

More on the Trinity: Some Key Passages from the New Testament Where We See the Full Deity and Preexistence of God the Son with God the Father and Some Key Bible Passages Used to Teach a Oneness View of God

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I’ll always quote from the New American Standard Bible, 1995 edition, in this article unless otherwise noted. Sometimes I’ll make comments in the middle of quotations using brackets [] or [] to make them more obvious.

I’ll list the passages we will discuss in the first section of this paper and then those that are discussed in the second section of this paper: John 1:1-18 (6 pages); John 8:58 (with 8:57, 59); John 17:1-5; Phil. 2:5-11; Col. 1:15-17; and Heb. 1:1-3; and in the second section that deals with “Some Key Bible Passages Used to Teach a Oneness View of God”: Deut. 6:4; Isaiah 9:6; John 10:30; 12:44, 45; and 14:7, 9-11 (8 pages for these three passages from the Gospel of John); Acts 2:38 (with Acts 2:36-42); 8:16; 10:48; 19:5; 1 Cor. 1:13 and Matt. 28:19; 1 Cor. 8:4 (with 8:5, 6); and Col. 2:8-10.

Some Key Passages from the New Testament Where We See to the Full Deity and Preexistence of God the Son as a Person Distinct from God the Father

John 1:1-18. (For a fuller discussion of these super-important verses, which are a prologue for the Gospel of John, see my paper that includes a verse-by-verse discussion of these verses.) **“In the beginning** [Compare Gen. 1:1. John means back before any creating had taken place. The time system of our world didn’t exist yet, and God isn’t limited to the time system of our created world.] **was the Word** [The Word (Greek Logos) is a title for the God the Son, who always existed as a Person with God the Father (and the Holy Spirit). Also see John 1:14; 1 John 1:1; Rev. 19:13.], **and the Word was with God** [God the Son was with God the Father. I’ll quote John 17:5, “Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.” They always had a glorious Person to Person relationship.], **and the Word was God.** [The Word isn’t being confused with the Person of God the Father here. For one thing, the second use of the Greek word for God (*theos*) in this verse does not have the definite article, whereas the first use of the word does have the definite article. The word for God with the definite article perfectly fits God the Father, the One who is typically called God throughout the New Testament. The second use of the Greek word, without the definite article, communicates the fact that the Word is fully deity, without confusing Him with the Person of God the Father. As we continue with these verses, we learn that

every person, being, or thing, including matter that was ever created was created *through* the Person of God the Son (see John 1:3, 10, 11, for example). And as we continue with the Gospel of John it is confirmed again and again that the Word was a Person, a Person who was eventually sent into the world by the Father.

I'll read 1 John 1:1-3, which is an important cross-reference, "What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of life—(2) and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us—(3) what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ." **(2) He was in the beginning with God.** [As the margin of the NASB shows, "He" would more literally be translated "This One." Whether we translate "He" or "This One," this word, which is masculine in the Greek, clearly refers to a Person, not to a word, thought, idea, or plan in the mind of God the Father. The fact that the Word is a Person is confirmed in most of the verses that follow, down to, and including, verse 18. This is important information when we consider the oneness interpretation of John 1:1, because that interpretation doesn't have any room for the Word to be Person with God the Father before Jesus (the God-man) existed. If the Word is a Person, which He clearly is in these verses, then the oneness view of God is wrong. I don't make a comment like that to show disrespect for anyone; not at all; but we desperately need the balanced truth of what the Bible teaches.] **(3) All things came into being through Him** [through the Person of God the Son. I'll quote the relevant words from John 1:10, "and the world was made through Him." I'll quote 1 Cor. 8:6, "yet for us there is *but* one God, the Father [the preeminent role of God the Father is strongly emphasized in this verse and in quite a few other verses in the New Testament], from whom are all things and we *exist* for Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom [The Greek has the same preposition used in John 1:3, 10, and in the next two verses that I'll quote as we continue, the preposition *dia* used with the genitive case. I would translate "through whom" here in 1 Cor. 8:6] are all things [in that God the Father created all things through Him], and we *exist* through Him." I'll also read the words at the end of Col. 1:16, "all things have been created through Him and for Him." And Heb. 1:2 says, "in these last days [God the Father] has spoken to us in His Son, who He appointed heir of all things, through whom [God the Son] also He [God the Father] made the world." These verses all make it clear that God the Father created everything through His Son, a Person, not through a word, thought, plan, thing, etc. Also see Heb. 1:10-12.], **and apart from Him** [God the Son] **nothing came into being that has come into being. (4) In Him** [God the Son] **was life** [In that God the Son was deity, He had life in Himself.], **and the life was the Light of men.** [The Gospel of John frequently speaks of Jesus being the Light of men. One of the roles of God the Son was to make light, spiritual light (which includes the truth about God) available to men. (God, the triune God is the only source for life, light, and everything else that is good.) As the next verse and verse 9 show, the Son made that light available, as He shined with the light of God, in the days before He became the God-man. And the Gospel of John shows that He made that light available (and in a more personal, more powerful way) after He became the God-man.] **(5) The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.** [The light from God the Son was shining in the darkness, but mankind, speaking of mankind in

general (there were exceptions like Enoch, Noah, Abraham, etc.), was not receptive to the light—mankind rejected the light. Mankind was in spiritual darkness and spiritual death after the rebellion and fall of Adam and Eve (see Rom. 5:12-21, for example). As we will see in John 1:9-11, even after God the Son came into the world as the God-man, mankind, speaking of mankind in general, still rejected God the Father, God the Son, and the light of God (see John 3:19-21, for example). The sin problem runs very deep in the heart of man. Verse 13 adds (thank God!) that some people did receive God the Father, the Lord Jesus and the light of God and became born-again Christians.] **(6) There was a man sent from God, whose name was John** [John the Baptist]. **(7) He came as a witness, to testify about the Light** [see John 1:29-40, for example], **so that all might believe through him** [through John the Baptist]. **(8) He was not the Light, but he came to testify about the Light.** **(9) There was the true Light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man.** [I can't live with the translation of the NASB here. I'll give a literal translation of the Greek that yields, I believe, the intended meaning: (My translation is very similar to the NIV, which I'll quote, "The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world.") **"The true Light** [God the Son], **which shines on every man, was coming into the world.**" [I believe it is better to translate "shines on" (which is a reasonable way to translate the Greek verb used here) than "gives light to" because the translation "gives light to" tends to communicate the idea that the people receive the light (and are enlightened by the light) that is made available to them, but verse 5 has already informed us that the people in the darkness (speaking for the large majority) did not receive the light. Verses 9, 10 confirm that the people (speaking for the large majority) had not received the light, and did not even receive the light when God the Son (through whom they had been created) came into the world through the virgin birth. The words, "coming into the world" speak of God the Son's coming into the world to become the God-man. Notice that verse 10 starts with the words, "He was in the world." The words at the end of verse 9 speak of His coming into the world. Verse 14 adds, "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us."

I'll list some of the verses from the Gospel of John that speak of God the Son's, a Person, coming into the world from heaven, having been sent by God the Father. For one thing, these verses, by themselves, should suffice to show that God the Son is a Person distinct from God the Father, and that He existed with God the Father before He became a man. Quite a few verses in the New Testament (including John 1:1-3 and other key verses that we discuss in this paper) show that He existed with the Father before any creating took place, before the time system of our created world existed. John 3:13 ("He who descended from heaven"); John 3:17 (God the Father sent His Son into the world); John 3:31 (He comes from above and "He who comes down from heaven"); John 6:38 ("For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me."); John 6:46 ("Not that anyone has seen the Father except the One who is from God; He [God the Son, a Person] has seen the Father."); John 6:62 ("...the Son ascending to where He was before") ; John 7:33 ("then I go to Him who sent Me"); John 8:14, 16, 18 ("I know where I came from and where I am going"; "But I and the Father who sent Me"; "and the Father who sent Me testifies about Me"); John 13:3 ("*Jesus*, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come forth from God [God the Father] and was going back to God."); John 16:27, 28 ("For the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me and have believed that I came forth from the

Father. I came forth from the Father and have come into the world. I am leaving the world again and going to the Father.”)] **(10) He was in the world** [He, this Person, the Lord Jesus, the Word, God the Son, who had taken on flesh to become the God-man], **and the world was made through Him** [John has already informed us in verse 3 that God the Father created the world through Him, through God the Son in His preincarnate state.], **and the world did not know Him.** [John has already informed us in verse 5 that mankind (speaking for the great majority), which was in the darkness, did not receive the light that shined on them. They did not know Him when He came into the world, which showed how serious the spiritual death, bondage to sin and to the kingdom of darkness problem was, and as the next verse shows they “did not receive Him.”] **(11) He came to His own** [The Greek more literally reads, “Unto His own things (or, possessions) He came.” “His own things/possessions is a translation of the Greek *ta idia*, where *ta* is a *neuter* plural definite article and *idia* is a *neuter* plural adjective. Apparently John used the *neuter* here (even though the masculine form of the adjective was readily available, as we will see as we continue with this verse) to make the important point that the people to whom the Word, God the Son, came were part of that which God the Father had created through Him. Having been created by God (the triune God), they owed Him their allegiance, and all the more so after the Word condescended to become a man (the God-man) and then to die for them, bearing their sins with the guilt and the penalties. The NIV translates, “He came to that which was His own, but His own did not receive him.”], **and those who were His own did not receive Him.** [“His own” here is a translation of *hoi idioi*, where *hoi* is a *masculine* plural definite article and *idioi* is a masculine plural form of the same adjective that was used earlier in this verse. After making the point that the Word came to “His own things/possessions” with the first words of this verse (by using the *neuter* plural form of this adjective), he switched to a *masculine* plural form of this same adjective. The masculine was the typical gender used for people, unless the people happened to be female.

Many believe “His own” and “those who were His own” is limited to the people of Israel. It is true, of course, that God had a special relationship with the people of Israel and that they had a special obligation to submit to the Messiah promised in the Old Testament. I believe, however, that John was speaking of mankind worldwide here in verse 11, as he was in verses 4, 5, 9, 10, 12, and 13.] **(12) But as many as received Him** [received Him by submitting to Him in faith, and to the One who sent Him, and to the gospel], **to them He** [God the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ] **gave the right** [or, the authority] **to become children of God** [As verse 13, and many other verses show, we become born-again children of God the Father.], **even to those who believe in His name** [the Word’s, God the Son’s, the Lord Jesus Christ’s name. To believe in His name includes believing all that the Bible teaches about Him, very much including all that the Bible teaches about Him here in John 1:1-18. And we must understand that *believing* in His name includes a commitment from the heart to live in accordance with the terms of the new covenant, on a continuous basis, by the saving, enabling grace of God in Christ. And there is no way we can submit (in faith) to God the Son and not submit to God the Father, the One who sent Him into the world. Jesus always made it very clear that He had been sent by the Father and that He was totally committed to the Father and His will. For one super-important thing, He came to solve the sin, spiritual death problem and bring us to the Father.], **(13) who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the**

