

The “Eternal” Three
&
“The LORD our God,
the LORD is one!”

A Bible Study on the Eternal Godhead

Godhead Study Part 4

Compiled by Dan Augsburger

Matthew 28:19 “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”

Deuteronomy 6:4 (NKJV) “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one!”

*“The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, the eternal Godhead....”
Ellen G. White, Manuscript 45, 1904.16*

Introduction

This part of the multi-part Bible study on the Godhead looks at various passages where the “Three” are listed together, establishing the presence and joint activity of three separate entities in the Godhead, and then integrating the “Three” with the “LORD our God, the LORD is one” found in Deuteronomy 6:4. The three distinct Persons and “the LORD is one” are completely compatible.

We will first look at the Three Persons of the Godhead, follow with the “Three” in the writings of Ellen White, the Godhead as portrayed in Deuteronomy 6:4 and finally consider a few questions.

We go forward acknowledging ffff there is much that we do not understand: “Let human beings consider that by all their searching they can never interpret God. When the redeemed shall be pure and clean to come into His presence, they will understand that all that has reverence to the eternal God, the unapproachable God, cannot be represented in figures.” Manuscript 223 1902.17.

We also go forward sobered by the realization that we can come to understandings contrary to the teachings of the Scriptures.

Please know that I intend no lack of reverence by referring to the distinct Persons of the Godhead as the “Eternal Three” or the “Three” in these studies. As you will quickly discover, there are so many positive references to the “Three” attached to other descriptors in the writings of Ellen White—“Three great and glorious heavenly characters” for example—that the expression “The Three” is communicated with joy and fervent appreciation to the Persons who have done and still do so much for all of us.

Unless indicated otherwise, quotations come from the writings of Mrs. White. The scriptures with asterisks (*) indicate important references.

Do you have feedback and suggestions on these studies? I would love to hear from you. Do you have questions? Would you like to receive more information? Are you interested in a future compilation of the writings of Ellen White on the subject? Please write: discipleheart@protonmail.com or call 269 471 5415.

You can also find more information on the Godhead at my website discipleheart.com. There are more than 700 pages of resources there on a wide variety of subjects.

Dan Augsburg

Contents

If you are reading this document as a pdf on a digital device, clicking on the page numbers should take you to the proper location in the document. The outline also has clickable links. Epub documents downloaded from discipleheart.com have many clickable links for the location as well as footnotes.

Introduction 2

Contents 3

The Bible Study 5

- In studying the Godhead we stand on holy ground! 5
- There are three persons in the Eternal Godhead. 5
- “The LORD our God, the LORD is one!” 5

The “Three” in the Scriptures 6

- There are clear references to the “Three” in the Old Testament. 6
- The Old Testament “Plurals” provide additional evidence. 8
- There are references to the “Three” in the New Testament. 9

The “Three” in the Writings of Ellen White 15

“The LORD Our God, the LORD is One” 22

• Introduction 22

• “The LORD Our God” 23

+ In the Old and New Testaments are many ongoing statements regarding God being spoken of as the “only God” or something like that. 23

• Here we list verses revealing the three Members had similar attributes. 24

• What does the “LORD is one” mean? 28

+ Sample verses with ’echâd. 29

+ Sample verses with yâchîyd. 29

• What is the significance of the “Lord is one” aspect of the Godhead? 29

+ We are touching the essential nature of the Godhead. 29

+ We find loving relationships within the Godhead. 29

+ We find perfect unity!	30
+ We find diversity—individuality and personality—in that unity.	31
+ We find self-effacing humility.	31
+ We find submission in a relationship of equals.	32
+ We also find perfect, other-centered, love.	32
+ What is the practical application of the unity between the Father and the Son?	33
The “Only True” God	34
Was Christ the Literal Son of the Father?	36
Reviewing & Final Thoughts	48
• Reviewing	48
• Final thoughts	50
Bibliography	51

The Bible Study

1 In studying the Godhead we stand on holy ground!

2 *Exodus 3:5 “And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes
3 from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.”

4 Romans 11:33 “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and
5 knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways
6 past finding out!”

7 *Deuteronomy 29:29 “The secret things belong unto the LORD our
8 God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our
9 children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.”¹

10 There are three persons in the Eternal Godhead.

11 *Matthew 28:19 “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing
12 them in the name of the Father², and of the Son³, and of the Holy
13 Ghost.⁴”

14 “The LORD our God, the LORD is one!”

15 *Deuteronomy 6:4 (NKJV) “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the
16 LORD is one!”

17 *Though this only comes in the final study, this is one of the most
18 important topics we can look at. Before we consider “the LORD is
19 one” we will consider where the Eternal “Three” are mentioned*

1 “In regard to entering into the subject of the divine mystery of the essence of God, Christ ever maintained a wise reserve.” White, Manuscript 45, 1900.10. “In regard to the personality and prerogatives of God, where He is, and what He is, this is a subject which we are not to dare to touch. On this theme silence is eloquence.” Ellen White, Manuscript 132, 1903.31. “God is to be acknowledged more from what He does not reveal of Himself than from that which is open to our limited comprehension. If men could comprehend the unsearchable wisdom of God and could explain that which He has done or can do, they would no longer give Him reverence or fear His power. In divine revelation God has given to men mysteries that are incomprehensible, to command their faith. This must be so. If the ways and works of God could be explained by finite minds, He would not stand as supreme. Men may be ever searching, ever inquiring, ever learning, and yet there is an infinite beyond.” Manuscript 4, 1882.13.

2 “God is the eternal, self-existent One ... God is a person.” Manuscript 137, 1903.4.

3 “Christ is equal with God, infinite and omnipotent ... the eternal, self-existing Son.” *Youth's Instructor*, June 21, 1900, par. 2.

4 “The Holy Spirit ... must also be a divine person, else He could not search out the secrets which lie hidden in the mind of God.” Manuscript 20, 1906.32.

20 *together in the Scriptures, as well as in the writings of Ellen White.*
21 *The evidence is compelling for Three Distinct Persons in the Eternal*
22 *Godhead.⁵ Then we will look at “the LORD is one” and consider why*
23 *the portrayal of the “One” aspect is so important to our overall*
24 *understanding of the Godhead, and why we can legitimately speak of*
25 *the “only true God” all the while maintaining our understanding of*
26 *three distinct Persons making up the Godhead.*

27 The “Three” in the Scriptures

28 *There are numerous references to the “Three” throughout the*
29 *Scriptures.*

30 There are clear references to the “Three” in the Old
31 Testament.

32 *Because the Old Testament is not as explicit in revealing the three Per-*
33 *sons of the Godhead as the New Testament, sometimes an Old Testa-*
34 *ment Scripture is paired to a New Testament Scripture; sometimes the*
35 *evidence is based on two of the Persons rather than all three; and*
36 *sometimes only an allusion to the plurality in the Godhead is*
37 *provided.*

38 Numbers 6:24-26 “The LORD bless thee, and keep thee: 25 The
39 LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: 26
40 The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.”

41 Compare

42 2 Cor. 13:14 “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God,
43 and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.”

44 Psalms 45:6-7 “Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of
45 thy kingdom is a right sceptre. 7 Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest
46 wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of
47 gladness above thy fellows.”

48 Compare

49 Hebrews 1:8-9 “But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for
50 ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.
51 9 Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God,

5 “The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, the eternal Godhead....” Manuscript 45, 1904.16.

52 even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy
53 fellows.”

54 Psalms 110:1-2 “The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right
55 hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.”

56 Compare

57 Hebrews 1:8,13 “But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for
58 ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.
59 ... 13 But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right
60 hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?”

61 *Isaiah 11:1-3 (NKJV) “There shall come forth a Rod from the stem
62 of Jesse, And a Branch shall grow out of his roots. 2 The Spirit of the
63 LORD shall rest upon Him, The Spirit of wisdom and understanding,
64 The Spirit of counsel and might, The Spirit of knowledge and of the
65 fear of the LORD. 3 His delight is in the fear of the LORD, And He
66 shall not judge by the sight of His eyes, Nor decide by the hearing of
67 His ears.”

68 Isaiah 34:16 “Seek ye out of the book of the LORD, and read: no one
69 of these shall fail, none shall want her mate: for my mouth it hath
70 commanded, and his spirit it hath gathered them.”

71 *Isaiah 42:1 (NKJV) “Behold! My Servant whom I uphold, My Elect
72 One in whom My soul delights! I have put My Spirit upon Him; He
73 will bring forth justice to the Gentiles.”

74 *Isaiah 48:16-17 “Come ye near unto me, hear ye this; I have not
75 spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, there
76 am I: and now the Lord GOD, and his Spirit, hath sent me. 17 Thus
77 saith the LORD, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I am the
78 LORD thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by
79 the way that thou shouldest go.”

80 *Isaiah 61:1-2 “The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the
81 LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath
82 sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the
83 captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; 2 To
84 proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance
85 of our God; to comfort all that mourn.”

86 Isaiah 63:7-14 “I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the LORD, and
87 the praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD hath

88 bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel,
89 which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, and
90 according to the multitude of his lovingkindnesses. 8 For he said,
91 Surely they are my people, children that will not lie: so he was their
92 Saviour. 9 In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his
93 presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them;
94 and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old. 10 But they
95 rebelled, and vexed his holy Spirit: therefore he was turned to be their
96 enemy, and he fought against them. 11 Then he remembered the days
97 of old, Moses, and his people, saying, Where is he that brought them
98 up out of the sea with the shepherd of his flock? where is he that put
99 his holy Spirit within him? 12 That led them by the right hand of
100 Moses with his glorious arm, dividing the water before them, to make
101 himself an everlasting name? 13 That led them through the deep, as an
102 horse in the wilderness, that they should not stumble? 14 As a beast
103 goeth down into the valley, the Spirit of the LORD caused him to rest:
104 so didst thou lead thy people, to make thyself a glorious name.”

105 Malachi 3:1 “Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare
106 the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come
107 to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight
108 in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts.”

109 The Old Testament “Plurals” provide additional evidence.
110 *The verses that follow are sometimes referred to as the “plurals” of*
111 *the Old Testament, and provide precious understandings. Weaker evi-*
112 *dence in confirming the Godhead, the plurals are associated with the*
113 *word ’ēlôhîym, which is a commonly used word for God in the Old*
114 *Testament, but can also describe other entities, including individuals*
115 *(Psalm 82:6), angels (Psalm 8:6), and false gods (Exodus 20:23).*
116 *’ēlôhîym is neither singular or dual, rather plural—Hebrew recog-*
117 *nizes singular, dual and plural, the latter referring to three or more.*
118 *Sometimes mistakenly considered “plurals of majesty,” the verses are*
119 *not such “plurals” since the Scriptures contain no evidence that any*
120 *king mentioned used such a “plural.” Our understanding of the God-*
121 *head is not dependent on these “plurals,” however, there being more*
122 *than sufficient evidence in other ways.*⁶

123 *Genesis 1:26a “And God said, Let us make man in our image.”

6 See Norman Gulley, “Trinity in the Old Testament,” *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society*, 17:1 (Spring 2006) Trinity Issue., 84,85, and Daniel Bediako, “God in 3 Persons—in the Old Testament,” BRI, (Release 10), to learn more about these plurals.

124 *Genesis 3:22 “And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become
125 as one of us, to know good and evil.”

126 Genesis 11:7 “Go to, let us go down, and there confound their
127 language, that they may not understand one another's speech.”

128 Isaiah 6:8 “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?”

129 There are references to the “Three” in the New
130 Testament.

131 *Luke 1:35 And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy
132 Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall
133 overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of
134 thee shall be called the Son of God.”

135 Luke 2:25-27 “And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose
136 name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for
137 the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him. 26 And it
138 was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see
139 death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ. 27 And he came by the
140 Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus,
141 to do for him after the custom of the law.”

142 *Luke 3:21-22 “Now when all the people were baptized, it came to
143 pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was
144 opened, 22 And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a
145 dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art
146 my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.”

147 Matthew 3:16-17 “And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up
148 straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto
149 him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting
150 upon him: 17 And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved
151 Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

152 *Luke 4:18-19 “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath
153 anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal
154 the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and
155 recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,
156 19 To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.”

