

# Focus on the Kingdom

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Anthony Buzzard, editor

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## 25th Theological Conference

April 28-May 1, 2016

Calvin Center, Hampton, GA

Please join us for our annual gathering of passionate Kingdom and biblical unitarian believers. We will have a full schedule of speakers, as well as your “faith stories.” We really need you to be there as a blessing for us all. The Abrahamic promise is that the seed of Abraham would not only be blessed but be a blessing.

**Conference rates per person**—inc. 3 nights, 9 meals

	Single	Double (per person)
<b>Hotel-style room</b> (2 beds with private bath, sheets/towels)	\$415	\$260
<b>Bunkbed room</b> (6 per room with bath) <i>We can assign roommates</i>	\$185 per person +\$15 for sheets and towels or bring your own	

Please note that there are **only 24 hotel-style rooms available**, so please register early. First come, first served! There are also hotels 15 minutes away by car (see list at [theologicalconference.org](http://theologicalconference.org)). If not staying at Calvin Center, the conference price including meals (except breakfasts) is **\$85 per person**.

Three ways to register:

1. Online at [theologicalconference.org](http://theologicalconference.org)
2. Mail the form on the back page
3. Call Atlanta Bible College at 800-347-4261

**Registration deadline: April 8, 2016**

### Airport Transportation

We will provide transportation between Atlanta airport and Calvin Center for \$25 round-trip or \$15 one-way, at the following times:

Airport to Calvin Center		
Thurs. April 28	2:00 pm	4:00 pm
Calvin Center to Airport		
Sun. May 1	1:00 pm	

Please arrange your arrival time on Thursday early enough to catch one of the two shuttle runs. On Sunday, May 1 we will provide **only 1** shuttle run. In order to allow you enough time to catch your return flight, we suggest you not book your return flight prior to 3:30 pm.

The conference begins with registration at 4 pm on Thursday and ends with lunch on Sunday. Driving directions to Calvin Center are at [calvincenter.org](http://calvincenter.org). The address is 13550 Woolsey Rd., Hampton, GA 30228.

## Luke’s Understanding of Jesus’ Origin as Son of God

Luke, the physician, was a careful historian and shrewd observer. He was an ardent disciple and evangelist of apostolic Christianity. As he explained in the introduction to his first volume, he deliberately set out to investigate and document the Christian faith as he knew it, by consulting firsthand witnesses who had known Jesus (Luke 1:1-4). In his second volume, the book of Acts, Luke implies that he had spent much time in the company of Paul as they traveled together. It would be quite extraordinary if Paul and Luke were divided over the issue of the origin of Jesus. In his account of the miracle of Jesus’ birth through virginal conception, he makes no mention whatever of Jesus having previously existed. His record describes the miraculous conception of a human person who comes into being in the womb of his mother. Luke wrote two whole volumes of the Bible (contributing more of the New Testament than any other writer) without so much as a hint of belief in a preexistent second member of a Trinity. When the angel Gabriel announced the arrival of the long-promised Messiah to Mary, he informed her that she would “bear a son, and name him Jesus. He will be great...and the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David” (Luke 1:31, 32). Gabriel spoke of a *future* greatness to be gained through divine appointment to the throne of Jesus’ celebrated ancestor. There was no indication from the angel that Mary was to carry in her body one who had preexisted as God or a superior angel. The good news was that she was to conceive and bear a son, who would thus be the Son of God as well as the son of David. The faith of Luke, and of the Christian community for which he wrote, could hardly be more clearly defined.

Luke recorded the fact that Mary’s son was to be conceived (actually, fathered) in a miraculous way, by a special divine intervention: “Holy spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason indeed [*dio kai*] the holy child [lit. *the holy thing begotten*] will be called the Son of God” (Luke 1:35). There is no word of an “eternal Sonship” here; simply the promise that her offspring would be called Son of God *because of the miracle which God would perform in her* (cp. Matt. 1:20) — a miracle which would involve the One God directly in the begetting and birth of a unique human being, Israel’s

promised Messiah. This is the beginning of the New Creation.

We are presented in these verses, on the authority of God's emissary, with a plain statement about the origin (Matt. 1:18, "origin") of Jesus as Son of God. The miraculous conception in Mary, according to Luke, was the immediate cause of the divine Sonship of Jesus. It is "*for that reason precisely*" (Luke 1:35) — the conception by Mary through the power of God's Holy Spirit — that Jesus was to be called the Son of God. A French commentator on this passage nicely renders the Greek, *dio kai*, as "*c'est précisément pourquoi*" ("that is precisely why," "for that reason indeed") he shall be called the Son of God.<sup>1</sup> It doesn't get any clearer than that.