will of man, but of God. [This glorious, all-important birth comes from God (see, for example, John 3:3-8; James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:23; and 1 John 2:29; 3:9). It does not, and cannot, come from anything of the created world, including man, or the will of man.] **(14) And the Word** [God the Son, who had always existed with God the Father] **became flesh, and dwelt among us** [See Matt. 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-38; 2:1-38; Rom. 1:3; Gal. 4:4; Phil. 2:7, 8; Heb. 2:14; 1 John 1:1-3; 4:2; and 2 John 1:7. God hasn't revealed all the details, but is it clear that the Word, God the Son, became a man, but not just a man—He became the God-man. From the time of His incarnation, He was one Person with two natures, He was deity (God the Son) and He was human. He temporarily set aside His glory (to a significant extent) when He became a man (see John 17:1-5, Phil. 2:7, 8, for example), but He never ceased being deity, and He will be worshipped forever with God the Father (see, for example, Phil. 2:9-11; Rev. 5:11-14; 21:22, 23; 22:1-21). Jesus Christ was not spiritually dead, as all men have been since the fall, and He never sinned.], **and we saw His glory** [Throughout His life on earth, His glory was manifested to some extent, and especially after He was anointed by the Spirit to become the Anointed One/the Messiah/the Christ (see John 2:11, “This beginning of His signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory....”) through who He was and by the things He said and did. The apostles Peter, James, and John were privileged to see His glory in a special sense at the Mount of Transfiguration (Matt. 17:1-8; Mark 9:2-8; Luke 9:28-36; and 2 Pet. 1:16-18). Many disciples, especially the apostles, saw something of His glory after He was resurrected.], **glory as of the only begotten from the Father** [I would translate, “**the unique Son of the Father**” or “**the unique One of the Father**”], **full of grace and truth** [see John 1:17]. [In the margin the NASB has a note, “or unique, only one of His kind,” instead of “only begotten.” There is widespread agreement in our day that the Greek adjective *monogenes* does not mean “only begotten”; it should be translated “unique” or the equivalent.¹ It is important to understand that when orthodox Christians have spoken of the only-begotten Son, they were not saying that there was a time when the Son did not exist. They thought in terms of His being *eternally* generated/begotten by the Father.² This same adjective is also used of the Son of God in John 1:18; 3:16, 18 and 1 John 4:9. In John 3:16, 18 and 1 John 4:9 (and probably also in John 1:18), the word “Son” is included in the Greek. I would translate “the unique Son” in John 3:16, 18; and 1 John 4:9; we’ll discuss John 1:18 as we continue. Here in John 1:14 it is necessary to supply another word with the adjective; we could translate “the unique Son” or “the unique One.” The angels are sometimes called “sons of God” in the Bible, and so are born-again Christians, but the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ, is the Son of God in a *unique*, very special, sense. He is deity, through whom the angels and men (and everything else) were created, for one super-important difference.] **(15) John** [John the Baptist] **testified about Him and cried out, saying, ‘This was He of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me** [see John 1:30].’” [Jesus came after John the Baptist in that He was born some six months after him (see Luke 1:36) and in that John’s ministry started earlier and prepared the way for Jesus and His ministry. But John realized that he and his ministry were very much subordinate to Jesus and His ministry (compare, for example, Matt. 3:11-15; Luke 3:16, 17; John 1:27). John knew quite a bit about Jesus and His ministry (see John 1:26-43;

¹ See my paper on John 1:1-18 for the details.

² See my paper on John 1:1-18 for more details.

Luke 1:5-80, for example). It is significant that John knew about Jesus' preexistence: He said, "for He existed before me," even though it was understood that John was born before Jesus was. John the Baptist was speaking of Jesus' preexistence as a Person, not of His preexisting as a word, or thought, etc. in the mind of God the Father. John the Baptist also knew, for example, that Jesus was the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29, 36) and that He would baptize in the Holy Spirit (John 1:33), in the Holy Spirit and fire (Matt. 3:11, 12). He also saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and lighting on Jesus and heard a voice out of heaven saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (see Matt. 3:16, 17; Mark 1:10, 11; John 1:33).] **(16) For of His fullness we have all received** [compare Eph. 1:23; 3:19; 4:13; Col. 1:19; and 2:9], **and grace upon grace.** [Every aspect of new-covenant salvation that we receive in/through the Lord Jesus (which includes everything we could ever need now and forever, including truth, knowledge, wisdom, redemption, forgiveness, righteousness, holiness, provision for our daily needs in this world, glorification, having a place in God's eternal kingdom, and reigning with Him and the Lord Jesus Christ forever) comes to us by the all-sufficient, super-abundant grace upon grace of God in Christ Jesus. We did not, and could not, earn/merit these things.] **(17) For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ.** [The Law, which was the foundation for the old covenant, was given through Moses. The Mosaic Law was from God, it was good, it was *true*, and some *grace* accompanied that covenant, but God didn't give the old covenant to solve the sin, spiritual death, darkness, Satan problem. God's plan, from before the creation of the world (see, for example, 1 Pet. 1:20; Eph. 1:4; Rev. 13:8; 17:8), was to send His Son to die for our sins and to fully solve the sin, spiritual death, Satan, darkness problem. The all-sufficient grace of God in Christ—the "grace upon grace" spoken of here in verse 17—avails to fully save us and to totally remove sin, spiritual death, darkness, Satan and all who continue to follow him in his rebellion against God from His kingdom forever. The Mosaic Law was *true*, but the full, complete *truth* was not manifested until Jesus Christ, who is *the truth*, was manifested. As verse 14 says, He was "full of grace and truth." Compare John 8:32; 14:6; and 18:37.] **(18) No one has seen God at any time** [Compare Ex. 33:20; 1 Tim. 6:16; and 1 John 4:12. No man has seen God the Father at any time, not in any full, direct sense. After we are glorified we will see Him as He is (compare 1 John 3:2) and face to face (compare 1 Cor. 13:12; Rev. 22:4).]; **the only begotten God**³ [or, probably better "**unique Son**," not "only begotten God." The Greek behind "only begotten" is *monogenes*, the adjective that we discussed in some detail under verse 14. Here, as in verse 14, I believe a translation like "**unique**" was intended. The interpretation of this verse is complicated by the fact that many ancient Greek manuscripts have the word for "Son" (*huios*) following *monogenes* instead of the word for "God" (*theos*). Quite a few translations follow the Greek text that has the word for "Son," including the KJV ("the only begotten Son"); the NKJV ("the only begotten Son"); the RSV ("the only Son"); the NEB ("God's only Son"); the *New Living Translation* ("his only Son"); and the *Jerusalem Bible* ("the only Son"). If the original reading was *monogenes* followed by *huios* (and I rather strongly favor this reading), I would translate "**the unique Son**," or the equivalent. Remember that John 3:16, 18, and 1 John 4:9 have the adjective *monogenes* followed by the word for Son.

³ See my paper on John 1:1-18 for more details on this verse.

It is possible that “God” (instead of “Son”) was the original reading. If so I would understand this verse in the sense given by D. A. Carson and others.⁴ “...the unique and beloved one (the term is *monogenes*...), [himself] God, has made him [God the Father] known. That is probably the correct text [with the reading *God* instead of the *Son*].... What it means is that the beloved Son, the incarnate Word (1:14), himself God [“God” in the sense of deity, as in verse 1] while being *at the Father’s side* – just as in v. 1 the Word was simultaneously God [God the Son] and with God [with God the Father]....” **who is in the bosom** [“ ‘In the bosom of’ ” is a Hebrew idiom expressing the intimate relationship of child and parent, and of friend and friend (cf. [John] 13:23.”⁵)] **of the Father, He has explained Him.** [“has made him known” NIV; “has revealed him” *New American Bible*. The Lord Jesus Christ was the perfect Person to reveal/make known God the Father (and the triune God). He was/is deity with the Father; He became a man (the God-man), which permitted Him to dwell with men and communicate with us in our dimension; He was anointed by the Father with the Holy Spirit; He had the same nature, character, attitudes, motives, and priorities as the Father, and He spoke the words that the Father wanted Him to speak and did the works the Father wanted Him to do (compare, for example, John 5:19; 10:37, 38; 12:49; and 14:8-10).]

John 8:58 (with 8:57, 59). **“So the Jews said to Him, ‘You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?’ (58) Jesus said to them, ‘Truly [Amen], truly [Amen], I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am.’ (59) Therefore they picked up stones to throw at Him, but Jesus hid Himself** [“was hidden” note in margin of NASB; if this is the idea God hid Him, one way, or another; it is clear that this wasn’t the right time for Jesus to die, and He was not to die by stoning] **and went out of the temple.”**

Jesus clearly spoke of His preexistence (His preexistence as a Person) in verse 58, having existed before Abraham (who lived some two thousand years before Jesus was born of the virgin), but He did more than that: There is very widespread agreement that He was declaring His deity with the words “I am.” The words “I am” here (also compare John 8:24, 28; 13:19) undoubtedly build on the super-important words “I AM” and “I AM WHO I AM” (or, probably better, “I AM FOR I AM”) of Ex. 3:14, where God gave these words as His name. The name “I AM” is very closely related to the name “Yahweh,” which was used in Ex. 3:15 and more than 6,800 times in the Hebrew Old Testament. See the discussion on the super-important meaning of these names at the beginning of my paper titled, “The Name Yahweh and God the Father and God the Son.”

Those Jews would have undoubtedly stoned Jesus for just saying that He existed before Abraham, but they would have been even more angered by His claim to be deity with the words “I AM.” It was totally legitimate for Jesus to take that name for Himself because that name, which referred first and foremost to God the Father in the Old Testament, was applicable for Him too in that He was deity, and it was used for Him several times in the Old Testament. In fact, there is widespread agreement that it was God the Son who

⁴ *Gospel According to John* (Eerdmans, 1991), page 134. See my paper on John 1:1-18 for more details on this verse.

⁵ R. V. G. Tasker, *Gospel According to St. John* (Eerdmans, 1969), page 49.

appeared to Moses in Exodus chapter 3, as the Angel of Yahweh. (See Ex. 3:2 and the paper I mentioned in the preceding paragraph.)

John 17:1-5. (Jesus' words here, especially verses 3-5, clearly show that He, in His preincarnate state, the Word, God the Son, had been existing in a glory with God the Father before the world was created, as in John 1:1-3. And they show that the Father sent Him, this Person through whom all creating took place, into the world to become the God-man. As this paper shows, many verses in the Gospel of John confirm that the preexistent Son was sent into the world to become the God-man. John 17:24 mentions that God the Father loved the Son before the creation of the world.) **“Jesus spoke these things; and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, ‘Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You, (2) even as You gave Him authority over all flesh** [compare, for example, Matt. 28:18; John 3:35], **that to all whom You have given Him** [compare, for example, John 17:6, 9, 20-24], **He may give eternal life.** [On Jesus' being glorified see John 17:5. The Father *glorifies* the Son by raising Him from the dead (He was the first man, though He was much more than just a man, to be raised with a glorified body), by exalting Him to His right hand, by “giving Him authority over all flesh” (over all mankind), etc. Christ's authority over all flesh includes His “[giving] eternal life” to those chosen by God (the elect⁶) and His judging and removing all who persist in rebellion, without repentance (compare John 5:21-29). We enter “eternal life” through the new birth by the Spirit (see, for example John 3:3-8, 15, 16, 36; 5:24).] **(3) This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God** [The full deity of the Lord Jesus Christ (and the Holy Spirit) are clearly taught in the New Testament (including here in John 17:1-5), but there are quite a few verses like this in the New Testament that emphasize the preeminent role of God the Father (see Rom. 16:26, 27; 1 Cor. 8:4-6; 15:27, 28; Eph. 4:4-6; 1 Tim. 1:17; 2:5; 6:13-16; and Jude 1:24, 25). Here He is called “the only true God.” I'm totally sure that the Lord Jesus (and the Holy Spirit) love the fact that God the Father has the preeminent role in the Trinity.], **and Jesus Christ whom You have sent** [God the Father sent His Son, who always existed with Him, into the world to become the God-man and our salvation (compare, for example, John 3:17; 17:8, 21, 23, 25)]. [God (the triune God) is the only source of life, very much including spiritual/eternal life, and of everything else that is good. We must be right with God the Father and *know* Him and Jesus Christ through new-covenant salvation (which includes being united with the Son and the Father by the indwelling Spirit) to partake of spiritual/eternal life. To *know* the Father (and the Son) includes *knowing* about Him (who He is, what He has done and what He will do, especially His plan of salvation and His judgment of all who persist in rebellion) and having an experiential *knowledge* of Him (person to Person) by the indwelling Spirit. Christians partake of spiritual/eternal life in a preliminary sense from the time they are born again by the Spirit of God, but most of the glory of eternal life is reserved for the end of this age, when we will be born into the fullness of eternal life (compare, for example, Rom.