157 *John 3:33-35 “He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal
158 that God is true. 34 For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of
159 God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him. 35 The Father
160 loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.”

161 *John 14:16 “And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another

162 Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.”

163 John 14:26 “But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the
164 Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring
165 all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.”

166 *John 15:26 “But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto
167 you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from
168 the Father, he shall testify of me.”

169 John 20:20-22 “And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his
170 hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the
171 Lord. 21 Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my
172 Father hath sent me, even so send I you. 22 And when he had said this,
173 he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy
174 Ghost.”

175 *Acts 2:38-39 “Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized
176 every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins,
177 and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. 39 For the promise is
178 unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as
179 many as the Lord our God shall call.”

180 *Acts 10:38 “How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy
181 Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all
182 that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.”

183 Romans 5:1,5 “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with
184 God through our Lord Jesus Christ. ... 5 And hope maketh not
185 ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the
186 Holy Ghost which is given unto us.”

187 Romans 8:2-3 “For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath
188 made me free from the law of sin and death. 3 For what the law could
189 not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son
190 in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.”

191 Romans 8:9-11 “But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be
192 that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit
193 of Christ, he is none of his. 10 And if Christ be in you, the body is
194 dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. 11
195 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in
196 you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your
197 mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.”

198 *Romans 8:16-17 “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit,
199 that we are the children of God: 17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of
200 God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that

201 we may be also glorified together.”

202 Romans 14:17-18 “For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but
203 righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. 18 For he that in
204 these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of
205 men.”

206 Romans 15:12-13 “And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a root of
207 Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the
208 Gentiles trust. 13 Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace
209 in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the
210 Holy Ghost.”

211 1 Corinthians 6:15,19 “Know ye not that your bodies are the members
212 of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the
213 members of an harlot? God forbid. ... 19 What? know ye not that your
214 body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have
215 of God, and ye are not your own?”

216 1 Corinthians 12:3-6 “Wherefore I give you to understand, that no
217 man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no
218 man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. 4 Now
219 there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. 5 And there are
220 differences of administrations, but the same Lord. 6 And there are
221 diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in
222 all.”

223 *2 Corinthians 1:21-22 “Now he which stablisheth us with you in
224 Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; 22 Who hath also sealed us, and
225 given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.”

226 2 Corinthians 3:3-4 “Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be
227 the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with
228 the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables
229 of the heart. 4 And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward.”

230 *2 Corinthians 13:14 “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love
231 of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all.
232 Amen.”

233 Galatians 6:8, 14-15 “For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh
234 reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap
235 life everlasting. ... 14 But God forbid that I should glory, save in the
236 cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto
237 me, and I unto the world.”

238 Ephesians 1:3-4 “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus
239 Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly

240 places in Christ: 4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the
241 foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame
242 before him in love. ... 12 That we should be to the praise of his glory,
243 who first trusted in Christ. 13 In whom ye also trusted, after that ye
244 heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also
245 after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise.”

246 *Ephesians 2:18 “For through him we both have access by one Spirit
247 unto the Father.”

248 Ephesians 2:20-22 “And are built upon the foundation of the apostles
249 and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; 21 In
250 whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy
251 temple in the Lord: 22 In whom ye also are builded together for an
252 habitation of God through the Spirit.”

253 Ephesians 3:5, 8-9 “Which in other ages was not made known unto the
254 sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets
255 by the Spirit. ... 8 Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is
256 this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the
257 unsearchable riches of Christ; 9 And to make all men see what is the
258 fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath
259 been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ.”

260 *Ephesians 3:14-16 “For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of
261 our Lord Jesus Christ, 15 Of whom the whole family in heaven and
262 earth is named, 16 That he would grant you, according to the riches of
263 his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner
264 man.”

265 Ephesians 4:4-6 “There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are
266 called in one hope of your calling; 5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism,
267 6 One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in
268 you all.”

269 Ephesians 4:30-32 “And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye
270 are sealed unto the day of redemption. 31 Let all bitterness, and wrath,
271 and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with
272 all malice: 32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving
273 one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.”

274 Ephesians 5:18-20 “And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess;
275 but be filled with the Spirit; 19 Speaking to yourselves in psalms and
276 hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart
277 to the Lord; 20 Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the
278 Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

279 Philippians 3:3 “For we are the circumcision, which worship God in
280 the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the
281 flesh.”

282 1 Thessalonians 1:2-5 “We give thanks to God always for you all,
283 making mention of you in our prayers; 3 Remembering without
284 ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in
285 our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father; 4 Knowing,
286 brethren beloved, your election of God. 5 For our gospel came not
287 unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and
288 in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among
289 you for your sake.”

290 *1 Thessalonians 5:18-19 “In every thing give thanks: for this is the
291 will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. 19 Quench not the Spirit.”

292 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14 “But we are bound to give thanks alway to
293 God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the
294 beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit
295 and belief of the truth: 14 Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to
296 the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

297 2 Timothy 1:8-9 “Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of
298 our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions
299 of the gospel according to the power of God; 9 Who hath saved us,
300 and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but
301 according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ
302 Jesus before the world began, ... 13 Hold fast the form of sound words,
303 which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.
304 14 That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy
305 Ghost which dwelleth in us.”

306 Titus 3:4-5 “But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour
307 toward man appeared, 5 Not by works of righteousness which we have
308 done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of
309 regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.”

310 Hebrews 9:14 “How much more shall the blood of Christ, who
311 through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge
312 your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?”

313 *1 Peter 1:2 “Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father,
314 through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of
315 the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.”

316 1 Peter 1:16-17,21-22 “Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.
317 17 And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons

318 judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your
319 sojourning here in fear: ... 21 Who by him do believe in God, that
320 raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and
321 hope might be in God. 22 Seeing ye have purified your souls in
322 obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the
323 brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently.”

324 *1 John 4:13-15 “Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us,
325 because he hath given us of his Spirit. 14 And we have seen and do
326 testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world. 15
327 Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in
328 him, and he in God.”

329 Jude 1:20-21 “But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most
330 holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, 21 Keep yourselves in the love
331 of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal
332 life.”

333 *Revelation 2:7 “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith
334 unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree
335 of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.”

336 Revelation 2:27-29 “And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the
337 vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received
338 of my Father. 28 And I will give him the morning star. 29 He that hath
339 an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.”

340 Revelation 3:5-6 “He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in
341 white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life,
342 but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels. 6
343 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the
344 churches.”

345 Revelation 3:12-13 “12 Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in
346 the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write
347 upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God,
348 which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my
349 God: and I will write upon him my new name. 13 He that hath an ear,
350 let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.”

351 Revelation 3:21-22 “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me
352 in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my
353 Father in his throne. 22 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the
354 Spirit saith unto the churches.”

355 Revelation 14:12-13 “Here is the patience of the saints: here are they
356 that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. 13 And I

357 heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead
358 which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they
359 may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.”

360 Revelation 21:10, 22-23 “And he carried me away in the spirit to a
361 great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy
362 Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God. ... 22 And I saw no
363 temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the
364 temple of it. 23 And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the
365 moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb
366 is the light thereof.”

367 *The “Three” in the Writings of Ellen White*

368 *Evidence of the “Three” in the writings of Ellen White is compelling,*
369 *though little known! She speaks of the “Three” in undeniable ways.*
370 *These quotes were introduced in the study on the Holy Spirit. This*
371 *listing is accordingly shorter. The quotes are arranged topically, and*
372 *reveal the ongoing work of the Three Persons. The perspectives*
373 *provided on the united work of the Members of the Godhead are*
374 *wonderful and transformative, particularly relating to baptism.*

375 Matthew 28:19 “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them
376 in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:”

377 The “Three” are carefully defined.

378 ***“The Father is all the fulness of the Godhead bodily and is**
379 **invisible to mortal sight. The Son is all the fulness of the Godhead**
380 **manifested.** The Word of God declares Him to be “the express image
381 of His person.” [Hebrews 1:3.] “God so loved the world that He gave
382 His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not
383 perish, but have everlasting life.” [John 3:16.] Here is shown the
384 personality of the Father. **The Comforter that Christ promised to**
385 **send after He ascended to heaven, is the Spirit in all the fulness of**
386 **the Godhead, making manifest the power of divine grace to all**
387 **who receive and believe in Christ as a personal Saviour. There are**
388 **three living persons of the heavenly trio; in the name of these**
389 **three great powers—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—**
390 **those who receive Christ by living faith are baptized,** and these
391 powers will co-operate with the obedient subjects of heaven in their
392 efforts to live the new life in Christ.” Manuscript 21, 1906.9-11.

393 The Godhead—the “Three”—worked together on the plan of

394 redemption.

395 “**The Godhead—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit**—were
396 working in behalf of man. Every power in the heavenly universe was
397 put into activity to carry forward the plan of redemption. Ellen White,
398 Manuscript 47, 1901.6.

399 ***“The Godhead** was stirred with pity for the race, and **the Father, the**
400 **Son, and the Holy Spirit gave themselves to the working out of the**
401 **plan of redemption.** In order to fully carry out this plan, it was
402 decided that Christ, the only begotten Son of God, should give
403 Himself an offering for sin. What line can measure the depth of this
404 love?” Letter 12, 1901.10.

405 “Christ came to this world and stood before men with the hoarded love
406 of eternity. The whole ocean of divine love was flowing forth from its
407 great center. **The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit** were working
408 in behalf of man. Every power in the heavenly universe was put into
409 activity to carry forward the plan of redemption.” *Review and Herald*,
410 January 7, 1902, Art. A, par. 7.

411 “The **three representative powers of the Godhead, the Father, the**
412 **Son, and the Holy Spirit**, were pledged to carry out God’s plan for
413 the salvation of the lost race.” Manuscript 139, 1907.10.

414 The “Three” will be worshipped in heaven.

415 ***“As the saints in the kingdom of God are accepted in the beloved,**
416 they hear: “Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom
417 prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” [Matthew 25:34.]
418 And then the golden harps are touched, and the music flows all
419 through the heavenly host, and **they fall down and worship the**
420 **Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.**” Manuscript 139, 1906.32.

421 The Eternal Godhead support the human agent.

422 “The work of salvation is not a small matter, but so vast that the
423 highest authorities are taken hold of by the expressed faith of the
424 human agency. **The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, the**
425 **eternal Godhead** is involved in the action required to make assurance
426 to the human agent to unite all heaven to contribute to the exercise of
427 human faculties to reach and embrace the fulness of the threefold
428 powers to unite in the great work appointed, confederating the
429 heavenly powers with the human, that men may become, through
430 heavenly efficiency, partakers of the divine nature and workers
431 together with Christ.” Manuscript 45, 1904.16.

432 “How many will today pledge themselves to serve God with heart and
433 mind and strength? Do you not want **God and Christ and the Holy**
434 **Spirit to co-operate with you?** They are pledged to do this if you will
435 keep your covenant with God.” Manuscript 50, 1904.45.

436 The “Three” are referenced when speaking of neglecting the work.

437 ***“To neglect this work is to insult Jehovah, to grieve the Holy**
438 **Spirit, and to prove disloyal to Christ.”** *Review and Herald*, July 18,
439 1899, Art. A, par. 7.

440 Uniting with the Three Divine Instrumentalities brings wisdom from
441 above.

442 “Those who unite with **the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit**, who
443 show by their lives that they are no longer following the course they
444 followed before they united with these divine instrumentalities, will
445 receive wisdom from above.” Manuscript 11, 1901.8.

446 We are to cooperate with the Three Highest Powers of heaven.

447 “Keep yourselves where **the three great powers of heaven—the**
448 **Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit**—can be your efficiency. These
449 powers work with the man who gives himself unreservedly to God,
450 heart and soul, and mind and strength.” Letter 102, 1903.11.

451 ***“We are to co-operate with the three highest powers in heaven—**
452 **the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit;** and these powers will work
453 through us, making us workers together with God.” Letter 253a,
454 1903.18.

455 The “Three” are often listed in the same sentence.

456 “Let an abiding Christ live in the soul, and we shall show far greater
457 wisdom than we have done. We shall **know more of God and of**
458 **Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit which opens the door for us to**
459 **advance.** We need to manifest the Spirit of Christ. If we have not
460 received all we should have had, shall we now say, “Pay me that thou
461 owest?” It is the Lord’s, and we will say, “Return to God His own.”
462 Letter 43, 1899.49.