It is not difficult to see that Luke's view of Jesus' Sonship is at variance with the traditional idea that one who *already existed* as God and Son of God had entered the womb of Mary. If this were so, the conception of Jesus would *not* be the cause of Jesus' divine Sonship. He would have been the Son of God already. Alfred Plummer makes an honest appraisal of Luke's account of Jesus' beginning: "The title 'Son of the Most High' (1:32) expresses some close relationship between Jesus and Jehovah **but not the divine Sonship of the Trinity.**"<sup>2</sup> The author calls our attention to the fact that Christians are also called "sons of the Most High" (Luke 6:35), but this does not make them eternally preexistent beings. It is only under the influence of later doctrinaire Trinitarian thinking and a distortion of the Hebrew usage of the title "Son of God" that many read into Luke's account a "God, the Son" unknown to Luke.

For Luke, Jesus, Son of God, *begins to exist* in the womb of Mary — "conception is **causally** related to divine sonship."<sup>3</sup> Jesus was begotten as Son of God at his conception. Luke did not think that Jesus had had a pre-human life. Luke, therefore, could not have been a believer in the Triune Godhead.

Raymond Brown makes reference to theologians who "try to avoid the **causal** connection 'therefore...' in Luke 1:35, by arguing that the conception of the child does *not* bring the Son of God into being." Brown finds himself unable to agree with them. What Brown has disclosed is simply the reluctance of the average Bible student to admit that Scripture, in this critical matter of the origin and nature of Jesus, does not agree with what he or she has accepted as truth without careful examination.

<sup>1</sup> S. Lyonnet, "L'Annonciation et la Mariologie Biblique," in *Maria in Sacra Scriptura*, 1967, 4:59-72.

<sup>2</sup> *Gospel According to S. Luke, International Critical Commentary*, p. 23.

<sup>3</sup> Raymond Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah*, p. 291.

If the conclusions of the Nicene and the later Chalcedonian Councils were complex and confusing, the account of Luke is quite the opposite. According to him, Jesus was a human person deriving existence and personality from his mother, Mary, herself a descendant of David. If he were not a fully human person, how could he be the promised Messiah, the seed (descendant) of Abraham and David? How could a person who has existed from eternity be a descendant of David in any meaningful sense? Trinitarian views of Jesus seem to eliminate his descent from David, and thus his claim to be the Messiah. The Trinity undermines Messiahship. Messiah must be a lineal descendant of David (Ps. 132:10-12).

Would the concept of a second Person in the Godhead, a preexistent divine being becoming a helpless fetus in the womb of his mother, Mary, while all the time retaining his Godhood, have made any sense to Luke? If some special God-given revelation had been granted to anyone, Paul, Peter or Mary, with whom Luke must have checked thoroughly before composing his story of the foundations of the original faith, would he not have made some slight mention of this momentous event? We must remember that Trinitarian teaching officially maintains that Jesus possessed "impersonal human nature" (the doctrine known technically as "anhypostasia"), but that he was *not a human person*. That denial stems logically from the mistaken premise that Jesus is God, an eternal member of the Triune Godhead. The argument is this: If the ego of Jesus, the single center of his personality, is God, it must follow that the human element in him cannot be another ego or self. Thus it must be said that his humanity is really "impersonal human nature." To say that Jesus had a second human ego would make him two persons.

All of this extraordinary complexity is unknown to any writer of Scripture. It is significant that Gabriel, Luke and Matthew, dealing with the origin of Jesus, take no notice at all of the supposed eternal preexistence of the Son of God who became man, and are unaware of any complexities about the humanity of the Savior. Judged by today's religious standards and the opinions of many theologians, Gabriel, Luke, and Matthew were most unorthodox and might even be accused of being non-Christian! By no means use the gospel of John, wrongly, to contradict Matthew and Luke. ✧

**To our international readers:** If you are able and willing to receive *Focus on the Kingdom* by **email** each month (and save us postage), please send an email to **anthonybuzzard@mindspring.com** or sign up at [www.restorationfellowship.org](http://www.restorationfellowship.org) with your name and email address.

