

# What did the Pioneers Believe?

## The Trinity Exposed...

### John Nevins Andrews

The doctrine of the Trinity which was established in the church by the council of Nice, A. D. 325. This doctrine destroys the personality of God, and his Son Jesus Christ our Lord. The infamous, measures by which it was forced upon the church which appear upon the pages of ecclesiastical history might well cause every believer in that doctrine to blush.

**{Advent Review and Sabbath Herald March 6, 1855, page 185.34}**

Every member of the human family, except Adam, has had parents, and everyone has had beginning of days; and indeed, with two exceptions, everyone has had end of life. Even the angels of God have all had beginning of days, so that they would be as much excluded by this language as the members of the human family. And as to the Son of God, he would be excluded also, for he had God for his Father, and did, at some point in the eternity of the past, have beginning of days.

**{ Review and Herald, September 7, 1869}**

That God is the fountain and source of immortality is plain from the statement of Paul. He speaks of God the Father: 'Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen nor can see; to whom be honor and power everlasting; Amen.' 1Tim.6:16. This text evidently designed to teach that the self existent God is the only being who, of himself, possesses this wonderful nature.

Others may possess it as derived from him, but he alone is the fountain of immortality. "Our Lord Jesus Christ is the source of this life to us. "For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself." "As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me." John 6:57. The Father gives us this life in His Son.

"And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life and this life is in his son. He that hath the son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." 1 John 5:11,12. These Scriptures do clearly indicate that Christ is the source of endless life, and that those only have this who have Christ."

**{ Review and Herald, January 27, 1874 p.52}**

### James White

As fundamental errors, we might class with this counterfeit sabbath other errors which Protestants have brought away from the Catholic church, such as sprinkling for baptism, the trinity, the consciousness of the dead and eternal life in misery. The mass who have held these fundamental errors, have doubtless done it ignorantly; but can it be supposed that the church of Christ will carry along with her these errors till the judgment scenes burst upon the world?

We think not. "Here are they [in the period of a message given just before the Son of man takes his place upon the white cloud, [Revelation 14:14](#)] that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." This class, who live just prior to the second advent, will not be keeping the traditions of men, neither will they be holding fundamental errors relative to the plan of salvation through Jesus Christ.

And as the true light shines out upon these subjects, and is rejected by the mass, then condemnation will come upon them.

**{Review and Herald, September 12, 1854}**

The Father and the Son were one in man's creation, and in his redemption. Said the Father to the Son, "Let us make man in our image." And the triumphant song of jubilee in which the redeemed take part, is unto "Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, forever and ever."

**{Life Incidents p.343.1}**

Jesus prayed that his disciples might be one as he was one with his Father. This prayer did not contemplate one disciple with twelve heads, but twelve disciples, made one in object and effort in the cause of their master. Neither are the Father and the Son parts of the "three-one God." They are two distinct beings, yet one in the design and accomplishment of redemption.

**{Life Incidents p.343.2}**

The redeemed, from the first who shares in the great redemption, to the last, all ascribe the honor, and glory, and praise, of their salvation, to both God and the Lamb.

**{Life Incidents p.343.2}**

"The way spiritualizers have disposed of or denied the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ is first using the old unscriptural trinitarian creed, viz., that Jesus Christ is the eternal God, though they have not one passage to support it, while we have plain scripture testimony in abundance that he is the Son of the eternal God."

**{The Day Star, January 24, 1846}**

## **Joseph Bates**

"My parents were members of long standing in the Congregational church, with all of their converted children thus far, and anxiously hoped that we would also unite with them. But they embraced some points in their faith which I could not understand. I will name two only: their mode of baptism, and doctrine of the trinity.

"My father, who had been a deacon of long standing with them, labored to convince me that they were right in points of doctrine. I informed him that my mind was troubled in relation to baptism. Said he, "I had you baptized when an infant." I answered, that that might all be according to his faith; but the Bible taught that we must first believe and then be baptized (Mark 16:16; 1 Peter 3:21), but I was not capable of believing when I was an infant."

**{The Autobiography of Elder Joseph Bates p.204,205}**

"Respecting the trinity, I concluded that it was an impossibility for me to believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, was also the Almighty God, the Father, one and the same being. I said to my father, "If you can convince me that we are one in this sense, that you are my father, and I your son; and also that I am your father, and you my son, then I can believe in the trinity."

**{The Autobiography of Elder Joseph Bates p.204,205}**

## John Norton Loughborough

“QUESTION 1. What serious objection is there to the doctrine of the Trinity?

ANSWER. There are many objections which we might urge, but on account of our limited space we shall reduce them to the three following:

1. It is contrary to common sense.
2. It is contrary to scripture.
3. Its origin is Pagan and fabulous. "

**{Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald November 5, 1861 page 184.3}**

1. It is not very consonant with common sense to talk of three being one, and one being three. Or as some express it, calling God “the Triune God,” or “the three-one-God.” If Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are each God, it would be three Gods; for three times one is not one, but three. There is a sense in which they are one, but not one person, as claimed by Trinitarians.

**" {Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald November 5, 1861 page 184.4}**

2. It is contrary to Scripture. Almost any portion of the New Testament we may open which has occasion to speak of the Father and Son, represents them as two distinct persons. The seventeenth chapter of John is alone sufficient to refute the doctrine of the Trinity. Over forty times in that one chapter Christ speaks of his Father as a person distinct from himself. His Father was in heaven and he upon earth. The Father had sent him.