463 “We are to be engaged in gospel missionary work. We are brought into
464 connection with **God, who is the God of all comfort; into fellowship**
465 **with the Son, who is our Redeemer and the consolation of Israel;**
466 **and into communion with the Holy Spirit, the Comforter.”**
467 Manuscript 185, 1898.23.

468 The “Three” are referred to as Personal Dignitaries of Heaven.
469 “We are to “hold fast” and live up to all the light we receive from
470 heaven. Why? Because God wants us to grasp the eternal truth, and act
471 as His helping hand by communicating the light to those who are not
472 acquainted with His love for them. When you gave yourself to Christ,
473 you made a pledge **in the presence of the Father, the Son, and the**
474 **Holy Spirit—the three great personal dignitaries of heaven.** “Hold
475 fast” to this pledge.” Manuscript 92, 1901.5.

476 “Christ tells them they were to fight in fellowship with all the children
477 of light; that satanic agencies would combine their forces to extinguish
478 the light of the life of Christ out of their ranks. But they were not left
479 to fight the battles in their own human strength; that the angelic host
480 coming as ministers of God would be in that battle, and also there
481 would be **the eternal heavenly dignitaries—God, and Christ, and**
482 **the Holy Spirit**—arming them with more than mortal energy, and
483 [who] would advance with them to the work, and convince the world
484 of sin.” Manuscript 130, 1901.52.

485 The “Three” are mentioned when Christ promised the help of the Holy
486 Spirit.

487 “Christ promised His disciples that He would send them the Holy
488 Spirit, who would bring all these things to their remembrance. **“The**
489 **Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in**
490 **my name, he shall teach you all things,** and bring all things to your
491 remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” Manuscript 15,
492 1898.10.

493 “What a salvation is revealed in the **covenant by which God**
494 **promised to be our Father, His <only begotten> Son our**
495 **Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit our Comforter, Counsellor, and**
496 **Sanctifier.** Upon no lower ground than this is it safe for us to place
497 our feet.” Manuscript 15, 1898.20.

498 The “Three” provide power to overcome.

499 ***“Our sanctification is the work of the Father, the Son, and the Holy**
500 **Spirit.** It is the fulfilment of the covenant that God has made with
501 those who bind themselves up with Him, to **stand with Him, with His**
502 **Son, and with His Spirit in holy fellowship.** Have you been born
503 again? Have you become a new being in Christ Jesus? Then **co-**
504 **operate with the three great powers of heaven** who are working in
505 your behalf. Doing this you will reveal to the world the principles of

506 righteousness.” *Signs of the Times*, June 19, 1901, par. 4.

507 “I beseech those who claim to believe that Jesus has died for them,
508 those who have been baptized **in the name of the Father, the Son,**
509 **and the Holy Ghost**, to come to Christ, believing that He will give
510 them power to resist the enemy. If by our compassion and generosity,
511 by our kind, tender words, we manifested His sweet Spirit, His
512 righteousness, we should truly be lights in the world.” Manuscript
513 102, 1901.9.

514 “No requirement is laid upon man that Christ has not obeyed. We can
515 overcome as He overcame, if we will **avail ourselves of the help of**
516 **the three great powers of heaven**, who are waiting to answer the
517 demand made upon them by God’s people for power to defeat satanic
518 agencies.” Manuscript 181, 1905.10.

519 *“The **Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, the three holy**
520 **dignitaries of heaven**, have declared that they will strengthen men to
521 overcome the powers of darkness. All the facilities of heaven are
522 pledged to those who by their baptismal vows have entered into a
523 covenant with God.” Manuscript 92, 1901.26.

524 The “Three” long for channels to communicate through.

525 “The **Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit** are seeking and longing
526 for channels through which to communicate the divine principles of
527 truth to the world.” Letter 43, 1901.8.

528 The Three Highest Authorities in the universe call persons teaching
529 the commandments great.

530 “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not
531 come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven
532 and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law,
533 till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least
534 commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall **be called the least in**
535 **the kingdom of heaven (by the Father, the Son, and the Holy**
536 **Ghost)**: but whosoever shall do and teach them, **the same shall be**
537 **called great (by the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost) in the**
538 **kingdom of heaven.**’ The **three highest authorities in the universe**,
539 with all the heavenly family, shall call great, in the fullest sense of the
540 term, those who do and teach the commandments of our heavenly
541 Father.” Manuscript 129, 1907.28.

542 The three members of the Godhead cooperated in bringing our
543 salvation.

544 ***“After the believing soul has received the ordinance of baptism, he is**
545 **to bear in mind that he is dedicated to God, to Christ, and to the**
546 **Holy Spirit. These three all co-operate** in the great work of the
547 covenant made by baptism in the sight of the heavenly universe. **The**
548 **Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit receive the believing soul into**
549 **covenant relation with God.”** Manuscript 56, 1900.26.

550 The “Three” were present at Christ’s baptism.

551 Luke 3:21-22 “Now when all the people were baptized, it came to
552 pass, that **Jesus also being baptized**, and praying, the heaven was
553 opened, 22 And **the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a**
554 **dove upon him**, and a voice came from heaven, which said, **Thou art**
555 **my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.”**

556 There are numerous statements that have to do with baptism.

557 ***“The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, powers infinite and**
558 **omniscient**, receive those who truly enter into covenant relation with
559 God. **They are present at every baptism, to receive the candidates**
560 who have renounced the world and have received Christ into the soul
561 temple. These candidates have entered into the family of God, and
562 their names are inscribed in the Lamb’s book of life.” Manuscript 27a,
563 1900.10.7.

564 “After the believing soul has received the ordinance of baptism, he is
565 to bear in mind that **he is dedicated to God, to Christ, and to the**
566 **Holy Spirit. These three all co-operate in the great work of the**
567 **covenant made by baptism** in the sight of the heavenly universe. **The**
568 **Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit receive the believing soul into**
569 **covenant relation with God.”** Manuscript 56, 1900.26.

570 “Let every soul be careful how he shall conduct himself after he has
571 made his profession before many witnesses. **Who are these**
572 **witnesses? The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit**, and all the
573 heavenly universe are witnesses of that burial in the water in the
574 likeness of Christ’s death. Those who have been truly converted have
575 been buried with Christ in the likeness of His death, and raised from
576 the watery grave in the likeness of His resurrection, to walk in
577 newness of life. By faithful obedience to the truth these are to make
578 their calling and election sure.” Manuscript 57, 1900.21.

7 Manuscript 95, 1906 is an especially important document to read on baptism, for it reveals the united activities of the members of the Godhead who enter into covenant with the one being baptized.

579 “At the baptismal ceremony **we virtually take a most solemn oath in**
580 **the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, that**
581 **henceforth our lives will be merged into the life of these three**
582 **great individual Agencies;** that the life we now live in the flesh we
583 will live in faithful obedience to God’s sacred and holy law, keeping
584 all His statutes and His commandments; that we will live in newness
585 of life as men and women having a new birth unto God.” Manuscript
586 68, 1900.12.

587 Additional titles for the “Three.”⁸

588 “**Three highest powers in the universe.**” *Review and Herald*, August
589 12, 1909, par. 3.

590 “**Three great heavenly powers.**” Manuscript 192, 1903.22;
591 Manuscript 186, 1907.7.

592 “**Three great Worthies in heaven.**” Manuscript 95, 1906.13;
593 Manuscript 145, 1906.12.

594 “**Three mighty powers.**” Manuscript 229, 1902.23; Manuscript 142,
595 1906.50.

596 “**Three great infinite powers.**” *General Conference Bulletin*, April 4,
597 1901, Art. A, par. 16.

598 “**Eternal heavenly dignitaries.**” Manuscript 130, 1901.52.

599 “**Three great and glorious heavenly characters.**” Manuscript 45,
600 1904.18.

601 “**Three great authorities of heaven.**” Manuscript 177, 1907.15.

602 “**Three great personal dignitaries of heaven.**” Manuscript 92
603 1901.5.

604 “**Three highest authorities in the universe.**” Manuscript 129,
605 1907.28.

606 “**Three highest authorities of the heavenly courts.**” Manuscript 87,
607 1902.36.

608 “**Three holiest beings in heaven.**” Manuscript 95, 1906.29.

609 “**Three living persons of the heavenly trio.**” Manuscript 21, 1906.11.

610 “**Three representative powers of the Godhead.**” Manuscript 139,
611 1907.10.

⁸ You will find a longer exhaustive list of these statements in the study on the Holy Spirit.

612 “The LORD Our God, the LORD is One”

613 Deuteronomy 6:4 (NKJV) “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the
614 LORD is one!”

615 Introduction

616 *The Bible not only speaks of the Three Persons of the Godhead, it also*
617 *asserts “The LORD our God, the LORD is one.” The “Three,” which*
618 *we have already studied, and the “LORD is one,” which we are about*
619 *to study, are perfectly compatible. Because there are efforts to negate*
620 *the “Three” in some quarters, in favor of various other understand-*
621 *ings, the first three parts of this series of studies, and the first sections*
622 *of this fourth part, have sought to clearly establish the scriptural foun-*
623 *dation for Three distinct co-equal, divine, eternal Persons in the God-*
624 *head. Having hopefully succeeded in that effort, understanding the the*
625 *“LORD our God, the LORD is one” is our next objective.*

626 *When we speak of the “Lord is one,” we are still speaking of the eter-*
627 *nal Godhead that consists of three persons. Though there are three*
628 *distinct Persons (plural, meaning more than one) we describe them as*
629 *members of the “Godhead” (singular) never as “Godheads” (plural).*
630 *We also baptize “in the name” (singular) of the Father, Son and Holy*
631 *Ghost,”⁹ never in the “names.” In doing so, we are merely stating*
632 *what the Bible teaches on the subject.*

633 *The three Persons, one God paradox is one of the great mysteries of*
634 *the Bible, and is beyond what has been fully revealed in the Scriptures.*
635 *But, as mentioned above, the “Three” and the “Lord is one” are per-*
636 *fectly compatible. To be faithful to the teachings of the Scriptures, we*
637 *must equally accept the teachings regarding the Three Persons and*
638 *those regarding one God. The challenge is integrating them.¹⁰*

639 *Here is the official statement of the church:*

640 “There is one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, a unity of three co-
641 eternal Persons. God is immortal, all-powerful, all-knowing, above all,

9 Matthew 28:19.

10 Find helpful discussions on the Trinity in Gerhard Pfandl, (2003) "The Trinity in Scripture," *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society*: Vol. 14 : Iss. 2 , Article 5. <https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/jats/vol14/iss2/5/> (accessed April 28, 2021); Woodrow Whidden, “Why the Trinity Is Important,” *The Trinity: Understanding God’s Love, His Plan of Salvation and Christian Relationships* (Hagerstown: Review and Herald, 2002) 243-244; John Reeve, "Why We Don't Worship Three Gods" (2020). *Faculty Publications*. 1204. (<https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/pubs/1204/>); Daniel Scarone, *The God We Worship*, (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 2011), 101.

642 and ever present. He is infinite and beyond human comprehension, yet
643 known through His self-revelation. God, who is love, is forever wor-
644 thy of worship, adoration, and service by the whole creation.”¹¹

645 *It is significant that our doctrinal statement does not attempt to ex-*
646 *plain the “everlasting to everlasting” duration of the Godhead’s exist-*
647 *ence, nor how “Three” can be “One.” Neither is there any attempt*
648 *to explain. Discussing this challenge. Kwabena Donkor explains:*

649 “The Bible seems not to go into the issue of how God is One, and we
650 should not either. Just because the Christian tradition dealt with it does
651 not mean we have to do the same. We may state the Bible’s view of
652 God as One and Three without trying to explain it.”¹²

653 “The LORD Our God”

654 *“The LORD Our God” refers to the Godhead made up of Three Per-*
655 *sons. This is the mysterious paradox already spoken of. Though there*
656 *are three distinct Persons that make up the Godhead, there are numer-*
657 *ous verses in the Scriptures that speak of one God. As we will learn,*
658 *the complete unity between the Persons of the Godhead allows them to*
659 *be accurately spoken of as a single entity. Though we are not given*
660 *much information in this regard, at the very least one of the reasons*
661 *would include their self-effacing humility.*

662 • In the Old and New Testaments are many ongoing statements regard-
663 ing God being spoken of as the “only God” or something like that.