## Adoni and YHVH

There is a very careful and important distinction in the Hebrew Scriptures between YHVH, the only God, and ADONI אֲדֹנָי (my lord) which is never (all 195 occurrences) a reference to Deity. *Adoni* designates a human superior and sometimes an angel, but never God. This proves that in Psalm 110:1, the one who is *adoni*, my lord, cannot be God, which would make two Gods! In Joshua 5:14 an angel appears and is addressed as *adoni*. In Judges 6:13, Gideon speaks to the angel who is distinct from YHVH. Gideon addresses the angel as *adoni*, my lord. So also in Zechariah 1:9, the angel is addressed as *adoni*, my lord. To examine this important subject it is essential to know that 450 times the Lord God, the One God, is *Adonai*, never *adoni*.

195 times a non-Deity figure is *adoni*, my lord. So we all have **645 opportunities** to see this easy difference. Some on the internet attempt to confuse all this by pointing to Psalm 110:5 where YHVH (*Adonai*) is at the right hand of the Messiah. This is deliberately the reverse position from verse 1 of Psalm 110. There are several passages where *Adonai* (YHVH) can be at the right hand of a human to assist him. In Psalm 109:31 you find just this picture. See also Isaiah 63:12; Psalm 73:23; 16:8; 121:5.

So the rule is very clear: *adoni* never means Deity and *Adonai* is a reference to the One God. Of course we should also know that the angel of the LORD brings the presence of God with him. God is revealed in the angel. The angel, in whom the name of God resides, speaks for GOD but is not GOD. The angel is still an angel. God is said to appear in him, but no one sees God face to face. As the *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* states (what is obvious):

“The form **ADONI** (‘my lord’), a royal title (1 Sam. 29:8), is to be **carefully distinguished** from the divine title **ADONAI** (‘Lord,’ long vowel) used of Yahweh” (“Lord,” p. 157).✧

A preacher recently wrote these three statements on Facebook:

*“What is the purpose of Jesus’ birth? His death.  
What is the purpose of His death? His resurrection.  
What is the purpose of his resurrection? Our salvation.”*

**But Jesus said, “I must preach the Kingdom of God to the other cities also, for I was sent for this purpose” (Luke 4:43).**

**“By his knowledge, the righteous one, my servant, will justify the many” (Isa. 53:11).**

**“The Son of God has come and has given us understanding” (1 John 5:20).**

## Apostolic! In Every Way?

Anonymous

*I am a Pentecostal, and I am not ashamed*

*Just read the book of Acts*

*We are still the same*

*We worship only one God*

***Jesus is His Name***

*We are Apostolic in every way*

Above is a popular refrain sung in Apostolic Oneness churches. Well, am I Pentecostal? Yes! Am I ashamed of this fact? No! Do I worship one God? Yes! What is His Name? *Jesus is His Name!! Really??* Hmm!

You see if one is truly Apostolic according to the book of Acts **one would never write line 5!** Why? Because this is not the *same* understanding as the Apostles of the Book of Acts!

Let’s look at the evidence:

On the Day of Pentecost, Peter said nothing about *God being Jesus or God’s name being Jesus!* Paul came along later and again said nothing in the Book of Acts like *God is Jesus or Jesus is God’s name!*

The truly *Pentecostal* Peter proclaimed in Acts 2:22-24 that “Jesus of Nazareth was **a man** attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through him in your midst...He was **crucified and slain...but God raised him up.**” “God made him *lord*” (Acts 2:36) according to the prophecy spoken of in Psalm 110:1 (the most quoted OT verse in the NT).

Saul (yet to be named Paul) having his eyes opened according to the Book of Acts, **“immediately began to preach** the Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God” (Acts 9:20).

In Acts 14:6ff when Paul and Barnabas were in Lycaonia, God used Paul to do a miracle in healing a lame man who had never walked. The Lycaonians were overjoyed. It took a while before Paul and Barnabas realized what the commotion was about. When Paul and Barnabas did perceive what was happening, they rebuked the Lycaonians immediately, saying, “Sirs, why are you doing these things? We are also men of the same nature as you, and preach the gospel to you that you should turn from these vain things **to the living God,**<sup>4</sup> who made

<sup>4</sup> Paul criticized the theology of the Lycaonians and told them to turn from these vanities **to the living God.** The following passage clearly shows the Apostolic mindset of Paul in regard to the living God and Jesus: “For they themselves report about us what kind of a reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols **to serve the living and true God;** and to wait for **his Son** from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, that is **Jesus,** who rescues us from the wrath to come” (1 Thess. 1:9-10).

heaven and the earth and the sea and all that is in them” (Acts 14:15).

