THEOLOGY: THE ONENESS OF GOD

“Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord:” (Deuteronomy 6:4) The Bible emphatically declares in both the Old and New Testaments, the great truth, that there is only one true God (Exodus 15:11; Deuteronomy 4:35; I Kings 8:60; Isaiah 45:5; Zechariah 14:9; Mark 12:29-32; John 17:3; I Corinthians 8:4-6; I Timothy 2:5; James 2:19). To postulate more than one being who is infinite is illogical and inconceivable. The divine nature of God is neither undivided nor indivisible. God does not consist of parts nor can he be divided into parts. Many sects and cults have broken with the historical teaching of the first century Christian Church by failing to accept the doctrine of the oneness of God and have embraced two or more “persons” in the godhead.

The doctrine of the Oneness can be succinctly presented in two propositions:

There is one indivisible God with no distinction of persons; 2. Jesus Christ is all the fullness of the Godhead incarnate. All titles of Deity can be applied to him and all aspects of the divine personality are manifest in him.

Monotheism

At the core of Oneness Theology is the concept of radical monotheism. The basis of this concept is that God is absolutely and indivisibly one. There are no essential distinctions or divisions in his eternal nature. Differing from Trinitarian terminology, Oneness Theology posits that all the names and titles of the Deity, such as Elohim, Yahweh, Adonai, Father, Word and Holy Spirit refer to one and the same being. Any plurality associated with God is only a plurality of attributes, titles, roles, manifestations, modes of activity, or relationships to man. The basic historic position of Judaism is that, God is one. Both Oneness and Jewish believers find the classic expression of this belief in Deuteronomy 6:4. Numerous Old Testament scriptures, particularly in Isaiah, affirm strict monotheism and are interpreted literally to exclude any plurality in the Deity (Isaiah 43:10-11; 46:9) There is no Old Testament scripture which explicitly enunciates Trinitarian doctrine; one cannot derive it from an exegesis (explanation) of any Old Testament text. If “threeness” is an essential part of God’s nature, he did not reveal it to
his chosen people. If Trinitarianism is true, it stands totally unknown in the Old Testament, and has no biblical basis in the New Testament. If God is a trinity, then Abraham, the father of the faithful of all ages, did not comprehend the nature of the Deity he worshiped.

Oneness adherents provide the following explanations for Old Testament passages that Trinitarians reference as evidence of the trinity:

1. The use of the plural word Elohim does not denote a plurality of persons, but is a characteristic way to express greatness or majesty in the Hebrew language. (1)
2. The use of the divine plural in the phrase “Let us make man in our image” (Genesis 1:26) is the Hebrew idiomatic way of expressing deliberation as in Genesis 11:7; it is plural of Majesty, royal commands being conveyed in a first person plural, as in Ezra 4:18. (2)
3. References to the Son are prophetic of the man Christ, pointing to God’s future manifestation in flesh.
4. References to the Spirit of God, the Word of God, and the wisdom of God do not imply a plurality of persons any than when one speaks of the spirit, word, or wisdom of a man. (3)
5. All Old Testament theophanies can easily be seen as manifestations of the one omnipresent, omnipotent God. While the “angel of the LORD” is apparently a theophany in many passages, occasionally the phrase denotes a literal angel distinguished from God. (4)
6. Trinitarians often explain that the monotheistic passages used to show Oneness merely speak of perfect agreement and unity among the trinity, excluding a plurality of false deities but not a plurality of persons in the true God. But, neither the biblical writers nor their original audiences understood this to be so. Additionally, this position would foster polytheism, in that many distinct deities could exist in perfect agreement and harmony. (5)
7. Trinitarians emphasize that the Hebrew word used to describe God’s oneness is echad, which can mean in agreement. But this word can also mean “absolute numerical oneness” and is used several times in the Bible. It must be interpreted as such when it refers to God, or else it would not exclude polytheism as the passages in question clearly intend. To the extent that echad connotes a unity of plural things, it signifies the unity of God’s multiple attributes. (6)

Relative to the New Testament, Oneness proponents stress the importance of exegeting in light of context and culture. The original writers and speakers were strictly monotheistic Jews who had no thought of introducing a dramatic new revelation of plurality in the Godhead. Neither writers nor readers thought in trinitarian concepts, for both the doctrine and the terminology of the trinity had yet to been formulated. Several New Testament Scriptures affirm Old Testament monotheism, as the following scriptures show: “But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things” (1 Corinthians 8:6); “One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all” (Ephesians 4:6); “Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus clear the way for us to come to you” (1 Thessalonians 3:11).

