***The Work of the Trinity

RV84-02***

We continue with worship in the throne room, as we continue to examine the nature of God. We have pointed out that there are two powerful wills in the universe – two superhuman wills which exist, and they affect all of mankind. God is one of the masterminds, whose will is expressed through Judaism and Christianity. The other mastermind is Satan, whose will is expressed through Hinduism. Both of these basic religious systems have splinter groups of one kind and another, but they all share the basic doctrines of the parent religion.

These two wills in the universe are, of course, in constant conflict with one another. We describe that as the angelic conflict, or the angelic warfare. This battle for the souls of men will continue until there is only one will left in the universe: namely, the will of the living God.

Satan's plan of battle, we have shown, is to deceive men with a false doctrine about the nature of God. He promotes the doctrine of an impersonal God, which is a universal mind which possesses tremendous powers. Satan tells his devotees that all of mankind and all of nature are part of this force, and therefore everything and everyone is divine. We are all gods. Satan seeks to confirm this lie about the nature of God with demonstrations of occult powers which are so prominent in our day. Satan ties in his followers to the force through the techniques of Eastern mysticism or psychedelic drugs.

**The Essence of God**

The counterattack to Satan's lie about God is, of course, the biblical revelation about the nature of God. We have been pursuing that review of God's nature. We have seen that God is sovereign. That is, He is the absolute King of the universe. There is no will above His. He is absolute righteousness. He is perfect justice. He is love. He is eternal life. In the previous session, we looked at three "omnis" – that God is also omniscient; He is omnipresent; and, He is omnipotent. All of these are very important because they reiterate to us that this is a personal living God that we deal with.

**God is Immutable**

We now move on with one more attribute of God, and that is that He is immutable. The word "immutable" means that He is unchangeable. The important thing is to realize that we're talking about what is in the Bible. This characteristic of God is declared in Numbers 23:19: "God is not a man." Boy, what a problem does that verse have for the Mormons? I mean, talk about being deliberately and willfully blinded. How can any Mormon seriously look you in the eye and say that God is a person of flesh and blood just as we are? They say that God the Father is flesh and blood, and God the Son is flesh and blood. The Scripture says that God is not a man, and the implication is that He does not have the physical structure of man. In the book of John, of course, it becomes even clearer when John says that God is a Spirit.

**Mormonism**

I called this to the attention of a lady in the geological library in Salt Lake City. I said. "I'd be curious for you to tell me something. I understand that Mormon doctrine teaches that God is a flesh and blood person, and that He was once like we are, and has progressed upward through stages to where He became a complete and perfect deity, and that we are progressing and following in His steps." She said, "That's right." I said, "But how do you deal with the verse in John (and I pointed it out to her in the Bible) that says, 'God is a Spirit,' which means that He is very definitely a Spirit, and He's not anything else?" I called her attention to many other passages that indicate that God is not, in structure, as a human being. It was amazing. I thought she would say, "Oh, well, here's the answer." But she said, "You know, that is puzzling. I'd like to know the answer to that." That's where I got my first clue that Mormons do not really understand the Bible. They're in love with the Book of Mormon. They're in love with the additional Scriptures: "Doctrines and Covenants;" and "The Pearl of Great Price." They love those three basic Scriptures, but they don't really know the Bible.

I said, "What about this eternal marriage – to be able to be in the highest level?" There are three heavens in Mormonism, and the highest one up there is for Mormons only, and there are three stages in that one. And the highest level of the highest heaven for Mormons only is for Mormons who have been married within the temple. They have gone through the marriage ceremony in the temple, so that the marriage is eternal. So, this man and this woman will be able to reproduce spirit children in eternity to repopulate their own planets. I called her attention to the fact that Jesus said that, in heaven, we are in relationship to one another as the angels – that we do not marry, and we do not give in marriage, which is as clear as the Bible could say: "There is no marriage relationship in heaven." I said, "How would you explain that in terms of the concept of eternal marriages?"

She said, "You know, I'd like to know the answer to that, too." So, she said, "I'll tell you what. I'm going to give you a card. Will you write those two things down? And I'll see that it gets to one of our departments where we deal with questions that people send in." So, I did, and I'm still waiting. I never heard. This is the amazing deception that the willfully ignorant mind will impose upon itself even when the Bible says that God is not a man. God is a spirit. God is not anything at all like Joseph Smith said when he had a revelation that God was a man. Well, he had a revelation, but it was not the revelation from God. The system, therefore, because it has a false concept of God, and because everybody is going to deity, is again a variation of this same Eastern mysticism – that there is no evil. Everybody is going upward. Nobody is going to be condemned.

