

THE TRINITY – AN EXPOSITION

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ANNOMALIES AND DIFFICULT TEXTS

The following verses and questions cited are either unclear references or passages that clarify the meaning.

Deuteronomy 6:4 “**Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one!**”

Judaism considers this verse their confession of faith. The text is referred to as the “shema” pronounced “shmah”. It is used in synagogues as a liturgy or statement of faith.

The shema is understood to emphasise the monotheistic belief of Judaism. It is worth noting that the Hebrew word for “one” as referred to in this verse is “ehad” pronounced “echad” (latter “h” is pronounced with the back of the throat “gh” sound). “Ehad” may imply a Trinity. The word is not an “absolute unit” if it were so it would mean a simple entity. The word “ehad” is a “compound unit” meaning oneness or unity between two or more. It is worth noting that the same Hebrew word for “one” is used in reference to a man and a woman becoming one (ehad) see Genesis 2:24 “**Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.**” So, the monotheistic God (Elohim) of our faith is one (ehad) not singularly but one in plurality.

Another verse in Scripture that has puzzled Believers is Isaiah 9:6 ***“For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace”***

How could the babe of Bethlehem be called “Everlasting Father?”

His name will be called “Wonderful” or “exceptional” or “distinguishly” unique. He will be called “Counsellor” one who speaks with authority. He will be called “Mighty God” The prophet understood that this child would be equal to God and therefore, God in the flesh. Isaiah goes on to say he will be the deliverer and called “Everlasting Father.”

The bone of contention relating to the title “Everlasting Father” focuses on the last of the four titles. Some say if Jesus is the Son, the second person of the Trinity, how could He be called Everlasting Father, the first person of the Trinity? Many commentators are stumped or puzzled by the title. Let’s consider some responses:

John Walwood’s comments may be helpful, “First, the Messiah, being the second person of the trinity is in essence God. Therefore, He has all the attributes of God including eternality. Since God is One (even though He exists in three persons) the Messiah is God. Second, the title “Everlasting Father” is an idiom used to describe the Messiah’s relationship to time, not His relationship to the other members of the Trinity. He is said to be everlasting just as God (the Father) is called “the Ancient of days (Daniel 7:9). The Messiah will be a “fatherly ruler”. In other words, as the patriarchs were the

fathers of the nation, so Christ seated on David's throne in the Millennium will be a "Fatherly ruler". God in the flesh. Prince of Peace."

While Walfoord comes close to explaining the meaning it is not concise nor convincing.

William Kelly in his exposition of the Book of Isaiah – Isaiah 9:6 **"For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace,"** – says that some translate it as Counsellor of the Mighty God, of the Everlasting Father". Kelly suggests Christ is the Counsellor of the Mighty God, of the Everlasting Father – not that Christ will be the Everlasting Father." Kelly's take on this verse is good but not convincingly accurate.

Furthermore, Matthew Henry says, "He (Christ) is Everlasting Father or the Father of Eternity, He is God, one with the Father who is from everlasting to everlasting. His Fatherly care of His people and tenderness towards them are everlasting. He is the author of everlasting life and happiness to them, and so is the Father of a blessed eternity to them." Very well worded but not clear enough.

While commentators are all in agreement on the traditional doctrine of the Trinity the verse in Isaiah 9:6 has stumped others. My understanding of the verse is based on the importance of applying the principle of consistency in Biblical interpretation (hermeneutics). If a verse or passage is to be understood it needs to be interpreted within the established

framework of the whole Bible. One anomaly should not be isolated from the established doctrinal framework.