664 *To the Hebrews, who knew little to nothing regarding the distinct per-*
665 *sons in the Godhead, the injunction to worship the one God was espe-*
666 *cially comparative in nature, relative to the pagan worship going on*
667 *around them. Hidden within the assertion of Deuteronomy 6:4, howev-*
668 *er, was a great and profound truth that we will consider later: that the*
669 *one God was made up of a unity of Three Persons!*

670 Here are examples of “one God” references.

671 *Deuteronomy 6:4 “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one
672 LORD.”

673 Deuteronomy 4:35,39 “Unto thee it was shewed, that thou mightest
674 know that the LORD he is God; there is none else beside him. ... 39
675 Know therefore this day, and consider it in thine heart, that the LORD

11 <https://www.adventist.org/trinity/> (accessed May 1, 2021)

12 Kwabena Donkor, “God in 3 Persons—in Theology, Biblical Research Institute, Release 09.

676 he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath: there is none
677 else.”

678 *1 Kings 8:60 “That all the peoples of the earth may know that the
679 LORD is God; there is no other.”

680 Isaiah 45:5-6,18 “I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no
681 God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me: 6 That
682 they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that
683 there is none beside me. I am the LORD, and there is none else. ... 18
684 For thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God himself that
685 formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not
686 in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I am the LORD; and there is
687 none else. ... 21 Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take coun-
688 sel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? who hath told
689 it from that time? have not I the LORD? and there is no God else be-
690 side me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me. 22 Look
691 unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and
692 there is none else.”

693 Zechariah 14:9 “And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that
694 day shall there be one LORD, and his name one.”

695 *Statements regarding “one God” continue in the New Testament.*

696 Mark 12:29 “And Jesus answered him, The first of all the command-
697 ments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord.”

698 John 10:30 “I and my Father are one.”

699 1 Corinthians 8:4 “As concerning therefore the eating of those things
700 that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing
701 in the world, and that there is none other God but one.”

702 Ephesians 4:6 “One God and Father of all, who is above all, and
703 through all, and in you all.”

704 *We cannot fully understand or explain why “one God” is also “Three*
705 *Persons,” but the Bible teaches both, and we must accept the teach-*
706 *ing. Note that accepting the “One,” however, does not diminish or*
707 *negate the “Three”!*

708 Here we list verses revealing the three Members had sim-
709 ilar attributes.

710 • These divine attributes are unlimited and incommunicable.¹³

13 “This injunction [“Search the Scriptures”] is from the eternal Son of God. Neglect of

711 *These “unlimited” attributes that enable the maximum that deity can*
712 *do, were exhausted in the plan of salvation, and are incommunica-*
713 *ble—cannot be communicated—with lesser beings.*

714 • The three Members have an eternal existence.

715 *Deuteronomy 33:27 “The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath
716 are the everlasting arms.”

717 *Psalms 90:2 “Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou
718 hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to ever-
719 lasting, thou art God.”

720 John 8:58 “Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before
721 Abraham was, I am.”

722 Hebrews 9:14 “How much more shall the blood of Christ, who
723 through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge
724 your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?”

725 • All three Members are omnipresent.

726 Jeremiah 23:24 “Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not
727 see him? saith the LORD. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the
728 LORD.”

729 Matt. 28:20 “Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have
730 commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of
731 the world. Amen.”

732 Psalms 139:7-12 “Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I
733 flee from thy presence? 8 If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I
734 make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. 9 If I take the wings of the
735 morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; 10 Even there
736 shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. 11 If I say,
737 Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about
738 me. 12 Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as
739 the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee.”

the study of God’s word leads many to neglect the great salvation, and proves the ruin of thousands. When this command was given, reference was had to the Old-Testament Scriptures only, but we now have the New-Testament Scriptures besides. If God has done for us the utmost that Deity could do; if all the divine attributes, unlimited as they are, have combined and even exhausted themselves in the great plan of redemption, then every child and youth should make the Scriptures their study, that they may not be ignorant of this wonderful scheme. You should open the Scriptures with a solemn interest to hear what the voice of God bids you do and be in order to be saved.” *Youth’s Instructor*, August 31, 1887, par. 1.

740 • All three Members are omniscient.

741 *Isaiah 46:9-10 “Remember the former things of old: for I am God,
742 and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, 10 Declar-
743 ing the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that
744 are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my
745 pleasure.”

746 Matthew 6:8 “Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father
747 knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.”

748 *John 21:17 “He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas,
749 lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third
750 time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all
751 things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my
752 sheep.”

753 Romans 8:27 “And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the
754 mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints ac-
755 cording to the will of God.”

756 • All three Members are good.

757 Ps. 65:16 “That he who blesseth himself in the earth shall bless him-
758 self in the God of truth; and he that sweareth in the earth shall swear
759 by the God of truth.”

760 Psalms 143:10 “Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God: thy
761 spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness.”

762 Acts 3:14 “But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a
763 murderer to be granted unto you.”

764 Nehemiah 9:20 “Thou gavest also thy good spirit to instruct them, and
765 witheldest not thy manna from their mouth, and gavest them water
766 for their thirst.”

767 • All three Members exercise sovereign authority.

768 **Matthew 6:10 “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it
769 is in heaven.”

770 Mark 4:39 “And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea,
771 Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.”

772 1 Corinthians 12:4-11 “Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same
773 Spirit. 5 And there are differences of administrations, but the same
774 Lord. 6 And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God
775 which worketh all in all. 7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given

776 to every man to profit withal. 8 For to one is given by the Spirit the
777 word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;
778 9 To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by
779 the same Spirit; 10 To another the working of miracles; to another
780 prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of
781 tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: 11 But all these wor-
782 keth that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally
783 as he will.”

784 • All three Members participated in creation.

785 Genesis 1:1 “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.”

786 *John 1:3 “All things were made by him; and without him was not any
787 thing made that was made.”

788 Colossians 1:16-17 “For by him were all things created, that are in
789 heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be
790 thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were cre-
791 ated by him, and for him: 17 And he is before all things, and by him
792 all things consist.”

793 Genesis 1:2 “And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness
794 was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the
795 face of the waters.”

796 • All three Members bring life.

797 John 5:21 “For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them;
798 even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.”

799 John 14:6 “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life:
800 no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”

801 Romans 8:11 “But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the
802 dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also
803 quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.”

804 • All three Members bring transformation.

805 1 Thessalonians 5:23 “And the very God of peace sanctify you whol-
806 ly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved
807 blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

808 1 Corinthians 1:2 “Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to
809 them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that
810 in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs
811 and ours:”

812 Ephesians 3:16 “That he would grant you, according to the riches of

813 his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner
814 man;”

815 • All three Members dwell in believers.

816 Isaiah 57:15” For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eter-
817 nity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him
818 also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the
819 humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.”

820 Ephesians 3:17 “That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith;”

821 Romans 8:9-11 “But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be
822 that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit
823 of Christ, he is none of his. 10 And if Christ be in you, the body is
824 dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. 11
825 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in
826 you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your
827 mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.”

828 • All three Members are equally God.

829 Ephesians 2:4-8 “But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love
830 wherewith he loved us, 5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quick-
831 ened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) 6 And hath
832 raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in
833 Christ Jesus: 7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding
834 riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.”

835 *1 Timothy 3:16 “And without controversy great is the mystery of
836 godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of
837 angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received
838 up into glory.”

839 *Acts 5:3-4 “But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart
840 to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?
841 4 Whilst it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was
842 it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine
843 heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.”

844 What does the “*LORD is one*” mean?

845 *The “One” of Deuteronomy 6:4—’echâd refers to uniqueness and*
846 *unity—a unitary “one”—a unity in diversity of numerous persons,*
847 *such as is found in the marriage relationship between a husband and*
848 *wife, or the unity found in a group of people who have come together*
849 *for a common purpose. There is also the mathematical form of “one,”*

850 *yâchîyd*, that refers to an only son or child (Prov 4:3; Zech 12:10).¹⁴

851 • Sample verses with 'echâd.

852 Genesis 2:24 “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother,
853 and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.”

854 Judges 20:11 “So all the men of Israel were gathered against the city,
855 knit together as one man.”

856 • Sample verses with *yâchîyd*.

857 Proverbs 4:3 (NKJV) “When I was my father’s son, Tender and the
858 only one in the sight of my mother,”

859 Zechariah 12:10 “And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon
860 the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications:
861 and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall
862 mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in
863 bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.”

864 What is the significance of the “Lord is one” aspect of the
865 Godhead?

866 *In studying this topic, it helps to remember that God is past finding
867 out, His ways are incomprehensible, He defies human reasoning! We
868 must therefore be satisfied with the limited information provided.*

869 • We are touching the essential nature of the Godhead.

870 *When we speak of the mysterious oneness between the Three Persons
871 of the Godhead, we touch the core of the Godhead. Just as the unity of
872 God’s church is the clearest revelation of the God we represent, so the
873 apparent unity between the Persons of the Godhead provides the
874 clearest information on what the Godhead is all about. Among these
875 elements are love, unity, diversity, humble self-effacement and ongoing
876 submission in a relationship of equals.*

877 • We find loving relationships within the Godhead.

878 *Perfect, loving relationships existed among the Godhead from the*

14 There are two words for “one” in Hebrew: *'echâd* and *yâchîyd*. *'Echâd* refers to the unity in diversity between a man and wife, or the unity in diversity of a group of people who are linked together for some reason (Gen 2:24; 11:6; Judges 20:11; Ezek 37:19). *Yâchîyd* refers to uniqueness, as in an only son or an only child (Prov 4:3; Zech 12:10). For a more complete discussion see Gulley, 83-84. The authors of *Trinity* have a very helpful definition as well: a “oneness that results from a unity of numerous persons.” Find a more complete discussion in W. Whidden, 34.

879 *beginning. In the course of fulfilling the plan of redemption, Christ*
880 *gave His life for us, and eventually experienced temporary, heart-*
881 *breaking separation from His Father. The Father experienced a*
882 *similar aching separation from His Son. We often forget the personal*
883 *trauma that the members of the Godhead experienced in this respect.¹⁵*
884 *There are quotes about the infinite love of the Father for Christ.¹⁶*

885 *John 3:16 “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only
886 begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but
887 have everlasting life.”

888 Matthew 3:17 “And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my
889 beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

890 Mark 14:36 “And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto
891 thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but
892 what thou wilt.”

893 Matthew 27:46 “And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud
894 voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my
895 God, why hast thou forsaken me?”

896 • We find perfect unity!

897 *The three divine Persons of the Godhead are perfectly united in na-*
898 *ture, character, and purpose. The Godhead presents a unity that is so*
899 *complete that it can be correctly expressed in the singular! Though*
900 *they are Three, they are referred to as one God.¹⁷*

901 *John 10:30 “I and my Father are one.”¹⁸

902 John 17:21 “That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I
903 in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe
904 that thou hast sent me.”

15 “God withheld not even the sacrifice of Himself. He gave Himself in His Son. The Father suffered with Christ in all His humiliation and agony” Manuscript 21, 1900.11.

16 “[T]he Father demonstrates His infinite love for Christ by receiving and welcoming Christ’s friends as His friends.” *Experiences in Australia*, 259.5.

17 “Those to whom the Lord spoke anciently were in possession of the knowledge of the true God. Their message to the world was the existence of a personal God and the unity between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, in carrying forward the great work of redemption in every soul that is emptied of self.” White, Manuscript 78, 1905.20. “Christ, the Word, the only begotten of God, was one with the eternal Father—one in nature, in character, in purpose—the only being that could enter into all the counsels and purposes of God.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 34.1.

18 “From eternity there was a complete unity between the Father and the Son. They were two, yet little short of being identical; two in individuality, yet one in spirit, and heart, and character.” *Youth Instructor*, December 16, 1897, par. 5.