“May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace
gave us eternal encouragement and good hope” (2 Thessalonians 2:16). The Bible attributes various works such as: the resurrecting of Christ’s body, the sending of the Paraclete (Holy Spirit), answering of prayers, resurrecting the dead, sanctifying of believers and such, to both the Father and to Jesus. Neither testament used the word trinity or associates the word three or persons with the Deity in any significant way. (7) The only passage to use the word person (hypostasis) in relation to God is Hebrews 1:3, which says the Son is the image of God’s own person – literally “substance”- not a separate person or substance. (8) Trinitarians concede that the doctrine of the trinity is a “great mystery; that it may appear to some as an intellectual puzzle or a contradiction.” (9) Oneness believers on the other hand, maintain that God’s oneness is no mystery but is clearly revealed in Scripture to those who will believe. For them, the true mystery of the Godhead is the Incarnation (1 Timothy 3:16), and that has been revealed.

The New Catholic Encyclopedia draws the following conclusions relative to the trinity: “There is the recognition on the part of exegetes and biblical theologians…that one should not speak of Trinitarianism in the New Testament without serious qualifications….New Testament exegesis in now accepted as having shown that not only the verbal idiom but even the patterns of thought characteristic of the patristic and conciliar development would have been quite foreign to the mind and culture of the New Testament writers.” (10) Similarly, Emil Brunner, a Protestant theologian wrote, “The doctrine of the Trinity itself, however, is not a biblical doctrine and this indeed not by accident by of necessity. It is the product of theological reflection upon the problem….The ecclesiastical doctrine of the Trinity is not only the product of genuine Biblical thought, it is also the product of philosophical speculation, which is remote from the thought of the Bible.” (11)

The Absolute Deity of Jesus Christ

In his book, Christ: The Theme of the Bible, Professor Norman Geisler, a trinitarian author, makes the following statement, “Jesus of the New Testament is the Jehovah of the Old Testament….Jesus is Jehovah, that is, the God of the Old Testament.” (12) In agreement with Geisler, oneness theologians identify Jesus Christ as the incarnation of the one God, based on a literal interpretation of Colossians 2:9-10 which states in reference to Christ, “For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority.” Therefore, all names and titles of the Deity, such as Yahweh, Father and Holy Spirit, genuinely apply to Jesus Christ. Jesus is not merely the incarnation of one person of the trinity, but rather the incarnation of all the character, quality, attributes and personality of the one indivisible God. (13) Oneness theologians assume that when New Testament writers called Jesus, God, they indeed were referring to the God of the Old Testament. For them, the one and only God of the Old Testament incarnated himself as Jesus Christ as reflected in second Corinthians 5:19 which states, “For God was in Christ, restoring the world to himself, no longer counting men's sins against them but blotting them out. This is the wonderful message he has given us to tell others.” W. A Criswell, a former president of the Southern Baptist Convention, in his Expository Sermons on Revelation, described the deity of Christ in terms identical to the Oneness position, for he stated: “I often wonder at people who think that in heaven they are going to see three Gods. If you
ever see three Gods, then what the Mohammedan says about you is true and what the Jewish neighbor says about you is true. You are not a monotheist, you are a polytheist. You believe in a multiplication of Gods, plural. “Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one God.” We know God as our Father, we know God as our Saviour and we know God by His Spirit in our hearts. But there are not three Gods.