So what was it that the Lycaonians were saying to warrant such a rebuke?

Answer: They were calling them “gods,” that is, they called Barnabas Jupiter (Greek name: Zeus) and called Paul Mercury (Greek name: Hermes, Acts 14:12). The Lycaonians proclaimed, “**The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men**” (Acts 14:11).

Acts 14:11 is describing *Incarnation!* Incarnation was a well-established teaching as part of the ancient Greeks’ beliefs in their mythological (i.e. false) gods.

Let’s be honest! Every Oneness preacher knows that this situation would have been a golden opportunity to proclaim *who Jesus is*, *IF* the Apostles were indeed *Oneness!*<sup>5</sup> This would have been the perfect opportunity to proclaim: “*There is solely ONE GOD who has come down to us in the likeness of men and His Name is JESUS!*”

Again I say, *IF the Apostles were Oneness*, surely this would have been the perfect opportunity to proclaim the above! However they said no such thing! In fact, **they didn’t even mention Jesus at all! Selah!**

What was the Apostles’ response? “Turn from these vain things [i.e. repent] **to the living God,**” the Creator of all things.

What gives? I thought the Apostles were Oneness! Acts 14:14-18 is *not* a Oneness response! I will call this “Witness No. 1.”

Let’s look at another witness: Acts chapter 17 verses 15 onwards — Paul at Mars’ Hill/Areopagus/Athens.

Paul is about to proclaim who THE UNKNOWN GOD is! In other words he is about to make known to the crowd at Mars’ Hill who THE UNKNOWN GOD is!

Again, let’s be honest. Any Oneness preacher given *that opportunity* would make it very clear that *there is solely ONE GOD and His Name is Jesus!* Right?

So what did the truly *Apostolic* Paul say?

“The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth [cp. Matt 11:25, Luke 10:21], does not dwell in temples made with hands, nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all people life and breath and all things; and He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth,

<sup>5</sup>In this article I am dealing specifically with the *Oneness* doctrine; however the facts show equally that the *Trinity* doctrine is unscriptural. God can only be *one being, one Person* according to Deut. 6:4. This was Jesus’ understanding as well as all believing Jews of biblical times: “The scribe said to him, ‘Right, teacher, you have truly stated that **God is one, and there is no other but Him**’” (Mark 12:32). In short, Trinitarianism has never worked and never will!

having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation, that they would seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though he is not far from each one of us; for in him we live and move and have our being; as even some of your own poets have said, ‘For we also are his children.’ Being then the children of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and thought of man. Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that **all people everywhere should repent**, because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness **through a man** whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men **by raising him from the dead.**’ Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some began to sneer, but others said, ‘We will hear you again concerning this’” (Acts 17:24-32).

Huh!

**The name Jesus is not even mentioned! He is referred to as “a MAN” whom the ONE GOD, the Creator, the Lord of heaven and earth raised from the dead and ordained to be the judge of mankind.**

There is simply no mention that *Jesus is God*, much less that his name is the name of the One God! Again, the name Jesus is not mentioned at all. Paul, who is undoubtedly an Apostle, *obviously is not Oneness at all!* *Selah!* Witness No. 2.

“By the mouth of two or three witnesses every fact may be confirmed.”

So my dear reader, this is the decision by God’s grace that we all have to make. It is *not* about defending a cherished doctrine or an ideology regardless of *how scripturally sound or how biblical* it may appear. **Rather it is about truth!**

Jesus prayed, “**Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth.** As You sent me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they themselves might also be sanctified through the truth. I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but **for those also who believe in me through their word**” (John 17:17-20).

He prayed that we all ought to believe in Jesus *according to the Apostles’ word*. And when we examine the Apostles’ words, they say **NOTHING** about either *Jesus being God or Jesus being the name of the one God*.

“Simon Peter answered, ‘**You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.**’ And Jesus said to him, ‘Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but **my Father who is in heaven**’” (Matt. 16:16-17).

“All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father; nor

does anyone know the Father except the Son, and **anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal him**" (Matt 11:27).

Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God revealed himself to his disciples, and in turn the Apostles declared **the truth** throughout the Book of Acts, declaring *who Jesus is as well as the truth about the one God*.

