Pentecostal Theology

The Oneness of God

VOLUME 1

David K. Bernard
The Oneness of God
by David K. Bernard
Copyright © 1983, 2000 by David K. Bernard

A Study Guide for
The Oneness of God
by David K. Bernard and Neil Stegall
©1990 David K. Bernard
Hazelwood, MO 63042-2299

Cover Design by Paul Povolni

All Scripture quotations in this book are from the King James Version of the
Bible unless otherwise indicated.

All rights reserved. No portion of this publication may be reproduced, stored
in an electronic system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, elec-
tronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or otherwise, without the prior per-
mission of Word Aflame Press. Brief quotations may be used in literary
reviews.

Printed in the United States of America

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Bernard, David K., 1956-
The oneness of God / by David K. Bernard. -- Rev. ed.
p. cm.
1. God (Christianity) 2. Trinity. 3. God (Christianity)--Simplicity. 4. Oneness
doctrine (Pentecostalism) I. Title.
BT103. B473 2001
231'.044--dc22
2011001558
CONTENTS

FOREWORD .................................................. 4

PREFACE ..................................................... 10

1. CHRISTIAN MONOTHEISM ...................... 13
   Monotheism defined. The Old Testament teaches there is but one God. The New Testament teaches there is but one God. Conclusion.

2. THE NATURE OF GOD ......................... 23
   God is a Spirit. God is invisible. God is omnipresent (everywhere present). Does God have a body? God is omniscient (all knowing). God is omnipotent (all powerful). God is eternal. God is immutable (unchanging). God has individuality, personality, and rationality. God's moral attributes. Theophanies. The angel of the LORD. Melchizedek. The fourth man in the fire. Are there New Testament theophanies? Conclusion.

3. THE NAMES AND TITLES OF GOD .... 42

4. JESUS IS GOD ................................. 55
   The Old Testament testifies that Jesus is God. The New Testament proclaims that Jesus is God. God was manifest in the flesh as Jesus. The Word.
Jesus was God from the beginning of His human life. The mystery of godliness. Jesus is the Father incarnate. Jesus is Jehovah. The Jews understood that Jesus claimed to be God. Jesus is the One on the throne. The Revelation of Jesus Christ. Jesus has all the attributes and prerogatives of God. Conclusion.

5. THE SON OF GOD .............. 85

6. FATHER, SON, AND HOLY GHOST .... 125

7. OLD TESTAMENT EXPLANATIONS ..... 146
Elohim. Genesis 1:26. Other plural pronouns. The meaning of one (Hebrew, echad). Theophanies. Appearance to Abraham. The angel of the LORD. The Son and other references to the Messiah. The

8. NEW TESTAMENT EXPLA NATIONS: THE GOSPELS ......................... 170

9. NEW TESTAMENT EXPLANATIONS: ACTS TO REVELATION ............... 200

10. ONENESS BELIEVERS IN CHURCH HISTORY ...................... 236
The post-apostolic age. Oneness, the dominant belief in the second and third centuries. Modalistic
monarchianism. Oneness believers from the fourth century to the present. “Modalistic Monarchianism: Oneness in Early Church History.”

11. TRINITARIANISM: DEFINITION AND HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT .......................... 255

12. TRINITARIANISM: AN EVALUATION ........ 286

13. CONCLUSION ........................................... 301

BIBLIOGRAPHY ........................................... 307

GLOSSARY ............................................... 312

SCRIPTURE INDEX ................................. 327

SUBJECT INDEX ........................................ 336
TABLES

God's Moral Nature ........................................... 32
Old Testament Names for God ............................. 45
Compound Names of Jehovah ................................. 48
Jesus Is Jehovah (I) ........................................... 73
Jesus Is Jehovah (II) ......................................... 74
Jesus in the Book of Revelation ............................ 79
Jesus Has the Moral Nature of God ...................... 83
The Dual Nature of Jesus Christ ............................ 86
The Use of Kai .................................................. 209
The Full Deity of Jesus Stated in Colossians .......... 217
Trinitarianism and Oneness Compared .................... 294
CHRISTIAN MONOTHEISM

"Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord" (Deuteronomy 6:4).
"God is one" (Galatians 3:20).

There is one God. There is only one God. This doctrine is central to the Bible message, for both the Old Testament and the New Testament teach it plainly and emphatically. Despite the simplicity of this message and the clarity with which the Bible presents it, many who believe in the existence of God have not understood it. Even within Christendom many people, including theologians, have not comprehended this beautiful and essential message. Our purposes are to address this problem and to affirm and explain the biblical doctrine of the oneness of God.
Monotheism Defined

The belief in only one God is called monotheism, which comes from two Greek words: *monos*, meaning alone, single, one; and *theos*, meaning God. Anyone who does not accept monotheism can be classified as one of the following: an atheist—one who denies the existence of God; an agnostic—one who asserts that the existence of God is unknown and probably unknowable; a pantheist—one who equates God with nature or the forces of the universe; or a polytheist—one who believes in more than one God. *Ditheism*, the belief in two gods, is a form of polytheism, and so is *tritheism*, the belief in three gods. Among the major religions of the world, three are monotheistic: Judaism, Islam, and Christianity.

Within the ranks of those labelling themselves Christian, however, there are several divergent views as to the nature of the Godhead. One view, called trinitarianism, asserts that there are three distinct persons in the Godhead—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost—but yet one God. (See chapter 11.)

Within the ranks of trinitarianism, one can discern two extreme tendencies. On the one hand, some trinitarians emphasize the unity of God without having a carefully developed understanding of what is meant by three distinct persons in the Godhead. On the other hand, other trinitarians emphasize the three-ness of the trinity to the point that they believe in three self-conscious beings, and their view is essentially tritheistic.

In addition to trinitarianism, there is the doctrine
of binitarianism, which does not classify the Holy Ghost as a separate person but asserts belief in two persons in the Godhead.

Many monotheists have pointed out that both trinitarianism and binitarianism weaken the strict monotheism taught by the Bible. They insist that the Godhead cannot be divided into persons and that God is absolutely one.

These believers in strict monotheism fall into two classes. One class asserts that there is only one God, but does so by denying, in one way or another, the full deity of Jesus Christ. This view was represented in early church history by the dynamic monarchians, such as Paul of Samosata, and by the Arians, led by Arius. These groups relegated Jesus to the position of a created god, subordinate god, junior god, or demigod.

The second class of true monotheists believes in one God but further believes that the fullness of the Godhead is manifested in Jesus Christ. They believe that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are manifestations, modes, offices, or relationships that the one God has displayed to humans. Church historians have used the terms modalism and modalistic monarchianism to describe this view as held by such early church leaders as Noetus, Praxeas, and Sabellius. (See chapter 10.) Today, those who believe in both the indivisible oneness of God and the full deity of Jesus Christ frequently use the term “Oneness” to describe their belief. They also use the terms “One God” and “Jesus Name” as adjectives to label themselves, while opponents sometimes use the misleading or derogatory designations “Jesus Only” and “New Issue.” (The label