⁶ Taken in the fullest sense, God's elect includes all the people who will have a place in the new heaven and new earth with its new Jerusalem, very much including all the believers who lived in the days before the new covenant was ratified through the atoning death of the Lamb of God. The names of the elect are written in the Lamb's book of life (see, for example, Rev. 13:8; 17:8; 20:15; and 21:27).

8:29; 1 Cor. 15:42-57; Col. 1:27; Titus 3:7; and Rev. 12:5).] **(4) I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do.** [Compare John 4:34; 6:38. The Lord Jesus always perfectly obeyed the Father and perfectly accomplished the work assigned to Him. His greatest work involved His voluntary atoning death, which hadn't been accomplished when He spoke these words, but there is widespread agreement that Jesus spoke here from the point of view that it had been accomplished in that the time had now arrived for His crucifixion and He was fully committed to carry out that one last great work on the earth (compare, for example., John 1:29, 36; 3:14-18; 10:11-18; 12:20-33; 13:21-33; 18:11; and 19:28-30)—it *was* accomplished!] **(5) Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I [God the Son, a Person] had with You before the world was** [Compare John 1:1-3, 14; 17:24; Phil. 2:6-11; Col. 1:15-17; and Heb. 1:1-3].” It is very important to see that a whole lot more is taking place here than God the Son's being restored to the glory that He had with the Father before He condescended to become a man, the God-man (cf. Phil. 2:7, 8; John 1:14). Now the Lord Jesus Christ (the God-man), having overcome sin and God's enemies through His sinless life and atoning death, was to be glorified by the Father. Now He (the God-man) would have the authority to save (with a very full salvation) all believers and to judge and remove all unrepentant rebels. Genesis 3:15 had prophesied that Satan and his followers would be defeated by man. The God-*man* makes this work, but we [His people] have the privilege to participate in that warfare and judgment (see, for example, Rom. 16:20; 1 Cor. 6:2, 3; Rev. 2:26, 27; 5:10; 12:5; 17:14; and 19:19). All the verses I just listed refer to the time after we are glorified. Pretty soon comes eternal glory!

Those who are united with the Lord Jesus Christ by faith will ultimately be glorified with Him and reign with Him (see, for example Rom. 8:17, 18, 29; Rev. 3:21; 20:6; 22:5 [Rev. 22:5 shows that this will be a never-ending reign]). If He had not become a man (the God-man), we could not have been saved through His atoning death, and have become united with Him, and be glorified in union with Him. Christ Jesus exalts His people far above what Adam had before the fall (compare 1 Cor. 15:45-52). We will be glorified with Him and reign with Him forever—what a salvation plan! We will not, of course, become deity/God with Christ. We will be worshipping God (the triune God), serving Him, and enjoying Him and everything else in His kingdom forever.

Philippians 2:5-11. **“Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus** [The apostle Paul was speaking of the attitude of humility as the preceding and following verses show. If God the Son could humble Himself to become a man (the God-man) certainly we Christians can, and we must, humble ourselves before God and before one another. Humility is the opposite of pride, which is at the root of sin. In these first few verses we are seeing God the Son, a Person who existed with God the Father (and God the Holy Spirit) before He humbled Himself to become the God-man.], **(6) who although He existed in the form of God** [The Greek noun translated “form” could also be translated “nature.” The NIV, for example, translates, “Who being in very nature God.” He was deity, God the Son. He existed in the form of God, being God the Son, who was there with God the Father before anything was ever created, and through whom all things were created (see John 1:1-3, Col. 1:16, 17; and Heb. 1:1-3, 8-13), for example.], **did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped** [Even though God the Son always was

fully deity with God the Father, He always recognized (and loved) the fact that He had a subordinate role to God the Father in the Trinity. God the Father created through Him; God the Father sent Him into the world, He was the Son of the Father; and many verses throughout the Bible show that God the Father has the preeminent role.⁷ Rather than grasp for more, He (as the next verses show) humbled Himself to leave the glory behind and become a man (the God-man), which was a gigantic condescension, and then to die a shameful death on the cross, all in submission to the Father's will.], **(7) but emptied Himself** [I'll quote part of what the BAGD Greek Lexicon gives for the meaning here: "he emptied himself, divested himself of his prestige or privileges."], **taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.** [He didn't cease being deity, God the Son, but He temporarily exchanged an infinitely high place for a place of little reputation that involved great suffering.] **(8) Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.** [Having become the God-man, He humbled Himself much further by voluntarily submitting to the crucifixion and all that it involved. The physical suffering was a small part of what He submitted to. The Scriptures make it quite clear that it was a very difficult assignment: "And being in agony He was praying very fervently; and His sweat became like drops of blood, falling down upon the ground" (Luke 22:44), "Then He said to them, 'My soul is deeply grieved to the point of death; remain here and keep watch with Me.' And He went a little beyond them, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, 'My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not My will, but as You will' " (Matt. 26:38, 39). He was totally committed to always do the Father's will, and He knew that He was earning the right to save us and to judge and remove the devil and all those who follow him.] **(9) For this purpose also,** [or, "Therefore" with the NIV.] **God** [God the Father] **highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name** [Before God the Son humbled Himself (as pictured in verses 7, 8), He had a name above every name, excluding the name of God the Father, but now it was very different. Now He had earned the right to save us with a very full salvation; we are even united with Him (with God the Son, and through Him with God the Father) through His incarnation, atoning death and resurrection, and we are destined to be glorified with Him and to reign with Him forever. And now He has totally defeated the devil (see, for example, John 12:31; 16:11; and Heb. 2:14 [see Heb. 2:15-18 on His saving us]). This defeat will be fully manifested at the end of this age (see Rev. 12:7-9; 20:1-3, 10).], **(10) so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, (11) and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."** God's people bow willingly; His enemies (including Satan and his followers) will be subdued and forced to bow and acknowledge that God has defeated them through His beloved Son and that Jesus Christ is Lord, all to the glory of God the Father, who always had, and always will have, the preeminent role in the Trinity. God the Father did not give His Son a name above His name, nor could He have.

⁷ See my papers titled, "Who Do We Pray To?" and "The Name Yahweh and God the Father and God the Son" for many examples, and quite a few examples are included in this paper.

Colossians 1:15-17. **“He is the image of the invisible God** [Compare John 14:9; 2 Cor. 4:4, 6; Heb. 1:3. Jesus is the image of the invisible God (God the Father) in the sense that He came, for one super-important thing, to reveal the Father to us (see John 1:18). Since He became a man (the God-man) He could effectively communicate with us in our dimension; the apostles (and many others) were able to see Him, to hear Him, to see the things that He did in the physical, human dimension. And as we have discussed in this paper, when we see His character, we are seeing the character of God the Father, and when we hear Him and see the things that He does, we are hearing and seeing things the Father gave Him to say and to do.

It must be understood, of course, that He is the image of God in a far higher sense than man, who was created in the image of God (Gen. 1:27). However, through the glory of new-covenant salvation, in union with God the Son, “we will be conformed to the image of [God’s] Son” (Rom. 8:29; compare 1 Cor. 15:49; 2 Cor. 3:18; Col. 3:10) when we are glorified at the end of this age. But even then, there will be a very substantial difference between the Lord Jesus Christ and us. He will be deity with God the Father (and the Holy Spirit); we won’t be, and we will worship Him with God the Father (and the Holy Spirit). We won’t become deity, but a glorious destiny awaits us, even reigning with the Lord Jesus forever.], **the firstborn of all creation.** [I would translate **“the firstborn over all creation,”** with the NIV, and it is to be understood that He is the firstborn *Son of God the Father* over all creation. Sometimes in the Bible, including here, the word “firstborn” has nothing to do with the idea of someone literally being born first.⁸ God the Son always existed with the Father. Psalm 89:27, which is all the more important as a cross-reference because it prophesies of David’s greater son, the Messiah, helps show what the word “firstborn” means here: God the Father says, “I also shall make him *My* firstborn, The Highest of the Kings of the earth.” As Psalm 89:27 shows, for God to make the Messiah His firstborn Son means that He gives Him authority over all authority everywhere. Paul’s point here in Col. 1:15 is that God the Father has given the Lord Jesus authority over all creation, which includes His having authority over every being or thing ever created. Or, we could say that He has given Him a name above every name (Phil. 2:9-11).

This is important, so I’ll give three other cross-references that will help us understand what the apostle Paul meant by the word “firstborn” here. In Ex. 4:22 God said to Moses, “Then you shall say to Pharaoh, ‘Thus says the LORD [Yahweh], ‘Israel is My son, My firstborn.’” ’ ’ It is clear that Israel wasn’t God’s *firstborn* son in any literal sense. And I’ll read what God said in the last part of Jer. 31:9, “For I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim in My firstborn.” I’ll quote one last example, an example that is quite relevant to the glorious status that we have as born-again children of God. I’ll quote the relevant words from Heb. 12:23, “church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven...” The word “firstborn” is plural in the Greek. It refers to all true Christians “who are enrolled in heaven.” We aren’t dwelling in heaven yet (but we have access there through the Lord Jesus and by the Holy Spirit), and we have a place reserved for us to dwell there forever. The word “firstborn” here in Heb. 12:23 has nothing to do with our being born first in any literal sense, but it refers to our privileged status as born-again children of God.] **(16) For by Him all things were created** [These words give one reason (we’ll speak of the other reason as we continue) why Jesus is “the firstborn over all creation”: “For by Him

⁸ Some have wrongly understood these words to teach that there was a time when the Son did not exist and that He was the first person/being ever created.

all things were created.” That fact certainly qualifies Him to have authority over everything that was created by Him. Typically the New Testament speaks of God the Father creating all things *through* Him, which it also does at the end of this verse.], **both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities** [This includes the thrones, dominions, rulers, and authorities both in the heavenly dimension and on the earth that are loyal to God and those who are in rebellion against Him. It is important to know that God did not create any of them evil; they followed the devil in his rebellion against God. If the Lord Jesus did not have authority over these evil beings, starting with the devil, they could thwart God’s salvation plans and wreck havoc in the lives of Christians. For one thing, God limits what the evil one and his hosts are able to do against us, and at the right time they will be judged and totally removed from God’s universe.

It is also necessary for Christians to know that everything they could ever need is available in Christ.⁹ We never have to go looking for help anywhere else, and we are certain to get into trouble if we start looking for help from angels or any other spiritual beings rather than to God and His beloved Son. Of course God can use His angels to bless us in various ways, but we must look to Him through Christ. Note that there was a problem at Colossae with an improper “worship of the angels” (Col. 2:18)]—**all things have been created through Him** [all things have been created by God the Father through Him (see John 1:3, 10; 1 Cor. 8:6; and Heb. 1:2).] **and for Him.** [For one thing, the fact that all things have been created for Him shows that all beings owe their allegiance to God the Father and Him. God the Father’s plan to bring salvation and peace to His fallen world centered in His Son, who was to become the God-man, and who (after His all-important atoning death, resurrection, glorification, and ascension) would save all of the elect and remove by judgment all who continue to follow the devil through His authority as Lord over all.

This authority came not just because He was God the Son and all things had been created through Him. This authority came in part because He became the God-man, lived a sinless life, and died His all-important atoning death, through which He earned the right to save us and to overthrow Satan and all who follow him in his rebellion (see, for example, John 12:31; 1 Cor. 15:20-28; Eph. 1:20-22; Phil. 2:5-11; Col. 1:13; 2:8-15; and Heb. 2:14-16). The “peace” that Paul mentioned in Col. 1:20, for example, includes the peace that results when all persons have submitted to Jesus as Lord or have been removed by judgment.] **(17) He is before all things** [He existed before they were created, and He has authority over them.], **and in Him all things hold together.”** Compare Heb. 1:3. After all things were created through Him, God the Son has a role in holding all things together. The more we learn about the physics of our universe, the more we can appreciate the fact that He holds all things together, but not independently of God the Father or the Holy Spirit.