It ought to be obvious then that the Apostles believed that there is solely one God who is the Creator of heaven and earth and all things (Acts 4:24; 14:15; 17:24), who raised the man Jesus of Nazareth from the dead (Acts 2:22-24, 32; 4:10) and made this same Jesus both *lord and Christ* who now is at the right hand of the one God (Acts 2:34-36).

The one God is the same *God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob* of the Old Testament who now in the New Testament has glorified His servant Jesus (Acts 3:13).

When one indeed "faces the facts and looks at the Book of Acts" (another common saying in Oneness circles), it becomes apparent that the Apostles were **not Oneness at all! They did not believe Jesus was the Father or the name of the Father!** Rather they proclaimed a clear distinction between the One God, the Father, and the man Jesus of Nazareth, the lord Messiah (1 Tim. 2:5). ✧

## The Hebrew Word for One Means One

**F**aced with a traditional creed which contradicts the strict unitary monotheism of Jesus and of the Bible, some believers in Jesus as Messiah have felt compelled to find a way to justify their departure from Jesus' creedal monotheism. This has led to one of the most bizarre exercises in the distortion of simple words known, I suppose, to the history of ideas. It needs to be exposed as a bizarre venture in twisting the straightforward terminology by which the God of the Bible declares that He is one single Person.

The assault on common sense, simple language facts, and biblical authority we are speaking of has to do with the Hebrew word *echad*, which is the cardinal number "one." In counting to three in Hebrew one says "*echad, shnayim, shalosh*."

Extraordinary verbal acrobatics have been performed with the word *echad* by some Trinitarians, in an effort to convince the public that "one" does not mean "one." It is a tactic of desperation. It takes in only those who are not alert to the meaning of simple words. The obstruction of the straightforward meaning of the Hebrew *echad* (one) must rank amongst one of the most amazing pieces of bogus propaganda found in theological writing.

We cite one example. Professor James Boice attempted to find good reasons in the Hebrew Bible for believing that God is three in one. He wrote:

"It has been argued that because Deut. 6:4 reads 'Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD' that the Trinity is excluded. But in this very verse the word for 'one' is *echad* which means not one in isolation but one in unity. In fact, the word is never used in the Hebrew Bible of a stark singular entity. It is the word used in speaking of one bunch of grapes, for example, or in saying that the people of Israel responded as one people. After God has brought his wife to him, Adam says, 'This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore a man leaves his father and mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh' (Gen 2:23-24). Again the word is *echad*. It is not suggested that the man and woman were to become one person, but rather that in a divine way they do become one. In a similar but not identical way God is one God, but also existent in three 'persons.'"<sup>6</sup>

The statement proposed by Professor Boice about the meaning of *echad* is completely untrue. *Echad* occurs 970 times in the Hebrew Bible and it is the numeral "one." It means "one single." It is a numeral adjective, the ordinary word for "one" functioning very much like our English numeral "one." The Hebrew for eleven is "one (*echad*) plus ten."

Some unsuspecting readers have been bamboozled into the fraudulent argument that because "one" in English or Hebrew can *modify a collective noun*, then the word "one" itself must be "collective"! One can think of humorous ways of exposing this trick. Does "one" mean "one single" in the phrase "one loaf of bread" and yet *more than one* in the phrase "one loaf of *sliced* bread"? Does the word "one" mean "black and white" in the phrase "one zebra"? We trust that the point is clear. One tripod is still one tripod, despite the three legs in the tripod. It is the noun, in these examples, which contains the idea of plurality (three legs), while the word "one" maintains, thankfully, the stable meaning of "one single." One tripod is a single tripod. One Lord in the Bible does not mean two or three Lords. The meaning of "one" is precisely the same in "one rock" and "one family." The numeral adjective "one" is not affected in any way by the collective noun family.

According to numerous websites and even a number of textbooks, the combination "one bunch," we are invited to think, shows that "one" means more than one, so called "compound one," or "composite one." The mistake is quite obvious. "One bunch" is still in Hebrew and English *one* bunch and not two or more bunches! It is nonsense to suppose that the word "one" has altered its meaning when it modifies a collective noun. It is *the noun*

<sup>6</sup> J. M. Boice, *The Sovereign God (Foundations of the Christian Faith, Vol. 1)*, p. 139.

which is collective and gives us the sense of plurality. The word “one” is fixed and unchanged in meaning in both “one pencil” and “one bunch.” The numerical adjective, “one,” retains its meaning always as “one single.” When Adam and Eve are “one flesh,” they are not two or more “fleshes”! One still means one. The combining of Adam and Eve as “one flesh” has not altered the meaning of “one” (*echad*).