The Trinity is undeniable and the distinctive personality of each, namely the Father, Son and Holy Spirit is cardinal, but the question, “How the Son can be called Everlasting Father,” cries out for a concise and succinct answer. Illustrations and metaphorical images and items are multiple as the human mind seeks clarity. I will not bore you with my many examples but the family analogy is one that may suffice. A family is one unit consisting of father, mother and children. One without the other is no longer a complete family. The diversity of the members in no way invalidates their unity. When I speak to one I speak to all. If I speak to a Jones’s family member I can say I have spoken to the Jones family. (In fact, I spoke to one member that represented the entire family). When I speak to one member of the BBS Board of Directors I can say I’ve spoken to the Berean Bible Society or when I receive a telephone call from a representative of Ford Motor Company I can say I received a call from Ford today. In a similar sense, Jesus was God the Father and God the Holy Spirit, in the flesh. He represented the Trinity. The following verses underscore this fact – John 17:5 “***And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was,***” and John 17:21-22 “***...that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one:***”

The claim of equality with the Father agitated the Jews, John 5:17-24 states, “***But Jesus answered them, “My Father has been working until now, and I have been working.”***”

Therefore, the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God. Then Jesus answered and said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner. For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself does; and He will show Him greater works than these, that you may marvel. For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to them, even so the Son gives life to whom He will. For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son, that all should honour the Son just as they honour the Father. He who does not honour the Son does not honour the Father who sent Him. “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.” Then Jesus “rubs salt in their sensitive wounds as he responds in,” John 5:43 ***“I have come in My Father’s name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive.”***

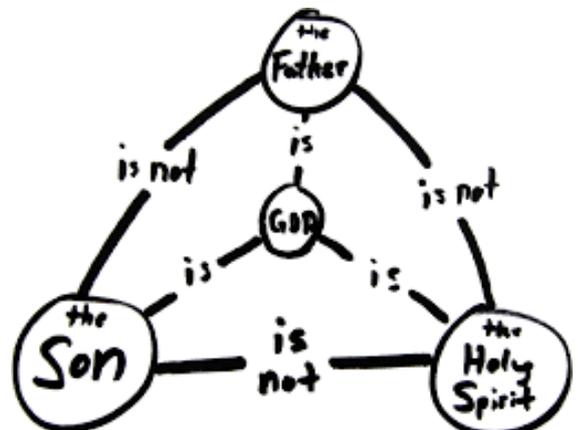
In terms of their oneness the Lord’s dialogue with Philip says it all in John 14:8-13 ***“Philip said to Him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us.” Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves.***

“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father. And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.”

The two identities of Father and Son are used synonymously just as the Son (Christ) and the Holy Spirit are used interchangeably.

How often we hear believers say, “I know that Christ lives in me.” Technically Christ cannot live in you, but by the Holy Spirit who resides in you, you can say “Christ lives in me”. Where is our ascended Lord? He is seated next to the Father in Heaven mediating for us. How can we boldly quote Ephesians 3:17 “... ***that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love,***” if indeed Christ is in Heaven? The answer, lies in the fact that through the representation of the Spirit indwelling in us, we can assert that “Christ lives in us.” In the same token, Christ Jesus was the bodily expression of the Everlasting Father – Colossians 2:9 “***For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.***”

This verse must be viewed in relation to Isaiah 9:6. Jesus said “***if you see me*** (second person of the Trinity) ***you see the Father*** (first person of the Trinity)”. Jesus in the flesh was God the Father, in the flesh. In this regard we can say, along with Isaiah, His name shall be called Everlasting Father.



The diagram correctly indicates the three persons of the Trinity

It would be wise, and more enhancing for our cause, as teachers in the Grace Movement, to clarify statements when there are marginal issues that may be misconstrued to mean what we never intended it to mean. The doctrine of the Trinity is cardinal any perceived departure from a correct pronouncement of the Trinity may cause more harm to what we hope to accomplish in teaching the Word Rightly Divided. A “misquote” used mischievously by sinister forces could hamper our testimony throughout the world.

The following verses serve as further proof of Christ’s unique identity with deity and are self-explanatory:

John 1:1 ***“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”***

Colossians 1:15-17 ***“He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.”***

Philippians 2:5-6 ***“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God.”***

Scofield’s footnote on the mystery is helpful:

1(2:2) The "mystery of God" is Christ, as incarnating the fullness of the Godhead, and all the divine wisdom and knowledge for the redemption and reconciliation of man.

