

The Mystery of the Godhead

I. Introduction

There is one God who has revealed himself as Father in creation, Son in redemption, and Holy Ghost in action or in regeneration.

From the Catholic Encyclopedia found online at <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/15047a.htm> we can learn why we use the phrase the Holy Ghost in action.

Article: The Blessed Trinity

**Heading: Proof of doctrine from Scripture
Old Testament**

For nowhere in the Old Testament do we find any clear indication of a Third Person. Mention is often made of the Spirit of the Lord, but there is nothing to show that the Spirit was viewed as distinct from Jahweh Himself. The term is always employed to signify God considered in His working, whether in the universe or in the soul of man.

This lesson is designed in a manner that will walk the Trinitarian believer through several topics concerning the Godhead while concentrating mainly upon the Son. The reason for this concentrated effort upon the Son is because this is where the mystery of the Godhead lies.

II. The Image of God

In the beginning “God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness” (Gen 1:26a). What is God’s image according to the scriptures? There are four scriptures that identifies this for us.

“In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.” (2 Cor 4:4)

“In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:” (Col 1:14-15)

“And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:” (Col 3:10)

“Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;” (Heb 1:3)

So we learn that the image of God is the body of the man Jesus Christ. He is the expressed visible image of the invisible God. This also reveals to us that when God was creating mankind he had the incarnation in mind and thus said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness". The likeness of his own image of which was not yet brought forth but was certainly in view.

III. There is only one body of God the body of Christ

"There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;" (Eph 4:4) There are not three bodies of God. Whether we define them as spirit bodies or not. There is only one body of God the body of Christ.

Many times when we think of the body of Christ we think of the body of the man Christ Jesus only and do not think about his dual nature. Jesus was fully man and fully God at the same time. As Jesus told us in John 10:30 "I and my Father are one." "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." (Col 2:9)

We must not forget that the one Spirit of God is the Spirit of Christ. "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." (Rom 8:9)

Thus the one body of Christ is the one body of God. God doesn't have three bodies because our God is one. And the scriptures teaches us that there is but one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism and "One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." (Eph 4:4-6)

This is the mystery of Godliness and the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ. The mystery of God manifested in the flesh. The one Spirit of God incarnate in the one body of God, the body of Christ.

Many times when we think of the body of Christ, we only think of the spiritual body of Christ that the born again believer becomes a part of. The body of Christ that has many members of which makes up this one body. But we must not forget the dual nature of Christ and the mystery of godliness.

For it is by the one Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ that one receives that gives them access into the one body of Christ of which we are many members.

"For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many." (1 Cor 12:12-14)

Hear the words of Jesus as he prayed in his humanity to the eternal Spirit.

“Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.” (Jn 17:20-23)

In verse 21 Jesus says, “That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.” This request that Jesus has prayed to the eternal Spirit is that all of those who believe on him through the words of his disciples, that they all may be one even as he and the Father are one. “As thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee... that they also may be one in us”.

How is the Father and Jesus one? They are one in Spirit and in body.

In verse 23 Jesus explains how we can be one in the Father as well as in himself. “I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one”. One as being members of the body of Christ by receiving the Spirit of Christ. That we may be one even as he is one. One in body and one in Spirit.

“For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.” (Eph 5:30)

IV. What is the Word (Logos)

3056. logos, log'-os; from G3004; something said (including the thought); by impl. a topic (subject of discourse), also reasoning (the mental faculty) or motive; by extens. a computation; spec. (with the art. in John) the Divine Expression (i.e. Christ)

The logos is something said (including the thought) and also the reasoning (the mental faculty) or motive of what was said.

V. Are the terms ‘Word’ and ‘Son’ interchangeable terms

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.” (Jn 1:1-3)

How was this Word with God? What is this Word that was with God and was God?

Some people teach that this Word was with God as a second divine person of a Triune Godhead, in which He is known as God the Son. Is this what the Apostle John was trying to relay to us? Was the Apostle John trying to relay to us a Hellenistic concept of the Word? Or was the Apostle John following after the concept of Jewish tradition?

The Catholic encyclopedia states that for the Apostle John, “the Word is for him the Word of God, and thereby he holds with Jewish tradition.... He perfects the idea and transforms it by showing that this creative Word which was from all eternity was in God and was God, took flesh and dwelt among men.” see: <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/09328a.htm>

Take notice that the early Catholic church recognized, “that this creative Word which was from all eternity was in God” How was this Word with God? What is the definition of this Word?

