

# Spiritual Counterfeit: Oneness Pentacostalism Denies the Biblical Doctrine of Trinity

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*Doctrine of Trinity*

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**Bible Text:** Hebrews 7:3; John 16:13

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Please turn with me tonight in your Bibles to John 16:12-15.

12 I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.  
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. 14 He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. 15 All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you.

I have chosen this text tonight so that you will remember it in the future. It was given to me by an old man who is now deceased and he was one of the major preachers of what is known as the Oneness doctrine. He wrote one of the textbooks that was used in Oneness Bible colleges and he was a very eminent teacher of this particular doctrine and he told me about this passage. It was a significant text for Gordon Magee. He was an old Irish preacher who ministered for many years in Belfast and then spent his last years in Texas after gaining fame in Ireland for introducing the Oneness doctrine there in 1954. In a moment I'll tell you why he gave me this particular passage of Scripture.

First, let me say what is the Oneness doctrine. The Oneness doctrine that we're looking at tonight is a doctrine that is taught by Pentecostal groups such as the United Pentecostal Church. I'm not quite certain if the large World of Pentecost church here in Austin is still connected with the United Pentecostal Church or not, it used to be years ago but they may have withdrawn from that fellowship of churches. Anyway, the doctrine is definitely taught by World of Pentecost here in town which is considered one of the major Oneness Pentecostal churches in the United States and certainly if you can imagine a Oneness Pentecostal church that is going to put a Starbucks in the facility, you see that there must

be a great deal of interest, enthusiasm and financial support. I'm looking forward to their putting the Starbucks in because World of Pentecost is near here and I can go over for coffee breaks. In any event, here is the doctrine: the doctrine is simply the oneness of God in Jesus Christ. So putting it another way, they say Jesus Christ is the name of the one and only true God who has revealed himself or manifested himself as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. But this Jesus in their view is not one God in 3 persons. In other words, they deny the Trinity in order to exalt the deity of Jesus as the one God of both the Old Testament and the new.

Now, this text from John 16 was very significant for Gordon Magee because he said that it was the only text that gave him a problem. Now, I believe that Magee was a man who lived in denial about texts that gave him problems. I believe many texts gave him problems and now that he has departed from us, I believe he has found out all the texts that should have given him problems. But in any event, he was an interesting, fascinating and very funny fellow. After years of pastoring a Oneness Pentecostal church in Houston, he repudiated most aspects of the Pentecostal charismatic movement and he became a five-point Calvinist. Now, he made, I think one of the great remarks about the charismatic movement and I cannot begin to reproduce his inimitable Irish accent but he said in his Irish accent that he wasn't sure if the charismatic movement was the lunatic fringe of Christianity or the celestial side of show business. It's one of the great remarks.

But anyway, he became a five-point Calvinist. Now, this will interest you. Being a five-point Calvinist and being totally committed to the doctrines of grace, he was extremely strong on the doctrine of justification by grace through faith alone but he never embraced the doctrine of the Trinity. What are we going to do with a guy like that? Now, thank God we don't have to do anything with him. There was definitely a man whose destiny was in the hands of God. An anti-Trinitarian Calvinist who believed in justification by grace through faith. He told me that this was the only passage that gave him any trouble and for that reason, you should know it.

Now, as I say, there are a whole lot more passages that should have given him trouble but he simply refused to let them do so. He is like so many husbands that come to me for marriage counseling and I give them something called the path test and part of that test is where they are walking along a path and you tell them that they encounter a bear. You ask them what the bear looks like and the bear is supposed to be symbolic of problems and when they see the bear, their response to the bear is indicative of how they deal with problems. How are you doing out there? How many of you see bear cubs? You're living in denial. You don't think problems are all that serious. they'll just play around you a little while and then go somewhere else. Well, I think that some of the texts of Scripture were like bear cubs to Gordon Magee. But anyway, we'll see eventually why this passage was a problem for him.