One of the guides of our group was a young man who kept talking about "going to your exaltation." That's what they call reaching up to the top level in the Mormon system. They had explained that there's this top heaven for Mormons, and it has three stages. Then there's a second one for people who have been a little better. They're good people, but they're not Mormons – folks like yourselves. Then there was a third heaven, the lowest one, for just the general public. I asked this young man, "Now, when you talk about exaltation, would the opposite be hell – the lake of fire, for those who don't make exaltation?" And again, he had that puzzled look on his face, and he finally said, "Do you mean the sons of perdition? There are very few of those." That was my first inkling, and I've since confirmed it – that Mormons do not believe that anybody really goes to hell. The sons of perdition are the only ones who go there. They are Cain, Judas, Satan, and a few of the real all-time bad guys. That's all. Those guys never make it. The rest of humanity is home free to begin with. And the basis of this is that Christ died, and therefore, you will be raised from the dead. He died to give you physical life, and your physical life is your entrance into your deity, because you as a physical being, are God.

So, it's a terrible thing not to understand clearly what the Bible says about the nature of God. This isn't just: "Yeah, I've heard this before." You better get the nature of God really anchored hard in your mind, and what God is like, because this is where the battle is being fought by Satan today.

So, God, as a person, is immutable. He is unchanging, no matter what the Mormons say. The Mormons say that God was once such as you and I are now, and that God kept changing, and moving up, and progressing upward. This is the same concept as Hindu mysticism. That is not so. Numbers 23:19 says, "God is not a man, that He should lie; neither the Son of Man that He should repent. What He has said, shall He not do it? Or what He has spoken, shall He not make it good?" When God says it, you can most certainly count upon it.

Then the Psalmist takes up the same concept in Psalm 33:11: "The counsel of the Lord stands forever; the thoughts of His heart to all generations." What God tells you is so, continues to be so. It is not changed. We have a thick book here in our library someplace that you might like to look at sometime. It's about Mormonism, written by two young people who were former Mormons, Gerald and Sandra Tanner, who have a microfilm library operation in Salt Lake City. In it, they have laid out the original revelations that Joseph Smith received from God. These revelations are recorded in "Doctrines and Covenants." One of these was, for example, the one on polygamy, and so on. And they have shown the original page, and then they have gone through, and they have marked every change of these prophecies. That's what these are. These are prophecies as well as introduction of new doctrine. They show how it was changed as time went on. So, in the edition of "Doctrines and Covenants" today, the words have been corrected. The prophecies have been corrected from a previous statement.

The average Mormon is totally oblivious to this. He wouldn't believe this if you told it to him. When I told this to one of our lady guides in Salt Lake City, she said, "Well, I certainly would like to see that." It's interesting to look at the page, and they apparently have a god who can't make up his mind. He gives you a revelation, and then later on, he has to change it; he has to readjust it; and, he has to bring it back in line.

**Jehovah's Witnesses**

In the Jehovah's Witnesses, you have the same concept. Again, this is a core of Eastern mysticism: that you are forever progressing; truth is always changing; and, you're always moving upward. In the Jehovah's Witnesses, they call it "old truth" and "new truth." These are clever words: old truth; and, new truth. This way they cover up the fact that what had been predicted by the leaders and the founders of Jehovah's Witnesses never came to pass. They say that it was truth. They don't want to say that it's a lie, and they don't want to say that it's a mistake. But they say that it was old truth. But now they have new truth – further revelation, expanding it. But that is not God.

This word "immutable" tells you exactly what the psalmist says. When God tells you something, He won't change it. If He tells you that you're destined for hell because of your condition, next week, He's not going to say, "Well, I've changed My mind. You're going to make it." If He tells you that you must believe this to be saved, next week, He's not going to change it. He is immutable. What He tells us, He'll stand by it.

In Psalm 102:27, you have another declaration: "But You are the same, and Your years shall have no end." There is the eternity of God. He is eternal life. Also, He is the same. He does not change.

The New Testament, of course, picks up this same truth about God. For example, in Hebrews 1:12: "And as a vesture, You shall fold them up." This is speaking about God's creation: "And they shall be changed. But You are the same, and Your years shall not fail."

Then Hebrews 13:8 makes another statement on the immutability of God. This is a famous one: "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and forever." This is one that the charismatics like to pop at you. When they want to defend the fact that they can speak in tongues, and that they can perform healings, and all of the other things that they claim, which were operational in the New Testament church, they come here to Hebrews 13:8 in order to prove that Jesus Christ does not change. He enabled believers to do that then, and, therefore, He enables believers to do it now.