The logos is something said (including the thought) and also the reasoning (the mental faculty) or motive of what was said. Thus the Word that was with God and was God is (the thought, plan, and mind of God.) This is how the Word was in God as the early Catholic church recognized that the Apostle John was implying.

However, the early Catholic church then drew the conclusion that this Word was the eternally begotten Son of God or what they have called God the Son. Is this what the Apostle John was trying to relay to us? That our one God was three distinct divine persons of one substance? That somehow God the Son is eternally being begotten? Which is a contradiction of words? Is the terms Word and Son interchangeable terms? The answer to these questions is no. This is not what the Apostle John was trying to relay to us.

So what was the Apostle John trying to relay to us? The nutshell answer is exactly what the Apostle John told us. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”

We must remember that God is a Spirit. (Jn 4:24) The eternal Spirit of God is the Word that was with God and was God; as the thought, plan, and mind of God. Not as three divine persons that somehow make up one God. The Holy Spirit (Holy Ghost) is this eternal Spirit of God. This Word that was with God and was God is the thought, plan, and mind of God that was with God.

The eternal Spirit of God, or the Father, beget His only son to redeem mankind from their fallen state of sin. This action of conception took place through the Word, the thought, plan, and mind of God, by His eternal Spirit which is the Holy Ghost. (Lk 1:30-35)

So the Word and the Son are not interchangeable terms. The Word is eternal as the thought, plan, and mind of God. The eternal Spirit of God has an eternal purpose in Christ. (Eph 3:11)

This plan of God was set forth as creation by the eternal spirit of God, which is the Word of God, when God spoke the world into existence. This same Word, which is the thought, plan, and mind of God, was made flesh some 4,000 years later when the eternal Spirit of God hovered over the virgin Mary and she conceived child of the Holy Ghost.

This conception was when the son of God was begotten as the scripture says, “Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.” (Psa 2:7b) Thus the Word is eternal, but the son of God was

begotten upon the conception of the virgin Mary by the eternal Spirit of God through the Word of God. The thought, plan, and mind of God in action.

In Hebrews 1:5-10 we see prophecies from the Psalms fulfilled in Jesus Christ. But focusing on verse 5 it reads, "For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?"

Notice carefully the future tense "I will be" and "he shall be" in this scripture verse. It reads, "I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?" This lets us know again that this was not an eternal sonship, but rather the Son was begotten at a certain point in time, which was at the conception of the virgin Mary.

VI. Cosmogony

By this term is understood an account of how the universe (cosmos) came into being (gonia — gegona = I have become). It differs from cosmology, or the science of the universe, in this: that the latter aims at understanding the actual composition and governing laws of the universe as it now exists; while the former answers the question as to how it first came to be.

The Catholic Encyclopedia online in the article entitled "The Blessed Trinity" (see weblink: <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/15047a.htm>) we read:

Heading: Proof of the doctrine from tradition Later Controversy

The Socinian writers of the seventeenth century (e.g. Sand, "Nucleus historiae ecclesiastic", Amsterdam, 1668) asserted that the language of the early Fathers in many passages of their works shows that they agreed not with Athanasius, but with Arius. Petavius, who was at that period engaged on his great theological work, was convinced by their arguments, and allowed that at least some of these Fathers had fallen into grave errors.

It is further to be remembered that accurate terminology in regard to the relations between the Three Persons was the fruit of the controversies which sprang up in the fourth century. The writers of an earlier period were not concerned with Arianism, and employed expressions which in the light of subsequent errors are seen to be not merely inaccurate, but dangerous.

It should further be remembered that throughout this period theologians, when treating of the relation of the Divine Persons to each other, invariably regard them in connection with the cosmogony. Only later, in the Nicene epoch, did they learn to prescind from the question of creation and deal with the threefold Personality exclusively from the point of view of the Divine life of the Godhead. When that stage was reached expressions such as these became impossible.

Notice carefully here that the Catholic Church is stating that the writings of the Church Fathers

prior to the Trinitarian Doctrine which received final approbation in the fourth century did not agree with the doctrine of which received this final approbation. Not only did the prior writings of the Church Fathers not agree with the Trinitarian Doctrine that received final approbation in the fourth century, but now we see several profound statements being made. 1) “It should further be remembered that throughout this period theologians, when treating of the relation of the Divine Persons to each other, invariably regard them in connection with the cosmogony.” 2) “Only later, in the Nicene epoch, did they learn to prescind from the question of creation and deal with the threefold Personality exclusively from the point of view of the Divine life of the Godhead.” 3) “When that stage was reached expressions such as these became impossible.”

