

What Is The “Jesus Only” Theory?

Bible Answers About Denominations

There are only three separate and distinct groups, to my knowledge, which subscribe to the view ‘There is only one person in the Godhead – namely, Jesus Christ.’ These are, “The United Pentecostal Church,” “The Church of the First-born,” and the “Pentecostal Assemblies of Jesus Christ.” While minor differences obtain among them regarding other issues, their position is the same touching the nature of the Godhead.

It is the view of the “Oneness” people that Jesus alone constitutes the Godhead. The various names designating the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are nothing more than titles of the same person and thus applicable only to Him. This theory takes on a practical aspect from the fact that its proponents teach that baptism—water baptism—is to be administered in the name of Jesus only; by which they mean that it is not to be administered “into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit,” as Christ commanded in the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20). When they are confronted with the fact that it was the Lord Jesus Christ Himself who commanded that baptism be in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, they reply that inasmuch as Jesus is God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit—all in one—baptism in the name of Jesus (baptism administered under this “formula”) is, in reality, in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit!

In the “Foreword” of the United Pentecostal Church manual, we find their claim to have had an outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the workers who began their movement. Still further in their manual, and thirteen years after the claimed reception of the Holy Spirit, we find this: “In the year 1914 came the revelation on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. The pivotal doctrines of the absolute deity of Jesus Christ and the baptism in his name became tenets of faith.” (Foster, Fred J. Think It Not Strange: A History of the Oneness Movement (St. Louis: Pentecostal Publishing House, 1965, p. 55). Please note the basis of this doctrine was the claim of a revelation on the subject. It had not been a tenet of faith prior to this, and this simply states that while it had not been doctrine, now it is doctrine. This fact alone condemns the practice because condemnation of the Lord is upon any who will not abide in the doctrine of Christ (2 Jno. 9), and Jesus said that worship is vain if men teach as doctrine that which is based upon man (Matt. 15:9). Furthermore, the Scriptures are crystal clear that God, through the Scriptures, has furnished man completely unto every good work (2 Tim. 3:16, 17) nearly two thousand years ago. Peter also said, that God had provided all things pertaining to life and godliness through the knowledge of Jesus Christ (2 Pet. 1:3). Why would God wait nearly two thousand years to give this revelation to these “Oneness” people? Are the passages in 2 Tim. 3:16, 17 and 2 Pet. 1:3 wrong?

The “Oneness” people like to quote Jesus when He said, “I and the Father are one” (John 10:30) and argue that Jesus stated that He and the Father are one.” Until it has been shown that by this Jesus intended to teach that He and the Father are one person the relevancy of the passage has not been

established. A man and his wife are one, but not one person! If such were so, when a man gets sick, his wife could take the medicine, and he'd get well! Jesus said, "For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh"? (Matt 19:5). That is, they would be one in purpose, end and aim, but still "two". In the same way God, Christ and the Holy Spirit are one in purpose, end and aim but not one person.

The word God simply means deity, from the Greek theos, God. The Scriptures ascribe deity to all the persons in the Godhead (Acts 17:29; Rom. 1:20; Col. 2:9): The Father is called God (I Cor. 8:6); the Son is called God (Jno. 1:1); the Holy Spirit is called God (Acts 5:3, 4). Deity is the essence of God; all possess this deity; hence, all are God. This is why in Genesis 1:1: the word for God is elohim which is the plural form of El (God). All three were involved in the creation of all things and this is why we read, "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness:" (Gen 1:26).

The writer of Hebrews deals a death blow to this "oneness" position where we are told that God (one person) now speaks through His Son (one person) and that Jesus (one person) is the brightness of God's (one person) glory, and the express image of God's (one person) person. In this passage we find TWO PERSONS in the Godhead and that Christ (one person) sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high (another person)! ONE PERSON, then, sat down on the right hand of THE SECOND PERSON! There is no conflict here regarding the doctrine of ONE GOD; "God is a Spirit" (Jno. 4:24), and these verses do not speak of HUMAN PERSONS. This answers many of the arguments they tend to make on this point. There is but one God, but THREE possessing the nature of deity.

Jesus clearly speaks of three in the Godhead when He said, "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you" (John 14:16-17). Please notice: Christ – "I will pray" -the Father will give or send – the Spirit of truth another comforter. Why did Jesus pray if He were the Father and why did He speak of another Comforter if Jesus was already that Comforter?

Now notice briefly some other passages: Jesus often declared He would ascend to the Father (Jno. 14:28). If Jesus is the Father why did He have to ascend to go to the Father? The Father knows some things the Son does not know (Mk. 13:32). If the Father and the Son are the same person, then does not the Son know some things He does not know? In the prayer that Jesus taught His disciples to pray He said they should pray, Our Father which art in heaven....? If Jesus is the Father, was not the Father on earth, at that very time, and not in heaven? The seven unities of Ephesians 4, necessitates the conclusion that each member of the Godhead is distinct from the other. "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all" (Eph 4:4-6). Much more of this same type of evidence is available, but this should suffice to show the absurdity of the position that would seek to identify as one person all three members of the Godhead.

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