In any event, he was one of Oneness doctrine's most articulate spokesman and let's look at the doctrine that he opposed. Turn in your hymnal to page 850. At the top of the page, you'll see Article 3 of Chapter 2 concerning God in the Westminster Confession of Faith. "In the unity of the Godhead there be three Persons of one substance, power, and eternity:

God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. The Father is of none, neither begotten nor proceeding; the Son is eternally begotten of the Father; the Holy Ghost eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son." Now, there is an orthodox statement of the doctrine of the Trinity. Or you might prefer the statement that was made by BB Warfield at the turn of this century. Warfield said, "When we have said these 3 things then, that there is but one God, the Father, the Son and the Spirit is each God and that the Father, the Son and the Spirit is each a distinct person, we have enunciated the doctrine of the Trinity in its completeness."

Now, let me remind you that it is the Bible itself that demands such a conclusion. The Trinity is ultimately a mystery. It is ultimately high and we cannot attain to it and the only reason that there is such a doctrine to begin with is that the Bible forces us to come to some sort of statement that is Trinitarian because it insists on one God, yet God the Father is presented as God, Jesus, God's Son is presented as God and the Holy Spirit is presented as God and yet there are distinctions made between them and they interact with each other, yet they are not 3 God's but one. To believe in the Trinity is not to believe in tri-theism, 3 God's. The Bible simply gives us all this data and the only way of doing justice to all of it was to formulate the doctrine of the Trinity.

Now, how did the whole Oneness controversy get started anyway? It actually got started as a byproduct of another concern. Many of you may know that at the turn of this century there was the rise of the Pentecostal movement and it got started back in 1900, pretty much, in Topeka, Kansas and then shortly after that, a number of years after that, around 1906 and so on, it got very famous as an outbreak of Pentecostal experiences occurred in Los Angeles. What was interesting is that the very morning of the San Francisco earthquake, April 18, 1906, the Los Angeles Times reported on the front page a story entitled "Weird Babble of Tongues," and said, "Breathing strange utterances and mouthing a creed which it would seem no sane mortal could understand, the newest religious sect has started in Los Angeles." It started at a former livery stable pastored by a black man named Edward Lee Seymour. It was a group pastored by Seymour and it was unique because it was from the very beginning a movement that had both blacks and whites worshipping together and it was a series of services that happened at this livery stable on a street called Azusa Street in Los Angeles that began to essentially catch fire all over the world. People began to come to Azusa Street to see what was going on. It was very much like the kinds of phenomena that we read about now in Pensacola and in Toronto and so on.

Well, as Pentecostalism spread and Pentecostal ministers began to organize into groups, eventually there was a Pentecostal meeting that was held out in Arroyo Seco, California in 1913, in April, 1913. It was attended by between 1500 and 2000 Pentecostals. They were mainly pastors and it was an old-fashioned camp meeting and a Canadian minister named Edward McAllister said at that meeting that Jesus had told his disciples to baptize in the name of the Father, of the Son and the Holy Spirit but the New Testament records the apostles baptizing only in the name of Jesus. Well, it was almost an offhand comment that was made during a sermon but another Pentecostal preacher named Frank Ewart later said, "The gun was fired from that platform which was destined to resound throughout all

Christendom." What happened was during that camp meeting, people felt that the Holy Spirit was giving them a new revelation that the proper form of baptism was to be patterned after what they thought they read in the book of Acts. Now, we'll probably deal with the baptismal formula question next week but they thought that they read in the book of Acts that baptism was to be administered in the name of Jesus Christ and therefore what they concluded was that the name of Jesus was that name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Jesus was the name of God who manifested himself in those 3 ways.