Hebrews 1:1-3. “**God** [God the Father], **after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, (2) in these last days has spoken to us in His Son** [In the sense these words are used here, God the Father began to speak to us through His Son after He became the God-man and began His ministry on the earth.],

⁹ See the discussion of Col. 2:8-10 later in this paper.

whom He appointed heir of all things [The Lord Jesus has authority now over all beings and things everywhere (see, for example Matt. 28:18; Eph. 1:20-23; Phil. 2:9; Col. 2:10, 15), but He is waiting for the Father's time for Him to return to fully save His people and to subdue all who continue in rebellion (see, for example, Heb. 10:12, 13; 1 Cor. 15:23-28; Rev. 12:7-9; 19:19-21; 20:1-3, 7-10, 11-15; and there are a very large number of verses throughout the Bible that speak of the things the Lord Jesus will do at His second coming). When He returns He will establish His kingdom on the earth (the millennial kingdom) but that temporary kingdom will be replaced by the full glory of God's kingdom in His new heaven and new earth, as pictured in the last two chapters of the book of Revelation. Romans 8:17 is exciting for Christians, "and if children [born-again children of God], heirs also, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him." Being faithful to God involves some suffering for this age.], **through whom also He made the world.** [These words (along with John 1:1-3; 1 Cor. 8:6; Col. 1:16, 17) show that God the Son was with God the Father before any creating took place and that all things were created through the Son.] **(3) And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature** [Compare 2 Cor. 4:4; Col. 1:15], **and upholds all things by the word of His power** [Compare Col. 1:17.]. **When He had made purification of sins** [He purified us from sin through His all-important atoning death. Compare Heb. 10:10, "...we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.'], **He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high** [referring to God the Father. See Psalm 110:1; Heb. 1:13; 8:1; 10:12, 13; 12:2. We see the two Persons of God the Father and God the Son in these verses, as we do so often throughout the Bible.].

Some Key Bible Passages Used to Teach a Oneness View of God:

Deuteronomy 6:4. **"Hear, O Israel! The LORD [Yahweh] is our God, the LORD [Yahweh] is one."** I'll quote a sentence from what J. A. Thompson says here¹⁰ "This small section (Deut. 6:4-9) has been known to the Jews for many centuries as the *Shema* (Hebrew, *Hear* ["Shema" is the Hebrew word translated "Hear" at the beginning of Deut. 6:4.]) and has been recited along with 11:13-21 and Numbers 15:37-41 as a daily prayer."

Based on what I have heard and read, Deut. 6:4 is the number one verse used (sincerely used) by Christians who deny the Trinity to argue for a oneness view of God. I am quite sure, however, that this verse was written for the sole purpose of declaring that the God of Israel (the God of creation, the God of the Bible, the God of Abraham) is the only true God. Some of the gods of the nations existed all right, but they were evil beings under Satan, and they were far from being in the class of the only true God, the One who had created every being and every thing that exists. (God didn't create Satan or any of the angels evil, but Satan rebelled against God through pride, and a third of the angels followed him in his rebellion.)

¹⁰ *Deuteronomy* (Inter-Varsity Press, 1974), page 121,

For one thing, it was totally necessary for the people of Israel to understand what a serious sin it was for them to worship the gods which all of the peoples apart from Israel were worshipping in the ancient world, and had been worshipping for a long time. All too often many of the people of Israel succumbed to the temptation to worship the gods of the nations. That sin went directly against the first commandment of the Ten Commandments. See Ex. 20:1-5; Deut. 5:6-10; and 6:5.

Deuteronomy 6:4 was not written to deny the Trinity that God progressively revealed, starting in the Old Testament, including in the five books of Moses. As my paper titled “The Name Yahweh and God the Father and God the Son: The Name Yahweh and a Listing of Some of the Large Number of Passages in the Hebrew Old Testament Where We Can See God the Son Along with God the Father“ demonstrates, there are a large number of passages in the Old Testament where we can see the Person of God the Son. It is true, however, that we needed the light of the New Testament to adequately understand that glorious Person and the Trinity.

Verses like Deut. 4:35, 39 communicate the same message as Deut. 6:4 with the words, “To you it was shown that you might know that the LORD [Yahweh], He is God; there is no other besides Him” and “Know therefore today, and take it to your heart, that the LORD [Yahweh], He is God in heaven above and on the earth below; there is no other.” There is only one God!

I’ll quote a few sentences from what Earl S. Calland says here¹¹ to show that the Hebrew word (*echad*) that is translated “one” in Deut. 6:4 was sometimes used of a oneness that consisted of more than one part, “To the Jews verse 4 is not only an assertion of monotheism, it is also an assertion of the numerical oneness of God contradictory to the Christian view of the Trinity of the Godhead. This kind of oneness, however, runs contrary to the use of *echad* in the sense of a unity made up of several parts. In Exod. 25:6, 11, the fifty gold clasps are used to hold the curtains together so that the tent would be a unit (*echad*).”

I’ll quote several sentences from page 2 of the 14 page article titled, “The Historic Case for the Trinity” by K. Dayton Hartman (www.answering-islam.org). He is discussing Deut. 6:4 and making the point that the Jews left a lot of room to see some plurality in their one God before the arrival of Christianity. “The possibility of plurality existing in a monotheistic Godhead was an active topic in pre-Christian Jewish theology.¹² A text that inspired much of this debate is found within Daniel’s book of prophecy. In Daniel 7:9, a plurality of thrones exists in heaven, all of which, the text proposes, belong to Yahweh. The text reads, ‘I kept looking until the thrones were set up, and the Ancient of Days took His seat....’ In the passage there are multiple seats of power (thrones), yet a single being of power (the king). [For the record, Dan. 7:18, 22, and 27 show that the saints will be reigning too; the thrones are for the saints (also see Rev. 20:4-6).] N. T. Wright, commenting on pre-Christian Judaism, points out that, ‘Within the most fiercely monotheistic of Jewish circles...there is no suggestion that “monotheism” or praying the *Shema*, had anything to do with the numerical analysis of the inner being of Israel’s God Himself.’¹³ ... After reviewing the evidence N. T. Wright concludes that: ‘The oneness of

¹¹ *Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, Vol. 3 (Zondervan, 1992), page 65.

¹² See especially, Larry Hurtado, *One God, One Lord: Early Christian Devotion and Ancient Jewish Monotheism* (Fortress Press, 1988).

¹³ *The New Testament and the People of God* (Fortress Press, 1996), page 259.

Israel's God, the creator, was never an analysis of God's inner existence, but always a polemical doctrine over against paganism and dualism. It was only with the rise of Christianity...that Jews in the second and third centuries reinterpreted "monotheism" and the numerical oneness of the divine being.¹⁴

A Better Way to Interpret Deuteronomy 6:4. After further study and prayerfully considering this verse, I have come to the opinion that the proper way to understand this verse (the way intended by the ultimate Author of the Bible) is to see that the name Yahweh refers to God the Father here, as it typically does throughout the Old Testament, not to the Trinity. This applies to Deut. 4:35, 39 (verses quoted above), and to many similar verses in the Old Testament (including Isa. 43:10, 11; 44:6, 8; 45:6, 21, 22; and 46:9). In most of the verses dealt with in my paper titled, "The Name Yahweh and God the Father and God the Son: The Name Yahweh and a Listing of Some of the Large Number of Passages from the Hebrew Old Testament Where We Can See God the Son Along with God the Father," for example, the name Yahweh typically refers the God the Father. The Old Testament was written in the years before God wanted to fully reveal the Person of His Son and the Trinity.

When Jesus first came to Israel, having been born of the virgin, none of the people of Israel understood that the Messiah would be deity. (We will never understand the Trinity until we see that God the Son was to become the God-man and the promised Messiah, and that the Messiah would, therefore, be deity. The deity of the Messiah took the promised new-covenant salvation to a whole new level. To be united with the Messiah is to be united with God the Son, the One who brings us to the Father.) The apostles didn't understand His deity until after His resurrection. They didn't even believe in His resurrection until after He was resurrected, even though He had told them that He would be resurrected on the third day.

God's revelation, which includes His opening the eyes of His people to understand the Scriptures, is progressive (see, for example, Luke 24:25-27, 44-49). The name Yahweh typically refers to God the Father in the Old Testament, even as the word God typically refers to God the Father in the New Testament. And the New Testament has quite a few passages like John 17:3 ("This is eternal life, that they may know You, THE ONLY TRUE GOD [my emphasis], and Jesus Christ whom You have sent."); Rom. 16:26, 27 (I'll read verse 27, "to THE ONLY WISE GOD [God the Father], through Jesus Christ, be the glory forever. Amen!"); 1 Cor. 8:4-6 ("Therefore concerning the eating of things sacrificed to idols, we know that there is no such thing as an idol in the world, and that THERE IS NO GOD BUT ONE [referring to God the Father]. (5) For even if there are so-called gods whether in heaven or on earth, as indeed there are many gods and many lords, (6) yet FOR US THERE IS BUT ONE GOD, THE FATHER, from whom are all things and we *exist* for Him, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things [These words would be better translated "through whom are all things." God the Father created all things through God the Son.], and we *exist* through Him."); 1 Cor. 15:27, 28 (I won't quote these verses here, but these verses strongly emphasize the preeminent role of God the Father.); Eph. 4:4-6 ("There is one body and one Spirit [the Holy Spirit], just as you were called in one hope of your calling; (5) one Lord [the Lord Jesus], one faith, one baptism, (6) ONE GOD AND FATHER OF ALL WHO IS OVER ALL AND

¹⁴ Same as the preceding footnote.

THROUGH ALL AND IN ALL.”); 1 Tim. 1:17 (“Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, THE ONLY GOD [referring to God the Father], be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.”); 1 Tim. 2:5 (“For THERE IS ONE GOD, *and* one mediator also between God and men, *the* man Christ Jesus....”); 1 Tim. 6:13-16 (“I charge you in the presence of God [God the Father], who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who testified the good confession before Pontius Pilate, (14) that you keep the commandment without stain or reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, (15) which He [God the Father] will bring about at the proper time—HE WHO IS THE BLESSED AND ONLY SOVEREIGN, the King of kings and Lord of lords, (16) who alone possesses immortality and dwells in inapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see. To Him be honor and eternal dominion! Amen.”); and Jude 1:24, 25 (“Now to Him [God the Father] who is able to keep you from stumbling and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy, (25) TO THE ONLY GOD OUR SAVIOR [referring to God the Father], through Jesus Christ our Lord, *be* glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.”)

Verses like the ones I just quoted from the New Testament that greatly exalt God the Father and His preeminent role (calling Him “the only God” and such expressions) do not diminish the fact that the Bible (and especially the New Testament) clearly teaches the full deity of God the Son (and the Holy Spirit). For one thing (as I have pointed out in the three companion articles to this article), the name Yahweh is used on occasion for God the Son in the Old Testament and the word God is used for Him several times in the New Testament, which strongly teaches His full deity. We desperately need the balanced truth of what the Bible teaches. I am convinced, by the way, that God the Son (and God the Holy Spirit) loves the verses that greatly exalt God the Father.

After we receive the full revelation regarding the Lord Jesus Christ (and the Holy Spirit) through the New Testament, we can clearly see the full deity of the Lord Jesus in the Old Testament, but I don’t believe we have to try to see Him typically included when the name Yahweh is used in the Old Testament. I’m quite sure that wasn’t God’s intention, and it confuses the issue. For one thing, if we overstate the oneness of God based (to some significant extent) on a misinterpretation of Deut. 6:4, we certainly confuse the issue. It’s proper to speak of one God, three Persons, but we don’t want to overstate that oneness. We desperately need the balanced truth of what the Bible teaches. We also confuse the issue if we don’t take seriously what the Bible, very much including the New Testament, says about the subordinate role of God the Son (and the Holy Spirit). Full deity, Yes! Subordinate to God the Father in His role, Yes!