The true Christian is a monotheist. There is one God. “I and my Father are one.” “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.” The Lord God is He that speaks. It is He that John saw when he turned around. The only God you will ever see is the Lord God whom John saw in the vision of the lampstands. The only God you will ever feel is the Lord God’s Spirit in your heart. The only God there is, is the great Father of us all. The one Lord God, Christ. In the Old Testament we call Him Jehovah. In the New Testament, the New Covenant, we call Him Jesus. The one great God, standing in authority and in judgment and in judicial dignity among His churches, here today, watching over us. “I saw one like [a great mystical symbol] unto the Son of man.” It is the very Lord God who is coming, for Christ Jesus is God of this universe. We are not going to see three Gods in heaven. Never persuade yourself that in glory we are going to look at God No. 1 and God No. 2 and God No. 3. No! There is one great Lord God. We know Him as our Father, we know Him as our Saviour, we know Him as the Holy Spirit in our hearts. There is one God and this is the great God, called in the Old Testament, Jehovah, and, incarnate, called in the New Testament Jesus, the Prince of heaven, who is coming.” (14)

As is shown below, Oneness adherents apply all the titles of Deity to Jesus Christ:

1. Jesus is Yahweh of the Old Testament. This is established by comparing Old Testament statements concerning Yahweh with New Testament statements to Jesus. For instance, in Isaiah 45:23 Yahweh said, “unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear,” however in Romans. 14:10-11 and Philippians 2:10-11, Paul applied this prophecy to Christ. The Old Testament describes Yahweh as the “Almighty”, “I Am”, “only Savior”, “LORD of lords”, “First and Last”, “only Creator”, “Holy One”, “Redeemer”, “Judge”, “Shepherd and Light”; yet in the New Testament all of these titles are given to Jesus Christ.
2. Jesus is the Father. This is established in Isaiah 9:6, there it says, “His name shall be called…The mighty God, the everlasting Father”. In John 10:30 it states, “I and my Father are one”. Jesus states in John 10:38, “The Father is in me, and I in Him”. Further, Jesus says in John 10:38, “He that hath seen me has seen the Father”. In John 14:18, Jesus promises not to leave his disciples comfortless (meaning, fatherless). In Revelation 21:6-7, Jesus is the Father of over comers.

3. The Holy Spirit is literally the Spirit that was in Jesus Christ. The Scriptures confirm that the Spirit that was in Christ was indeed the Holy Spirit as is evident from the following Scriptures: “The Spirit of truth…dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you” (John 14:17-18); “The Lord is that Spirit” (2 Corinthians 3:17). Further, the New Testament assigns the following works to Jesus and to the Holy Spirit: a. Moving on prophets of old; b. resurrection of Christ’s body; c. Work as the Paraclete; d. Giving words to believers in the time of persecution; e. Intercession; f. Sanctification; g. Indwelling of believers.

Lewis Smedes, a renowned trinitarian author and professor of theology and ethics at Fuller Theological Seminary, although not denying trinitarianism, stated the following: “The experience of the Spirit is the experience with the Lord. In the new age, the Lord is the Spirit…The Spirit is the ascended Jesus in His earthly action….The Spirit is Christ in His redemptive functions….This suggests that we do not serve a biblical purpose by insisting on the Spirit as a person who is separate from the person whose name is Jesus.” (15)

Oneness theologians identify Jesus as the “one” on the throne in heaven, by comparing the description of Him in Revelation 1 with that of the “one” on the throne in Revelation 4 and by noting that “God and the Lamb” is “one” being in Revelation 22:3-4. Bernard Ramm, a noted Baptist theologian and apologist, observes that Trinitarians are ambivalent as to whether they will see one divine being or three divine beings in heaven.

Father, Son, and Holy Ghost

Oneness adherents, without exception, believe in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (or Holy Ghost). However, we provide non-trinitarian definitions for these biblical terms. We posit: that the title of Father refers to God’s roles as father of all creation, father of the only begotten Son, and father of the born-again believer; that the title of Son refers to God’s incarnation, for the man Christ was literally conceived by the Spirit of God (Matthew 1:18-20; Luke 1:35); that the title of Holy Spirit describes the fundamental character of God’s nature. Spirituality forms the basis of his non-moral attributes and holiness forms the basis of his moral attributes. This title specifically refers to God in activity, particularly as it relates to his work in anointing, regenerating, and indwelling man.

Oneness affirms the multiple roles and works described by the terms Father, Son and Spirit. In opposition to trinitarianism, Oneness denies that the titles of Father, Son and Holy Spirit reflect any essential trinity or threeness of persons in God’s nature, essence and or substance and it affirms that all titles exist simultaneously in Christ. In His revelation to humanity: Father refers to God in family relationship to man; Son refers to
God incarnate; and Spirit refers to God in activity. The ability of God to act in three functions or roles should not surprise us. Just as an individual for example, can have three significant roles, functioning as: a father, a son and a brother, and yet be one person in every sense, God, who acts after the council of his own will has chosen to reveal himself to us in three ways, roles or functions.