So eventually what happened was that the movement became more and more popular. First it was a matter of live and let live among Pentecostals as some baptized in the Trinitarian formula and some baptized in the name of Jesus but eventually the Assemblies of God which had been newly formed and to which most of these ministers belonged, had a meeting and they, let me see if I can get the date for this meeting. I believe it was 1915. October 1, 1915, 525 delegates met in St. Louis and this was only the second year that the Assemblies of God had been formed. It had been formed the year before in 1914 and what happened was that the group was so against creeds and traditions and so on that they did not want to establish a set of doctrinal statements for the Assemblies of God and so those who were Oneness in the group voted against every proposed doctrinal statement but they failed to defeat them and so a statement of fundamental truths was drafted at this St. Louis meeting in October, 1915 and half of it was a repudiation of Oneness beliefs and that statement of fundamental truths was accepted as the Assemblies of God standard. So about 156 members of the Assemblies of God who adhered to this Oneness philosophy left the AG and formed new organizations and the most important of these were the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World and then several years later after several mergers, there came to be the United Pentecostal Church.

Now, they are not a large group. They are not a large denomination but they are quite vocal here in Austin. One of the reasons I am speaking on this subject tonight is that Lee told me about a prayer meeting recently where several of them came in to a new Bible study that had just been formed, they began to teach their doctrines and they are capable of teaching the doctrines in such a charming and fascinating way that before long, the entire Bible study was essentially hijacked from its original founders and became a Pentecostal Bible study. So if one applies the domino theory to this theology, originally it was the issue of the baptism formula but it escalated into an out-and-out rejection of the Trinity.

So what do they teach? They stress particularly that Jesus Christ is one person with 2 natures and they are right but they stress it to the point of absurdity. They stress it as so often doctrines are stressed, to an extreme that makes them heretical and every heresy that you and I know about is usually a truth that has been taken, pushed to its extremes so that other aspects of the truth are completely ignored and jettisoned. For example, in Magee's little book, this is what he says to be his guiding principle. He says, "All we have to do when we read our Bibles is to keep in mind this simple thought: is Jesus acting as a man now or is he acting as God? Is Jesus speaking as a man here or is he speaking as God? Because he was both God and man. In him deity and humanity were fused but not confused. He could speak from 2 separate standpoints. He can talk as Almighty God, he

can talk as a human. He could act as Almighty God, he could act as a human. So to understand what a scriptural passage says about Jesus, then we must ask the question: is he now taking the part and place of God or is he taking the part and place of man? There we have a wonderful key, and unfolding key to the Jesus of the 4 Gospels."

It sounds so good. It sounds so simple. It sounds like it is very reasonable but in actual fact, what it has just done is make Jesus not into one person with 2 natures. It has now made him into 2 persons. It has now made him into a split personality so that now he speaks as the Son, now he speaks as the Father. So when Jesus prays, for example, Oneness people say it's his human side talking to his divine side. Magee thinks Jesus always speaks one way or another, either as man or God. No, brothers and sisters. He is and was then and forever will be a unique being, not only the second person of the Godhead but he is, was and ever shall be the God-man. He is the God-man and he always spoke as the God-man except on one occasion when he raised his cry of dereliction and said, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" And naturally Magee denies, "But God did not forsake him," because of course he couldn't. So the point is that Jesus always speaks as the God-man as one person with 2 natures and not one being who is 2 persons. Do you understand the difference? He is not one being who is 2 persons. He is one person with 2 natures but he is always the God-man so when he said, "I thirst," it is the God-man thirsting. When he said he was hungry, it was the God-man being hungry. When he said, "Lazarus, come forth," it was the God-man saying, "Lazarus, come forth." When he wept right before he said that, it was the God-man weeping. This you have to understand.

Now, let me show you 3 passages which show spatial distinction between the Father and the Son. All of you could bring forth about a dozen passages each and they would all be different that showed distinctiveness between the Father and the Son but I want to show you 3 that really emphasize spatial distinction. Turn with me to Luke 3:21 and 22. "When all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also was baptized; and while He prayed, the heaven was opened. And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven which said, 'You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased.'" Now, a Oneness teacher has no choice but to reject any plurality here and he will say that Jesus himself was the source of the voice that spoke from heaven.