Isaiah 9:6. **“For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us** [It is important to see that this “child/son,” referring to the Messiah, was “given” to us. He was given by God the Father. We see the two Persons of God the Father and God the Son here, as we so often do throughout the Bible, even though the Person of God the Son wasn’t clearly and fully revealed until the days of the New Testament.]; **and the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God** [The words “Mighty God” were quite shocking in that old covenant setting, but we Christians can understand and appreciate these words as one more passage that shows the full deity of the Son of God. As I mentioned, this super-important fact wasn’t even

understood by the apostles until after His resurrection. They didn't really believe that He would be raised from the dead on the third day (even though He told them that He would on several occasions) until after He had been resurrected and proved it to them.], **Eternal Father** [These words were equally shocking as were the words, "Mighty God." I'll comment on these words after I finish quoting this verse.], **Prince of Peace.**"

I have an eight page discussion of Isa. 9:1-7 in my paper titled "Verse-by-Verse Studies of Selected Eschatological Prophecies from the Book of Isaiah," published in August, 2000. (Google to Karl Kemp Teaching.) I recommend that you read that entire discussion, but I'll quote part of what I said regarding the meaning of the words, "Eternal Father" here (I am taking the liberty to modify what I said in that paper to some extent for this paper.): This name also strongly indicates the deity of the Messiah. He is Father of His people in the eternal dimension. Taken in the fullest sense, this includes His work at creation (John 1:1-3, for example) and the fatherly care of His people (saving, guiding, protecting, and providing everything that is needed).

I'll quote part of what J. Alec Motyer said here.¹⁵ "used of the Lord, 'father' speaks of his concern (Ps. 65:5), care and discipline (Ps. 103:13; Pr. 3:12; Is. 63:16; 64:8); cf. Ps. 72:4, 12-14; Is. 11:4."

And I'll quote part of what F. Delitzsch said here.¹⁶ This name, *Eternal Father*, springs out of the last name, *Mighty God* "for what is divine must be eternal. The title Eternal Father designates Him, however, not only as the possessor of eternity...but as the tender, faithful, and wise trainer, guardian, and provider for His people even in eternity (Isa. 22:21). He is eternal Father, as the eternal, loving King, according to the description in Ps. 72."

Further Discussion Regarding God as Father

In the Old Testament the word *father/Father* was used more than five hundred times. Reading through the Old Testament verses listed under father/Father in my concordance (NASB), I found eleven verses (not counting Isa. 9:6) where God was pictured as Father to His people (Deut. 32:6; Psalm 68:5; 103:13; Prov. 3:12; Isa. 63:16; 64:8; Jer. 3:4, 19; 31:9; and Mal. 1:6; 2:10; also compare 2 Sam. 7:14; 1 Chron. 17:13; 22:10; and Psalm 89:26). In the New Testament we find the word *Father* used of God much more often than in the Old Testament, 264 times. It is used exclusively of God the Father in the New Testament; it is never used of God the Son, the Messiah.

We were not prepared to understand the New Testament name/title of "God the Father" (or "the Father") before the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, which (for one thing) made a gigantic difference in the relationship believers have with God. The New Testament clearly reveals the Person of God the Son, the Son of God the Father (the old-covenant believers did not comprehend the Person of God the Son), and it reveals the glorious fact that new-covenant believers actually become born-again children of God *the Father* through new-covenant salvation in union with God the Son. God the Father actually becomes "the Father" of His born-again children in a very real, very special, very personal sense.

¹⁵ *Isaiah* (Inter-Varsity Press, 1999), pages 89, 90.

¹⁶ *Commentary on the Old Testament*, Vol. 7, page 253.

It causes substantial confusion if Christians use the term “Father” for Jesus Christ (the Son of God) now that we have been given the much fuller, New Testament revelation regarding the triune God. It was reasonable in Old Testament days for Messiah to be called *Eternal Father* in this very important prophetic passage. For one thing, it was an effective way to shockingly declare the deity of the Messiah, along with the words “Mighty God.” (It must be understood that God didn’t choose to clearly reveal God the Son in the Old Testament, or the fact that He would become the God-man and the Messiah. These facts that are so clear to us now were concealed for the most part until it was God’s time to clearly reveal them.) In the same way that it was reasonable to call the Angel of the LORD *Yahweh* or *God* on occasion, it was reasonable to call the Messiah “Eternal Father,” and especially in the middle of a glorious prophecy in the Old Testament that dealt with His saving work and where He was just called “Mighty God.”

Christians who deny the Trinity typically use Isa. 9:6 as one of their primary proof texts, but quite improperly. There are multiplied hundreds of verses in the Bible, especially in the New Testament, which demonstrate that God the Father and God the Son are distinct Persons in the Trinity. Very often the Father and the Son are mentioned together in the same passage as separate Persons: God the Father created through the Son; they talk to one another; they talk about one another; the Father sends the Son; the Son goes back to the Father; the Son is at the right hand of the Father; and the Son reigns with the Father and is worshipped with the Father, etc. The oneness doctrine is widespread in our day, and I believe that many of those holding that doctrine are true Christians. I must also say, however, that I consider this teaching to be a substantial error. It is one of the most divisive issues in the body of Christ.

The oneness doctrine may seem to make God easier for the human mind to understand, and it sounds reasonable if we are willing to limit ourselves to a few proof texts that seem to teach oneness, but it cannot stand when we take into account all that the Scriptures teach on the topic. (Based on what I have heard and read from them, most of the people who have ascribed to the oneness viewpoint did so on the basis of the oneness interpretation of just a very few verses that seemed so clear to them. I have included at least most of those verses in this section of this paper. And then, as it so often happens with Christians [but not just Christians], once we have determined what we are sure is the correct, biblical viewpoint, we tend to close our minds. That issue is settled! Every other verse in the Bible must fit that viewpoint, one way, or another.) By the way, it’s not surprising that we cannot fully understand God. We are required to believe *all* that the Scriptures teach about Him, whether we can fully understand or not. There certainly is no basis to say that the triune view of God presented in the Bible is unreasonable. We will understand God a whole lot better after we are glorified, but even then I’m quite sure that we won’t fully understand Him.

The verse we are studying (Isa. 9:6) even guards against the oneness doctrine in that this “son [Son] will be given to us.” The Bible makes it clear who does the giving: God the Father, who sends His Son to save us. I mentioned that the Angel of the LORD [Yahweh] of the Old Testament helps us understand the Son of God and His deity. It is equally true that the Old Testament clearly distinguishes between this Angel [or Messenger] of Yahweh and Yahweh [God the Father].

John 10:30; 12:44, 45; and 14:7, 9-11. Before we discuss these verses, I'll include two studies dealing with the Gospel of John that will help us interpret these verses from the Gospel of John, and they will help prevent our misinterpreting these verses. Oneness Christians use these verses to argue for a oneness view of God.

First I'll list some verses from this Gospel that show that God the Father and God the Son are distinct Persons: Many of the verses I'll list demonstrate that God the Son existed with God the Father before the Father sent His Son into the world.¹⁷ John 1:1, 2¹⁸ (The Son [the Word] was with God the Father before any creating took place, and we are told that the Son was deity too. We see two Persons.); John 1:3 (Everything that was ever created was created by God the Father through the Son. We see two Persons.); John 1:4 (In Him, in the Son, was life and He was the Light of men, which demonstrates that this Person was deity; He was a Person distinct from God the Father from the beginning; these words would be totally inappropriate if the "Word" was nothing more than a word, or thought, or idea in the mind of God the Father before the incarnation. And I'll list quite a few verses from the Gospel of John as we continue which confirm that the Son was a Person with the Father before the virgin birth.); John 1:9-13 (I'll quote 1:9 from the NIV, "The true light [the "Light of men" of John 1:4] that gives light to [that shines on] every man was coming into the world." He came into the world through the virgin birth. Having come into the world, which had been created through Him [and "for Him" Col. 1:16], most people did not receive Him. The spiritual death and bondage to sin problem is deep-seated in the heart of mankind. Those who do receive Him are born again of God and become children of God.); John 1:14 (The Son became the God-man.); John 1:18 (No one has seen God the Father, but the unique Son has revealed Him, made Him known. See the discussion of John 1:1-18 above in this paper.); John 1:30 (John the Baptist testified that Jesus existed before him, even though John the Baptist was born before Jesus was born of the virgin.); John 3:13 (Jesus, who always existed with God the Father, descended from heaven.); John 3:17 (God the Father sent His Son into the world.); John 3:19 (The Light, God the Son, has come into the world, but men, but not all men, "loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil," and they didn't repent.); John 3:31 (John the Baptist said Jesus came from above/heaven.); John 6:38 ("For I [Jesus] have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me."); John 6:46 ("Not that anyone has seen the Father, except the One who is from God; He has seen the Father."); John 6:62 ("What then if you see the Son of Man ascending to where He was before?" referring to the time when the Son of God was with the Father before he became the God-man.); John 7:33 ("Therefore Jesus said, 'For a little while longer I am with you, then I go to Him who sent Me.' "); John 8:12-19 ("Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, 'I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life' [see John 1:4, for example]. (13) So the Pharisees [opponents of Jesus] said to Him, 'You are testifying about Yourself;

¹⁷ This is very important because oneness believers, not surprisingly, deny that the Son of God existed before the God-man existed.

¹⁸ See the discussion of John 1:1-18 in this paper, and see my paper that covers John 1:1-18 verse-by-verse for more details.

Your testimony is not true.’ (14) Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Even if I testify about Myself, My testimony is true, for I know where I came from [God the Son came down from heaven, having been sent by the Father.] and where I am going [He was going back to heaven, to God the Father, who had sent Him.]; (15) You judge according to the flesh; I am not judging anyone. (16) But even if I do judge, My judgment is true, for I am not alone *in it*, but I and the Father who sent Me [We see two Persons here, both before He came into the world and after He came into the world.]. (17) Even in your law it has been written that the testimony of two men is true. (18) I am He who testifies about Myself, and the Father who sent Me testifies about Me.’ [We certainly see two Persons here. The Father testified about Jesus in many ways, including the prophecies about Him in the Old Testament, His speaking audibly about Him from heaven on several occasions, His giving Him the Holy Spirit without measure, His drawing the elect to Him, etc.] (19) So they were saying to Him, ‘Where is Your Father?’ [Jesus had been telling them, but their hearts were on a different wavelength. They thought of themselves as being prime examples of the people of God, but their rejection of His Son proved that they didn’t really know God the Father. And Jesus said on occasion, including in this verse, that they didn’t know God the Father.] Jesus answered, ‘You know neither Me nor My Father; if you knew Me, you would have known My Father also.’ ” There was no way they could reject the Son (who spoke the words the Father gave Him, did the works that the Father gave Him to do, and who was like the Father in every way) and know or love God the Father who sent Him. So too there was no way they could really come to know the Father without coming through the Son (John 14:6, for example). I should mention that some oneness Christians use this verse, John 8:19, to demonstrate oneness, but quite improperly I think.); John 10:15, 17, 18 (“even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father, and I lay down My life for the sheep. ... (17) For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it again. (18) No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father.” We can clearly see two Persons here.); John 12:27, 28 (Jesus said these words shortly before His crucifixion. “Now My soul has become troubled; and what shall I say, ‘Father, save Me from this hour’? But for this purpose I came to this hour. (28) ‘Father, glorify Your name.’ Then a voice came out of heaven, ‘I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.’ ” We see two Persons here, as we so often do throughout the Bible.) John 13:3 (“*Jesus*, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come forth from God [God the Father] and was going back to God.” We again see that the Son was with God the Father before He was sent into the world, and now He was going back to the Father. We see two Persons.); John 13:31, 32 (“Therefore when he [Judas] had gone out, Jesus said, ‘Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in Him, (32) if God is glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself, and will glorify Him immediately.’ ” Jesus spoke these words on the evening before His crucifixion. He would defeat sin, Satan, and spiritual death in His atoning death, then He would be resurrected on the third day and glorified. After forty days He would be taken up in glory to the right hand of God the Father. I’ll read Acts 2:33, “Therefore, having been exalted to the right hand of God [God the Father], and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear.” The new-covenant church was born through the blood of the Lamb and the