Well, of course, what the Scripture is saying is that Jesus Christ Himself does not change. He is immutable. He is unchangeable. But this verse is not saying that His methods of dealing with mankind do not change. What was necessary in the New Testament church to establish Christianity as the replacement of Judaism, and to establish Christianity as being from God, and not an aberration of the invention of the mind of man, is no longer necessary, now that we have a written Scripture, which is the evidence of the change, and of what God now thinks, and what He expects of us now.

So, that's a nonsense argument. God Himself does not change, but how He deals with us, and what He does, changes from dispensation to dispensation. God, in His essence, is always complete. That is what "immutable" is telling us. James 1:17 says. "Every good gift, and every perfect gift, is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness nor shadow of turning." What he means is that all of these qualities of the essence of God are always true. There is no time when any of these qualities of God Himself, and of His nature, are not true now.

Since God is unchanging, He, of course, will keep His promises. Immutability with omnipotence (these two put together) means that God is going to be faithful. God can be faithful because of the fact that He is unchanging, and He has the omnipotence to do it. Satan cannot do that. Satan is not immutable. Satan, therefore, cannot be faithful to you. Those who are devotees of Satan always get stung because the devil always double-crosses. Why does the devil double-cross those who follow him? It would seem to be to his advantage to be faithful to them. He cannot be faithful because, in the first place, he is not omnipotent, so he cannot execute everything that needs to be done for people. Secondly, he is not immutable. He is a liar. The Lord told us he is the founder of the evil of lying. Therefore, as the father of lies, he cannot be immutable. He keeps changing his story.

The statements in Scripture that do say that God has changed His mind mean, basically, of course, as you find in each instance, that people have changed. So, God acts accordingly in perfect consistency. When the human race degenerated into the condition which we find it in the pre-flood civilization, then God changed His tactic in dealing with the human race. But that is not a change in the person of God. That is not a change in truth.

**God is Veracity**

There is one more factor to complete the biblical view of God, and that is veracity. The word "veracity" means "truthfulness." God is absolute truthfulness. God is never in error. There is no falsehood in any way attached to God. So, again, the Old Testament establishes this fact. Deuteronomy 32:4 says, "He is the rock. His work is perfect, and all His ways are justice; a God of truth, and without injury; just and right is He." There are a variety of the characteristics (the attributes) of God that are mentioned in this verse. The one we want to stress is the fact that He is a God of truth.

2 Samuel 7:28: "And now, O Lord God, You are that God, and Your Words are true. And You have promised this goodness onto Your servant." Because God has promised it, and because God is a God of truth, His servant may expect to receive the promise.

Psalm 33:4 says, "For the Word of the Lord is right, and all His works are done in truth." Again, we see the truthfulness of God.

Psalm 146:6 says, "Who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in it; Who keeps truth forever." You can count on God to keep telling the truth.

Isaiah 65:16 says, "He who blesses himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth. And he who swears in the earth shall swear by the God of truth, because the former troubles are forgotten, because they are hidden from My eyes." He is the God of truth.

When you come to the New Testament, of course, the same principle is enunciated. For example, Titus 1:2 says, "In hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began." The promise of eternal life is one that we may count on because God cannot lie. He is not a prevaricator.

Hebrews 6:18: "That by two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." This verse stresses the fact that God not only does not lie, it is even more comforting to know that here is something that God can't do: He can't lie.

Psalm 117:2 indicates that God's truth is eternal: "For His merciful kindness is great toward us, and the truth of the Lord endures forever. Praise ye the Lord."

In Psalm 91:4, we are told that the truthfulness of God is the thing that sustains us in our daily walk: "He shall cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you shall trust. His truth shall be your shield and buckler." The word "buckler" is an old English word which means "rampart." He will be the defensive barrier behind which you stand. His truth is going to be your shield.

The New Testament tells us that what Satan throws against us are fiery darts – evil attacks. It is the shield of truth that protects us against that. It is the fact that God is a God of truth that gives us the protection against the darts that Satan throws against us. He is a shield. He is a rampart behind which we can find a position of defense.

So, God's veracity provides the truth of doctrine which enables believers to fill the spiritual deficiency of soul, and then to mature to the power of super-grace living. These basic 10 qualities constitute the oneness of God, the essence of deity.

**The Trinity**

So that we have the picture clear, we should remind ourselves that the Bible does teach the doctrine of the Trinity. While the Bible reveals that God is one in essence in terms of these attributes, it says that He is three in personality. God is three persons who act in complete unity. All three persons have these qualities of the deity. The essence of deity is the same. This union of three-in-one is called the Godhead. We have that in Colossians 2:9: "For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." There is where we have the term Godhead. So, we refer to the three persons of the Trinity together as the Godhead. And you want to use scriptural terms.

So, the divine essence of God, which is His unity, expresses itself in three separate, distinct personalities. The prefix "tri," of course, means "three," and the word "unity" means "one." And thus we get the word "trinity," meaning three-in-one. This is not a biblical word. This is a theological word. It is a word that we use in order to describe what the Bible teaches. God is one unit made up of three persons: God the Father; God the Son; and, God the Holy Spirit. This is just as the United States is one country, but it's made up of many states. This is just as 1 Thessalonians 5:23 tells us that a human being is one person, but he's made up of body, soul, and spirit. So, God is a unity in essence, while he exists in three persons.

The evidence for this is extensive, and we're only going to touch upon that right now. The Bible begins in the Hebrew text with a very important word that tells us something right off the bat. This is a very great aggravation to Unitarians. It a very great aggravation to the Jews that this word is here in the form in which it is found in Genesis 1:1. It says, "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." And this word "God" is the Hebrew word "Elohim." In the Hebrew, "Elohim" is not a singular word. "Elohim" is a plural word. It's a word which indicates more than one. So, immediately, when you begin reading the Bible, this is the first thing you see. If you read the Hebrew language, you would say, "That is very peculiar: 'In the beginning,' and they use a word in a form that indicates it's not just one person. It's more than one person. What could that mean? "In the beginning, Elohim created the heavens and the earth." It is singular in meaning, of course, when referring to the true God. But it indicates that, within the Godhead, there is a division.

Genesis 1:26 further creates a problem for those who do not believe in the doctrine of the Trinity. We suddenly see, in the Hebrew Bible, the switching to plural pronouns: "us" and "our," not singular pronouns: "And God said, 'Let *us* make man in *our* image after *our* likeness, and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the foul of the air," and so on. Immediately, those who read this in Hebrew would say, "Now that's peculiar. What does that mean? What is that saying about God? God is speaking, and He's talking in terms of plurality – more than one." This is an indication that there was something that had not been revealed clearly concerning the Godhead.

The persons are actually identified even in the Old Testament. Genesis 1:26 says, "And God said." And now you have the speaker. That role is consistently held by the Father. The Father is the planner. The Father comes up with the plan, and therefore the Father is the one who is the spokesman. In Genesis 1:2, you have God the Holy Spirit: "The earth was without form and void. Darkness was upon the face of the deep, and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." That is God the Holy Spirit, hovering over the chaotic creation. And Genesis 1:1 says, "In the beginning, Elohim created." We know from other passages of the Word of God (John 1:1, John 1:3, and Colossians 1:16), that this is the Lord Jesus Christ who is the person of the Godhead who did the work of creating. So, when you bring the New Testament back in, you see immediately that the Old Testament clearly had all three persons of the Godhead functioning together.

However, if you go to Isaiah 48:16, you have even a more dramatic and clear indication of the Trinity in the Old Testament. We've been touching upon this recently already: "Come near unto Me. Hear this. I have not spoken in secret from the beginning. From the time that it was, there am I. And now the Lord God and His Spirit have sent Me." The expression "There am I" is one who has spoken from the beginning. John 1:1 said, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the word was God." This is speaking about Jesus Christ. This is identical to Isaiah 48:16, in reference to Jesus Christ: "There am I, the one who has spoken from the beginning." This is speaking clearly about God the Son. The speaker is the Lord Jesus Christ, and not the prophet. This is indicated by the context.

Notice Isaiah 48:12-15: "Hearken unto Me, O Jacob in Israel, My call. I am He. I am the first. I also am the last." You know enough from the book of the Revelation to know that that expression ("the alpha and omega, the first and the last") is the one which is characteristically used to identify God the Son: "My hand also has laid the foundation of the earth, and My right hand has spread out the heavens. When I call unto them, they stand up together." We know from the New Testament that the Creator was Jesus Christ. So, again, here it is speaking of the Creator. This is not the prophet Isaiah that it is referring to. It is referring to the Son.

Verse 14: "All of you assemble yourselves and hear who among them has declared these things. The Lord has loved Him. He will do His pleasure on Babylon, and His arms shall be on the Chaldeans. I, even I, have spoken. Yea, I have called Him. I have brought Him, and He shall make His way prosperous," and so on. So, when you come to verse 16, it is clear that in the expression "There am I," the "Am I" is referring to God the Son.

However, notice also that there is the expression "And now the Lord God and His Spirit have sent me." It is obvious that "the Lord God" is the Father, and "the Spirit" is God the Holy Spirit. So, in Isaiah 48:16 again, the Trinity is clearly to be seen even in the Old Testament. The full name of God is "God the Father; God the Son; and, God the Holy Spirit."

Isaiah, 6:1-3 is a passage that we have been looking at recently that says, "In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and His train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphim. Each one had six wings. With two, he covered his face; with two, he covered his feet; and, with two, he flew." This is suggesting to us what John probably saw of the cherub-like angels who, in Revelation, had six wings, and probably were doing the same thing: "One cried one to another, and said, 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts. The whole earth is full of His glory." Certainly they were saying the same thing in revelation that these angels are saying. Again, the repetition of the word "holy" three times indicates that he is speaking about the three persons of the Godhead, all of whom are equally holy.

And the oneness of God is stressed. Verse 3: "Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of hosts." The word "Lord" is singular. The word "hosts" means "armies." You notice that it does not say, "The *Lords* of hosts." So, "Holy, Holy, Holy" talks to us of the Trinity, and immediately God the Spirit leads the writer to say, "And the Lord of Hosts" (singular), speaking about the unity.

Isaiah saw only one person of the Trinity – the one that can be seen. In all likelihood, here was the Son. John 1:18 and John 6:46 indicate that.

In the Old Testament then, the emphasis was on the oneness of God in terms of the essence of God, because the people of the Old Testament were not ready to fully handle the revelation of the doctrine of the Trinity.

When you get to the New Testament, that doctrine is very quickly brought to the fore and made clear. In Matthew 3:16-17, you have one of the great declarations of the Trinity of God: "And Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water. And lo, the heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him, and lo, a low voice from heaven saying, 'This is My Beloved Son in whom I am well-pleased." I am sure you can put that verse together for yourself to realize that here, God the Son is in the water being baptized; God the Holy Spirit is descending upon Him in the form of a dove; and, God the Father is speaking from heaven. So, here, very clearly at the beginning of the New Testament, you have indicated the Trinity of the Godhead.

**Sabellianism**

There are a couple of false views that you should not fall into. These have been fought over in church history, and I'll just mention them in passing. One was a doctrine called "Sabellianism" which was a heresy. It is today held by the Unitarian groups. That is that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are merely one God who appears in those different roles: Sometimes you see Him as Father; sometimes you see Him as Son; and, sometimes you see him as the Holy Spirit. That is a false reflection. That is a satanic reflection of what the Bible teaches. The Matthew passage we just read obviously condemns that.

**Arianism**

Nor should you fall into another ancient heresy led by a man named Arius, which was tritheism – that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are three separate distinct Gods. That's the way the Mormons treat this – that they have no relationship to one another, and they are totally different, separate gods. That, again, is not true. You might on a human level, compare this to the fact that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were three personalities, but they all possessed a single humanity. They all had the same characteristics and qualities that constitute humanity.

So, those are the two basic false views that Satan has brought on in terms of trying to give a distortion to the biblical revelation of God apart from his pantheistic view you've got, which we've been studying in terms of Eastern mysticism.

**Our Savior**

To tie this together, let's look at Jude 25: "To the only wise God, our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen." God is our savior. We've already looked at the phrase "the only wise God," and it's really "the only God." The word "wise" is not there. There is only one true God, not the thousands upon thousands of gods of the heathen paganistic cults. This is the God who is our Savior. In the Greek Bible, there are words which are not included here in this translation of the King James. Those are the words "through Jesus Christ our Lord." So, what it should say is, "The only God, our savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord." Here, the Triune God is called our Savior. That is often characteristic in the Bible – that there are qualities of ministry which are attributed to each member of the Godhead. God the Father is our Savior, and God the Holy Spirit is our Savior, as well as God the Son. Here, the word "Savior" is actually being applied when it says, "The only God (that's the Godhead, and it calls Him), our Savior." Then it says, "Through Jesus Christ our Lord." So, the Triune God is called our Savior from sin and eternal death in hell. The agent is through Jesus Christ, our Lord. He is the agent. The Trinity, as a whole, has a part in that.

**Just Recognizing God will not get you into Heaven**

James 2:19 tells us something very important in terms of the relationship to this God. Having delineated the nature of God, James 2:19 points out to us: "You believe that there is one God. You do well. The demons also believe and tremble." This verse is very important for all those human beings that you and I meet day-by-day who believe in God; who indeed believe in one God; who indeed believe in a Godhead made up of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and, who indeed could be very orthodox, but who have not accepted that God as Savior. That is the difference. Just to believe what the Bible says about God will not take you into heaven.

When men get together on the masses of different religious systems, and they talk about God, this is what they do. They talk about God as a supreme being, and they all recognize that He's out there. And they think that just because they recognize God, that they have now come into a relationship with Him that will meet the demands of His holiness. It is very important that you make it very clear to people that just believing the revelation about God, and even believing accurately what God is like (the nature of God), that does not do it. The demons believe that. They know it very well. They have seen the functioning of the Godhead, but that does not enable them to have eternal life. That does not carry them through. No one comes to this triune God, of course, except through the Lord Jesus Christ, as 1 Corinthians 2:5 tells us.

**God's Plan for Man**

In eternity past, these three members of the Godhead had a conference, and They set Their plan. That plan included a role which each member of the Godhead was to play relative to our eternal salvation. Here again, we're going to deal with the deception of Satan. We have to deal with the fact that God has a specific role, as the Bible reveals, in terms of every person. This is what Satan is trying to contradict with his pantheistic god. These three Persons of the Godhead decided, first of all, to create man, and to give him a soul with a will which is able to go negative and positive. Their sovereignty and Their omniscience enabled Them to know that this man (this human race) which They would create, would break eternal fellowship with the Godhead.

Therefore, they had to set up a plan in order to restore the fallen humanity that they were going to create. So, these three Persons of the Godhead, because They loved man, and would love man in spite of his future choice of sin, wanted to continue to share the eternal life that they intended for him to have, along with God's own happiness – to share the happiness that God has. This is the only basic characteristic of God in terms of His emotional characteristic. God is happy. He's always been happy. It's His purpose to share that bliss, as we sometimes call it, with man now.

**The Three Stages of God's Plan**

Their attributes of perfect righteousness and justice, however, had to be satisfied; that is, Their holiness had to be satisfied in order for man to be able to be restored to what God, in this conference in eternity past with the Godhead, knew was going to happen. Holiness had to be recognized. It had to be satisfied. So, a plan was devised to remove this barrier to the love of God. This plan of the Godhead was offered by God the Father, and it had three stages. Each member of the Godhead came into practice in the execution of one stage.

1. **Salvation**

In the first stage, the key personality is God the Son. In this stage, salvation was to be provided. It was to be executed by the Son. He was to come into the world, through a virgin birth, so that deity and humanity could be joined together. God cannot die. A sacrifice had to be made for sin. Therefore, Jesus Christ had to come in a human body which could die. However, He had to come in a human body which was free of the sin nature. Therefore, He had to be incarnated, through the virgin birth, in order to bypass the genetic structure of the human father, which passes on the sin nature. So, the Son became the unique Person of the universe – the God-man. Jesus Christ, as man, could now die for the sins of the world, and could offer Himself as perfect man and absolute righteousness of deity as payment for sin. To be in God's plan for humanity, you must enter this first stage of God's plan, and you enter it at the cross. You must enter God's plan, and the entrance to God's plan, in order to escape the consequences of your sin, at the point of personal acceptance of Jesus Christ as Savior.

This plan was provided entirely by the Triune God without human help. Because Satan has deceived some of the splinter groups from the basic view of Christianity, he has sought to confuse the fact that the triune God provided a solution at stage one without human involvement.

**Water Baptism**

Thus you have a whole group like the Church of Christ, for example. I just watched the tape on a debate that was very interesting. I noticed that they were constantly reiterating that water baptism is a part of faith. They were hard pressed to escape the fact that water baptism was a human ritual. It was a human work. It was a thing that people can do, and people have been performing this for the very explicit purpose of being saved, even where they would say, "You're not saved just because you have water baptism." However, when they tried to defend that they were not violating the scriptural stage-one plan of salvation through the Son, apart from human works, they were hard pressed to do so. Their defense was constantly that faith is not complete until you include water baptism. Church of Christ preachers will tell you that water baptism is an act of faith. They are saying that purely out of the air. It is not true. It could not be true. It is a satanic assumption that had to be made in order to incorporate this human ritual.

Of course, the audience (I could tell) was prejudiced in terms of baptismal regeneration, and would break out in explosive applause when they thought that a telling point had been made. It was a debate. Those people didn't realize that they had violated the first step toward entering stage one of God's plan, which is salvation by grace apart from human doings. The men who were speaking on the other side, defending the biblical position, did an excellent job. The men who were defending the non-baptismal approach to salvation were finally pressed to say, "Now you will admit that these people are going to heaven." I noticed that both men (and they were knowledgeable men) hesitated for a moment, and said, "Yes, we will grant that." That was bad. They did not have a right to grant that. And I was sorry that somebody didn't bring in Romans 11:6. Romans 11:6 would have blown the thing sky high, because Romans 11:6 makes it very clear that grace and works are mutually exclusive. You cannot have part grace and part works, otherwise you have neither grace nor works, and God saves on the basis of grace.

The first stage is entering into eternal life on the basis of grace, and Satan is zeroing in to contaminate this point. He gets people all whipped up with a hoopla football-team-like spirit for their denomination, and the poor folks don't know that they are headed for the lake of fire.

Ephesians 2:8-9 say that it is by grace, and it's by grace alone. The technique of entrance is by faith in the gospel, which God has provided as enunciated in John 3:36 and John 3:16. The word "belief," which is used in these verses as the requirement for salvation is what we call, in grammar, a transitive verb. That is, it requires an object. You have to have a subject and an object. The subject is you, the sinner. You must believe, and it requires also an object. The object is Jesus Christ. You have to have a subject (you, the sinner). You have the transitive verb "believe." And you must have an object – Jesus Christ, or you may put the message of the gospel. That's the only way you are saved. The word "believe" has nothing else that you may interject. It is disconcerting, and it is confusing, to say, "Invite Jesus Christ into your heart." Your heart is a dirty place up to the point that you enter the plan of God at salvation, and it is no place to invite Jesus Christ. It is at the point that you believe the gospel that things get cleaned up, and that's what you want to invite. Even the most slovenly housewife would prefer for you not to come visiting when her house is all upset, let alone to invite Jesus Christ into the sloppiness of your unsaved heart.

1. **Learning Doctrine**

In the second stage of God's plan, the key personality is God the Holy Spirit. This is in the Godhead's eternal plan that They put together. In the second stage of God's plan, the believer is now in time; he's on earth; and, he's born again. And God has provided for this stage a grace system of perception for learning doctrinal truth – learning the Bible revelation. God the Holy Spirit reveals salvation truth to the lost. He brings conviction upon them to believe. For the believer, God the Holy Spirit brings conviction when He is out of fellowship in order to restore him to temporal fellowship. The Christian, with knowledge of doctrine and the filling of the Holy Spirit, produces divine good service. And that's the only person who produces divine good service – the Christian who is knowledgeable in doctrine and filled with the Holy Spirit. The believer's divine good, which he produces under that condition, receives the rewards of eternity as described in 1 Corinthians 3:12-15.

The Christian life, in stage two, is, of course, a supernatural life. The Holy Spirit is producing inner peace; happiness; mastery of one's condition; stability in life; love; purpose; and, beauty. He's providing logistical grace for you to make it. Ultimately, He is providing you with a spiritual maturity structure in your soul. That is the name of the game at stage two. God the Holy Spirit is leading you in such a way that increasingly you have more and more capacity to serve and produce divine good, and increase your capacity for earning reward. When you get to the super-grace level of life, then the whole realm of service is tremendously broadened as to where you can serve. You have capacity to serve on a wide front, and to be able to achieve divine good production.

**Logistical Grace**

When the born-again believer comes out of his lost life, and comes into the Christian life, he has hardly any area of service. He may be able to walk up to one of his relatives and say, "Hey, I want to tell you about what happened to me." He can explain the gospel, and that's about the limited area in which he can function. The Christian, who has filled his soul with doctrinal understanding, now broaden his horizons so that God can keep bringing things into contact with your life that you can come to grips with, and that you can deal with, in terms of eternal reward. You will be functioning in practical, applied Christianity, and producing service that God rewards. And God provides everything we need in stage two. "Logistical grace" is a good term. The word "logistic means" the "provisions."

When you're in a wartime situation, logistics becomes very, very important. If you're going to make an amphibious landing, a chart has to be drawn of the ship that's going to be loaded which is going to carry all that is necessary for the execution of that military operation. You also need a plan of attack. A procedure has to be drawn so that what is needed first is listed; what is needed second; what is needed third; and, down to the bottom line. Then they have to load the ship from the bottom up so that what is down at the bottom of the hole comes out because that's what you need last. But what you need first, when you hit the beach, has to be on top – not way at the bottom so that you're rummaging around to get all that other stuff off before you get your artillery pieces on shore, for example, that you need immediately within the second or third waves. This is logistics. It's providing the things by which you can execute, and God does that.

1. **Eternity**

The third stage of the great plan of the Godhead is executed by the Father. The third stage is eternity. As you proceed to develop grace in living, you will discover that you have also developed grace for dying. Dying grace is as important as living grace. So, when the doctor comes in and tells you you've got 48 hours to live; you're not going to make it; and, you're on your way, you're not going to go screaming; you're not going to go getting excited; and, you're not going to go kicking and saying, "Why me?" You're just going to understand that you have the grace capacity to check out in keeping with God's plan. The Father is the executor of your will of life.

The triune God, in complete fellowship with man, has forever removed all the barriers. The Father has removed the barriers between you and Him – that barrier of sin that made you a slave to sin. He executed that with the doctrine of redemption, and gave you forgiveness for your sin. The penalty of spiritual death, which lies upon you, has been paid by Jesus Christ. So, the doctrine of expiation comes in. Your sin record has been expiated (has been wiped out) by the spiritual death of Christ. You were born spiritually dead, and you need spiritual life to go to heaven. So, the doctrine of regeneration comes in there, so that the sin nature effects are removed. This is the basis for your contact with God in eternity – that you're not spiritually alive. Your human spirit is restored.

Then there are the demands of God's holiness that are part of this barrier. God is absolute righteousness, and you must be absolute righteousness. God is perfect justice, and you must have taken care of your sin perfectly. So, the doctrine of propitiation comes in to satisfy the justice of God. Then the doctrine of imputation comes in to satisfy our need for absolute righteousness. God's righteousness is imputed to us. We have the penalty removed completely. We are perfect with God.

Then finally, we have the problem of being in Adam. So, the doctrine of position in Christ comes in here, and we are transferred, at the point of belief, by the baptism of the Holy Spirit, from being in Adam to being in Christ. Thus, we are seen by God no longer in that position of death, but in the position of eternal life. So, that's why we say that today there's only one thing separating you from God, and that is faith in Jesus Christ – your attitude toward the cross.

So, Jude verse 25 closes with these majestic words. After reviewing the work of God in these three stages as Savior, he said, "To him be glory (the shining radiance of the divine essence), majesty (God's awesome sovereignty), dominion (the absolute power of God to execute His plan), and power (a better word there is the 'authority' of God, to execute His rule), both now (in time), and ever" (or "forever," in terms of eternity – eternity past, present, and future). That is because, again, in the Greek, the word "now" is preceded by the words "before all time." That's a very important omission. It should be: "Before all time, both now, and forever." So, you have the past, the present, and the future actually involved in this verse.

So, the essence of the Trinity is eternal here, and it is this God who has this kind of power and this kind of authority that is executing in our behalf. That is the God of the Bible, in contrast to the God of paganism. Jude ends up with a very significant declaration of the word "Amen" – that Hebrew word for affirmation.

So, I hope that what we have done today will have reiterated for you the totally different view of God and His work, which is taught by the Bible, and that which is taught to mankind by Satan. In Satan's system of religion, there is no God of love. The gods of Eastern mysticism are indifferent to human suffering and need, and they are vengeful. There is no substitutionary sacrifice for the sinner in the Satan system. You have to work out your own karma; your own effects of what you caused in your previous life; and, your evil condition. You have to do this by self-effort, but the Word of God says that that is not so. Jesus Christ took our karma upon Himself.

In Satan's system, there's no hope of eternal life. There is no hope to be released from the wheel of reincarnation. If you do get released, then you go into a nirvana in Eastern thinking, which is a place of nothingness: not a place of joy; not a place of fellowship; or, a place of communication. You are just blanked out, and nonexistence is what you have before you. In Satan's system, there is no personal release from the power of the old sin nature. You're a slave of evil from the filthiest moment that you entered your life to the filthiest moment of your performance in life to the very end. There is no release from that slavery. Finally, there is no divine revelation to guide the sinner to a Holy God under Satan system. There is only the human viewpoint of religious people, and the deception of Satan, as we've seen, of telling you to look within yourself, and to find the truth. That's where it is now.

If you get these concepts of Satan's false views, keep your eyes open this week. I think you'll begin to see them. I saw an article today in the paper saying that you can think yourself to success. That's exactly the kind of thing we're talking about – that you can make God do things for you if you know the right thinking; and, if you are tied into the force mentally, you've got Him over the barrel. There is a vast difference between the holy God that John here has praised in heaven, and the unholy gods that Satan produces.

We shall follow this now, in the sessions ahead, in a little more specific detail with specific groups, so that you can button them down where they belong in your thinking, and you are not looking tolerantly; pleasantly; and, acceptably upon those that you should recognize as being agents of his majesty the devil.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1982

[**Back to the Revelation index**](http://www.christiandataresources.com/revelation.htm)

[**Back to the Bible Questions index**](http://www.christiandataresources.com/allarticles.htm)