905 • We find diversity—individuality and personality—in that unity.
906 *There is also diversity in unity. Though they are perfectly united, they*
907 *still have their distinct personalities and specific functions.*¹⁹

908 1 John 1:3 “That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you,
909 that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is
910 with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.”²⁰

911 Hebrews 1:1-3 “God, ... 2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by
912 his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he
913 made the worlds; 3 Who being the brightness of his glory, and the ex-
914 press image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his
915 power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right
916 hand of the Majesty on high.”²¹

917 • We find self-effacing humility.
918 *In the Godhead we find perfect unity between three distinct Persons.*
919 *This could only be possible because the Three are completely rooted in*
920 *humility. In the very first verse in the Bible we find this self-effacing*
921 *humility in the declaration that “God created the heaven and the*
922 *earth.” Though the verse speaks of the work of God creating, the*
923 *actual creator was Christ.*²² *Hidden within the designation “God” are*
924 *“Three” who were present and participated in different ways, but*
925 *participated with such self-effacing humility and unity that “God*
926 *created” is an accurate description of what happened.*²³

927 *We should also consider that revelation is progressive. For example,*
928 *Christ revealed Himself as “Almighty God” to Abraham, Isaac and*
929 *Jacob, but revealed Himself as YHWH to Moses at the time of*

19 “Christ’s oneness with the Father was a constant joy to God; for He knew that there was in the world one who would not misrepresent Him. In Christ He beheld the reflection of His own character. And it was that His followers might have this same oneness that was Christ’s great desire. For this oneness He prayed.” Letter 317, 1904.6 ... “The oneness existing between the Father and the Son does not affect the distinct personality of each. And though believers are to be one with Christ, their identity and personality is recognized through the whole of this prayer.” Letter 317, 1904.10.

20 “All through the Scriptures, the Father and the Son are spoken of as two distinct personages. You will hear men endeavoring to make the Son of God a nonentity. He and the Father are one, but they are two personages.” Manuscript 56, 1905.4.

21 “The position of Jesus Christ in reference to His Father is in these verses [Hebrews 1:1-3] brought to view. While they are one in purpose, and one in mind, yet in personality they are two.” Manuscript 179, 1907.2.

22 John 1:3: “All things were created by Him”; Colossians 1:16: “For by him were all things created”; Hebrews 1:2 “By whom also he made the worlds.”

23 Though Christ was the primary agent of creation, the Father created through Him (Ephesians 3:9), and the Spirit was very present (Genesis 1:2).

930 *Exodus.*²⁴ *Though the Spirit was very active in the Old Testament,*
931 *more complete information only comes in the New Testament. That*
932 *could explain why the Jewish people who had more limited*
933 *information in Old Testament times focused so much on Deuteronomy*
934 *6:4 and related passages, but would have a more complete*
935 *understanding at the time of Christ's earthly sojourn.*

936 Genesis 1:1-2 "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.
937 2 And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon
938 the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the
939 waters."

940 • We find submission in a relationship of equals.

941 *Though they are equals, the Father apparently plays the lead role;*
942 *Christ voluntarily submits Himself to the Father, and continues that*
943 *submission while seated at the right hand of the Father; the Holy Spir-*
944 *it is in voluntary submission to the Father and Christ.*²⁵

945 *John 4:34 "Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him
946 that sent me, and to finish his work."

947 John 6:38 "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will,
948 but the will of him that sent me."

949 *Hebrews 10:7 "Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it
950 is written of me,) to do thy will, O God."

951 Luke 22:42 "Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from
952 me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done."

953 John 16:14 "He [Holy Spirit] shall glorify me: for he shall receive of
954 mine, and shall shew it unto you."

955 • We also find perfect, other-centered, love.

956 *The Bible is clear that God not only loves, He is the source of all*
957 *love!*²⁶

24 Exodus 6:2,3. Recall that Christ took over all communication after the fall of man.

25 "The work of the Spirit had been clearly defined by Christ. "He shall not speak of Himself," He said. "He shall glorify Me." [John 16:13, 14.] As Christ came to glorify the Father by the revelation of His infinite love, so the Spirit came to glorify Christ." White, Letter 213, 1903.12.

26 "The Lord has instructed us to call God our Father, to regard him as the fountain of paternal affection, the source of the love that has been flowing from century to century through the channel of the human heart. All the pity, compassion, and love which have been manifested in the earth have emanated from the throne of God, and, compared to the love that dwells in his heart, are as a fountain to an ocean." White, *Signs of the Times*, March 5, 1896, par. 3.

958 *1 John 4:8 “He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.”

959 1 John 1:5 “This then is the message which we have heard of him, and
 960 declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.”

961 Exodus 34:6-7 “And the LORD passed by before him, and pro-
 962 claimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuf-
 963 fering, and abundant in goodness and truth, 7 Keeping mercy for thou-
 964 sands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no
 965 means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the
 966 children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the
 967 fourth generation.”

968 *2 Corinthians 5:19 “To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the
 969 world unto himself.”²⁷

970 • What is the practical application of the unity between the Father and
 971 the Son?

972 We should be loving.

973 John 13:35 “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye
 974 have love one to another.”

975 We should be united.

976 1 Corinthians 1:10 “Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our
 977 Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be
 978 no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the
 979 same mind and in the same judgment.”

980 We must maintain our individuality—diversity.

981 Romans 12:5 “So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every
 982 one members one of another.”²⁸

983 We should be humble.

984 Matthew 11:28-30 “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy

27 “In Christ the character of the Father was revealed. As children looked upon his countenance, they saw purity and goodness shining forth from his eyes. In his countenance gentleness, meekness, love, and conscious power were combined. But though every word, every gesture, every expression of his face, betokened his divine supremacy, humility marked his deportment and bearing. He came but for one purpose; and that was the salvation of the lost.” *The Youth’s Instructor*, June 23, 1892, par. 3.

28 “By the figure of the vine and the branches, Christ illustrated not only the relation that should exist between Him and His followers, but also the union between every believer and his fellow believer. The branches of the vine are related to each other; but they are not alike. Each has its own individuality, which cannot be merged into that of another, but all have a special connection with each other.” Letter 112, 1907.13.

985 laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn
986 of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto
987 your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

988 We should appropriately submit to those in rightful authority over us.
989 Luke 9:23 “And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let
990 him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.”

991 *The “Only True” God*

992 John 17:3 “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only
993 true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”

994 • Some thoughts on the the “Only True” God.

995 *The “Only True” God is not so difficult to understand when*
996 *understood in light of the “LORD is one.” But there is more to*
997 *consider.*

998 *Was Jesus really suggesting in John 17:3 that His Father was the only*
999 *true God, and therefore negating His equal participation in the*
1000 *Godhead and that of the Holy Spirit, and discouraging worship of the*
1001 *two of them?*

1002 • What is the evidence of Scripture and the writings of Ellen White?

1003 *As we have already seen, (1) Christ is clearly spoken of as God in the*
1004 *Old and New Testament, and in the writings of Ellen White. (2) As*
1005 *God, Christ is self-existent. (3) Christ is clearly spoken of as being*
1006 *equal to God in the Old and New Testament, and in the writings of*
1007 *Ellen White. (4) Christ’s incarnation and ministry was full of*
1008 *supernatural events. (5) Christ made claims and gave assurances that*
1009 *only a Deity could make and assure. (6) Christ is clearly spoken of as*
1010 *accepting the worship of human beings in the Old and New Testament,*
1011 *and in the writings of Ellen White. (7) We are told that Christ came to*
1012 *earth as man and will ascend to heaven as God. (8) We will welcome*
1013 *Christ as God at the time of the second coming. (9) We are told that*
1014 *we will worship the Father, Christ and the Holy Spirit in heaven. (10)*
1015 *Adults and children are encouraged to pray to Christ. In light of this*
1016 *evidence, Christ’s statement cannot possibly suggest that the Father is*
1017 *the only “true” God and that Christ is not God and inferior.*

1018 • *In addition to this evidence we find clear statements in John attesting*
1019 *to Christ being God.*

1020 John 1:1 “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God,

1021 and the Word was God.”

1022 John 20:28-29 “And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord
1023 and my God. 29 Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen
1024 me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet
1025 have believed.”

1026 *Since John stated that Christ was God in John 1:1 and John 20:28-29,*
1027 *John 17:3 must not be understood to negate Christ’s Godhead.*

1028 • Jeremiah 10:10-11 compares the creator God to other pagan gods.

1029 *How are we to understand John 17:3? I would suggest that John 17:3*
1030 *is not a statement on whether Christ is God, rather a statement*
1031 *comparing the creator God to other pagan gods. Notice the evidence*
1032 *of Jeremiah 10:10-11:*

1033 *Jeremiah 10:10-11 “But the LORD is the true God, he is the living
1034 God, and an everlasting king: at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and
1035 the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation. 11 Thus shall ye
1036 say unto them, The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth,
1037 even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens.”

1038 *The phrase “true God,” first mentioned in Jeremiah 10:10, defines the*
1039 *“true God” as the Creator God who “hath made the earth by his*
1040 *power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath*
1041 *stretched out the heavens by his discretion,” and contrasts the “true—*
1042 *Creator—God” to the false “gods that have not made the heavens and*
1043 *the earth (Jeremiah 10:11).” The Hebrew word for God in Jeremiah*
1044 *10:10 is “’ĕlôhîym,” such as is found in Genesis 1:27, 11:7 and*
1045 *Exodus 20:3.*

1046 *These verses do not say the Father is the “True God” and Christ a*
1047 *false god—absolutely UNTRUE! and blasphemous. Or that the Father*
1048 *is the “only true god,” and Jesus Christ is a lesser god. Rather these*
1049 *verses compare the true Creator God with pagan gods. Speaking*
1050 *further of this Daniel Bediako states:*

1051 “In the passages that assert the oneness of God, the contrast is
1052 consistently between the God of Israel on the one hand and the gods of
1053 Canaanites on the other. The contrast is never between the one-person
1054 God and a plurality with that one God. In other words, when the Old
1055 Testament asserts the oneness of God, such oneness excludes only
1056 false deities, not a plurality of persons within the true God.”²⁹

29 Daniel Bediako, “God In 3 Persons—In the Old Testament,” Biblical Research Institute, Release 10, 8.

1057 *Proof of this fact are the incidences already mentioned where the three*
1058 *are mentioned in the Old Testament.*

1059 • *Thoughts on Christ seeking reinstatement of the glory He shared*
1060 *with His Father prior to the incarnation.*

1061 *In John 12:27-33 Jesus speaks of having come at a particular time—*
1062 *“for this cause came I unto this hour” (John 12:27), for a particular*
1063 *purpose—“now shall the prince of this world be cast out” (John*
1064 *12:31), and asks the Father to “glorify His own name”—the Father’s*
1065 *name. In other words, in coming Jesus emptied Himself of any glory*
1066 *and did not seek to attract attention to Himself.*

1067 *In John 17:1-5, at the end of His ministry, Jesus implores the Father to*
1068 *reinstatement the glory He [Christ] had prior to his humbling Himself and*
1069 *coming to earth: “Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy*
1070 *Son also may glorify thee (John 17:1).” In reminding the Father that*
1071 *eternal life comes to those who recognize “the only true God, and*
1072 *Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent (John 17:3),” Jesus is pointing to*
1073 *the casting out of the “prince of this world,” mentioned in John 12:31.*
1074 *Christ concludes by asking that the glory He enjoyed prior to coming*
1075 *to earth would be reinstated: “Glorify thou me with thine own self*
1076 *with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. (John*
1077 *17:5)”*

1078 *Far from stating that His Father was the only true God and Himself*
1079 *an inferior being, Jesus is asking for a reinstatement of the same glory*
1080 *He had from the beginning—equal to the Father.³⁰ The NKJV renders*
1081 *it, “O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I*
1082 *had with You before the world was (John 17:3).”*

1083 *Beyond that we should not comment. This falls into the “unsearchable*
1084 *and past finding out” that awaits our discovery in heaven.*

1085 *Remember: “The greatness of God cannot be measured or*
1086 *comprehended. And that doctrine that denies the absolute Godhead of*
1087 *Jesus Christ, denies also the Godhead of the Father; for no man*
1088 *knoweth the Son but the Father.” Signs of the Times, June 27, 1895,*
1089 *par. 3.*

1090 *Was Christ the Literal Son of the Father?*

30 “Here [The Scriptures] we may learn what our redemption has cost the One who was equal with the Father from the beginning” Letter 64, 1909.5.