outpouring of the Spirit of God, the third Person of the Trinity. We definitely see God the Father and God the Son here in John 13:31, 32.); John 14:16 (We see the Trinity here.); John 14:23 (“Jesus answered and said to him, ‘If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and my Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him.’ ” We see two Persons here.); John 14:26 (“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.” We see the Trinity here.) John 14:28 (“You heard that I said to you, ‘I go away, and I will come to you.’ If you loved Me, you would have rejoiced because I go to the Father, for the Father is greater than I.”); John 15:1, 2, 8-10, 16, 21, 23, 24, 26 (I’ll just quote John 15:10, 21, 26, “If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love. ... (21) But all these things they will do to you for My name’s sake, because they do not know the One who sent Me. ... (26) When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father [see Acts 2:33], *that is* the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me.” We see the Trinity in this last verse.); John 16:3, 5 (“These things they will do because they have not known the Father or Me. ... (5) But now I am going to Him who sent Me....”); John 16:15 (“All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said that He [the Holy Spirit] takes of Mine and will disclose it to you.” We see the Trinity here.); John 16:23, 24 (“In that day [after Jesus is glorified and we are born again] you will not question Me about anything [or, better, “you will not ask Me for anything”]. Truly, truly, I say to you, if you ask the Father for anything in My name, He will give it to you. (24) Until now you have asked for nothing in My name; ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be made full.” We see two Persons here.); John 16:26-28 (“In that day you will ask in My name, and I do not say to you that I will request the Father on your behalf, (27) for the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me and have believed that I came forth from the Father. (28) I came forth from the Father and have come into the world [through the virgin birth]; I am leaving the world again and going to the Father.” Again we see two Persons and the preexistence of God the Son.); John chapter 17 (Essentially all of the verses of this chapter are relevant to show the two Persons of God the Father and God the Son, but I’ll just quote John 17:1-5 [We discussed these verses earlier in this paper.], “Jesus spoke these things; and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, ‘Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You. (2) even as You gave Him authority over all flesh, that to all whom You have given Him, He may give eternal life. (3) This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God [Quite a few similar statements about the preeminent role that God the Father has in the Trinity are found throughout the New Testament (see Rom. 16:26, 27; 1 Cor. 8:4-6; 11:3; 15:27, 28; Eph. 4:4-6; 1 Tim. 1:17; 2:5; 6:13-16; and Jude 1:24, 25).], and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. (4) I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do. (5) Now Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.’ ” This last verse is especially helpful in that it shows that God the Son was with the Father before the world, or anything else, was ever created (like John 1:1-3, for example). He was a Person sharing glory with God the Father, and through whom all things were created. This verse, by itself, should suffice to show that He was a Person with God the Father (and God the Holy Spirit) before creation began. There is no way we can say that He was just a word or a thought or an idea in the mind of God the Father before He became the God-man.);

John 20:17 (“Jesus [having been resurrected] said to her [to Mary Magdalene], ‘Stop clinging to Me, for I am not yet ascended to the Father, but go to My brethren and say to them, “I ascend to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God.” ’ ” It is clear that Jesus, after His resurrection, still was a Person distinct from God the Father and that God the Father has the preeminent role in the Trinity.

I’ll also list some verses from the Gospel of John that explain what Jesus meant when He said that He and the Father are one, and that He who has seen Him has seen the Father, and similar expressions. (It is clear that He didn’t mean that they were the same Person): John 5:17-23 (When Jesus was attacked for healing a man on the Sabbath, “He answered them, ‘My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working.’ [As verse 19 shows, Jesus didn’t heal on the Sabbath on His own initiative.] (18) For this reason therefore the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also was calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God. (19) Therefore Jesus answered and was saying to them, ‘Truly [Amen], truly [Amen], I say to you, the Son can do nothing unless *it is* something He sees the Father doing, for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner. (20) For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself is doing; and *the Father* will show Him greater works than these, so that you will marvel. (21) For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son also gives life to whom He wishes. (22) For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son, (23) so that all will honor the Son even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.’ ” We clearly see two Persons in these verses, as we so often do throughout the Bible.); John 5:30, 36 (“I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear [from the Father], I judge; and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. . . .for the works which the Father has given Me to accomplish—the very works that I do—testify about Me, that the Father has sent Me.”); John 7:16-18 (“So Jesus answered them and said, ‘My teaching is not mine, but Him who sent Me. (17) If anyone is willing to do His will, he will know of the teaching, whether it is of God or *whether* I speak from Myself. He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory, but He who is seeking the glory of the One who sent Him, He is true, and there is no unrighteousness in Him.”); John 8:26-29 (“ ‘I have many things to speak and to judge concerning you, but He who sent Me is true; and the things which I heard from Him, these I speak to the world.’ (27) They did not realize that He had been speaking to them about the Father. (28) So Jesus said, ‘When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am *He*,¹⁹ and I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me. (29) And He who sent Me is with Me; He has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him.’ ”); John 12:49 (“For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment *as to* what to say and what to speak.); John 14:24 (“He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father’s who sent Me.”); John 14:31 {“but so that the world may know that I love the Father, I do exactly as the Father commanded Me.”}

¹⁹ On the words “I am *He*,” see under John 13:19 in my paper on John chapters 13-17.

John 10:30 (with John 10:27-29).²⁰ (When we read John 10:30 in the light of the other things Jesus said in the Gospel of John, it doesn't offer any real support for the oneness view of God. It is clear that Jesus didn't mean that He and the Father are the same Person.) **“My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. (28) And I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. (29) My Father, who had given them to Me, is greater than all [God the Father has the preeminent role in the Trinity.], and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand.** [These verses strongly emphasize the security of believers, but they do not teach that true Christians cannot willfully turn from God and His truth and righteousness.²¹] **(30) I and the Father are one.”** The fact that the word “one” is neuter in the Greek, not masculine, further demonstrates that Jesus was not saying that He and the Father are one Person. The Gospel of John (as I have demonstrated), and even these few verses (John 10:27-30), make it quite clear that Jesus wasn't saying that He and the Father are one Person.

John 17:21-23 is a helpful cross-reference: In those verses Jesus prayed to God the Father [a different Person], “that they [true Christians] may all be one; even as You, Father, *are* in Me and I in You, that they also may be one in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me. [We see two Persons here as we do in the two verses that follow and a very large number of other verses throughout the Bible.] (22) The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one [As the next verse shows, the “glory” that Jesus was speaking of here included the divine enablement for us to be one in a supernatural way. We must understand, of course, that the fact that we become one as the Father and the Son are one in a very real sense does not mean that we become deity with the Father and the Son (and the Spirit).] (23) I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that you sent Me, and have loved them, even as You have loved Me.” It is super-obvious that we are not going to become one Person with God the Father or God the Son, which helps confirm that Jesus is not one Person with God the Father either.

So what does it mean the Jesus and the Father are one. As these verses show, they are one—they are united—in their desire and commitment to make sure that no one (very much including the devil himself) will be able to snatch even one of God's sheep (the elect; true believers) out of their hands. They are united in every way, including the mutual love between the Persons of God the Father and God the Son that has always existed, and including the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ had been sent by the Father and was totally motivated to always say and do everything that the Father would have Him

²⁰ See my paper titled, “Verse-by-Verse Study of John Chapters 10-12 (with John 9:35-41)” for more details.

²¹ See my paper titled, “Once Saved, Always Saved?” In Revelation chapters 2, 3 Jesus warned many of the Christians that if they didn't repent, they would cease to be His people, and those passages make it clear that He was speaking to true Christians. For example, He told the Christians at Ephesus (Rev. 2:1-7) that if they didn't repent He would remove their lampstand. The fact that they had a lampstand proved that it was a true Christian church (Rev. 1:20). If He removed their lampstand, however, they would no longer be true Christians. And Jesus warned the majority of the Christians at Sardis (Rev. 3:1-6) that if they didn't repent He would come against them in judgment like a thief, that they would not walk with Him in white, and that He would erase their names from the book of life. The fact that He told them that they must “wake up and strengthen the things that remain, which were about to die” (Rev. 3:2), that they had soiled their garments, unlike the few Christians at Sardis who had not soiled their garments, and that their names were in the book of life showed that the Christians who must repent, or else, had become true Christians.

say and do. Since Jesus was God the Son, He was able to reveal the Father in a unique way (see John 1:18, for example).

I'll read John 10:36-38, verses that are closely tied to John 10:30. "do you say of Him, whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'? (37) If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; (38) but if I do them, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, so that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father." These verses like the large number of verses I quoted from the Gospel of John in the two sections above, demonstrate the two Persons of God the Father and God the Son and that God the Father and God the Son are one in that Jesus' works were "the works of [His] Father" (not to mention the other ways in which they are one, including the words that Jesus spoke that came from the Father; His deity, etc.).

John 12:44, 45. (These verses are discussed in my paper on John chapters 10-12. See Matt. 10:40; Luke 10:16. Essentially everything I said above dealing with the Gospel of John applies here too.) "**And Jesus cried out and said, 'He who believes in Me, does not believe in Me but in Him who sent Me. (45) He who sees Me sees the One who sent Me.'**" Although these verses are used by some oneness Christians to argue for a oneness view of God, I am quite sure that Jesus was not saying that He and the Father are one Person here. The point that Jesus was making in verse 44 was that those who honored Him by believing in Him (which included submitting to Him for who He was in faith) were also believing in and honoring God the Father who had sent Him. The one who really sees Jesus is also seeing God the Father in the sense that the Son reveals the Father (John 1:18) in His character, His words, His works, etc. Those who rejected Jesus showed that they didn't really believe in the One who sent Him. It is not possible to really see the Son and reject Him and to really believe in the One who sent Him. For us to believe in Jesus requires believing all that the Bible reveals about Him, including His being God the Son, who was sent by the Father into the world.

John 14:7, 9-11 (with John 14:1, 2, 6). (These verses are discussed in my paper on John chapters 13-17. Jesus spoke these words to His apostles on the last night before His crucifixion.) "**(1) Do not let your heart be troubled, believe in God [or, "you believe in God"], believe also in Me. (2) In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you [or, "if there were not, would I have told you that I am going to get a place ready for you?"] ... (6) Jesus said to him [to Thomas], 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life [see John 1:4; 11:25, for example]; no one comes to the Father but through Me.** [One reason I quoted verses 1, 2, and 6 here is because these verses, along with a large number of verses in the Gospel of John (as I demonstrated above) and throughout the Bible, speak of the two Persons of God the Father and God the Son (and three Persons with the Holy Spirit). These verses also help set the stage for the following verses. The Lord Jesus brings us (He is the way) to God the Father through our becoming the Father's born-again children when we become Christians. At the end of this age, He will bring us to God the Father in the ultimate sense, when we will be glorified, including having resurrected, glorified bodies designed for us to live in heaven. Also, when Christians die they go to heaven, but not in the ultimate, fully glorified sense.] **(7) If you had known**

Me, you would have known My Father also [My Greek New Testament (The United Bible Societies' *Greek New Testament* (fourth revised edition) gives a different reading, which is favored by many commentators, and after further study I prefer this other reading, **"If you have come to know Me, you will know My Father also."**]; **from now on you know Him, and have seen Him.** [The apostles had already come to know Jesus person to Person on one level, and they had come to know a lot more about God the Father through Jesus, but they hardly knew the Father on a person to Person basis. Now they would come to know Jesus and God the Father on a much deeper person to Person level. As verses 8-11 show, the disciples had already seen God the Father in one sense, in that they had seen the Lord Jesus Christ (God the Son), and they had heard the things that He had said and seen the things He had done from the Father. They came to know Jesus and God the Father on a deeper level through the things Jesus said to them that last evening (before the cross). They came to know Jesus and God the Father on a much deeper level through seeing the resurrected Christ and having Him share with them on numerous occasions throughout the forty days that started with His resurrection and culminated with His being taken up in a glory cloud from the Mount of Olives to return to the Father while they were watching. But their knowledge of God the Son and God the Father was taken to a whole new level through receiving the promised Holy Spirit, starting on the day of Pentecost. The Spirit brought the new birth and enables Christians to participate in spiritual/eternal life; He sanctifies; He reveals; He convicts; He anoints to minister; He distributes the charismatic gifts; etc. After we are born-again, we can know God the Son and God the Father in the Spiritual dimension. Now we can worship the Father in the Spirit and in the truth (see John 4:23, 24). Now the Spirit of God bears witness with our spirits that we are (born-again) children of God, and we can cry out in sincerity and in truth, Abba, Father (see Rom. 8:15, 16). But the best is yet to come, when we will be glorified (see Rom. 8:17, 18, for example).

