

CHRISTIANITY

101

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS

About

SIN & SALVATION
RESURRECTION & JUDGMENT

↑
HEAVEN

HELL
↓

THE NATURE OF MAN

◉ *The Nature of God* ◉

CHRISTIANITY 101

THE NATURE OF GOD

WHO IS GOD?

- ▶ The answer to this question provides one of the most profound distinctions between religions.

WHO DOES GOD CLAIM TO BE?

- ▶ Isaiah 44:6, 8
- ▶ I John 5:7
- ▶ Genesis 1:26, 27
- ▶ Genesis 3:22
- ▶ Genesis 11:5-8

THE GODHEAD IS A TRINITY

- ▶ The central feature that distinguishes cults from biblical Christianity is the doctrine of the Trinity. All cults have a distorted view of this doctrine.

- ▶ Matthew 28:19
- ▶ Matthew 3:16

THE MESSAGE OF THE BIBLE

- ▶ The Bible message is that the God who created you, in order to save you from the sin that has driven you from fellowship with Himself, gave His only begotten Son.

- ▶ The Bible says that Son was God manifest in human flesh. He came to make a way that you might be saved from sin, and have fellowship with your Creator. He came to be the life – everlasting.

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

- ▶ “For one thing, the Bible does not mention the word “Trinity.” For another, Jesus never claimed to be equal to God. Instead, Jesus worshipped God. (Luke 22:41-44)...

- ▶ ...A third line of evidence concerns Jesus' relationship with his followers. Even after he was raised from the dead to the spirit realm, Jesus called his followers "my brothers."
(Matthew 28:10)...

▶ ...Were they brothers of Almighty God? Of course not! But through their faith in Christ—God’s preeminent Son—they too became sons of the one Father. (Galatians 3:26) ”

<https://www.jw.org/en/publications/magazines/g201308/trinity/>

MORMONS

- ▶ “The Trinity of traditional Christianity is referred to as the Godhead by members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormon)...

- ▶ ...Like other Christians, Latter-day Saints believe in the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (or Holy Ghost). Yet, Church teachings about the Godhead differ from those of traditional Christianity...

▶...For example, while some believe the three members of the Trinity are of one substance, Latter-day Saints believe they are three physically separate beings, but fully one in love, purpose and will.”

[http://www.mormonnewsroom.org/
article/godhead](http://www.mormonnewsroom.org/article/godhead)

THE WAY INTERNATIONAL

▶ "JESUS CHRIST IS NOT GOD"

- ▶ “Many professing Christians have been taught to “praise Jesus.” However, the Bible does not teach that Jesus Christ is to be praised or thanked or addressed in prayer....

▶ ...God, as the Source of every blessing, is the only One to receive our praise, thanksgiving, and prayer. Right from the beginning, the Scriptures tell us that praise goes to God, not to Jesus."

<http://www.thewayinternational.com/praising-god-not-jesus/>

- ▶ “One reason for the practice of praising and praying to Jesus may be people’s misunderstanding that Jesus and God are one and the same....

- ▶ ...But the Bible shows that Jesus Christ is not God; he is the only begotten Son of God. (For further study on our Web site, see the scriptures listed under "Jesus Christ Is Not God"...

▶...and “One God” in the This Is What God Says section. Also, see our Bookstore section to order the book Jesus Christ Is Not God.)”

ISLAM

- ▶ “They do blaspheme who say: Allah is one of three in a Trinity, for there is no god except One God” (Quran 5:73)

QURAN 5:116-117

- ▶ “And [beware the Day] when Allah will say, "O Jesus, Son of Mary, did you say to the people, 'Take me and my mother as deities besides Allah ?'" He will say,...

▶ "Exalted are You! It was not for me to say that to which I have no right. If I had said it, You would have known it. You know what is within myself, and I do not know what is within Yourself. Indeed, it is You who is Knower of the unseen..."

- ▶ I said not to them except what You commanded me - to worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord. And I was a witness over them as long as I was among them;...

▶ ...but when You took me up, You were the Observer over them, and You are, over all things, Witness.”

APOSTOLIC / ONENESS PENTECOSTAL

- ▶ The modern Pentecostal movement is generally regarded to have begun in 1901 in a chapel prayer meeting in Topeka, Kan., led by Charles Parham, a teacher at Bethel Bible College.

- ▶ In 1906, the Pentecostal experience of "speaking in tongues" burst on the scene during a revival in an African-American Baptist church on Azuza Street in Los Angeles, California.

- ▶ Following these beginnings, Pentecostal preachers and churches spread rapidly coalescing into various denominations and factions.

- ▶ In 1913, one popular teacher, R.E. McAlister of Toronto, Ont., began teaching that the Trinity doctrine was untrue and that baptism should be done correctly in Jesus' name only-not in the traditional trinitarian formula.

- ▶ Other preachers, such as Frank J. Ewart and John G. Schepppe, joined McAlister in his non-trinitarian perspective.

WHAT DO ONENESS OR JESUS ONLY PENTECOSTALS BELIEVE?

- ▶ Oneness Pentecostals declare that the Godhead consists of only one Person and deny the traditional doctrine of the Trinity. They maintain that the only real "person" in the Godhead is Jesus.

- ▶ Thus, they are often referred to as the "Jesus Only" Movement.
- ▶ They maintain that God exists in two modes, as the Father in heaven, and as Jesus the Son on earth.

- ▶ Nevertheless, they are the same person, not two separate persons.
- ▶ The Holy Spirit is not regarded as a person at all, merely a manifestation of Jesus' power or a synonym for Him.

- ▶ Jesus is said to have two natures: human and divine. Thus, when He died, only His human nature died. Also, when Jesus prayed, it was His human nature praying to His divine nature-not to a separate Father in heaven.

ONENESS' VIEW OF SALVATION

1. FAITH IN JESUS ONLY

- ▶ Oneness teachers would agree that salvation requires putting one's full faith in the Jesus of Oneness doctrine, that is the Jesus who is the totality of the Godhead, who died on the cross as an atonement for sin, and who rose again from the dead.

2. REPENTANCE AND BAPTISM IN THE “NAME OF JESUS”

- ▶ Acts 2:38 is used as evidence that the early church baptized only in the name of Jesus. They maintain that baptism in the trinitarian formula is invalid since it implies belief in three gods.

- ▶ They claim Matthew 28:19 is not to be taken as a command to baptize in that formula.

3. SPEAKING IN TONGUES

- ▶ Like most traditional Pentecostals and charismatics, Oneness Pentecostals teach that speaking in tongues is a gift to be exercised today. However, unlike most traditionalists, the Oneness movements maintain that...

- ▶ ...speaking in tongues is not just a post-conversion indicator of the filling or baptism of the Holy Spirit, but an essential ingredient in the salvation experience itself.

4. ADHERENCE TO “HOLINESS” STANDARDS

- ▶ Most Oneness Pentecostals teach that once salvation is gained initially by the preceding ingredients, it must be maintained by daily adherence to legalistic codes of personal behavior.

- ▶ Alcohol and tobacco are prohibited. Women are not allowed to cut their hair, wear short dresses or slacks, use make-up, or wear jewelry. Men are expected to dress conservatively (white shirts and dark slacks), be clean shaven, and have short haircuts.

- ▶ Violations of these codes may result in a loss of salvation and exclusion from church fellowship.

HOW INFLUENTIAL IS THIS MOVEMENT?

- ▶ Somewhere around 20 million followers.
- ▶ That is 20 million people who call themselves Christian but do not believe in the God of the Bible!

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