Now, a natural reading of the text gives a distinction spatially between the 3 persons. We understand that Jesus was the God-man but upon that God-man came a manifestation of the Holy Spirit because, in fact, that was the point at which he was anointed by the Holy Spirit to begin his public ministry and yet he always was Lord. He was Lord in the womb of Mary and Elizabeth said, "Why am I so blessed that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" When the angels announced his coming in the hills beyond Bethlehem, they said, "Unto you is born this day a Savior which is Christ the Lord." He was that holy thing inside her. He was the God-baby, if you want to put it that way, and yet he was anointed by the Holy Spirit to be the Messiah, the anointed one. Therefore there had to be a distinctive manifestation of the Holy Spirit but he did not anoint himself. Furthermore, when the voice came from heaven, he was, I say it reverently, not being a ventriloquist. He was not throwing his voice in order to trick people and make them think that God in heaven was approving him when in actual fact he was the approver standing there in the

water. This is a matter of spatial distinction and if you explain these things to someone and they don't acknowledge the common sense of it, there is very little, of course, that you can do except pray for their blindness because this is a very clear spatial distinction.

Let me show you another one. Acts 7:55 and 56. This concerns what Stephen saw, "But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God, and said, 'Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!'" I don't know if you know how many passages speak of Jesus being seated on the right hand of God but there are quite a number of them. Acts 2:33; Romans 8:34; Ephesians 1:20; Hebrews 1:3 and Hebrews 10:12 and so on. So this is a doctrine that is stated over and over again and what it clearly declares is that Jesus is co-reigning with the Father. He has the right to reign, the right to rule. He is seated at the Father's throne.

Now, Carl Brumback who wrote what is the very best book against the Oneness doctrine, it's a classic book called "God in Three Persons." Carl Brumback was an Assembly of God minister and he dealt thoroughly with the doctrine. He has an excellent point here. He says, "How could it be possible for Jesus to sit at his own right hand? If you think that it's possible for a person to sit at his own right hand, try it. The only reasonable interpretation is that one person is sitting on the right hand of another person or as in Stephen's vision, someone is standing on the right hand of someone else. If Jesus invited himself to sit at his own right hand as the Oneness proponents claim, then language is used as a means to mislead and misrepresent the facts. Contrariwise, if the Father as a distinct person issues an invitation to his Son as another distinct person to sit beside him on his throne, then language performs its true function." That is an excellent point about language being misleading because what you have to say in both of these instances, the baptism of Jesus and what Stephen saw, you have to say, "Oh no, it didn't really happen like that. Let me explain to you how it really happened," in spite of the clear language of the Bible.

Let me show you one more passage about spatial distinction. Turn with me to John 17:1 and 2. "Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: 'Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him.'" Well, never mind the 2 roles here that are being played by the 2 members of the Godhead where Jesus has authority over all flesh which he could not have as a mere man from his human point of view, and the fact that he is giving them eternal life and they are the ones God has given him. It's clearly deity talking about other deity, doing 2 different functions here. Just leaving aside all that, I've got something simpler to point out to you and that's the spatial distinction problem. Look in verse 1, "Jesus lifted up his eyes to heaven." Now, why did he do that? Why in the world did he need to do that? You see, the Oneness make a great point that the Father is in Jesus and Jesus is in the Father. They take the union of the 2 to mean that there is only one person. Well, why did he need to look up? When I talk to myself, I look down. I never look up when I talk to myself. You know? John must have seen him do it and that's how he knew it happened to write it in his Gospel. He saw him look up and address the Father but if he was talking to the other

side of himself, why did he have to look up? And was that not a trick if it wasn't necessary? And if it was a trick, then why is God misleading us again? You see, a third passage here that actually is a highly misleading passage about the true nature of things if the Oneness people are correct. So, pay attention to passages, particularly that show spatial distinctions between the Father and the Son.