From Scripture as we have shown, the divine nature of Jesus Christ the Son of God is identified as the Father and the Holy Spirit. Additionally we have seen that the Father and the Holy Spirit are identified as one and the same being. The term Holy Spirit is descriptive of the essence of the Father, for He is indeed the Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ the Son of God is not co-eternal with God because Bible states that he had a definite beginning as is seen in Luke 1:31-32, 35 which states: “You (Mary) will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David… The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.” From the above text the conception of Jesus it is clearly seen and the “Holy Spirit” is literally His Father.

Oneness theologians provide the following explanations of New Testament passages often used to demonstrate the existence of a trinity:

1. Passages used to denote plural references to the Father and the Son merely distinguish between Christ’s deity and humanity;
2. Similarly, plural references to God distinguish between various manifestations, attributes, roles, or relationships that the one God employs. Note the following examples: 2 Corinthians 13:4, describes three aspects, attributes, or works of God Similarly, 1 Peter 1:2 mentions the foreknowledge of God the Father, the sanctification of the Spirit, and the blood of Jesus. (16)
3. The baptism of Christ was not meant to introduce to the devout Jewish audience a radical, innovative doctrine of plurality in the Godhead, rather it signified the authoritative anointing of Jesus as the Messiah. A proper view of God’s omnipresence dispels any notion that the heavenly voice and dove require separate persons. (17)
4. Christ’s statement of “another comforter” in John 14 indicates a difference of “form” or “relationship”, in other words, Christ in Spirit rather than in flesh.
5. The unity of the man Jesus Christ with the Father is mentioned in John 17. It’s important to understand that as a man, Jesus was one with God in, purpose and will, and every Christian can similarly enjoy the same. But Jesus, being who he was – not only human – as other scriptures teach, was one with God in a manner that we cannot be, in that He was divine, the almighty God Himself.
6. The Scripture, in saying that Jesus is at the “right hand of God”, doesn’t indicate a physical positioning of two separate beings, because in his essence is God is a Spirit and does not have a body other than the one manifested by Christ. To view this in any other manner would postulate ditheism rather than the one God revealed in Scripture. This expression is idiomatic of Old Testament language to show that Christ possesses all the power, authority, and preeminence of God.
7. Typically Paul’s letters include a salutation such as: “Grace to you and peace from God
our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ” (Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:3; 2 Corinthians 1:2; Galatians 1:1: Ephesians 1:2; Philippians 1:2; Colossians 1:2; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:2; and more). This emphasizes the need to acknowledge not only God’s role as Father and Creator, but also God’s revelation in flesh as Jesus Christ. The Greek conjunction “kai” can mean “even,” therefore indentifying the Father and Jesus Christ as the same being. (18) In regards to the usage of kai in the New Testament, R. Bent Graves states the following: “The common word for “and” in the Greek New Testament is kai. However, kai is also the usual term for “even” or “that is.” Therefore, it very well may be significant that the New Testament greetings have kai between “Father” and “Lord Jesus Christ.” This means that a possible English translation would be: “Grace to you and peace from God our Father, even [kai] the Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 1:3). Although this translation may seem strange to some, the probability of its accuracy is high, particularly in light of the parallel passages like Jude 4, where the context proves that we are to understand kai as “even” or “that is.” in the Jude passage it is a certainty that the correct translation is: “the only Lord God, even [kai] our Lord Jesus Christ!” So we can accurately and faithfully translate the salutations in Paul’s epistles (letters) from Greek into English in a number of ways – all of which significantly bring out the oneness of our God. The important thing to appreciate is that the original language of the greetings, like so many New Testament passages, emphasize two roles of one Lord God and certainly not three persons of a trinity.” (19)

8. Additionally, the phrase, “the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” indicates a covenant relationship, similar to the phrase “the God of Abraham”. It serves to remind us of the promises Christ won as a sinless man, which are available from “the God of Jesus Christ” to those who have faith in Christ. (20)