2(2:18) The error against which Paul warned the Colossians later developed into the heresy called Gnosticism (from Gk. *gnōsis*, meaning *knowledge*). This false teaching assigned to Christ a place subordinate to the true Godhead, and undervalued the uniqueness and completeness of His redemptive work. It insisted that between a holy God and this earth a host of beings, angels, etc., formed a bridge, of which Christ was a member. This system included the worship of angels (v. 18) and a false asceticism (vv. 20–22). For all these errors, the apostle had one remedy, a knowledge (*epignōsis*, i.e. *full knowledge*, 1:9–10; 3:10) of the fullness of God in Jesus Christ. Paul is not afraid of wisdom, or knowledge, and refers to them frequently, but he does insist that the knowledge be according to divine revelation. His devastating answer to this false teaching is in 1:19 and 2:9, in which the Lord is revealed as

the one in whom "dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." The word "fullness" (Gk. *plerōma*) is the very word Gnosticism used for the entire host of intermediary beings between God and man. The incarnate Lord, crucified, risen, and ascended is the only Mediator between God and men (1 Tim. 2:5).

1(2:23) By creating a reputation for superior sanctity, as some did, they did not really honor God but only satisfied the flesh.

PSALM 110:1

"The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool."

This statement is quoted several times in the New Testament. This was Jehovah speaking to Adonai. The Father speaking to the Son. God the Father referring to God the Son as God. The throne of God is forever and ever. There are modernist who say they believe that Jesus is the Son of God, the question is do they believe He is God the Son? In Hebrews 1:3 "***Jesus on the throne of God the Father is the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person upholding all things by the word of His power. When He purged our sins, He sat down on the righthand of the Majesty on High.***" In His earthly ministry, Jesus was the express character and image of the invisible God. So, when he was seen in the flesh the Father could be seen. In Christ dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily so we can say that the Godhead resides within us by the Holy Spirit who represents the Trinity, Father and Son. The trichotomy strongly asserts the three functional roles

that belong to each member of the Trinity. When one function is fulfilled we can say God in His unity is at work.

The tri-personality of the Godhead is exclusively a Truth of revelation attested by the overwhelming evidence of the Sacred Scriptures. While reason embraces the unity of God, revelation unveils the Trinity of God. Orthodox Christianity affirms that there are in the Godhead three distinct hypostases or immutable subsistences – The Father, The Son, The Holy Spirit each possessing one and the same divine nature though in a different manner. The essential parts are unity of essence and ontological distinctions or the reality of inherent (immanent) distinctions. Joseph Cook states, “That The Father, The Son and The Holy Ghost are one God. Each has a peculiarity in communicable to the other, neither, is God without the others, each with the other is God.” The controversy and opposition to the doctrine of the Trinity in the first 300 years of Christianity is a fact of history. What plagued the first century church should be expected to manifest itself in this the 21st century. Yes, it is true that the term Trinity is not explicitly used in the Scriptures, however it was implicitly embraced by the early church and apostles.

PSUEDO VIEWS

The doctrine of the Trinity does not on the one hand assert that three persons are united in one person or three beings in one being, or three God’s in one God, that is called Tritheism, nor on the other hand that God merely manifests Himself in three different ways, that’s called “modal trinity” or “trinity manifestation,” but rather that there are three eternal distinctions in the substance of God.

ANTHROPOMORPHISM

The use of the terms Father, Son and Holy Spirit are employed in anthropomorphic terms to communicate Divine truth to the human mind. Our finite minds cannot fully comprehend the infinite.

THREE ARE RECOGNISED AS GOD

Strong's Systematic Theology states that the Scriptures recognise there are three who are one God.

