WHICH GOD?



"Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well..."
— James 2:19

MANY IDEAS

There is only one God. This is a clear teaching of the Bible. (Mark 12:29-34) But did you know that among Christians there are several different ideas about who God really is? In actual fact there are several different gods worshipped in Christendom, although only one of them is the true God. Many of us may be actually worshiping a false god, if our ideas of God are wrong. The ques-tion is, which God do you worship? Do you worship the true God of the Bible or do you worship a

false idea of God? Let us remember that those who worship God must worship Him "in spirit and in truth." (John 4:24)

1. First of all there is the belief that God is a Trinity. This is the belief of most Christians. According to this dogma God has three parts. One part is called Father, one part is called Son, and the other part is called Holy Spirit. All three parts, or persons make up one great being. This being has all power, all knowledge, and has existed forever with his three parts or persons.

2. Second, there is the belief that God is only one Person, but that He reveals Himself in different ways at different times. For example, in the Old Testament He was the Father, then He (the same person) took on the form of the Son when Christ was on earth, and afterwards He became the Holy Spirit. This belief is commonly referred to as the " Jesus only " doctrine.

3. Third, there is the belief that there are three almighty Beings who all have exactly the same authority and power and that they have all lived for all eternity. All three are said to be God, but because they are in agreement in everything they do, they are said to be one God. According to this belief, these three Beings (Gods) decided long, long

ago to act in three different roles. One would act as Father, one as Son and one would work as Holy Spirit.

4. Fourth, there is the belief that God is only one Person, and that this Person is the Father alone. It is said that Jesus Christ was created by God long, long ago and was set above the rest of creation. The Holy Spirit is said to be God's power, or active force.

Can all these ideas be correct? Of course not! It is clear that these people all worship different Gods! But does it really matter? I mean, as long as we say "God," and try to do what is right, does it matter what we believe? It certainly does! There is a popular belief in the world today that it does not matter what a person believes as long as he or she calls upon the name of God. This is a false and very dangerous idea. The Bible teaches us that those who do not love the truth will be deceived and will believe a lie. Because they believe this lie they will be damned (condemned) and destroyed. (2 Thess. 2:10-12) Jesus Himself said: "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." (John 17:3) And yet, how can we know God if we do not even know who we are

talking to when we call upon God? Do we mean:

A. Three persons who are really one Being?

B. One person operating in three ways?

C. Three almighty beings acting in three roles?

D. One person and a created Son?

We have outlined four popular ideas, each one different from the other and yet none of these present the true, biblical teaching about God.

THE TRUE GOD

What does the word "God" mean? Generally the word refers to anything which is regarded as superior or which is worshipped. However, the Bible teaches that there is only one true God, and that this God is the greatest Being in the universe. All things come from Him, all power belongs to Him and He is ruler over all. Who is this Person? According to the Bible, this person is God the Father alone.

- One God and Father of all, who is above all. (Ephesians 4:6)
- To us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things. (1 Corinthians 8:6)

This great God, the Father, the Lord God Almighty, had a Son. Way back in the days of eternity this God begot, or brought forth, a Son from His own substance. This Son was not created; He was begotten. Creation means to be formed from a substance outside of the creator or from nothing, but begotten in this context means to be brought forth from the Father's own substance.

THE SON OF GOD

The Son of God was just like His Father. He was begotten in His exact image, with the same pure, holy nature. God gave all His power and authority to this Son, and it was by this Son, Jesus Christ, that God created every single thing in the universe. (See Ephesians 3:9; Hebrews 1:2.) The book of Proverbs tells us of the birth of the Son of God, and of the relationship which He enjoyed with God in the days before the world was made. Though He is referred to as "wisdom," yet it is plain that the passage is speaking of the Son of God. We should note that in 1 Corinthians 1:24 Christ is called, "the wisdom of God."