1091 Introduction

1092 *An important question to consider is whether Christ as the “Son of*
1093 *God” was the literal flesh and blood descendent of the Father?*

1094 *Lines of evidence include (1) recognizing the limitations of human*
1095 *understanding and language; (2) Christ, as a self-existent member of*
1096 *the Godhead, with a life of everlasting to everlasting duration, had no*
1097 *beginning; (3) consider why a self-existent God is referred to as*
1098 *begotten; (4) why an eternal being is referred to as “Son”; (5) the*
1099 *common practice of using filial terms for non-biological relationships*
1100 *in the Hebrew culture; (6) reasons why “begotten” correctly describes*
1101 *Christ; (7) possible understandings of Proverbs 8; and (8) final*
1102 *thoughts on why the Father-Son relationship ideally describes Christ’s*
1103 *relationship to His Father.*

1104 1. Human understanding and language fall short.

1105 *Human language falls short when describing Christ’s relationship to*
1106 *His Father. To characterize Christ as the literal, flesh and blood,*
1107 *descendent of the Father, Son of God, would presuppose a literal*
1108 *heavenly “Mother,” as well as a literal “birth” in the far distant past.*
1109 *I have never heard anyone speak of a heavenly Mother when they*
1110 *speak of Christ as a “literal” Son of God. There is no doubt the Bible*
1111 *refers to Christ as the “Son of God,” but what does that mean exactly*
1112 *if Christ is a self-existent Member of the Godhead, and why is He*
1113 *called the Son of God. Can Christ be called the Son of God without*
1114 *being a literal, flesh and blood Son of God? We would have to agree*
1115 *that our human understanding of birth doesn’t really fit what we know*
1116 *of Christ prior to His incarnation and birth to Mary.*

1117 2. Christ is God—an eternal, self-existent Member of the Godhead.

1118 *If Christ, as one of the eternal, self-existent—life original, unborrowed*
1119 *and underived—members of the Godhead, with a life of “everlasting*
1120 *to everlasting” duration, having the non-communicable attributes of*
1121 *Deity, how can there have been a birth in the distant past when He has*
1122 *always existed? Notice a few verses and quotes affirming key aspects*
1123 *of His Divinity.*

1124 • Christ’s life was of eternal duration.

1125 Isaiah 9:6 “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the
1126 government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called
1127 Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The
1128 Prince of Peace.”

1129 *Micah 5:2 “But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little
1130 among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto
1131 me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of
1132 old, from everlasting.”

1133 *John 8:58 “Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you,
1134 Before Abraham was, I am.”

1135 *Christ was God essentially, and in the highest sense. He was with
1136 God from all eternity, God over all, blessed forevermore. *Review and*
1137 *Herald*, April 5, 1906, par. 6.

1138 Christ is declared in the Scriptures to be the Son of God. From all
1139 eternity He has sustained this relation to Jehovah. Manuscript 22,
1140 1905.4.

1141 *As noted in the earlier addendum on Christ's eternal life, Ellen White*
1142 *used many phrases to describe the everlasting to everlasting duration*
1143 *of His life: “from all eternity,” “from eternity,” “existed from*
1144 *eternity,” “from eternal ages,” “from the beginning,” “never was a*
1145 *time,” “everliving,” “Eternal Presence,” “Eternal Word,”*
1146 *“Everlasting Father,” “Eternal Son of God,” “Eternal Godhead,”*
1147 *“Eternal Wisdom,” “eternal throne,” “everlasting throne,” “from*
1148 *everlasting,” “from everlasting to everlasting,” “set up from*
1149 *everlasting,” “A life unreckoned by human computation or measured*
1150 *by figures,” “never a time when He was not in close fellowship with*
1151 *the eternal God,” “in the presence of the Father from the beginning,”*
1152 *“who from the beginning was equal with the Father,” “Never-ending*
1153 *life that existed before the worlds were made,” “familiarity and ease*
1154 *of eternal habitude,” “One of the eternal dignitaries” and “uncreated*
1155 *Lord” to establish the “everlasting to everlasting” limitless nature of*
1156 *His existence.*

1157 • Christ is self-existent.

1158 *As a self-existent Deity, Christ did not depend on any other entity to*
1159 *exist. His life was original, unborrowed and underived. It goes without*
1160 *saying, a self-existent deity requires no birth!*

1161 John 1:4 “In him was life; and the life was the light of men.”

1162 John 2:19 “Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple,
1163 and in three days I will raise it up.”

1164 *John 8:58 “Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you,
1165 Before Abraham was, I am.”

1166 "In Jesus is our life derived. In Him is life that is original,

1167 unborrowed, underived life. In us there is a streamlet from the
1168 fountain of life. In Him is the fountain of life." Lt309-1905.7.

1169 "With solemn dignity Jesus answered, "Verily, verily, I say unto you,
1170 Before Abraham was, I AM." Silence fell upon the vast assembly. The
1171 name of God, given to Moses to express the idea of the eternal
1172 presence, had been claimed as His own by this Galilean Rabbi. He had
1173 announced Himself to be the self-existent One, He who had been
1174 promised to Israel, "whose goings forth have been from of old, from
1175 the days of eternity." Micah 5:2, margin. *Desire of Ages*, 469.4,5.

1176 • Christ is also preexistent.

1177 *The same can be said for Christ's preexistence. He always existed.*
1178 *Therefore, speaking of a time when He was born makes no sense.*

1179 John 1:1-2 "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with
1180 God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with
1181 God."

1182 Revelation 19:13 "And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood:
1183 and his name is called The Word of God."

1184 Colossians 1:17 "And he is before all things...."

1185 "He is the faithful and true Witness, "the beginning of the creation of
1186 God," whose throne is of old, from everlasting. Behold Him, the
1187 mighty, uncreated Lord, the all-glorious Redeemer." Letter 185,
1188 1901.9.

1189 "When Joseph and Mary brought Jesus to the temple, he was only an
1190 infant of a few weeks. But he *was also the Ancient of days*, (emphasis
1191 added) whose goings forth have been from of old, even from
1192 everlasting. He was indeed the long-expected Messiah, of whom the
1193 Jews had read, "The Lord, whom you seek, shall suddenly come to his
1194 temple." To the Pharisees Christ afterward declared, "Before Abraham
1195 was, I am." He is the head of an unchangeable priesthood, the only
1196 true high priest over the house of God." Manuscript 104, 1900.10.

1197 "But while God's Word speaks of the humanity of Christ when upon
1198 this earth, it also speaks decidedly regarding his pre-existence. The
1199 Word existed as a divine being, even as the eternal Son of God, in
1200 union and oneness with his Father. From everlasting he was the
1201 Mediator of the covenant.... *Review and Herald*, April 5, 1906, par. 5.

1202 "The world was made by him, "and without him was not anything
1203 made that was made." If Christ made all things, he existed before all
1204 things. The words spoken in regard to this are so decisive that no one

1205 need be left in doubt. Christ was God essentially, and in the highest
1206 sense. He was with God from all eternity, God over all, blessed
1207 forevermore." *Review and Herald*, April 5, 1906, par. 6.

1208 3. If Christ is a self-existent and eternal God, why does the Bible refer
1209 to Him as begotten?

1210 *There is much mystery when we come to the essence of God, but this is*
1211 *an important question. In this regard, Jesus maintained a large*
1212 *reserve and the Bible is largely silent.*³¹ We will as well.

1213 • John 3:16 and “only begotten” [*monogenēs*].

1214 *As explained below, a word was added to John 3:16 in the Latin*
1215 *Vulgate, which eventually was added to the King James Version. A*
1216 *more correct rendering is found in other translations. Notice the*
1217 *following examples:*

1218 John 3:16 (NIV) “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and
1219 only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have
1220 eternal life.”

1221 John 3:16 (RSV) “For God so loved the world that he gave his only
1222 Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal
1223 life.”

1224 • Notice Abraham offered up an “only begotten” son, even though he
1225 had two sons.

1226 Hebrews 11:17 “By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up
1227 Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only
1228 begotten son”

1229 • John speaks of believers being born in 1John 1:13, but speaks of
1230 Jesus being a unique one of a kind son in 1John 1:15.

1231 John 1:12 and 14 “But as many as received him, to them gave he
1232 power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his
1233 name: Which were born (*gennaō*=to procreate (properly, of the father,
1234 but by extension of the mother); figuratively, *to regenerate:—bear,*
1235 *beget, be born, bring forth, conceive* (emphasis added), be delivered
1236 of, gender, make, spring.), not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh,
1237 nor of the will of man, but of God. ... 14 And the Word was made

31 “In regard to entering into the subject of the divine mystery of the essence of God, Christ ever maintained a wise reserve.” Manuscript 45, 1900.10. “In regard to the personality and prerogatives of God, where He is, and what He is, this is a subject which we are not to dare to touch. On this theme silence is eloquence.” Manuscript 132, 1903.31.

1238 flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of
1239 the only begotten (*monogenēs*=*single of its kind, only used of only*
1240 *sons or daughters* (emphasis added) (viewed in relation to their
1241 parents) used of Christ, denotes the only begotten son of God) of the
1242 Father,) full of grace and truth.”

1243 - Notice what the SDA Bible Commentary states regarding John 3:16:
1244 “The only begotten. Gr. *monogenēs*, from two words meaning “only”
1245 and “kind,” and thus properly translated “unique,” “only,” “only one
1246 of a kind.” As with the title Logos (see on v. 1), only John uses the
1247 word *monogenēs* of Christ (see John 1:18; 3:16, 18; 1 John 4:9).
1248 Absence of the definite article in the Greek either makes *monogenēs*
1249 indefinite, “an only one,” or makes it an expression of quality, in
1250 which case John would be saying, “glory as of an only one [who had
1251 come] from beside the Father.” This seems evidently the sense here.
1252 See on Luke 7:12; 8:42, where *monogenēs* is translated “only.” In
1253 Heb. 11:17 *monogenēs* is used of Isaac, who was by no means
1254 Abraham’s “only begotten,” or even his first-born. But he was the son
1255 of the promise, and as such, the one destined to succeed his father as
1256 heir to the birthright (Gen. 25:1–6; Gal. 4:22, 23). “Similarly in
1257 respect to the five texts in John’s writings of Christ, the translation
1258 should be one of the following: ‘unique,’ ‘precious,’ ‘only,’ ‘sole,’ ‘the
1259 only one of his kind,’ but not ‘only begotten’” (Problems in Bible
1260 Translation, p. 198). The translation “only begotten,” here and
1261 elsewhere, apparently originated with the early Fathers of the Catholic
1262 Church, and entered early English translations of the Bible under the
1263 influence of the Latin Vulgate, the official Bible of the Catholic
1264 Church. Accurately reflecting the Greek, various Old Latin
1265 manuscripts which antedate the Vulgate read “only” rather than “only
1266 begotten.” ... The idea that Christ was “begotten” by the Father at
1267 some time in eternity past is altogether foreign to the Scriptures....
1268 Properly understood of Christ’s unique status as the Son of God, the
1269 word *monogenēs* distinguishes between Him and all others who,
1270 through faith in Him, are given “power to become the sons of God” (v.
1271 12), and who are specifically declared to be “born ... of God” (v. 13).
1272 Christ is, and always has been, very “God” (see on v. 1), and by virtue
1273 of this fact we “become the sons of God” when we receive Christ and
1274 believe on His name.” — SDA Bible Commentary, ([https://
1275 /archive.org/stream/SdaBibleCommentary1980/
1276 SdaBc-5%20%2843%29%20John_djvu.txt](https://archive.org/stream/SdaBibleCommentary1980/SdaBc-5%20%2843%29%20John_djvu.txt), accessed May 30, 2022).