Now, look at some passages that show plurality. John 8. Look at John chapter 8, verses 17 through 19. Jesus is, of course, being confronted by the Pharisees and they have told him, "You bear witness of yourself. Your witness is not true." And here's what Jesus says in verse 17, "It is also written in your law that the testimony of two men is true. I am One who bears witness of Myself, and the Father who sent Me bears witness of Me." Isn't that amazing? Now, why would Jesus say that if the Father is in him and if the side of him that is God is the Father? Wouldn't he say, "You're looking at the Father right here. I am the Father." By the way, he never says, "I am the Father," he says, "He who has seen me has seen the Father," because he has seen the Father's characteristics. He has seen what the father is like but he distinctly makes the point that there are 2 and he uses this, of course, I think symbolically, 2 men. In other words, he is saying that there is so much of a distinction between him and his Father that they qualify not as one witness but as 2 witnesses.

Then what's interesting in verse 19 is that, "Then they said to Him, 'Where is Your Father?' Jesus answered, 'You know neither Me nor My Father. If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also.'" So there's the unity. There is Jesus essentially saying that he is the same in essence as the Father and this is what they hammered out for the sake of orthodoxy at the Council of Nicaea in 323, that Jesus was homo-ousios, of the same substance with the Father and that's what he's saying in verse 19. But wonder of wonders, he's saying, "I am of the same substance with somebody who is so distinct from me that you could call us 2 men and bring us forth in a court of law as 2 witnesses." Go figure, brothers and sisters. That's plurality.

Then John 14:16. John 14:16, the famous promise of the Holy Spirit. "And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper," or another Comforter, or another Advocate, "that He may abide with you forever." Now, the first thing to notice is that you have all 3 members of the Trinity working together here. Jesus is going to pray the Father. The Father doesn't pray to Jesus. And the Father is going to give you another helper but why does the Father need to give another helper who is the Holy Spirit if God is a spirit and those who worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth? Why doesn't the Father just give the Father instead of the Holy Spirit? Furthermore, notice that word "another." Another can only mean one more, not the same. Another can only mean one more, not the same. Well, who is the first comforter? Who is the first Paraclete, the one called alongside to help? Well, 1 John 2:1 tells us, "My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate," we have a Paraclete, we have a Counselor, "with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." So what he's saying is, "I'm going to pray the Father and he's going to give you another one just like me to come alongside to help." Here is plurality in the Godhead.

Now, look at some passages that show cooperation. We've seen spatial distinction and plurality. Let's look at some passages that show cooperation among the members of the Godhead and the epistles are full of these. Look with me first of all at Ephesians 2:18. "For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father," both meeting Jew and Gentile. Do you see how in this one little verse it shows us how our salvation is of the Triune God because it is through Jesus, his name, his blood, his righteousness, his work on our behalf, that we have access by one Spirit, through the Holy Spirit, who draws us to God, who births us again so that we can have faith in God, who helps us to cry out to Jesus as Lord which no man can do except by the Holy Spirit. We have access by one Spirit to the Father. All 3 working together to bring the Christian to reconciliation with God and yet all 3 are God. Salvation is of the Lord, just as Jonah uttered in the belly of the whale. And the Lord is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Through him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.

Now, turn over to Hebrews 9:13 and 14. I'll tell you why these cooperation passages are so important, where you see them working together. I'll tell you that in just a moment. Hebrews 9:13 and 14. "For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" Here is the Lord Jesus Christ offering himself to God as a sacrifice once for all and he offers himself through the eternal Spirit and so you see, again, a cooperation among the members of the Godhead.

One of the reasons I mentioned this cooperation business is because it deals a blow to one of the theologians that the Oneness people follow and look up to. This was a man in, I believe, the third century named Sibelius and Sibelius attempted to solve the problem of plurality in the Godhead and this is what Carl Brumback says about Sibelius. "His proposal was startling in its originality and simplicity. He advocated in a word, untying the Gordian knot by cutting it in 2. God is one. He is the divine monad. This is the clear teaching of the Scriptures. It is equally clear that God appeared to men and made himself known as Father, as Son and as Holy Spirit. Both things being true, the obvious solution is that the Trinity is one of manifestation. God is like an actor on the Greek stage. He is able to take different parts at different times by putting on a new mask or face." Now, that word "mask," by the way, is the literal and original meaning of the Greek word for person, *prosopon*, and that was applied by Sibelius to the roles of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. So this is one of the confusing things. When we use person in our day, what we really mean is personal disclosure or, if you prefer Calvin's words, subsistence. I know that will help you enormously. Three subsistences in the Godhead.