9. The kenosis of Christ described in Philippians 2:6-8 does not mean Christ emptied Himself of attributes of deity such as omnipresence, omniscience, and omnipotence, for then Christ would be merely be a demigod. The Spirit of Christ retained all attributes of deity even while He manifested all of His character in flesh. In reference to his human life, this text only refers to the limitations Christ imposed upon himself. The kenosis was a voluntary surrender of glory, dignity, and godly prerogatives, not an abdication of his nature. The union of deity and humanity in Christ was equal with God and proceeded from God, but became humble and obedient unto death. (21)

10. In Revelation 5, the vision of the “One” on the throne and the “Lamb” is purely symbolic. The “one” on the throne represents all the Deity; the “Lamb” represents the Son in his human sacrificial role. (22) The Son. The term Son, is defined by Oneness proponents to mean the manifestation of the one God in flesh; the term can refer to the human nature of Christ; to the union of deity and humanity. For example, “the Son died”, or the “Son shall return to earth in glory.” Apart from God’s incarnation, the term Son can never be used in reference to deity alone. Oneness proponents reject the non-biblical term “God the Son”, the doctrine of the eternal Son, and the doctrine of the eternal begetting. The phrase “only begotten Son” does not refer to an inexplicable, spiritual generation of the Son from the Father, but to the miraculous conception of Jesus in the womb of the virgin Mary by the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:31, 35).

Hebrews chapter 1 gives illumination relative to the Sonship of God. A study of this chapter reveals the following: 1. That the Sonship of Jesus began Jesus come in the world. Hebrews 1:5 quotes Psalms 2:7, where Yahweh in speaking of the Son to come
says, “You are My Son, today I have begotten You.” Here Yahweh uses symbolic language as in Psalms 110:1, to foretell the two roles - of Father and Son - He would employ, when the Son was conceived and born. The last section of Hebrews 1:5 is quoted from 2 Samuel 7:14 where again, Yahweh is speaking and forth telling the coming of the Son. (23)

Giving additional commentary on Hebrews 1:5, R. Brent Graves states: “Most English translations leave out two important Greek words – eis, which is used two times in the verse. Eis has different meanings in the Greek New Testament, depending on its context. One of these meanings is “as,” according to the lexicon by Arndt and Gingrich, the standard lexicon for the Greek New Testament. Eis means “as” in Acts 10:4, where the NIV correctly translates it in the phrase “as a memorial offering.” In Hebrews 1:5, eis is used before “Son” and before “Father.” What makes this Greek term significant here is that it emphasizes the roles of God as Father and Son: “I will be to him as a Father, and He will be to me as a Son.” Hebrews 1:5-6 specifically tells us that the Son will be “conceived” and that the roles of Father and Son will begin when God “brings the firstborn into the world.” This is an obvious reference to the birth of Jesus.” (24)

Similarly in The New Testament: An Expanded Translation by Kenneth S. Wuest, Hebrews 1:5-6 is more properly translated utilizing “eis” as shown: “I will be to Him as a Father, and He himself shall be to me as a Son” 2. That the Son is both God (Elohim) and the LORD (Yahweh) Himself. Quoting from Psalms 45:6, Hebrews 1:8 calls “the Son” God. Psalms 45:6 states, “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever.” Because the Hebrew word for God in this text is, as well as many other places in the Old Testament, Elohim, Jesus Himself is identified as Elohim. In Hebrews 1:10, which quotes Psalms 102:25-27, the Son is called “Yahweh”; Psalms 102:25-27 states, “Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.”

Therefore, Hebrews 1:10 not only reveals the Son to be Yahweh, but also the Creator of all things. (25) 3. That after Jesus purged (made atonement) our sins by His sacrificial death, the risen, glorified Son sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. 4. That the Son is at the right hand of God until a certain time. 5. That although the Son will no longer be at the right hand of God after His enemies are subdued, His kingdom, as the kingdom of God, will last forever.

Additionally, in regards to the Son of God, several other factors are worth considering:

1. Jesus’ cry on the cross, “My God, my God why hast thou forsaken me?” is held by some to mean that the “Spirit of God departed form Jesus at the moment prior to his death. However, this view destroys the unity of Christ’s person, as well as undercuts the belief in His absolute Deity. Rather, it’s appropriate and consistent to view this as signifying the punishment Christ suffered as He took on the sins of the world, actually tasting death for all of humanity and feeling the complete separation from God that a sinner will feels.