- a) The Father as the first person of the Trinity is recognised as God in a great number of passages. John 6:27 "***Him the Father, even God, hath sealed.***" 1 Peter 1:2 "***Therefore knowledge of God the Father.***" This is a fact of Scripture and we don't have to adduce further proof.
- b) The Lord Jesus Christ is recognised as the second person of the Trinity and as God. He is expressly called God in John 1:1 "***In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.***" Thomas confirmed His deity in John 20:28 "***my Lord my God***". In Titus 2:13 "***..looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ,***" Jesus is referred as the Great God. The close juxta position in 2 Peter 1:1 "***Simon Peter, a bondservant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ,***" indicates that Peter was certain about the oneness of God and Jesus Christ.

Note:

God (by assumption the first person) refers to the Son, the second person as God – Hebrews 1:8 “***But about the Son he says, “Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever; a scepter of justice will be the scepter of your kingdom.”***”

Christ is identified with Jehovah. God as the creator is Christ the Creator, Colossians 1:16-18 “***For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the pre-eminence.***” Most evangelicals embrace the Johannine declaration of the Trinity in 1 John 5:7 “***For there are three that bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one,***” despite early manuscripts excluding this verse. The early church 100 years before the Nicene Creeds endorsement of it indicates that it was consistent with the rest of Scripture. Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage (200-258AD) quoted 1 John 5:7. The Vulgate Manuscript includes it and the Codex Monfortianus contains it.

DESCRIPTIONS OF GOD

The Old Testament descriptions of God are applied to Jesus. The strenuous monotheism of Judaism rejects that a man (Christ) could be designated with titles that only belong to God, yet throughout the New Testament Christ the Messiah is designated with diverse Divine attributes. The apostles to Israel acknowledged the uniqueness of Jesus in their writings.

The apostle to the Gentiles continued with the designated titles reserved for Jehovah God in reference to Christ.

HIS HUMANITY

While Jesus is and was God in the flesh, He identifies with humanity totally. Born of a woman, He became hungry, thirsty, needed to sleep, etc. The dichotomy between the man Jesus and His divinity is often highlighted by critics. The Kenosis Theory and the Hypostatic Union are theological terms to explain how the second person of the Trinity could retain His Divinity and yet be human. Jesus prays in the Garden of Gethsemane, ***“If it is possible let this cup pass from me, nevertheless, not my will (human) be done, but Your will (divine),”*** Mark 14:32. Surely, some may reason if Jesus is one with the Father their will would be aligned.

Christ’s prayer is a human representative prayer and any suggestion of His will being in contrast to God’s will needs to be understood in that context (Hebrews 4:14-16 ***“Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”***).

HOLY SPIRIT RECOGNISED

The attributes of God are ascribed to the Holy Spirit and the personal pronoun employed asserts His personality as the third person of the Trinity. Acts 5:3 & 4 ***“But Peter said, “Ananias,***

why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself? While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God.”

In 1 Corinthians 12:4-6 ***“There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all,”*** the Trinity is indicated in an ascending climax, in such a way that we pass from the Spirit that bestows gifts to the Lord Jesus Christ who is served by means of the gifts and finally to God (Father) the possessor of all powers work in us.

The Spirit of Life -Romans 8:2 ***“For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death”***

The Spirit of Truth -John 16:13 ***“ However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.”***

The Eternal Spirit – Hebrews 9:14 ***“How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?”***

Be born of the Spirit – John 3:8 ***“The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit.”***

The Spirit of God dwells in us – 1 Corinthians 3:16 ***“Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?,*** confirm His deity.

The Apostolic benediction of 2 Corinthians 13:14 ***“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen,*** all point to the attributes of deity possessed by the Holy Spirit. **IF** the spirit of man is man himself, then the Spirit of God must be God – 1 Corinthians 2:11 ***“For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God.”*** The so-called limitations of the Holy Spirit’s work under the Old Testament dispensation do not invalidate the deity of the Holy Spirit. John 7:39 ***“But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.”*** In essence means that the Holy Spirit as the Revealer of who Christ was could not fulfil His peculiar office until the atoning work of Christ and the Lord’s glorification.

ABRAHAM’S ENCOUNTER WITH THE DIVINE

In Genesis 22:11 ***“But the Angel of the Lord called to him from heaven and said, “Abraham, Abraham!” So he said, “Here I am,”*** and Genesis 22:16 ***“and said: “By Myself I have sworn, says the Lord, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son,”*** the “Angel of Jehovah” called unto him. The Old Testament references to the Angel of God or Angel of Jehovah associates the Angel of the Lord with deity. Genesis 22:15 ***“Then the Angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time out of heaven.”*** The Genesis 18 narrative again supports Abraham’s encounter with

the Divine. Was the personage who communicated with Abraham the Lord? Most scholars believe the Divine agency who interacted with the patriarchs and prophets of the Old Testament was the second person of the Trinity and the Angel of the Lord was the pre-incarnate Christ. Commonly considered the Angel of Jehovah was a theophany or self-manifestation of God. The appearance of the Angel of Jehovah seems to be a preliminary manifestation of the logos. The New Testament accounts of an angel seems to distinguish between the angel and an angel. The former being self-existent (aseity), the latter a created being – Matthew 1:20 ***“But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit,”*** and in Peter’s case an angel stood by him – Acts 12:7 ***“Now behold, an angel of the Lord stood by him, and a light shone in the prison; and he struck Peter on the side and raised him up, saying, “Arise quickly!” And his chains fell off his hands.”*** The Angel of the Lord received worship, an Angel of the Lord was not worshipped.

UNDIVIDED ESSENCE

The invisible essence of the Godhead belongs equally to each of the persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Each possesses all the substance and all the attributes of deity. The plurality of the Godhead is therefore, not a plurality of essence but a plurality of hypostatical or personal distinctions. God is not three and one, He is three in one.

DIVERSE FUNCTIONS

In our finite reasoning we have difficulty in processing the concept of three in one. The Trinity is not simply a partnership. God's nature is not abstract but organic. As in the organism of the body, the head, the feet and the arms make up the one body but have distinct functions, so the distinct function of the Trinity do not separate one from the other. On their own they would not be organically linked. The body is a complex rather than a simple organism. We are in error when we try to isolate one from the other. While the function of each differs, the function is not independent or separate from the other. We use words to articulate our understanding of concepts but too often words fall short of adequately expressing the complex dynamic of the Divine.

The Oxford Dictionary defines the term Godhead as God's Divine nature. Colossians 2:9 says, "***For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily***". The Godhead is the full and complete nature of God the Trinity.

Our local church "Articles of Faith" state the following from Articles 1-6 and may prove helpful:

1 UNITY

We affirm that the seven-fold unity expressed in Ephesians 4:1-7 is the Holy Spirit's doctrinal Statement for the Church that is the Body of Christ.

We recognise other doctrinal unity as given for the various programmes found in Scripture but we affirm that Eph. 4 stands alone as the doctrinal unity for the Church today.

2 SCRIPTURES

In keeping with orthodox belief, we affirm that the entire Bible written in the original languages is inerrant, verbally inspired by God and is of plenary authority (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:21).

3 GOD

We believe that there is but one living and true God (Deut. 6:4; 1 Cor. 8:4); an infinite, intelligent Spirit (John 4:24); perfect in all His attributes, one in essence, existing and subsistent in three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit (2 Cor. 13:14).

God the Father is the first person of the Trinity (1 John 5:7). He is the Creator of all things (Gen. 1:1-31). He is sovereign (Rom. 11:33). His Fatherhood denotes a spiritual relationship within the Trinity, secondly within mankind creatively and thirdly in spiritual relationship to all believers.