But we don't believe that God is actually putting on phony faces or phony masks so what Sibelius did was note that in the Old Testament, God patently appears in diverse ways and that according to the 4th Gospel, the Holy Spirit does not come until the Son is glorified. So what Sibelius did was simply say that God manifested himself first as Father, then as Son, now as Holy Spirit and the name of that being, say the Oneness people, who manifested himself first as Father, then as Son, now as Holy Spirit, is Jesus. The problem is that when you show cooperation between the Father, the Son and the



Holy Spirit, you show God, if you want to put it this way, playing all the roles or manifesting himself in all 3 different ways at once and this is an extremely difficult point for Oneness people to deal with. So the point is that the Sibelianism cannot stand the test of logic and, I think, that one of the things that works very well against it is these passages that show cooperation.

Now, Gordon Magee was not to my thinking a Sibelian. He was a Nestorian. He adopted the theory of Nestorius. Nestorius lived in 428. He was a famous preacher first at Antioch and then at Constantinople. And Nestorius made it appear that he held that Christ joined 2 persons. He did not deny the deity of Christ but in emphasizing the reality and integrity of the Savior's humanity, Nestorius pictured the relation between the 2 natures in terms of a moral conjunction or merging of wills rather than that of an essential union and this is what, I think, Magee did. Nestorius said, "I hold the natures apart but unite the worship." Well, the point is the natures cannot be held apart to such an extent that you have one moment Jesus being the Son and another moment Jesus being the Father.

However, the Oneness people do have one verse that they draw like a gun and they seize on it because it is one verse that seems to explicitly identify the Father and the Son as the same person and that, of course, is Isaiah 9:6. Let's turn there in our Bibles. While you're turning there, let me just say that in case some of you have not figured this out or guessed this, another real problem for Oneness people or another issue that they insist upon, I'm going to put it that way, is that Jesus Christ as Son of God refers to his humanity. That he was preexistent but he wasn't always the Son so they deny the doctrine of the eternal Sonship of Christ and that's what I'm going to be looking at next week along with the baptismal formula issue. So this eternal Sonship doctrine is a key doctrine for the Oneness people. They deny it and, of course, they have to deny it because what Scripture teaches is that there was always a Father/Son relationship and the Scripture does not teach that the second person of the Godhead simply became the Son of God. To say that is to completely misunderstand what the Hebrew term Son of God means.

Alright, we're going to look here at 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," can't you just hear the chorus in Handel's Messiah? "Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." Hey, we've got a Son whose name is going to be called the everlasting Father. There it is. There's the verse to end all strife. Alright? No, okay, here's the problem, isn't it, before I read you a scholarly comment, we can already see the difficulty. Some of you are fathers out there and you are fathers of sons and your own fathers are still alive so you've got a father living and you've got a son who is living and you are the father of that son. Therefore you are both a son and a father but as a son, you are not the father of you. As a son, you are not your own father and as a father, you are not your own son. So the passage is saying that this Son is going to be a Father but to whom and in what relationship is he a Son? Well, he is clearly a Son to God and the question is: does this phrase "everlasting Father" mean that he is going to be God the Father, that the Son is actually going to be his own Father? No, it doesn't mean that. What it refers to is the phrase that begins verse 7, "Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it

and establish it with judgment and justice." In other words, he is going to eternally be a Father to his people as the heir of David because the Kings of Israel were fathers to their people.

Let me read you the scholarly comment by E J Young in his commentary on Isaiah. He says, "We may perhaps bring out the thought by paraphrasing one who is eternally a Father. The word 'Father' designates a quality of the Messiah with respect to his people. He acts toward them like a Father. 'Thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer. Thy name is from everlasting. Like as a Father, pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.' The quality of fatherhood is defined by the word 'eternity.' The Messiah is an eternal Father. If this is correct, the meaning is that he is one who eternally is a Father to his people. Now and forever he guards his people and supplies their needs. 'I am the good shepherd,' said our Lord and thus expressed the very heart of the meaning of this phrase. What tenderness, love and comfort are here. Eternally a Father to his people." Now, I believe that Dr. Young is right. If there is some other meaning to it, I am willing to certainly concede that but I think that is the best explanation of it because in no place is Jesus the Son represented as being his own Father.