On this amazing piece of verbal trickery Christians have been lured into thinking that in the phrase “one God” the word “one” imparts some sort of plurality to the word God. This is completely unfounded. Imagine the confusion which would ensue if when we present our one dollar purchase at the check-out counter, we are told that “one” is really “compound one.” Thus the item costs three (or more) dollars! A collective noun is clearly made up of a number of items. But the word “one” which stands before it is not in any way changed by its proximity to the collective noun. However, the unwary have been taken in by the most amazing assertions that *echad* tells us that God is *more than one!*

Professor Boice’s assertion that *echad* “in fact is never used of a stark singular entity” cannot possibly have been checked by that author. One suspects that it is a piece of misinformation passed on mindlessly as dogma. It has, however, no basis in fact.

How would the proponents of one as “compound one” explain Nehemiah 11:1: “one [*echad*] out of ten.” Or “one [*echad*] day or two” (Ezra 10:13); “Two are better than one [*echad*” (Ecc. 4:9); “If two lie down together they keep warm, but how can one alone [*echad*] keep warm?” (Ecc. 4:11); “Where alone [*echad*] man may be overcome, two together may resist” (Ecc. 4:12). The rest of the 970 appearances of *echad* might be cited to make the same point.

Ignoring this massive evidence for the meaning of the word “one” as “one single, “one alone,” Robert Morey says that *echad* means “a compound of unified oneness...If the authors of the Bible were unitarians, we would not expect to find *echad* applied to God.”<sup>7</sup> The facts are precisely the opposite. *Echad* always means “one single” and it is applied to God who is a single Person. Morey invites his readers to imagine that “one” means more than one. He cites some examples: “one day” (Gen. 1:5). The word “one” refers to compound oneness, because the day combines morning and evening! The truth is that the word one means “one (day)” and not two or more days. A congregation of 42,000 can of course be described as “as one.” But the word “one” means just as much “one and not two” as in every one of its occurrences.

The idea that the word *yachid* would be the only word suitable to describe a unitarian God is false. *Yachid* in Scripture is very rare and has associations like “lonely” or “solitary” which are not appropriate for God. *Echad* itself is the mathematical term meaning one and it is sometimes rendered properly as unique or alone. Professor Boice’s extraordinary assertion that *echad* never means anything other than “compound one” raises my suspicions as to how far people will go to force their view of God on to Scripture. When a contemporary author, John Blanchard, cited uncritically Boice’s misinformation on the meaning of *echad*, I wrote to him and received the following gracious reply:

“Following our recent correspondence I have taken theological and academic advice, and it seems clear that in the final paragraph on page 450 of *Does God Believe in Atheists?* my comments on the Hebrew word *echad* are inaccurate. I am very grateful to you for pointing this out, and assure you that in the future printings of the book the paragraph will be replaced by one that uses other Old Testament arguments for the plurality of Yahweh’s being. Thank you again for preventing that particular error being perpetuated in the book.”

“One Lord” in Israel’s creed means one single Lord. Jesus said that God is one single Lord. He defined Him as the Father, as well as the God of Israel. He defined Him as “the only one who is truly God” (John 17:3). The numeral “one” is not in the slightest altered if the noun it modifies has different parts. This is as simple and true in Hebrew as it is in English. Thus “one family,” though it has multiple members, is still one and not two families.

The fake argument is presented like this: One (*echad*) God can imply that God is more than one. This is untrue. One God or one Lord is still one single God or one single Lord. Jesus stated, agreeing with the constant reference to God as one Person in the Old Testament, that “the Lord our God is one Lord.” If that statement is not clear, nothing is clear! Jesus was a unitary monotheist. His agreement with a unitary monotheistic Jewish scribe underlines this basic fact (Mark 12:29). ✧

## Comments

“I am from Turkey. After 10 years since my conversion to Christianity (I saw Christ in a dream when I was 18, while I was a Muslim), I became a biblical unitarian. It was the Hebrew Old Testament that helped me to realize God’s true nature and His way of working. I started to study the Bible from Hebrew and Greek Scriptures with its English translations. I did this because I was in a spiritual war with a Catholic Christian. The Protestant movement brought some truths, yet other Catholic beliefs were still alive and well in Protestant churches and teachings — such as Trinity, immortality of