4 JESUS CHRIST

The Son, Jesus Christ, is the second person of the Trinity and possesses all divine attributes. He is co-equal and co-eternal with the Father (John 10:27-30). We teach that in His incarnation He surrendered the prerogatives of deity, but nothing of divine essence, either in degree or kind. His divine nature and human nature is an indissoluble union.

We teach that Jesus Christ was virgin born (Isaiah 7:14; Luke 1:26) and that through His merits and work of salvation, redemption is made possible to all who believe and receive His grace through faith.

The Lord's death was voluntary, vicarious, propitiatory, redemptive and substitutionary (Rom. 3:25; 5:8). We believe His resurrection from the dead was literal and physical and He ascended to the right hand of the Father where He ministers as our Advocate.

We teach that His resurrection from the dead confirmed His deity and guarantees our future resurrection (Rom. 1:4; 1 Cor. 15:22-23). He is the only Mediator between God and man (1 Tim. 2:5).

He is the Head of the Body, the Church (Eph. 1:22); He is the coming universal King who will reign on the Throne of David (Isaiah 9:6, 7; Luke 1:31, 32).

We teach the return of Christ to receive the Church as His Body unto Himself (1 Thess. 4:13-18) and that He will come again to judge all mankind.

5 HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit is a divine Person, eternal, possessing all the divine attributes and is co-equal with the Father and the Son (Acts 5:3-4). We believe the work of the Holy Spirit is to execute the divine Will of God. The broad scope of His divine activity

includes convicting the world of sin, of righteousness and judgement, glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ and transforming believers into Christ-likeness (2 Cor. 3:8; Eph. 2:22).

The Holy Spirit is the supernatural and sovereign agent in regeneration, baptising all believers into the Body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13). He indwells, empowers and has sealed all who believe, until the day of redemption (Rom. 8:9; 2 Cor. 3:6; Eph. 1:13).

Every believer possesses the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit from the moment of salvation, and it is the duty of all believers to be filled (controlled by the Holy Spirit moment by moment, Eph. 5:18).

We believe the Holy Spirit has bestowed gifts to the Church for the perfecting of the saints. Sign gifts and spiritual gifts must be distinguished. It is evident in Scripture that the sign gifts were given to manifest and reveal Christ as the Messiah both in His earthly ministry and through the delegated authority of the Apostles (Matt. 10:5-11; Mark 16; 1 Cor. 12,14; 1 Cor. 1:22; Acts 28:26-28; 1 Tim. 5:23).

It is evident in Scripture that the sign gifts continued to authenticate Apostleship until the complete revelation was given (2 Cor. 12:12; 1 Cor. 13:8-13). These texts indicate a functional change in the demonstration and purpose of the gifts. Therefore today only spiritual gifts are in operation and not sign gifts.

6. MANKIND

We teach that mankind was directly created by God in His image and likeness (Genesis 1:26; 2:15-25).

We teach that the purpose of man's creation was with the divine intention that he should glorify God, enjoy God's fellowship and live his life in the will of God. By this he shall accomplish God's purpose in the world (Isaiah 43:7; Col. 1:16; Rev. 4:11).

Adam's sin of disobedience to the Will and Word of God resulted in man losing his innocence. Mankind incurred the penalty of spiritual and physical death, became inherently corrupt and incapable of doing that which is acceptable to God apart from divine grace.

Man had no recuperative powers to enable him to recover himself. Man is hopelessly lost, apart from the salvation which is in the redemptive work of the Lord Jesus Christ (Gen. 2:16, 17; John 3:36; Romans 6:23; 1 Cor. 2:14; Eph. 2:1-3; 1 John 1:8).

We teach that all mankind, in the loins of Adam are partakers of his sin that has been transmitted to all humanity, Jesus Christ being the exception. All mankind is sinful by nature and by choice (Jer. 17:9; Rom. 3:9-18; Rom. 5:12).

Let God be true and everyman a liar. As it is written, “that you may be justified in your words and overcome when you are judged.”