So finally tonight, in case you thought I had completely forgotten about the text from which we began, let's return back to it. John 16:12 through 15, and let's see what it says that must have troubled Gordon Magee so much. I, as I say, do not understand why these other texts did not trouble him but this one was the one he conceded he couldn't figure out. It says, "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. 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. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you." What he's saying here is that when the Holy Spirit is sent, that he is going to guide God's people into all truth but what's interesting is that it says he will not speak on his own authority but whatever he hears he will speak. It's depicting the Holy Spirit as not taking the initiative himself but as passing on what he hears from another and glorifying yet another. "He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you."

Now, just put your bookmark or your finger in that passage and turn over to a parallel passage that will help us by contrast, John 8:26 through 29. Here is Jesus talking again. There is a slight similarity here but there is a big contrast. He says, "I have many things to say and to judge concerning you, but He who sent Me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I heard from Him." They did not understand that He spoke to them of the Father. Then Jesus said to them, "When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am," now, that's interesting because, of course, "he" is not in the Greek and that is saying that Jesus is the God of the Old Testament, "I AM THAT I AM." "When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and that I do nothing of Myself." Huh? He's the Old Testament God "I AM" but he does nothing of himself? "But as My Father taught Me, I speak these things." Now, you see that we have a passage that is kind of similar because we have Jesus saying, "I'm just declaring to you what I heard

and as my Father taught me, I speak these things." That passage doesn't bother or didn't bother when he was alive, Gordon Magee. Why? Well, because in this passage you have humanity listening to deity. You have humanity hearing from deity so Jesus is a human being who is being taught by the divine part of him, the Father, what to say. Naturally, that doesn't bother Magee because he's one being with 2 persons.

But now turn over to our text, John 16 and look at verse 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." In the passage I just showed you in John 8, you have humanity listening to divinity but in this passage, you've got divinity listening to divinity because God is a spirit. God is spirit. This is not humanity listening to divinity, this is divinity listening to divinity as if there are different functions, different roles, different duties within the Godhead. The Holy Spirit speaks what he hears. He's not hearing from the human side of Jesus, he's God hearing from God. No wonder Magee had trouble with that. He is the spirit but he is, how do we say it reverently, in some way under authority. That's the only way to do it because he's not speaking on his own authority, he's God listening to God, passing on the things that are Jesus' and declaring them and glorifying him.

So brothers and sisters, these are passages that I think deal decisively with all of the many issues that are raised by the Oneness people and I guess the question ultimately comes down to this: well, does it all make any difference? Is it, in fact, a matter of semantics? Well, of course, as I understand the Oneness Pentecostal people, they don't really preach justification by grace through faith. They preach a method of works righteousness. They preach that you do have to be baptized and if you haven't ever been the first time, you have to be rebaptized in the name of Jesus. Not that Trinitarian formula of Matthew 28. You've got to be baptized in the name of Jesus and you have to have the baptism in the Holy Spirit with evidence of speaking in tongues. That these things are necessary, repentance and faith, baptism in the name of Jesus and the Holy Spirit as manifested in speaking in tongues and you have to have all of those things before you can be considered a Christian. That is what I understand that they teach. I may be wrong about that. That's what I have been told that they teach. It is not justification by grace through faith.