1) Cosmogony, being the study of the origin and development of the universe, was a crucial part of understanding what the Apostle John meant when he spoke to us in John 1:1-3 “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.”

Remember that the Word (Logos) is something said (including the thought) and also the reasoning (the mental faculty) or motive of what was said. This is why cosmogony was such an important part of understanding what the Apostle John meant in regards to the Word.

2) Notice again that it was “Only later, in the Nicene epoch, did they learn to prescind from the question of creation and deal with the threefold Personality exclusively from the point of view of the Divine life of the Godhead.” Why did they learn to prescind from this question? They answer that for us in the next sentence.

3) "When that stage was reached expressions such as these became impossible." They became impossible because you were either banished, excommunicated, or possibly put to death for teaching heresy!

VII. How did the Son create the worlds then?

“For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.” (Col 1:16-17)

“**And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;**” (Rev 3:14)

Here we read an interesting verse. This verse makes the statement, “**These things saith... the beginning of the creation of God**” How was Jesus the beginning of the creation of God?

Notice the keywords ‘the beginning.’ This again goes back to understanding what the Word is and what is meant by the Word.

The answer is found in many scripture passages. Let me give a summary of these verses with what we have learned up to this point.

Who is the Son of God? The Word made flesh (Jn 1:14), not beforehand (Psa 2:7b, Heb 1:5). So God made the worlds by his Son as the Word that would become flesh, not as a second individual in the Godhead, but rather as the Word that was God. (Jn 1:1) God calls things that be not as though they were (Rom 4:17) even as he speaks of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. (Rev 13:8) God created all things by Jesus Christ (Eph 3:9) as the Word of God (Jn 1:1-3) that would be made flesh (Jn 1:14) when the fulness of the time was come (Gal 4:4).

The Word made flesh would reveal to us the name of God as Jesus. I and my Father are one. (Jn 10:30) By inheritance have I obtained a more excellent name than the angels. (Heb 1:4) I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not. (Jn 5:43a) But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things... (Jn 14:26a) And I have declared unto them thy name. (Jn 17:26a) For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named. (Eph 3:14-15)

Jesus Christ is the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

VIII. Conversation in the Godhead?

The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. (Psa 110:1)

There are not any conversations in the Godhead recorded in the Bible but rather prophecy recorded that was spoken by the Prophet. Just like the case with the Lord speaking to Cyrus.

“Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut;” (Isa 45:1)

Was this a literal conversation between God and Cyrus? The answer is no. The Lord spoke it through the Prophet Isaiah two hundred years before Cyrus was born and it was recorded so that it might be an undeniable evidence of the exactness of God's foreknowledge. It was recorded and fulfilled in it's proper time just like the prophecies concerning the Messiah. They were not conversations taking place in the Godhead between a God the Son and a God the Father, but rather they were prophecies recorded afore time so that it might be an undeniable evidence of the exactness of God's foreknowledge.

It we try to force Psalms 110:1 to be a conversation between a God the Father and a God the Son, then we must also force the words spoken in prophecy from the Prophet Isaiah in regards to Cyrus to also be a conversation that took place between God and Cyrus which would then force a

pre-existent birth of Cyrus. Pre-existent birth is not a Biblical doctrine.

This is exactly what is taking place with claiming recorded prophecy of the Messiah to come was conversations taking place with a God the Father and a God the Son which then forces a pre-existence of Christ as a second individual in the Godhead. Just like pre-existent birth is not a Biblical doctrine, the Trinity is also not a Biblical doctrine.

IX. Who is Jesus Christ

For this understanding we will let the Word of God declare to us who the Son of man Jesus Christ is.

“When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, **Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?** And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, **But whom say ye that I am?** And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” (Mt 16:13-16)

Who is Jesus Christ?

Jesus Christ is the Son of the living God.

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” (Jn 1:1,14)

Who is Jesus Christ?

Jesus Christ is the Word of God.

“**And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; 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. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.**” (Jn 14:16-18)

Who is Jesus Christ?

Jesus Christ is the Comforter.

“**But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.**” (Jn 15:26-27)

Who is Jesus Christ?

Jesus Christ is the Spirit of Truth.

“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.” (Gal 2:20)

Who is Jesus Christ?

Jesus Christ is the indwelling Spirit of God.

“Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.” (Mt 1:23)

Who is Jesus Christ?

Jesus Christ is God with us.

“Saying, **I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last;**” (Rev 1:11a)

Who is Jesus Christ?

Jesus Christ is the Alpha and the Omega.

“**I am he that liveth, and was dead;**” (Rev 1:18a)

Who is Jesus Christ?