<sup>7</sup> *The Trinity: Evidence and Issues*, p. 89.

soul. These two are the biggest lies and the root of all wrong teachings in Christianity. I had never been truly Trinitarian from the beginning, but I was holding modalism. My pastor and all Christians were saying God was Triune, so modalism was my solution for it. Yet when I was believing that, I was ignoring Jesus' words about his God. I could never understand Jesus praying to God (John 17) and his answer that there are gods who are sons of God (Psalm 82). I could not understand the Apostles' writings, when they made a separation between Jesus and God, especially Paul's greetings and last words in his letters. There were many things that nobody could explain well. Since June 2015, I started to understand better the Truth. Meanwhile I was struggling with some issues, such as Jesus' being pre-existent, an angel of God (not Michael, but an unnamed angel). I realized later I was wrong, thanks to you and other unitarian brothers. I would like to thank you and your ministry." — *Turkey*

"Sir, I am very pleased that you are accessible to email. I really appreciate your service for Christ and the Father in reaching out to people with your research. I have gotten a lot from watching your videos and reading your articles recently. I share your same vision that the Gospel is simple, that it's contained first in the synoptic gospels, and that most popular theology has gone far astray from what the Scriptures teach, ignoring the Gospel itself. I am challenging those around me to face up to what the Bible says honestly. I hope that the simple truth can come out and spread out to every tribe tongue and nation. I have often thought that the less educated a person is in theology, the better chance he has to understand the Bible for what it actually says. This is sad and I'm not sure I'm correct on this, but I well know the damage and confusion that popular theology can cause in distorting and obscuring the simple meaning of the Biblical text. The simple message about the Kingdom rings true in my ears, and I've been picking up a lot from you on that point. I grew up evangelical and have found that taking Scripture seriously meant alienating myself from my church and not being able to find anyone to fellowship with since they view me as a heretic. Only recently have I discovered biblical unitarianism and have found the movement to be very similar in concern and approach to Christianity as my own thinking. My own reading of the Bible leaned towards that direction but without assistance, as well as that of Dale Tuggy, whose work on the 'trinities' podcast is very helpful, I would not have been able to move fully to your position as I feel I now confidently can. The begetting of the Son before the world began would have been my position previously (certainly the concept of 'eternal begetting' is a meaningless one!). I believe it makes a lot more sense to see his begetting as being through and in Mary. This

preserves the theme that Jesus is the Son of Man and human in the truest sense." — *California*

"I'm 36, from North Carolina. My faith story is complicated...still working out some things in my head on many topics, but I'm coming around to belief in one God and his human Messiah. I've consumed a lot of books and websites over the years on this subject and others, including Sir Anthony's work which is very helpful. He seems very gracious in his approach, speaking the truth in love, but meets people wherever they happen to be, working patiently with them. I look forward to learning more as time goes on. Really enjoy the Sunday worship/study." — *North Carolina*

"Over forty-five years ago, my wife and I discarded Trinitarianism only to find ourselves mired in an intellectually compromised position that was in effect Binitarian. Almost twenty years ago, we welcomed the biblical unitarian understanding of Scripture. We have read and studied *One God and One Lord* (Schoenheit) and *When Jesus Became God* (Rubenstein) and both of your books dispelling the errors of Trinitarian belief. Your approach makes such sense to us and corresponds so much better with Scripture." — *Indiana*

"I would like to inform you that the book about the Kingdom was so awesome that I could learn more deeply about the Kingdom from Jewish roots. I am 28 years old and I am preaching His Kingdom with my friends. I was born and brought up in a strict Catholic family. But it was Father's anointing made me to read the word more carefully with Kingdom oriented concept I made a video in 2014 about the Kingdom of God in English, in my local language and in German (as I was doing my masters in engineering in Germany). I am very happy that we can pray together and preach his Kingdom in an effective manner." — *India*

"I am now a one God person and have confessed and repented of any belief in the Trinity. I am considering leaving the church (Baptist) I am attending, but slowly. It will be an upheaval in my family of wife and 6 children, all grown up, and 13 grandchildren. I trust God to help me change minds, or rather I will try to help God bring truth into a Trinitarian mindset. The pastor declared our church Trinitarian a few weeks ago; it was in his sermon." — *Australia*

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