Given to him those that believed. He was then to go to the Father. And in this very testimony he shows us in what consists the oneness of the Father and Son.

**{Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald November 5, 1861 page 184.4}**

3. This doctrine of the trinity was brought into the church about the same time with image worship, and keeping the day of the sun, and is but Persian doctrine remodeled. It occupied about three hundred years from its introduction to bring the doctrine to what it is now.

**{Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald November 5, 1861 page 184.10}**

THE Spirit of God is spoken of in the Scriptures as God's representative —the power by which he works, the agency by which all things are upheld. This is clearly expressed by the psalmist, when he inquires: "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning,

and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." Ps. 139 : 7-10. We learn from this language that when we speak of the Spirit of God, we are really speaking of his presence and power.

**{Review and Herald September 20, 1898}.**

## Joseph H Waggoner

Many theologians really think that the Atonement, in respect to its dignity and efficacy, rests upon the doctrine of a trinity. But we fail to see any connection between the two. To the contrary, the advocates of that doctrine really fall into the difficulty which they seem anxious to avoid. Their difficulty consists in this:

They take the denial of a trinity to be equivalent to a denial of the divinity of Christ. Were that the case, we should cling to the doctrine of a trinity as tenaciously as any can; but it is not the case.

They who have read our remarks on the death of the Son of God know that we firmly believe in the divinity of Christ; but we cannot accept the idea of a trinity, as it is held by Trinitarians, without giving up our claim on the dignity of the sacrifice made for our redemption.

**{The Atonement in the Light of Nature and Revelation, p. 164,165}.**

The distinction between Christ and the true God is most clearly shown by the Saviour's own words in John 17:3: "That they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. Much stress is laid on Isa. 9:6, as proving a trinity, which we have before quoted, as referring to our High Priest who shed his blood for us. The advocates of that theory will say that it refers to a trinity because Christ is called the everlasting Father

But for this reason, with others, we affirm that it can have no reference to a trinity. Is Christ the Father in the trinity? If so, how is he the Son? or if he is both Father and Son, how can there be a trinity? for a trinity is three persons. To recognize a trinity, the distinction between the Father and Son must be preserved.

Christ is called "the second person in the trinity;" but if this text proves a trinity, or refers to it at all, it proves that he is not the second, but the first. And if he is the first, who is the second? It is very plain that this text has no reference to such a doctrine.

**{The Atonement in the Light of Nature and Revelation, p. 167-169}.**

## Uriah Smith

THE SCRIPTURES NOWHERE SPEAK OF CHRIST AS A CREATED BEING, BUT ON THE CONTRARY PLAINLY STATE THAT HE WAS BEGOTTEN OF THE FATHER.

But while as the Son he does not possess a co-eternity of past existence with the Father, the beginning of his existence, as the begotten of the Father, antedates the entire work of creation, in relation to which he stands as joint creator with God. John 1:3; Heb. 1:2. Could not the Father ordain that to such a being worship should be rendered equally with himself, without its being idolatry on the part of the worshiper?

He has raised him to positions which make it proper that he should be worshipped, and has even commanded that worship should be rendered him, which would not have been necessary had he been equal with the Father in eternity of existence. Christ himself declares that "as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself." John 5:26.

The Father has "highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name." Phil.

2:9. And the Father himself says, "Let all the angels of God worship him." Heb. 1:6. These testimonies show that Christ is now an object of worship equally with the Father; but they do not prove that with him he holds an eternity of past existence.

**{Uriah Smith, 1882, Daniel And The Revelation, page 430}.**

God alone is without beginning. At the earliest epoch when a beginning could be, - a period so remote that to finite minds it is essentially eternity, - appeared the Word. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." John 1:1. This uncreated Word was the Being, who, in the fulness of time, was made flesh, and dwelt among us.

His beginning was not like that of any other being in the universe. It is set forth in the mysterious expressions, "his God's only begotten Son" (John 3:16; 1 John 4:9), "the only begotten of the Father" (John 1:14), and, "I proceeded forth and came from God." John 8:42. Thus it appears that by some divine impulse or process, not creation, known only to Omniscience, and possible only to Omnipotence, the Son of God appeared.

**{Uriah Smith, Looking unto Jesus, p.10.1 1898}.**

J. W. W. asks : " Are we to understand that the Holy Ghost is a person, the same as the Father and the Son ? Some claim that it is, others that it is not."

ANS.— T h e terms " Holy Ghost," are a harsh and repulsive translation. It should be " Holy Spirit " (hagion pneuma) in every instance. This Spirit is the Spirit of God, and the Spirit of Christ ; the Spirit being the same whether it is spoken of as pertaining to God or Christ. But respecting this Spirit, the Bible uses expressions which cannot be harmonized with the idea that it is a person like the the Father and the Son.

Rather it is shown to be a divine influence from them both, the medium which represents their presence and by which they have knowledge and power through all the universe, when not personally present. Christ is a person, now officiating as priest in the sanctuary in heaven ; and yet he says that wherever two or three are gathered in his name, he is there in the midst. Matt. 18 : 20.

How ?—Not personally, but by his Spirit. In one of Christ's discourses (John, chapters 14, 15, and 16) this Spirit is personified as " the Com- forter," and as such has the personal and relative pronouns, " he," " him," and " whom," applied to it. But usually it is spoken of in a way to show that it cannot be a person, like the Father and the Son.

**{Uriah Smith, Review and Herald, October 28 1890}.**