Jesus Christ is He that liveth and was dead.

“For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.” (Col 2:9)

Who is Jesus Christ?

Jesus Christ is the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

“Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:” (Col 1:15)

Who is Jesus Christ?

Jesus Christ is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature

The prophet Isaiah prophesied of the birth of Christ.

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.” (Isa 9:6)

Who is Jesus Christ?

Jesus Christ is Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

Let us sum up who Jesus Christ really is according to the Bible.

1. Jesus Christ is the Son of God!
2. Jesus Christ is the Word of God
3. Jesus Christ is the Comforter
4. Jesus Christ is the Spirit of Truth
5. Jesus Christ is the Indwelling Spirit of God (the Holy Ghost)
6. Jesus Christ is Emmanuel, God with us
7. Jesus Christ is the Alpha and Omega
8. Jesus Christ is the First and the Last
9. Jesus Christ is He that liveth and was dead
10. Jesus Christ is the fullness of the Godhead bodily
11. Jesus Christ is the visible image of the invisible God
12. Jesus Christ is Wonderful
13. Jesus Christ is the Counsellor
14. Jesus Christ is the Mighty God
15. Jesus Christ is the Everlasting Father
16. Jesus Christ is the Prince of Peace

X. The Son would be known as the Everlasting Father?

“Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, **Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.**” (Jn 14:8-10)

Remember how the Father and Jesus are one? They are one in Spirit and in body. The flesh of Jesus is the body of God and the Spirit of Jesus is the Father. Therefore the Son would be known as the Mighty God as well as the Everlasting Father.

“I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him.” (Deut 18:18-19)

XI. The Mystery of the Godhead

“And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.” (1 Tim 3:16)

The mystery of godliness is God was manifest in the flesh. Jesus was to be called the mighty

God and the everlasting Father. And they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. This is the mystery of God manifest in the flesh. It was the Everlasting Father that was manifest in the flesh as the Son of God.

This is the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ. “That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” (Col 2:2-3)

It is important to recognize the wording of this mystery. It is the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ. This is the mystery of God manifest in the flesh. This mystery is God the Father, who is a Spirit, manifested himself in the flesh as the Son of God to redeem mankind back unto himself.

“To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.” (2 Cor 5:19)

Thus God manifested himself in various roles or offices to us. Such as the Father in creation, the Son in redemption, and the Holy Spirit in action. God is a spirit. He is the Holy Spirit. And when you see the Spirit of God referenced in the Bible it refers to God in action upon the universe or upon the souls of men. God is the Father of what is created which is everything. God who is a Spirit robed himself in flesh as the son of God to redeem mankind back unto himself. Jesus is the expressed visible image of the invisible God. Jesus is the body of God.

XII. The Dual nature of Christ

“He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.” (1 Jn 3:8)

“And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification. For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.)” (Rom 5:16)

We must not forget that Jesus had a dual nature. He was both fully man and fully God at the same time.

As to the human nature of Christ he hungered, thirsted, was fatigued, suffered pain and death. Christ “was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.” (Heb 4:15b) As to the Deity of Christ he was omnipotent (all powerful), omniscient (all knowing), and omnipresent (everywhere present).

We must ask ourselves when we read the words that Jesus spoke as to whether it was the

humanity in him speaking or the divine. For example: when Jesus prayed He prayed in His humanity to the Eternal Spirit.

“Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;” (Heb 5:7-9)

What many Trinitarian believers do not realize is this. God the Son was not praying to God the Father. If God the Son had to pray then by definition He would not be God. For as God He would not need help from anyone or anything. Thus even if you were a Trinitarian in belief, you must realize that Jesus was praying in his humanity to the eternal Spirit of God, which is God the Father.

When Jesus said the Father was greater than He, this was pertaining to humanity. Otherwise you would be forced to believe in both a God the Son and God the Father in which case you would have subordinated the Son to the Father in which case Trinitarians do not teach.

When Jesus said that no man knows the day nor the hour of the coming of the Son of man no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only, this was according to the flesh. As to the Divinity of the Father dwelling inside of Him, He knew the day and the hour.

Thus the mystery is revealed to us that Jesus Christ had a dual nature. He was the Almighty God and He was a man at the same time.

XIII. Is this not the teaching of Patripassian

Patripassianism. Name given to modalism, modalistic monarchianism, or Sabellianism. It came from Latin words meaning “the Father suffered.” Some historians use it to describe modalism because Tertullian accused the modalists, of believing that the Father suffered and died. However, the modalists apparently denied Tertullian’s accusation. The word therefore represents a misinterpretation of modalism by trinitarians, for modalism did not teach that the Father is the Son, but that the Father is in the Son. The flesh was not the Father, but the Father was in the flesh. Thus, modalism did not teach that the Father physically suffered or died.