What do you say, though, to a fellow like Magee who is absolutely orthodox, 5 points of Calvinism, justification by grace through faith, a cynical attitude toward most of what goes on in the charismatic movement but will not bend an inch in acknowledging that there is one God in 3 persons, blessed Trinity, and so exalts the deity of Jesus that he refuses to acknowledge that there is any other person and thinks once you do that you have become essentially a tri-theist? There is a verse that we have already studied on Sunday morning in 1 John 2:22 and 23. "Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist who denies the Father and the Son. Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father either; he who acknowledges the Son has the Father also." You will never find a Oneness person who tells you he doesn't have the Father. They will all say to you, "We have the Father. The Father's name is Jesus. The Son is in the Father. The

Father is in the Son. The Father and Son are the Holy Spirit and the name of that God is Jesus."

So it would seem if you look there at 1 John 2:22, that you've got a question: are they denying the Father and the Son? They say no. Look at the second part of verse 23, "he who acknowledges the Son has the Father also." Well, they'll sure tell you they're acknowledging the Son, ergo they must have the Father also. The problem is verse 23a, "Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father either," and of course they say that what they are doing is exalting the Son but why are they refusing the Son's work in reconciling them to their Father who wants to adopt them and bring them into the family of God?

One of the most interesting and damaging arguments, I think, against the Oneness Pentecostal movement is that they constantly pray to Jesus naturally. It's always to Jesus and the interesting thing is that they pray to Jesus in the name of Jesus but did you know that once Jesus ascended into heaven, that you are actually very hard pressed to find very many passages in Scripture at all where anyone offers prayer to Jesus. It is, of course, permissible because he is God just as it is permissible to offer prayer to the Holy Spirit but the consistent witness of the New Testament except for only one passage that I know of, is that we are intended to pray to the Father in the name of Jesus who through the eternal Spirit has offered himself without spot to God.

The one exception is the fact that Paul always refers to Jesus when he says "Lord." When Paul uses that word, he means Jesus and therefore there is an example of him calling on Jesus according to that theory and that is when he says that he had "a thorn in the flesh and concerning this thing, I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me and he said to me," and my New King James has it in red letters so they must think it's Jesus too, "My grace is sufficient for you for my strength is made perfect in weakness." But that's the exception that proves the rule.

What we are intended to be as Christians is people who have come to the Father through Jesus the Son and are giving him the glory, great things he has done. In other words, we are intended to now enjoy our status as sons and daughters of the living God and Jesus is not our Father, he is our elder brother, the firstborn from the dead and we are going to be joint heirs with him of the Father's inheritance and Oneness teachers have no conception of any of this. They do not understand these ideas. They do not begin to tap into the richness of biblical Christianity that we have become sons of God through faith in Jesus Christ and have been reconciled to the Father through him.

So brothers and sisters, obviously we can say that anyone who does not come to God the Father through Jesus Christ by grace through faith has no right to any assurance, no right to be considered a Christian and yet we wonder what does God think about this exaltation of Jesus to the neglect of God his Father. I personally feel like that when coupled with the works righteousness, of course, it is a very serious heresy.

What do I think happened to Magee? I don't know what happened to Magee but I'm going to take a guess that he saw more in heaven than he was realizing he would see and the reason that I say that is because as I would talk to him and as others talked to him and as you read his book, you think, "This guy is trying hard but in his heart he's a Trinitarian. He just doesn't want to use the term." But one thing is for sure: he did love Jesus and he knew that Jesus was God.

So we just have to, at this point, do what I have said before: judge not and simply proclaim the Gospel and say to any of our Oneness friends, even if they come to us and they say, "Well, I believe it's by grace through faith," and you say, "Well, do you have to be baptized according to that formula?" "Well no, I can imagine being baptized according to a Trinitarian formula. It will be alright. I just believe in faith in Jesus as God." Then at the very least we should say to them, "Well, if you're believing in Jesus as God, then let him take you a step further. Let him reconcile you to God. He died the just for the unjust that he might bring you to God. Let him do it and receive him and become one of the children of God."

To our God be honor and glory. Let me turn you to one last passage of Scripture and that is Ephesians 4. This is real interesting. The reason it's interesting is because we're going to read some verses here where the different members of the Godhead are particularly singled out and mentioned in very distinct ways by the Apostle Paul. "I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord," that's Jesus, "one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."

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