In John 14:18 Jesus says He will come to the disciples, and in verse 23 He says the Father and the Son will make their abode with the disciples. Those glorious intimate relationships come to pass (at least for the most part) through the Holy Spirit, who dwells in new-covenant believers.

Oneness Christians use John 14:7, 9-11 (along with John 10:30; 12:44, 45) to argue for a oneness view of God, but Jesus wasn't saying here, or in verses 9-11, that He and God the Father are one Person. What I said above regarding John 10:30 and 12:44, 45 fully applies here.] **(8) Philip said to Him, 'Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.'** **(9) Jesus said to him, 'Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father** [As we have discussed, those who had seen Jesus had seen the Father in that the Son revealed the Father {John 1:18, for example) in many different ways.]; **how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?** **(10) Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me?** [Compare John 10:37, 38; 14:20. I'll quote these verses. (Jesus spoke the words of John 10:37, 38 to Jews who had rejected Him and wanted to kill Him.) "If I do not do the works of my Father, do not believe Me; (38) but if I do them, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, so that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father." John 14:20, "In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me and I in you." We can see two Persons here in John 14:10, God the Father and God the Son. With the words that follow here in 14:10, 11, Jesus tells us (a big part of) what He

meant when He said “He who has seen Me has seen the Father” (John 14:9).] **The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works.** [Jesus, God the Son, didn’t stop being deity when He lived on the earth in a physical body, but He temporarily laid aside His glory when He became the God-man. He didn’t work any miracles until after He had received the Spirit when He was baptized by John the Baptist (see John 2:11). At that time He became the Anointed One.] (11) [Jesus was speaking to Philip in verse 10, but the Greek shows that He began to speak to all of the apostles here in verse 11.] **Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me** [Many verses speak of our being in Christ and His being in us, but we aren’t the same Person. I am not suggesting that the glorious relationship that we have with the Lord Jesus is fully comparable with the super-glorious relationship God the Son has with God the Father, but it serves to confirm that we are not to think of one Person here.]; **otherwise believe because of the works themselves.**” As Jesus so often said, the words that He spoke and the miraculous works that He did didn’t originate with Him. They originated with God the Father and very much included the work of the Holy Spirit in Jesus’ life. It is significant, for one thing, that the Old Testament had prophesied that the Messiah/Christ would do these works (see, for example, Luke 4:17-21; 7:18-23).

Acts 2:38; 8:16; 10:48; 19:5; 1 Cor. 1:13 with Matt. 28:19. All these verses from Acts speak of baptizing in, or into, the name of Jesus Christ (or, the name of the Lord Jesus). 1 Corinthians 1:13 is similar, but Matt. 28:19 says that Jesus, after His resurrection, told His apostles to, “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.” Based on Jesus’ words most Christians in our day baptize in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. So too throughout most of the history of the Christian church. The instructions in “The Didache” (an early Christian document, which is typically dated in the late first century or early second century) mentions baptizing in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

I don’t think we have enough information to answer every question, but it seems rather clear to me why Peter didn’t mention baptizing in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit to his Jewish audience in Acts 2:38, on the Day of Pentecost. I’m confident that the apostle Peter (and the other apostles) would not have intentionally disobeyed what the Lord Jesus told them about baptism a short while before the Day of Pentecost. Jesus may have informed them, one way, or another, that they wouldn’t use the words in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit at first. The apostles themselves were *just beginning* to understand the deity of the Lord Jesus and the Trinity, and they didn’t receive the Holy Spirit to help them understand until the Day of Pentecost, the very day Peter was preaching. Some fifty days before the Day of Pentecost the apostles didn’t really believe in the resurrection of the Lord Jesus (even though He had told them He would be killed and resurrected on the third day on several occasions), and they certainly didn’t fully understand His deity and the Trinity fifty days before the Day of Pentecost (see Luke chapter 24 and John 20:9, for example).

The Jews didn’t know about or believe in God the Son, and they were not expecting the Messiah to be deity. (Nor were they expecting the sacrificial death of the Messiah [but John the Baptist spoke of “the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” in John 1:29, 36.], or His resurrection.) These things which are so clear to us now were not

understood back then, even though there were prophetic passages that spoke of these super-important things. God's salvation plans through, and in, the Messiah were much greater than they had anticipated, even as the Messiah was much greater than they had expected. It took a while for the details concerning the Trinity to sink in, and the Jews that Peter was speaking to on the Day of Pentecost wouldn't have understood His deity or the Trinity yet, and there is no record that Peter spoke to them of His deity or the Trinity on that day. Peter's message, as he was led by the Spirit, centered on the fact that Jesus was God's promised Messiah, and that He was the One who, after He had been crucified and resurrected and taken up to heaven (all according to the plan of God the Father), received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit and poured forth the Spirit, which was causing the things to happen that they were seeing and hearing (see Acts 2:1-33). In such a setting it would have been very confusing (and very controversial) to baptize converts in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

As Acts 2:36-42 show, Peter was calling the Jews to repent of their sin, and especially for the super-serious sin of having rejected their Messiah, and to submit to Him and God's new-covenant plan of salvation. I'll quote Acts 2:36-42, “**‘Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God [God the Father] has made Him both Lord and Christ—this Jesus whom you crucified.’ (37) Now when they heard *this* they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, ‘Brethren, what shall we do?’ (38) Peter *said* to them, ‘Repent [Note that Peter said, “Be saved from this perverse generation” in verse 40.], and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (39) For the promise [The promise was for new-covenant salvation in Christ Jesus. The promise that God would give/pour out His Spirit on believers was a big part of what new-covenant salvation is all about. See, for example, Acts 1:4, 5; 2:33; Ezek. 36:27; Joel 2:28-32 with Acts 2:16-21; John 7:37-39; Rom. 8:1-17; Gal. 5:5, 16-18, 22, 23, 25, and there are many more such verses in the New Testament and in the Old Testament.] is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God [Peter is referring to God the Father. On the word “Lord” for God the Father (Greek *kurios*), see Acts 2:25, 34, for example; in Acts 3:22 the Greek behind “the Lord God” (which clearly refers to God the Father) is exactly the same as the Greek here in Acts 2:39.] will call to Himself [compare, for example, Rom. 8:28-30; 9:24; 1 Cor. 1:9, 24, 26-31.]’ (40) And with many other words he solemnly testified and kept on exhorting them, saying, ‘Be saved from this perverse generation!’ [On being saved, see Acts 2:21.] (41) So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls. (42) They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles’ teaching [They would begin to get solidly grounded in super-important details like the deity of Christ and the Trinity here (and His atoning death, resurrection, second coming, etc.). Under normal circumstances, believers should be grounded in such details before they are baptized.] and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.”**

It was totally appropriate for them to baptize in (or, into) the name of Jesus in that setting. Jesus was the Messiah God had sent, and Israel (centering in most of its leaders) had rejected Him. They must submit to the One who had died for them, bearing their sins. He was the only One who could bring them to the Father and to His new-covenant

salvation.²² And, as Acts 8:16; 10:48; 19:5; and 1 Cor. 1:13 show, they continued to baptize in the name of Jesus Christ (or the Lord Jesus) for many years. Some may have been baptizing in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit (with Matt. 28:19 it wouldn't be surprising), but no examples are recorded in the New Testament.

Based on Matt. 28:19, most Christians think we should baptize in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, and I agree. There is nothing wrong with baptizing in the name of Jesus (we do a lot of things, including praying in the name of Jesus, and we have Acts 2:38; 8:16; 10:48; 19:5 and 1 Cor. 1:13), but why exclude the Father and the Holy Spirit when we have Matt. 28:19. God the Father has the preeminent role in the Trinity, and we are totally dependent on the Holy Spirit, who dwells within us as born-again Christians. Through the Lord Jesus, with whom we are united when we become Christians, and through whom we come to God the Father, we become born-again children of God the Father, and the Spirit of God dwells in us.

It is important to see that Peter made a clear distinction between God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ in his message on the Day of Pentecost, which is a distinction consistently made throughout the Bible. He spoke of the two Persons of God the Father and the Lord Jesus in Acts 2:22-24. So too we see God the Father and the Lord Jesus in the words of Psalm 16:8-11 that Peter quoted in Acts 2:25-28, verses that prophesy of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. (The word "LORD" [Yahweh in the Hebrew] near the beginning of Acts 2:25 refers to God the Father.) We also see God the Father and the Lord Jesus mentioned in Acts 2:30-32, in Acts 2:33 (where we see the Trinity), in Acts 2:34, 35, and in Acts 2:36. You don't have to strain to see the two Persons of God the Father and God the Son. The Bible is literally packed with examples. You have to really strain though to try to see one Person.

We have a big problem with the typical oneness Christian interpretation of Matt. 28:19 in our day. I'll quote Matt. 28:19 again, **"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit."** They believe that, based on the passages in Acts and 1 Cor. 1:13, we can see that Jesus is the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit and that there is only one Person. (At least some oneness Christians in our day speak a lot about the divine nature and the human nature of the one Person – Jesus - interacting with one another.) They totally reject the idea of the distinct Persons of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. That view may fit a few verses OK, but there are a very large number of passages throughout the Bible that show that that view is wrong.

For one super-important thing, the name Jesus is never used for God the Father, the Holy Spirit, or the Trinity in the Bible, nor would it be appropriate to use that name for God the Father, the Holy Spirit, or the Trinity. The name Jesus, which is the same as the name Joshua, (more accurately "Yeshua" or "Yehoshua" in the Hebrew) is used 911 times in the New Testament of the New American Standard Bible, 1995 edition. (One of those 911 uses, in Col. 4:11, refers to a different person, and three times the NASB

²² Ananias, who had been sent to Saul/Paul, said to him, "Now why do you delay: Get up and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name" (Acts 22:16). It is appropriate for us to call on the name of God the Son, who condescended to become the God-man and then, after living a sinless life, died for us bearing our sins with the guilt and the penalties (including the major penalties of spiritual death and bondage to sin) so we could be born-again and begin to live in the righteousness and holiness of God, on the road that leads to eternal glory.

translated “Joshua,” not “Jesus,” in Luke 3:29; Acts 7:45; and Heb. 4:8.) The name Yeshua (Jesus) means “Yah [which is short for Yahweh] saves,” or “Yah is salvation.” That name was given to the God-man by revelation (Matt. 1:21; Luke 1:31) when the Son of God took upon flesh, and it is still used for Him after He was glorified and went back to sit at the Father’s right hand.

The word “name” is singular in Matt. 28:19, which emphasizes the perfect unity of the Trinity, with the three Persons. We desperately need the balanced truth of what the Bible teaches on every topic. For one thing, the Bible does not teach three Gods. The subordinate roles of God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, who are fully deity with God the Father, help demonstrate why we don’t worship three Gods. The Trinity with three Persons is totally different than three independent Gods. I am not suggesting, by the way, that we have enough information (or the ability) to fully understand the Trinity. But then again, it isn’t difficult to believe. We are not saying three equals one or anything like that.