1277 - The following explanation was found on the Biblical Research

1278 Institute website:

1279 "Christ as God's *Monogenēs*: When the term is used to describe Jesus,
1280 it simply means "unique," or "one and only." It describes the
1281 uniqueness of His nature: "We have seen his glory, the glory of the
1282 One and Only, . . . full of grace and truth" (John 1:14, NIV). There is no
1283 other like Him in that He came from the Father and possesses the
1284 glory of the Father. John 1:18 is particularly difficult because the
1285 manuscripts provide at least two different textual variants. Some argue
1286 that the original text reads "only Son" and others that the original is
1287 "only God." If one accepts "only God," then *monogenēs* could refer to
1288 the uniqueness of Christ as God and as God's means of revelation (cf.
1289 verse 14). If we accept the reading "only Son," His uniqueness as a
1290 revealer of the Father would be emphasized. *Monogenēs* also
1291 identifies Jesus as the only and unique means of salvation. John wrote,
1292 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that
1293 whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John
1294 3:16, NIV). The relationship between Christ and the Father is unique:
1295 He is God's one and only Son, and He is God's only means of
1296 salvation. The same is found in 1 John 4:9, where John wrote that the
1297 Father loved us and sent "his one and only [*monogenēs*] Son into the
1298 world that we might live through him" (NIV). God gave us the most
1299 precious gift He had, His only and unique Son to redeem us. Based on
1300 the root meaning of the term and the context in which it is used, one
1301 could suggest that the most probable translation is "unique, one and
1302 only."³²

1303 • Mrs. White speaks of Christ's incarnational begetting.

1304 "Christ brought men and women power to overcome. He came to this
1305 world in human form, to live a man among men. He assumed the
1306 liabilities of human nature, to be proved and tried. In His humanity He
1307 was a partaker of the divine nature. ***In His incarnation he gained in a***
1308 ***new sense the title of the Son of God.*** Said the angel to Mary, "The
1309 power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy
1310 thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." ***While***
1311 ***the son of a human being, Christ became the Son of God in a new.***
1312 Thus He stood in our world—the Son of God, yet allying Himself by
1313 birth to the human race." Manuscript 22, 1905.5.

1314 Sonship quotes of Mrs. White

32 (<https://adventistbiblicalresearch.org/materials/john-316/>, accessed June 30, 2021).

1315 *There are no quotes that speak of the essence of His birth, apart from*
1316 *his conception through the instrumentality of the Holy Spirit with*
1317 *Mary. That said, even that information is sparse. However, she clearly*
1318 *states that He has sustained the relationship of Son to the Father from*
1319 *all eternity — the key phrase being from all eternity! Such a statement*
1320 *negates the idea of a birth in the far distant past. She additionally*
1321 *states that the title "Son of God" took on new meaning at that time of*
1322 *incarnation, since at that time He was truly the "Son" of God as a*
1323 *result of the Holy Spirit's (Deity) role of conceiving Jesus in Mary*
1324 *(Human). Mrs. White also compares that incarnational birth to the*
1325 *creation of the angels and the adoption of the sons of men. The latter*
1326 *statement is sometimes used in attempts to establish a birth in the far*
1327 *distant past, which we have already determined could not be.*

1328 • The Scriptures also speak of a begetting fulfilled at the time of the
1329 resurrection.

1330 Psalms 2:7 “I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me,
1331 Thou art my Son; *this day have I begotten thee.* (emphasis added)”

1332 Acts 13:33 “God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that
1333 he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm,
1334 *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee*” (emphasis added).

1335 Hebrews 1:5 “For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou
1336 art my Son, this day have I begotten [gennaō] thee? And again, *I will*
1337 *be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son* (emphasis added)?”

1338 *When were these Scriptures fulfilled? At the time of the resurrection.*

1339 Romans 1:4 “And declared to be the Son of God with power,
1340 according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.”

1341 Revelation 1:5 “And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness,
1342 and the first begotten of the dead,”

1343 4. Many instructive titles were used to describe Christ.

1344 *The term “Son of God” is one of many titles used by Christ to explain*
1345 *various aspects of His relationship to human beings. Additional titles*
1346 *include, Son of man (used more than 100 times in the Gospels;*
1347 *Matthew 8:19-20); I Am (Christ also used this name in the Old*
1348 *Testament; John 8:58-59; Exodus 6:3); The Bread of Life (John 6:35);*
1349 *The Resurrection and the Life (John 11:25); I am the way, the truth*
1350 *and the life (John 14:6); The Bridegroom (Matthew 9:15); The Gate*
1351 *(John 10:7,9); Good Shepherd (John 10:14-15); Light of the World*
1352 *(John 8:12); Lord/Teacher (John 13:14-15); Messiah/Christ (John*

1353 4:25-26); The Vine (John 15:5); The First and the Last (Rev. 1:17);
1354 Living One (Rev. 1:18); The Bright and Morning Star (Rev. 22:16).
1355 *The title "Son of God," one of the most meaning-filled titles of Christ,*
1356 *reflects Christ's submissive relationship to His Father. There is much*
1357 *mystery here and the Bible is silent on how this submission-in-a-*
1358 *relationship-of-equals developed, and what that submission meant on*
1359 *a practical basis. You will find a most interesting and helpful article*
1360 *on this topic in the SDA Commentary.*³³

1361 5. Semitic cultures often used filial terms to describe non-biological
1362 relationships.

1363 *Hebrew and other Semitic cultures used filial terms —Father, Son,*
1364 *daughter for example — for non-biological relationships. Examples of*
1365 *this are found in the following Scriptures:*

1366 1 Samuel 3:6 "And the LORD called yet again, Samuel. And Samuel
1367 arose and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou didst call me. And
1368 he answered, I called not, my son; lie down again."

1369 1 Samuel 24:16 "And it came to pass, when David had made an end of
1370 speaking these words unto Saul, that Saul said, Is this thy voice, my
1371 son David? And Saul lifted up his voice, and wept."

1372 2 Kings 2:12 "And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father,
1373 the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him no
1374 more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two
1375 pieces."

1376 2 Kings 13:14 "Now Elisha was fallen sick of his sickness whereof he
1377 died. And Joash the king of Israel came down unto him, and wept over
1378 his face, and said, O my father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the
1379 horsemen thereof."

1380 Matthew 9:22 "But Jesus turned him about, and when he saw her, he
1381 said, Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole.
1382 And the woman was made whole from that hour."

1383 Paul Petersen explains;

1384 "In Semitic languages the terms "Son" and "Father" are used in a
1385 wider sense than is common in most Western languages. A son can be
1386 what we call a son of flesh and blood, identified by DNA, but it can

33 "Son of God," *SDA Bible Commentary*, Gospel of Luke, (https://archive.org/stream/SdaBibleCommentary1980/SdaBc-5%20%2842%29%20Luke_djvu.txt, accessed May 31, 2022).

1387 also refer to a descendant. Son can indicate a student, as in "sons of
1388 the prophets" (2 King 2:3), or the son in Proverbs 1:8 and other
1389 wisdom literature. Furthermore, "son" can be used in reference to a
1390 successor in an office, for example, Belshazzar as the king of Babylon
1391 referred to his predecessor, Nebuchadnezzar, as his "father" (Dan
1392 5:18). Basically, a "son" is a representative, most clearly exemplified
1393 by the term "sons of God" (Job 1:6; 2:1)"³⁴

1394 Notice the following helpful thoughts from an article in the
1395 International Journal of Frontier Missiology, on translating filial terms
1396 in the Bible:

1397 "The Bible often uses social familial terms for fathers and sons that do
1398 not specify whether their relationship is biological or not. In English,
1399 the relational noun son signifies a filial relation with someone of any
1400 kind, whether it is the result of biological procreation or not. So a
1401 person can become a "son" to someone on the basis of procreation,
1402 adoption, marriage, or upbringing (a so-called "son of the family"). ...
1403 It is important to realize that to express divine familial relationships,
1404 the Bible uses Greek and Hebrew social familial terms that do not
1405 necessarily demand biological meanings. It presents God's fatherhood
1406 of us in terms of his inclusion of us in his family and in his paternal
1407 care for us as his loved ones rather than in terms of siring us as
1408 biological offspring. In regard to sonship to God, the New Testament
1409 uses four different Greek familial terms for Jesus, and two for
1410 believers, all of which are terms for social sonship, so none of them
1411 imply that sons of God must be his biological offspring. Instead the
1412 terms allow for the different kinds of generation presented in the
1413 Bible. ... Many speakers of English have little familiarity with
1414 linguistic diversity, and this leads them to mistakenly assume that their
1415 English words and phrases must have look-alike counterparts in other
1416 languages, with the same meanings and the same frequencies of usage;
1417 they then assume that if an expression looks different in another
1418 language it must have a different meaning from the English. As a
1419 result, when they see literal back-translations into English of
1420 expressions used in a language different from English, they are
1421 disturbed when these differ from the expressions in their English
1422 Bible. The fact, however, is that there are usually semantic
1423 mismatches between many of the words in any two languages,
1424 especially if they are from different language families and different

34 Paul Petersent, "God in 3 Persons—In The New Testament," Biblical Research Institute, Release 11.

1425 cultures, and translators often have to use phrases in the target
1426 language to express the intended meaning of a single- word term in the
1427 Greek or Hebrew text."³⁵

1428 6. What about a possible birth in Proverbs 8?

1429 Proverbs 8:24-25 “When there were no depths, I was brought forth;
1430 when there were no fountains abounding with water. 25 Before the
1431 mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth:”

1432 *Attempts are sometimes made to establish a birth in the far distant*
1433 *past on the basis of Proverbs 8. Textual evidence suggests otherwise.*

1434 - A painful birth.

1435 *Eugene Prewitt points out in his excellent article on the Godhead that*
1436 *the word purported to refer to a birth—*hûl*, speaks of a painful birth,*
1437 *which would apparently put such a birth, if that were the case, after*
1438 *the fall of man:*

1439 “First, the Hebrew word “khood” doesn’t mean “give birth.” Rather, it
1440 means “to twist or twirl” or to “writhe.” It is the latter meaning that
1441 lends itself to the pain involved in child bearing. The word also has a
1442 figurative meaning, “to wait.” And that is how it is used first in
1443 scripture. Khood is rendered “stayed” in [Gen. 8:10]. A little more
1444 study convinced me that writhing in pain could not describe any birth
1445 prior to the curse, for that is when pain became part of birth.”³⁶

1446 - Installation into a new mediatorial role.

1447 *Dr. Richard Davidson suggests that Proverbs 8, which speaks of, the*
1448 *wisdom of YHWH, co-creatorship of the earth, and the joy found in*
1449 *working with that creation, actually speaks of the installation of Christ*
1450 *into the new role.*

1451 “According to Prov 8, at the beginning of creation, we find a situation
1452 of equal members of the Godhead. Presumably by mutual consent, one
1453 Person of the Godhead is “installed”... in a work of Mediator. While
1454 the Person we call the Father continued to represent the transcendent
1455 nature of the Godhead, the Person we know as the Son condescended
1456 to represent the immanent aspect of divinity, coming close to His
1457 creation, mediating between infinity and finitude, even before sin.

35 Rick Brown, Leith Gray, Andrea Gray, “A New Look at Translating Familial Biblical Terms,” *International Journal of Frontier Missiology*, July-September, 2011, vol. 28:3, (Pasadena, CA: International Student Leaders Coalition for Frontier Missions), 105-120.

36 Eugene Prewitt, *Godhead* (<https://bibledoc.org/contramenandmovements/thegodhead-for-john/>, accessed May 31, 2022).

1458 This is not a subordination of the Son to the Father, but a voluntary
1459 condescension to be installed into a mediatorial work, representing the
1460 divine love in an immanent way to his inhabited universe.”³⁷

1461 - Ellen White on Proverbs 8:2

1462 *Ellen White, when quoting Proverbs 8, references the sections dealing*
1463 *with the everlasting duration of Christ's life, in the next quotation from*
1464 *1900.*

1465 “Before Abraham was, I am.” *Christ is the pre-existent, self-existent*
1466 *Son of God (emphasis added).* The message He gave to Moses to give
1467 to the children of Israel was, “Thus shalt thou say unto the children of
1468 Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.” The prophet Micah writes of
1469 Him, “But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, tho thou be little among the
1470 thousands of Judah, yet out of Thee shall He come forth unto Me that
1471 is to be ruler in Israel; *whose goings forth have been from of old, from*
1472 *everlasting (emphasis added).*” White, *Signs of the Times*, August 29,
1473 1900, par. 13. ... *In speaking of His pre-existence, Christ carries the*
1474 *mind back through dateless ages. He assures us that there never was a*
1475 *time when He was not in close fellowship with the eternal God*
1476 *(emphasis added).* He to whose voice the Jews were then listening had
1477 been with God as one brought up with Him.” *Signs of the Times*,
1478 August 29, 1900, par. 13, 15

1479 7. Why was the title “Son of God” used by the Father to affirm Christ
1480 who was a member of the eternal Godhead?