The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no

> *depths, I was brought forth; ... Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: ... When he prepared the heavens, I was there ... when he appointed the foundations of the earth: then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men.*
>
> — Proverbs 8:22-25, 27, 29-31

Jesus Himself tells us that He was the begotten Son of God. He says, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." (John 3:16)

This Son of God, Jesus Christ, is the One whom God sent into the world to die for the sins of men. It is He who was in the form of God (Philippians 2:6), yet laid aside the glory which He shared with His Father, and humbled Himself, to become a poor wretched human being. He allowed Himself to be scorned, beaten, mocked, insulted, and brutally crucified, and endured separation from His beloved Father, in order that we sinners could have life. This One who gave His life was the Son of God. He was of the very nature of God, because He was born from God. What a great marvel it is when we consider that it was His own beloved Son

that God gave; the One who came from the very bosom and heart of the Father. (John 1:18)

TWO VITAL TRUTHS

There are two truths which are vital links in the plan of salvation. These are truths which we need to believe if we are to be saved.

1. The first of these is the truth of God's wonderful love for the human family. This love was so great that God gave His Son to become man and to die for men.

2. The second great truth is that Christ died to pay the price for our sins. He did not pretend to die, but He really and truly did die.

Now the teachings of Christendom say that Jesus Christ was not really the Son of God in the true sense!! Some say He was not born from God, but that He was the eternal God Himself. Others say that He was really created by God!! These false ideas contradict the two vital truths which we just mentioned.

THE PROOF OF GOD'S LOVE

It was because God loved you and me that He gave His Son to suffering and death. It pained the heart of God to watch His own Son suffer and die, but He "so loved" you that He gave

that which was most precious to Him; His one and only Son, so that you might have life! Surely we can see that this great God really has a very great love for us.

Why do Christians now teach that Jesus was not really begotten from God, but that He always was a part of a three-in-one God in which all three members were equal in power and authority? Did the Bible lie when it says that "God sent His Son into the world"? (1 John 4:9)

Other's say that God created Jesus, then gave Him to be crucified. Does this show the love of God? Not at all. These satanic ideas make it seem that God is really a selfish person who sacrificed His creature, but made no sacrifice Himself. It is only when we realize that Jesus was, and is really the true, begotten Son of God; His beloved, brought forth from Himself, that we can understand how much God must love us. We understand this because He was willing to give such a gift; to suffer with His Son as He died in terrible physical, mental and spiritual agony. He did this that wretched, sinful men might have the chance to live in eternal happiness.

The enemy of God and His truth, the devil, has done his best to destroy the greatest

truth in the universe; the truth of the marvelous love of God for the sinful race of men. How can we discern that love? We see that love only when we understand that it was His own Son, the beloved of His bosom, His one and only begotten Son that God gave for us. But Satan has deceived the Christian churches. He has led the people who should protect this truth to destroy it, and today, many Christians teach that although Jesus is called the Son of God, He is not really God's Son in the true sense.

It should also be obvious that if Jesus was not God's Son, but God Himself, then it would not be true that He died for our sins, because the Bible teaches that God cannot die. (1 Timothy 6:16)

WHERE IT BEGAN

Almost seventeen hundred years ago in 325 A.D., the great theologians of the Catholic Church came together at a place called Nicea to discuss whether or not Jesus was really God's Son. Some of them led by a man named Arius, proposed that He really was the Son of God, not a created being but begotten of the Father.

Another group, led by a man named Athanasius, decided that He was not really begotten of God in the true sense, but that

Jesus was actually a part of God. Athanasius decided that God was really one Being, or one "substance," which had three parts called Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Today, most Christians still hold to some form of this belief. In doing this, all of them deny the truth that Jesus was really God's true, begotten Son! This Council of Nicea is where these false ideas started, and for the past 1600 years they have remained imbedded in popular Christian thinking.

The question is, do you believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God?

You have received this tract because God wants you to know that He loves you greatly. He wants you to know that His love for you is so great that He "spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all..." (Romans 8:32)

If you believe this, truly believe, then the love of God will transform your life. You will have fellowship with the true God and His Son (1 John 1:3) and you will be given a place in the kingdom of God.