2. God made the worlds by the Son, according to Hebrew 1:2. As previously discussed,
the Spirit (God) indwelt the Son, and was indeed the creator of the universe as stated in Genesis chapter 1. There is no inconsistency between Hebrews 1:2 and Genesis chapter 1 on this issue. It could also be said the God predicated the entire work of creation on the future manifestation of the Son. God by his omniscience knew that man would sin, and he also knew that through the Son man could be saved and fulfill His original purpose. In his book Is God a trinity?, John Miller states: “Though He did not pick up His humanity till the fullness of time, yet He used it, and acted upon it, from all eternity.”

3. The Son is called the firstbegotten or the firstborn in Hebrews 1:6. An Arian interpretation of this verse would say that God created a divine Son before He created anything else, but this is inconsistent with and rejected by Oneness theology. The Son is the firstborn in the sense of humanity:
   a. He is the first and only begotten Son in that He was conceived by the Spirit;
   b. The incarnation existed in the mind of God prior to the beginning and formed the basis for all subsequent actions;
   c. As a man, Jesus is the first to conquer sin and so is the firstborn of the spiritual family of God;
   d. As a man, Jesus is the first to conquer death and so is the firstborn of the resurrection;
   e. Just as the firstborn son has the position of preeminence, so it is that Jesus Christ is the head of all creation and of the church.

4. Jesus preexisted the Incarnation, not as the eternal Son, but as the eternal Spirit of God. The terminology expressing Son being sent from the Father simply indicates that the Father enacted his preexisting plan at a certain point in history, and that the Son was divinely appointed to accomplish a certain task. This can be seen in the terminology pertaining to the birth of John the Baptist, for the Scripture says of him, “There was a man sent from God”, but as we know, John did not preexist his arrival into this world (John 1:6). (26)

5. In that Christ prays, one sees the struggle of his human will as it submits to the divine will. These prayers represent Christ praying from His human self-consciousness not form His divine, by definition God does not need to pray (If these examples demonstrate a plurality of persons, then it follows that they establish the subordination of one person to the other, in in opposition to the Trinitarian doctrine of co- equality). (27) 6. In cases where conversation, communication or expression of love occurs between Father and Son, it must be understood as communication between the eternal God and the man Christ (If used to demonstrate a distinction of persons, they would establish separate centers of consciousness in the Godhead, in essence polytheism, which Oneness adherents soundly reject).

The Logos

The Logos (Word) of John chapter one is not equivalent to the title Son in Oneness theology as compared to Trinitarian theology. In Oneness theology, the Son is limited to the Incarnation, but the Logos is not. For Oneness adherents, the Logos is God’s self expression, “His means of self-disclosure,” or God uttering Himself.” (28) Prior to the Incarnation, the Logos was the unexpressed thought, plan and incomprehensible mind of God which incorporates His omniscience and predestination. The Logos was in the beginning with God, not as a separate person, but the very God Himself, as thought and word pertains to, belongs to and is inseparable from any individual. At the appropriate
time God put “flesh” on the Logos - manifesting Himself in flesh (1 Timothy 3:16).
Theology of the Name Oneness believers place strong emphasis on the name of God as revealed and expressed in the Scriptures; as previously discussed, names in biblical times carried great significance. The name of God is especially revered as it represents His presence, character, power and authority. The revealed name of God in the New Testament takes precedent and supersedes all prior revealed names of God. The revealed name of God in the New Testament is, JESUS (Matthew 1:21, 23; Isaiah 9:6; 1 Timothy 3:16; Phillipians 2: 9-10).

While trinitarians see the name Jesus as the human name of God the Son, Oneness believers see it as the redemptive name of God in the New Testament, which carries with it the power and authority need by the church. (29) Oneness adherents appropriate the following New Testament passages in substantiation of their position: “There is salvation in no one else! Under all heaven there is no other name for men to call upon to save them” (Acts 4:12). “All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.” (Acts 10:43) “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;” (Phillipians 2: 9-10). “And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.” (Colossians 3:17). “If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.” (John 14:14).

The first century church understood the importance, power and authority of the name Jesus, as they preached, prayed, taught, healed the sick, cast out demons, performed miracles and baptized in the name of Jesus.

Notes: