

Chapter Eighteen

THE UNIQUENESS OF THE FATHER

See

DOCTRINE OF GOD (THEOLOGY PROPER)

AFFIRMATION 18

In the Bible, whenever God is referred to, without any distinction to any member of the triune Godhead, the reference is primarily to the Father (Deut. 6:4; Jn. 6:27-29; Eph. 2:19; 3:19; 4:6; 5:1; Phil. 3:15). The Father, then embodies all the distinctiveness of deity in His Being – *Self-sufficient, Self-conscious, Self-determined and Self-existent* (Ex. 3:13, 14), *Life* (Jn. 5:26) and *Light* (1 Jn. 1:5); *Nature– Infinite Spirit* (Jn. 4:23-24) and yet *Personal* (Ps. 94:9, 10); *Essence or Form – distinct in the One indivisible Godhead in three co-equal Divine Persons* (Deut. 6:4; Matt. 28:19) but yet in the Son (Jn. 8:12-19; 14:9-11); and *Attributes - Omnipotent* (Deut. 6:4; Job 42:2; Is. 46:9, 10; Rev. 19:6), *Omnipresent* (Ps. 139:7-12; 147:5), *Omniscient* (Job 42:2; Is. 46:9, 10; Acts 5:4, 5), *Immutable* (Mal. 3:6; Heb. 13:8; Js. 1:17), *Eternal* (Ex. 3:14; Deut. 33:27; Ps. 90:2), *Perfect Love* (1 Jn. 4:8), etc. being, nature and character, attributes and functions.

The Father holds the pre-eminence as God (Hebrew: *Elohim*; Greek: *Theos*) in the triune Godhead, the Creator of the Universe (Gen. 1:1, 4-28; 2:4, 7; Ps 8:3; 104:30; 139:13; Is. 45:12, 18; Rev. 4:11). He is not only the Creator but also the Owner (Ps 24:1; 50:10; 97:5; 104:24-30), Preserver and Sustainer (Ps. 36:6), Ruler and Governor (Ps. 66:7), Judge (Gen. 18:25), Provider (Gen. 8:22) and Redeemer (Gen. 1:2-3; 3:9-15; Ex. 3:4-8; 6:2-5; Eph. 3:14, 15) of the whole Universe.

The Father, in eternity past, sat in council (Jer. 23:18, 22; Rom. 11:33, 34) with the co-equal and co-eternal members of the triune Godhead (Deut. 6:4; 1 Tim. 2:5) to plan and design all that was, is and ever shall be in the Universe (Gen. 1:1, 3-31; Jn. 1:1-3). He laid the foundations (Prov. 8:29), prepared the elements (Job 28:26, 27), and set the boundaries of the seas (Job 38:11). He also specially made man in His image to be His steward on Earth (Gen. 1:26-28); who was to be the object of His grace (Jn. 1:12-18; Eph. 1:2, 4; 2:8-10; Tit. 2:11-15). In the creative and redemptive genius of God, the Father planned (1 Cor. 8:6), the Son executed (Jn. 1:3; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:10) and the Holy Spirit revealed or restored it (Gen. 1:2; Job 33:4; Ps. 104:30). In the New Creation of the New Heavens and New Earth, the Father will all in all as One Godhead in the eternal city of the New Jerusalem (1 Cor. 15:28; 2 Pet. 3:1-18 v. 13; Rev. 21:1-7).

His Identity

The Father is God, who is revealed by the Son, Jesus Christ as the 'Father' (Matt. 23:9; Jn. 1:14, 18; 6:27-29, 33, 69; 14:6, 9-11, 16; 15:26; 20:17, 21). The Father is severally revealed in the New Testament as the one true God (1 Cor. 8:4, 6; Gal. 3:20; 1 Thess. 1:9) and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 1:3; 11:31; Eph. 1:3, 7; 2:4; 3:14; Col. 1:3; 1 Pet. 1:3). The relationship of the Son, Jesus Christ with the Father is eternal (Jn. 1:1-3; 17:5, 24); but that the Son is also both the revelation of the Father to humanity and the central theme to the drama of God's Redemptive Plan as the only begotten Son (Jn. 1:1-3; 14-18; 3:16; Acts 13:33; 2 Cor. 4:6; Eph. 3:11; Heb. 1:2, 5; 5:5; 1 Jn. 4:9).

He is also the Father of all believers (Gal. 4:6; Eph. 1:5; 3:14, 15; 4:6). He is, however, not the Father but the Creator of all human kind (Jn. 8:42, 44). This is because, the Fatherhood of God is preconditioned on faith in His Son, Jesus Christ as the Second Person of the triune God (Jn. 1:12, 13; Gal. 3:26; 1 Jn. 2:22-25; 5:1-5, 20) and in the abiding assurance of the third Person, the Holy Spirit within the believer (Rom. 8:15; 1 Jn. 3:23, 24).

His Functions

6. He is the Master Planner, Designer, Builder, Originator, Creator and Sustainer who sent His Son to die on the Cross for our sins (Gen. 1:1, 26-28; Neh. 9:21; Ps. 127; Ps 55:22; Matt. 1:21; Lk 2:1f; Jn. 1:29; 3:16; 14:1-6).
7. He is the source and giver of all life (John 5; 6)
8. He is the just and justifier of all who believe in His Son, Jesus Christ (John 3:16-18; Rom. 3:26)
9. He gave the Spirit to the Son and the Church (Gen 1:1; Neh. 9:21; Ps 55:22; 127; Matt 3:16; Lk 24:49; John 3:34; 35; 14:16, 26; Acts 2:1-4, 33).
10. He sits in counsel as the head of the triune Godhead (Gen. 1:1, 26; 3:22; 1 Cor. 11:3)
11. He has given, ultimately given all things to His Son Jesus, including all authority (Matt. 28:18; Phil. 2:11), judgment (Acts 10:42; Rom. 2:16) and rule (Ps. 110:1; 1 Cor. 15:24; Rev. 11:15-17).
12. He performs special functions in believers (2 Cor. 1:18-22). The Father reveals the Son in and to believers (Matt. 11:25-27; Gal. 1:15, 16), and thereafter, establishes believers in Christ, having already anointed, sealed and given the Holy Spirit as earnest in our hearts (2 Cor. 1:21, 22). He does this corporately with the Son and the Holy Spirit through the gospel (Acts 5:30-32; Eph. 1:13, 14; 3:4-6).
13. He performs special functions on and for believers (2 Cor. 1:1-4; 1 Pet. 5:8-10; 1 Jn. 5:18-20). The Father as the family head keeps us in His love (Eph. 3:14-19) and protects us from the wicked spirit from Satan in view of His promise on eternal life in the Son (Matt. 6:9-13; 1 Jn. 5:2:23-25; 18-20).

14. He will eventually sit in counsel as the head of the triune Godhead and ruler over all creation in the New Heavens and New Earth as One God (1 Cor. 15:28; Rev. 21:1-7). This will be after the Millennial Rule of Jesus Christ as King of kings and Lord of lords (1 Tim. 6:15; Rev. 17:4; 19:16). Presently and through all ages to the day of final resurrection and eternal judgment on Earth, the Father does everything on Earth with other members of Trinity (1 Cor. 15:28; Heb. 6:1, 2; 9:14-28); yet only through His Son and the Holy Spirit (Jn. 5:22-29; Acts 1:1-3; 5:29-32; 10:34-44; Heb. 1:1-5; 1 Jn. 2:20-27; 4:12-16).

God's Special Functions in believers

The Trinity always work in concert but with one or two members seen in action in believers (Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 2:33; 2 Cor. 5:21; 13:14; Eph. 3:14-19). In 2 Cor. 1:21-22, Paul mentions four wonderful things that God, the Father does for believers who embrace the gospel; *"Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts."* (2 Cor. 1:21, 22 KJV). God, therefore, establishes believers in Christ, having already anointed, sealed and given the Holy Spirit as earnest in our hearts. Very conclusively, God:

1. Sees to establish believers in Christ and in the faith (v. 21 see Acts 16:5; Rom. 1:11, 12; 2 Cor. 13:1; Col. 2:1-7; 2 Pet. 1:12-21; Jd. 1:3, 20, 21): The implication is that it is God's duty to establish, that is confirm, make firm, steadfast and constantly abiding in Christ and the faith (Rom. 1:11-13; 16:25; 2 Cor. 5:14-21; Col. 1:23; 2:6, 7; 2 Thess. 2:16, 17; 1 Jn. 2:18-27). In Christ, God the Father is our Father in heaven (Matt. 6:9; Jn. 20:17) by adoptive fatherhood of all believers (Jn. 1:12, 13; Rom. 8:14-16; Eph. 1:3-23 vv. 6, 7; Gal. 4:4-6).
2. Anoints believers (v. 21): The same anointing upon Christ is in and from the Holy Spirit; and God anoints us, similarly, to consecrate and qualify us for service (Lk. 4:18; Acts 1:8; 5:32; 10:38; 1 Jn. 2:20, 27).
3. Seals believers (v. 22): God places His seal, His stamp, His mark of ownership, preservation and authenticity upon believers through the coming of the Holy Spirit (Eph. 1:13, 14).
4. Gives the earnest or deposit of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of believers (v. 22): The Holy Spirit is an advanced payment, a down payment on His promise to believers as His guarantee, security, deposit, an advanced payment of final redemption as the guarantee of eternal life (Rom. 8:16; Gal. 4:6; Eph. 1:13, 14; 4:30; 1 Jn. 3:24; 4:13; 5:6). The Holy Spirit is the first installment as engagement ring to guarantee that the rest would be paid to the Church on the marriage between His Son and His Bride, the Church (Eph. 5:25-27; Rev. 19:1-9).