It is important to understand that essentially every person who was there on the Day of Pentecost, very much including Peter and the other apostles and the three thousand souls who were added to the Body of Christ that day, would have rightly understood that the name of Jesus Christ referred exclusively to Jesus the Messiah. None of them (including those who submitted to the Lord Jesus Christ that day and those who didn’t) would have thought that the name Jesus could include God the Father (or the Holy Spirit). They knew the difference between the Messiah and the One who sent Him. And Jesus Himself consistently made it clear that He was a Person distinct from the One who sent Him (and from the Holy Spirit). Those Jews weren’t about to make that mistake.

Also, the Samaritans who were converted through the preaching of Philip and the Gentiles who were converted through the preaching of Peter, who were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus (in Acts 8:16; 10:38), although they wouldn’t have had as much background information as the Jews, would have understood that the Lord Jesus was a Person distinct from God the Father (and the Holy Spirit). So too for those converted through the apostle Paul who were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus (Acts 19:5; 1 Cor. 1:13). Paul consistently taught about the Persons of God the Father, God the Son, and the Holy Spirit. (See the next two headings, for example.)

1 Corinthians 8:4 (with 8:5, 6). **“Therefore concerning the eating of things sacrificed to idols, we know that there is no such thing as an idol in the world, and that there is no God but one.”** I have heard this verse used to argue for a oneness view of God, but it doesn’t teach that at all, as the following verses demonstrate. We clearly see the Persons of God the Father and God the Son in 1 Cor. 8:5, 6, as we so often do. And we see the preeminent role of God the Father, which we so often see throughout the Bible. I’ll read 1 Cor. 8:5, 6, **“For even if there are so-called gods whether in heaven or on the earth, as indeed there are many gods and many lords [There are evil beings behind many of the gods, idols, and religious, or occult practices of peoples, but they are enemies of the one true God (see 1 Cor. 10:19-22, Acts 16:16-19, for example).], (6) yet for us there is *but* one God, the Father, from whom are all things [compare Rom. 11:36], and we exist for Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by [It would be much better to translate “through” instead of “by.” The Greek preposition (*dia*) that I would translate “through” here with the NIV and NKJV is the same preposition translated “through” in John 1:3; Col. 1:16, for example.] whom are all things, and we *exist* through Him.”**

The apostle Paul shows what he meant when he said “there is no God but one” in 1 Cor. 8:4 and “for us there is *but* one God, the Father” in 1 Cor. 8:6. He was referring to God the Father, who is a Person distinct from the Lord Jesus Christ, in these verses. There are quite a few verses like this in the New Testament (see John 17:3; Rom. 16:27; Eph. 4:4-6; 1 Tim. 1:17; 2:5, 6; 6:13-16; and Jude 1:25). And there are a large number of passages throughout the Bible that speak of the preeminent role of God the Father. (For many examples, see my papers titled, “Who Do We Pray To?” and “The Name Yahweh and God the Father and God the Son.”)

I must hasten to point out, however, that the writings of the apostle Paul (in agreement with the rest of the Bible) strongly teach the full deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, God the Son. Paul mentioned here in 1 Cor. 8:6, for example, that, “through [Him] are all things, and we exist for Him,” which confirms His full deity. The word “God” is typically used of God the Father in the New Testament, and the name “Yahweh” was typically used of God the Father in the Old Testament, but the fact that both words were sometimes used of the Son of God, along with many other considerations, strongly teach the full deity of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Colossians 2:8-10. **“See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ. (9) For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form** [Colossians 1:19 is an important cross-reference, “For it was the Father’s good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him.” All of the wisdom, authority, power, etc. that is included in what the word deity means is available in the Lord Jesus.], **(10) and in Him you have been made complete** [I prefer the translation, “**you have been made full,**” with the margin of the NASB. The NIV has, “you have been given fullness.” The Greek noun *pleroma* translated “fullness” in verse 9 was derived from the Greek verb *pleroo*, which is used in verse 10. Verse 10 has a perfect participle formed from this Greek verb joined with a verb that would normally be translated “you are.” These are the words that I would translate “you have been made full,” or the equivalent. However we translate the verb we should recognize the connection between the *fullness* of verse 9 and our having been *made full* of verse 10.], **and He is the head over all rule and authority.**” If He didn’t have the authority “over all rule and authority,” some evil ruler might be able to thwart God’s plans, including His plans for each Christian.

Colossians 2:9 is one of the few key verses used to argue for a oneness view of God. I suppose they typically use the translation of the King James Version, “For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.” I would translate “Deity” with the NASB, instead of “the Godhead.” (Whether we translate Deity or the Godhead, it must be understood that everything that is available in the Trinity, is available in the Lord Jesus Christ.) Under the Greek noun (*theotetos*), which is only used this one place in the New Testament, the BAGD Greek Lexicon gives “deity” as the meaning in this verse.

I don’t see this verse offering any real support to the idea of oneness. The fullness of deity dwells in God the Son. He is fully deity with God the Father and God the Spirit, and everything that God the Father and the Holy Spirit have are available in (and through) God the Son. And this is true of God the Son even though He greatly humbled Himself and temporarily laid aside His glory (see Phil. 2:5-8; John 17:3-5, for example) and

became the God-man with a physical body. Note the words at the end of verse 9, “in bodily form.” Now that He has been resurrected and taken up to the right hand of God the Father, He has a glorified body, but He is still “in bodily form” and always will be.

If God the Son had not become a man (the God-man) with a body and lived a sinless life and died for us, bearing our sins with the guilt and the penalties (including the major penalties of spiritual death and bondage to sin), we could not be saved. See Col. 2:11-15, for example. I’ll read verse 15, “When He [God the Father] had disarmed the rulers and authorities [speaking of the evil rulers and authorities, starting with Satan], He [God the Father] made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him [through His unique Son, the Lord Jesus Christ]. (We see the two distinct Persons of God the Father and God the Son here, as we so often do throughout the Bible.) Satan had gained his authority over man through our sin, especially the sin of Adam (see Rom. 5:12-21), but God “disarmed the rulers and authorities” through the all-important atoning death of His Son. Freedom from sin and from these evil rulers is part of what God the Father has provided for us in the Lord Jesus and new-covenant salvation. After the Lord Jesus [God the Son, who became the God-man] had completed His assigned work, which centered in His all-important atoning death, He was resurrected, then after forty days He was taken up in glory to the right hand of God the Father. Some ten days later He received from God the Father the promised Holy Spirit and He poured out the Spirit, which enabled new-covenant salvation to begin.

The apostle Paul knew that some of the Christians at Colossae were being tempted to modify the gospel and to look other places for truth, victory over sin, help, etc., rather than to stick with God’s new-covenant plan of salvation that centers in the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom God the Father has provided EVERYTHING we need. That’s what verse 9 is all about, “in Him [in Christ, with whom all true Christians are united (see Rom. 6:1-11; Col 2:10-15, for example)] all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form.” There is absolutely nothing that we could ever need that has not been provided in Christ. Like Paul said in verse 10, “in Him [we] have been made full.” Of course we must abide in Him, which includes abiding in the truth and righteousness of God by His grace through faith, or we will not be able to partake of the fullness He has provided for us.

When Christians face problems they are often tempted to look somewhere else for help (I’ll mention some examples from the apostle Paul in a minute), but that always is a mistake, and sometimes it is a gigantic mistake, because if we aren’t very careful, we may end up looking to the work of the devil and his demons for “help.” The devil is very “generous” with such help, and it can look good; he is a liar and a deceiver. That kind of “help” may seem to help for a while, but it is designed to destroy us.

In verse 8 Paul warned against “[being taken] captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ.” In verse 4 he said, “I say this so that no one will delude you with persuasive arguments.” And in verses 16-23 he added quite a few other items to the list. I’ll quote these verses, “Therefore no one is to act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day—(17) things which are a *mere* shadow of what is to come, but the substance belongs to Christ. (18) Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize [The BAGD Greek Lexicon says regarding the Greek verb used here (*katabreuo*), which is not used anywhere else in the New Testament, “ ‘decide against’ (as umpire), and so ‘rob of a prize,’ ‘condemn’

someone....”] by delighting in self-abasement and the worship of angels, taking his stand on *visions* he has seen, inflated without cause by his fleshy mind [that is, his thinking is not at all in, and by, the Holy Spirit], (19) and not holding fast to the head [the Lord Jesus, in whom “all the fullness of Deity dwells” (Col. 2:9) and “in Him you have been made full” (Col. 2:10); at least the fullness is available to Christians in Christ, and no where else.], from whom the entire body [the body of Christ] being supplied and held together by the joints and ligaments, grows with a growth which is from God. [The joints and ligaments, through which the body is supplied and held together, probably refers to the ministries that Christ has placed in the body.] (20) If you have died with Christ to the elementary principles of the world, why, as if living in the world, do you submit yourself to decrees, such as, (21) ‘Do not handle, do not taste, do not touch!’ (22) (which all *refer to* things destined to perish with use)—in accordance with the commandments and teachings of men [not God]? (23) These are matters which have, to be sure, the appearance of wisdom in self-made religion and self-abasement and severe treatment of the body, *but are* of no value against fleshly indulgence.” In fact they are manifestations of the flesh (which can include the work of demons). The only place we can find the authority and power to overpower sin (and our sins can be equated with “works of the flesh”; see Gal. 5:19-21) is in Christ and by the Holy Spirit in Him.

Throughout his writings, very much including the first two chapters of his Epistle to the Colossians, the apostle Paul repeatedly speaks of God the Father and God the Son (who has now been crucified, resurrected, glorified and ascended to the right hand of God the Father) as two distinct Persons. (Paul certainly didn’t intend to deny the two distinct Persons of God the Father and God the Son in Col. 2:9.) I’ll give a few examples from Colossians chapter 1. Paul mentions both Persons in Col. 1:1, 2, and 3, for example, and in Col. 1:13 he says, “For He [God the Father] rescued [or delivered] us from the domain [or, better, from the authority] of [the] darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son,” referring to the kingdom of His now glorified Son, who is at His right hand. All true Christians are in that kingdom, which is here now in an early form of that kingdom (compare Luke 17:21; Rom. 14:17).

In Col. 1:16 Paul says, “For by Him [by God the Son, who existed with the Father before any creating took place (see John 1:1-3, 10, 1 Cor. 8:6; Heb. 1:2, 3)] all things were created, *both* in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones, or dominions or rulers or authorities [This includes Satan’s extensive kingdom of evil, but it must be understood that they were not created evil. They rebelled against God and His Son. Anyway, the Creator has the authority and power to judge and remove beings He has created, which He will do at the proper time. That is the easy part, but God’s plan included working things out is such a way that He would save a gigantic number of people (the elect) and give a powerful demonstration of the fact that there is no room for rebellion and sin in His world.]—all things have been created through Him [God the Father created all things through God the Son, who existed with Him before any creating took place.] and for Him [for God the Son].”

Colossians 1:17 says, “He [God the Son] is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.” Obviously “He is before all things” in time, since all things were created “by Him” and “through Him” (Col. 1:16). God the Son is also before all things in His exalted position over them. And Col. 1:17 also informs us that God the Son has been active in

holding things together since they were created. We are talking about a Person, God the Son, not a thought, or a word, etc. in the mind of God. These verses that speak of the preexistence of God the Son with the Father should suffice in themselves to show that the oneness view of God is wrong. My article, "The Name Yahweh and God the Father and God the Son: The Name Yahweh and a Listing of Some of the Large Number of Passages in the Hebrew Old Testament Where We Can See God the Son Along with God the Father," gives many example where we see God the Son existing as a distinct Person along with God the Father and actively engaged in the things that were taking place throughout the Old Testament.

May God's will be fully accomplished through this paper and His people be edified.

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