1481 *How an eternal, self-existent person comes to be called “Son” is a*
1482 *mystery. The bible is silent on the topic. However, the role of a godly*
1483 *father in relationship with a child gives one of the best illustrations of*
1484 *the kind of relationship that God wants to have with His human*
1485 *children. Sonship provides an illustration of the Father’s ongoing*
1486 *guidance, providing and keeping; to be reciprocated with surrender,*
1487 *ongoing trust and following—a relationship especially demonstrated*
1488 *in the lives of Christ and Enoch.*

1489 Concluding Christ’s Sonship

1490 *In conclusion, because Christ is one of the self-existent members of the*

37 Richard Davidson, “Proverbs 8 and the Place of Christ,” *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society*, 17/1 (Spring 2006): 1-3. (Collegedale, TN: Adventist Theological Society, 2006), 33-54). Also Richard Davidson, “The Nature and Work of the Holy Spirit in the Pentateuch” (2016) <https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/pubs/862>. Faculty Publications. 862.

1491 *Godhead, with a life of everlasting to everlasting duration, there could*
1492 *have been no birth in the far distant past. A begetting experience*
1493 *occurred, however, at the time of the incarnation when Christ became*
1494 *the “Son of God” and the “Son of Man” in a new sense, as well as at*
1495 *the time of the resurrection. Aside from the Hebrew culture’s proclivity*
1496 *to use filial terms for non-biological relationships, we can only*
1497 *speculate as to why and when an eternal member of the Godhead*
1498 *came to be called a Son. Like other matters regarding the Godhead, it*
1499 *is a mystery on which the the Bible is silent..*

1500 *Accordingly we affirm Christ’s “absolute” Godhead,³⁸ acknowledge*
1501 *His self-existence and everlasting to everlasting life, rejoice in the love*
1502 *of His Father and our Heavenly Father, learn about how to be godly*
1503 *sons of God in looking at His Sonship, he all while still recognizing*
1504 *His place as one of three Members of the Godhead.*

1505 *Reviewing & Final Thoughts*

1506 *Reviewing*

1507 *The First Study: The Father*

1508 *In the first study of this series of Bible Studies on the Godhead, We*
1509 *considered the Godhead of the Father, noting particularly the su-*
1510 *pernatural experience that is constantly going on around us, of which*
1511 *we understand little. But when it comes to knowing the one who con-*
1512 *ceived, designed and then created planet earth, we know even less.*
1513 *That said, there is overwhelming evidence to believe in a supernatural*
1514 *designer and creator. We also noted that all communication from*
1515 *heaven with humankind was taken over by Christ after the fall, result-*
1516 *ing in His presence in many narratives of the Old Testament.*

1517 *The Second Study: Christ*

1518 *In the second study on the Godhead of Christ, we looked at a variety*
1519 *of lines of evidence that overwhelmingly confirmed that Christ was the*
1520 *eternal, self-existent, co-equal, divine Person, Savior and God. Among*
1521 *the lines of evidence were his being known and referred to as God, the*

38 “Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.” This is the absolute Godhead. The mightiest created intellect cannot comprehend Him; words from the most eloquent tongue fail to describe Him. Silence is eloquence. Manuscript 128, 1897.13.

1522 *prophecies pointing to His incarnation and ministry, the supernatural*
1523 *nature of His birth and other events connected with it, the many mira-*
1524 *cles performed, the power given to others to do miracles, His numer-*
1525 *ous claims of His Godhead—coming from heaven, knowing the Father,*
1526 *coming in His own glory, etc—and assurances that only a God could*
1527 *give, to say nothing of His allowing many people to worship Him and*
1528 *His being greeted as God at the time of the second coming.*

1529 Second Study Addendum: Eternal Duration of Christ's Life

1530 In this addendum to the study on Christ, we looked at the Scriptures
1531 and Ellen White quotations having to do with the eternal, everlasting
1532 to everlasting duration of Christ's life.

1533 The Third Study: The Holy Spirit

1534 *In the third part of the study, we considered evidence for the Holy*
1535 *Spirit being Christ's Representative, Successor, a distinct Person, and*
1536 *member of the Godhead. We looked at the the incommunicable attrib-*
1537 *utes—self-existence, omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence—of*
1538 *the Holy Spirit, the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit in the Old*
1539 *Testament, the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit in the life of*
1540 *Christ, the teachings and promises of Christ regarding the Holy Spirit*
1541 *as a distinct and independent Person that would bring power and*
1542 *boldness to the early believers, the Holy Spirit's role as Representa-*
1543 *tive, Successor and Comforter after Christ ascended to Heaven, the*
1544 *fulfilment of those promises on the Day of Pentecost, the ongoing*
1545 *leadership and activity of the Holy Spirit in the Early Church, the*
1546 *recognition of the Holy Spirit as a Person and God by the early believ-*
1547 *ers, multitudinous manifestations attesting to the Personhood of the*
1548 *Holy Spirit, similar multitudinous manifestations attesting to His Dei-*
1549 *ty, the many marvelous "Three" quotations that place the Holy Spirit*
1550 *on equal footing with the other Persons of the Godhead—abundant*
1551 *clear statements that are unequivocal on the Holy Spirit being one of*
1552 *the Three, and some thoughts on the mistaken assertions that the Holy*
1553 *Spirit is only a spiritual manifestation and third personification of*
1554 *power in spite of overwhelming evidence otherwise.*

1555 The Fourth Study: Three Persons - One God

1556 *In this fourth "Three Person - One God" part of the Bible study, fur-*
1557 *ther confirmation was given of three distinct Divine Persons, through*
1558 *verses compiled where the Three are listed together in the Old Testa-*
1559 *ment, the New Testament, and a longer topical list of "Three" state-*
1560 *ments in the writings of Ellen White. Consideration was also given to*

1561 *Deuteronomy 6:4 and the “LORD our God, the LORD is one.” We*
1562 *discovered that the “Three” and the “One” are fully compatible, the*
1563 *Scriptures teaching the mysterious, but blessed “one God” “Three*
1564 *Persons” paradox. Important information was provided establishing*
1565 *that ’echâd was a unitary one rather than a mathematical one such as*
1566 *yâchîyd. Accordingly, though the Scriptures correctly speak of one*
1567 *God in various places, the designation does not negate the three dis-*
1568 *tinct Persons that have been studied in earlier portions of this series of*
1569 *studies. Attention was directed to the essential nature of the Godhead,*
1570 *including loving relationships within the Godhead, perfect and com-*
1571 *plete unity between the Persons of the Godhead, diversity—individual-*
1572 *ity and personality—within that unity, humility, and submission in re-*
1573 *lationships of equals—instructing on the proper representation of God*
1574 *through loving relationships, unity, diversity, humility and appropriate*
1575 *submission. Time was also given to the question of the “True God,”*
1576 *articulated in the course of Christ’s prayer to His Father in John 17.*
1577 *Having clearly established Christ’s Godhead, rather than being a*
1578 *statement of a lessor position, Christ was seeking to be fully reinstated*
1579 *to the position He had shared with His Father from the beginning.*

1580 **Final Study: Is Christ the Literal Flesh and Blood Son of the Father?**
1581 *Before concluding we also considered the question of the Sonship of*
1582 *Christ, determining that humans are unable to understand how a self-*
1583 *existent member of the Godhead, with a life of everlasting to everlast-*
1584 *ing duration and fully God, came to be called a Son. However our in-*
1585 *ability to understand does not preclude our loving, and relating to,*
1586 *Christ as the Son of God, loving His Father as our Heavenly Father,*
1587 *reveling in what we learn about the relationship our Heavenly Father*
1588 *wants to have with us as we learn about Christ’s relationship of trust*
1589 *and submission to His Father, all the while continuing to recognize*
1590 *Christ’s place as one of three self-existent Persons of the Godhead*
1591 *who never had a birth in the far distant past.*

1592 **Final thoughts**

1593 **Be careful who you listen to.**

1594 **1 John 2:22 “Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ?
1595 He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son.”**

1596 **Honor the Son.**

1597 **John 5:23 “That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour
1598 the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father**

1599 which hath sent him.”

1600 “The greatness of God cannot be measured or comprehended. And that
 1601 doctrine that denies the absolute Godhead of Jesus Christ, denies also
 1602 the Godhead of the Father; for no man knoweth the Son but the Fa-
 1603 ther.” *Signs of the Times*, June 27, 1895, par. 3

1604 Do not blaspheme against the Holy Spirit.

1605 Mark 3:28-29 (NKJV) “Assuredly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiv-
 1606 en the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they may utter; 29 but
 1607 he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but
 1608 is subject to eternal condemnation”

1609 Avoid controversy.

1610 Titus 3:9 “But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and con-
 1611 tentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and
 1612 vain.”

1613 Look forward to a glorious future that will include worshipping the
 1614 three Persons of the Godhead.

1615 “As the saints in the kingdom of God are accepted in the beloved, they
 1616 hear: “Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared
 1617 for you from the foundation of the world.” [Matthew 25:34.] And then
 1618 the golden harps are touched, and the music flows all through the
 1619 heavenly host, and they fall down and worship the Father and the Son
 1620 and the Holy Spirit.” Manuscript 139, 1906.32.

Bibliography

- Bediako, Daniel, “God In 3 Persons—In the Old Testament,” Biblical Research Institute, Release 10, 8.
- Davidson, Richard, “Proverbs 8 and the Place of Christ,” *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society*, 17/1 (Spring 2006): 1-3. (Collegedale, TN: Adventist Theological Society, 2006), 33-54).
- Donker, Kwabena, “God In 3 Persons—In Theology,” Biblical Research Institute, Release 09, (<https://www.adventistbiblicalresearch.org/materials/god-in-3-persons-in-theology/>, accessed June 2, 2022).
- Gulley, Norman. “Trinity in the Old Testament,” *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society*, 17, nos. 1,2 (2016): 84,85.
- Petersen, Paul, “God in 3 Persons—In The New Testament,” Biblical

Research Institute, Release 11, (https://www.adventistbiblicalresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/Release_11_Petersen-6-16-15.pdf, accessed June 2, 2022).

Pfandl, Gerhard. "The Trinity in Scripture," *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society*, 14, no. 2 (2003).

Prewitt, Eugene, Godhead (<https://bible.doc.org/contramenandmovements/the-godhead-for-john/>, accessed May 31, 2022).

Seventh-day Adventists Believe . . . : A Biblical Exposition of 27 Fundamental Doctrines. [Principal author, P. Gerhard Damsteegt.]. Silver Spring, MD.: Ministerial Department of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1988.

Whidden, Woodrow, Moon Jerry, Reeve, John W. "Why the Trinity Is Important," *The Trinity: Understanding God's Love, His Plan of Salvation and Christian Relationships*, Hagerstown: Review and Herald, 2002. 243-244.

White, Ellen. *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association.

_____. *Experiences in Australia*, 1891.

_____. *Patriarchs and Prophets*, Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1890.

_____. *The Present Truth and Review and Herald Articles*. (facsimile reproduction). (facsimile reproduction). Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1962. 4 vols.

_____. *The Signs of the Times Articles*. (facsimile reproduction). Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1974, 4 vols.

_____. *The Youth's Instructor Articles*. (facsimile reproduction). Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1986.

This study was compiled by Dan Augsburg. These studies may be downloaded at no cost from discipleheart.com. ©; use for personal, small group, and church study purposes only; commercial use is prohibited. Were you blessed? Dan can be contacted via discipleheart@protonmail.com Call: 269 471 5415. Write: Path2Prayer Ministries, PO Box 244, Berrien Springs, MI 49103. Find more resources clicking on QR Code.

Three Persons Bible Study GACU 2023 c