The modalists are sometimes called Patripassians, from Latin words meaning “the Father suffered.” This label stems from Tertullian’s attempt to ridicule modalism as follows: If Jesus is the Father incarnate, then the Father was crucified and the Father died. How ridiculous to imagine that the Father could die!

What made his argument so powerful in his day was an important tenet of Greek philosophy, particularly emphasized in Neo-Platonism: God is impassible, or incapable of emotional feeling and suffering. God is so lofty that He cannot fully interact with this world; thus the God who

interacts with us cannot be the supreme God.

The most common objection made to modalistic monarchianism was that it was Patripassian; that is, it implied that the Father suffered and died. Tertullian was the first to so accuse the modalists. He interpreted modalism to mean that the Father is the same as the Son. But this would mean that the Father died, a clear impossibility. In this way, Tertullian sought to ridicule and refute modalism.

Later historians, taking Tertullian's argument as truth, have labelled the modalist doctrine as Patripassianism. However, Praxeas explained that while Jesus was the Father incarnate, Jesus died only as to His humanity, as the Son. Sabellius evidently answered the charge of Patripassianism in a similar way.

The whole issue can easily be resolved by realizing that modalism did not teach, as Tertullian assumed, that the Father is the Son, but rather that the Father is in the Son. As Commodian said, "The Father went into the Son, one God everywhere." Similarly, Sabellius explained that the Logos was not the Son but was clothed by the Son. Other modalists in response to the charge explained that the Son suffered, while the Father sympathized or "suffered with." By this they meant the Son, the man Jesus, suffered and died. The Father, the Spirit of God within Jesus, could not have suffered or died in any physical sense but yet He must have been affected by or have participated in the suffering of the flesh. Accordingly, Zephyrinus said, "I know only one God, Christ Jesus, and apart from Him no other who was born or could suffer. . . . It was not the Father who died but the Son."

From these statements, it seems clear that the modalists held that the Father was not flesh but was clothed or manifested in the flesh. The flesh died but the eternal Spirit did not. Therefore, Patripassianism is a misleading and inaccurate term to use for modalistic monarchianism. — Dr. David K. Bernard

XIV. Why do the Apostles use Father and Son in their salutations?

The first thing to take notice of is that there is no scripture in the Bible using the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost as three distinct individuals. Many people claim the scripture "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen" (2 Cor 13:14), as a Trinitarian text.

This scripture is speaking of our fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. It is through the grace and love of God, who robed himself in flesh as Christ, that we receive the atonement. And through the baptism of the Holy Ghost we have our communion with God. "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body" (1 Cor 12:13) the body of Christ.

Take a closer look at what the Apostle John writes "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the

Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.” (1 Jn 1:3) Why did the Apostle John leave out the Holy Ghost? And why do the other salutations continuously leave out the Holy Ghost?

The answer is because our God is not a trinity of persons. Our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. This is the mystery of God manifest in the flesh. We become one with God in body and Spirit when we are born again of water and of the Spirit. (Jn 3:5) When we receive the baptism of the Spirit we are baptized into the body of Christ. “For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body” (1 Cor 12:13).

XV. Summary

The Lord knowing his eternal purpose in Christ brought forth this plan through his Word of whom he is and when he created man he created him in the image of Jesus Christ the last Adam. Thus God in the counsel of his own will said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness” as he was thinking of the Christ that was to be brought forth when the fulness of the time was come of whom man would be made in the image of.

Thus the manifold wisdom of God was brought forth that the Almighty God would take upon himself the seed of Abraham upon the conception of the virgin Mary to redeem mankind back unto himself and upon his death as the scriptures says in Ephesians 2:15-16 “Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby”. And in so doing destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil. And upon his resurrection took back the keys of hell and of death.

Thus the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ was fulfilled which eternal purpose was in the Word of God as the eternal purpose he purposed in Christ to redeem mankind back unto himself when the fulness of the time was come which allowed restoration of sonship to his chosen vessels which he had afore prepared unto glory, Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles.

And so the eternal Word of God, which is the thought, plan, and mind of God will continue to be brought forth as we await the catching away of the saints, the coming of the great day of God Almighty wherein his Word will ride in victoriously conquering those who opposed him, and then he will rule and reign for 1000 years upon the Earth. Which Word of God will eternally unfold as there is no end as the scriptures has said in Ephesians 3:21 “Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.”