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A Critical Study of the Jehovah's Witnesses Doctrine of God

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A CRITICAL STUDY OF THE JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES DOCTRINE OF GOD

by

Robert S. Taber

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INTRODUCTION

The self-styled Pastor Russell is dead, but the teachings he spent his life in spreading are very much alive; and many countries of the world including the United States of America have been outlets for the distribution of his literature.

Dr. Dixon, late of Spurgeon's Tabernacle, said of Russellism or Jehovah's Witnesses: "Its plan of Salvation is a plan of Damnation." Concerning its testimony with regard to Jesus Christ, Dr. J. M. Gray of the Moody Bible Institute, Chicago, said, "It contradicts almost every fundamental revelation." Dr. I. M. Haldeman of New York, summed up the movement of Jehovah's Witnesses as the "wicked and blasphemous system which teaches the annihilation of our Lord Jesus Christ." Such a three-fold testimony is not to be easily discounted.¹

"To the Law and to the Testimony: if they speak not according to this Word, it is because they have no light in them."² Thus it was necessary for the author to diligently study the teachings of Jehovah's Witnesses to see if they spoke according to the Word of God. The Word of God is the criterion by which Russellism must be tested. Jehovah's Witnesses claim to accept the Bible-----although their actual Bible consists of the "Pastor's" six volumes of Studies in The Scriptures. Russell asserted that it would be more profitable to read this commentary

1. Wm. C. Irvine, Heresies Exposed (New York, Loizeaux Brothers, Incorporated, 1945), p. 149.

2. Ibid.

without reading the Bible than to read the Bible without reading his six volumes.³

It was interesting to observe that Jehovah's Witnesses deny indignantly that their movement is religious. This may sound strange to some who have heard them or read their literature, for their literature contains many Scripture quotations. Their literature is replete with familiar theological language of God, Christ, Kingdom of God, Sin, Salvation, ecetera. If this is not religion, the question is proper, "What is it?"

The explanation of Jehovah's Witnesses, that their movement is not religious, rests upon their concept of religion which is quite unique.

Religion is doing anything contrary to the will of Almighty God. Religion is of the Devil.⁴

The mask is down. The truth of God's Word has ripped it off and organized religion stands exposed as being not of the Lord God and Christ, but of their enemy, Satan---the Devil. It stands ripped of its Christian professions and stands naked as being demonism.⁵

Although the movement now known as Jehovah's Witnesses has always been a single organization, it has, during its history, been known by many other names. When first organized in 1872, Russell wanted the group to be called "Christians." But this name never materialized and in later years such names as Dawnites, Russellites, Bible Students,

3. Watchtower, Sept. 15, 1910, p. 52, quoted in S. A. Witmer, Galilean Fisherman (Berne, Indiana, Light and Hope Publ., 1952), p. 155.

4. J. F. Rutherford, Theocracy (Brooklyn, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1944), p. 18.

5. J. F. Rutherford, Religion Reaps the Whirlwind (Brooklyn, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1944), p. 58.

Rutherfordites, arose to confuse both those within and without the group. It was Rutherford who maintained the organization could not assume the name of "any man" as its official title, and finally resolved that his followers should be known as Jehovah's Witnesses.⁶

Jehovah's Witnesses are convinced that they have the "Truth," and have literally covered the earth with their witnessing. The 1948 Yearbook contains annual reports of their work in eighty-six different countries. In 1948 alone, more than 20,000,000 booklets and books were placed in homes, and 12,000,000 individual magazines were distributed on the street corners of the world. Charles S. Braden, in his book These Also Believe, states that no single organization in the world displayed more zeal and persistence in the attempt to spread the good news of the Kingdom than Jehovah's Witnesses. Even unto this present day they are zealous in all phases of their movement.⁷

It was the purpose of the writer in presenting this study on Jehovah's Witnesses, to compare and contrast their teaching concerning the doctrine of God with the doctrine of God as taught by Conservative Protestantism.

6. H. H. Stroup, Jehovah's Witnesses (New York, Columbia University Press, 1945), p. 3.

7. Charles S. Braden, These Also Believe (New York, The Macmillan Company, 1951), p. 370.

CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND ITS TREATMENT

A. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The doctrines of revelation and inspiration are essential in establishing the claims of any religious group. If the views of Jehovah's Witnesses regarding the Holy Scriptures are correct, they have a solid foundation upon which their doctrines are built. Thus the problem in this study has been to do two things. First, it was necessary to determine their method of Scripture interpretation in the light of their views of revelation and inspiration; second, to present and analyze the doctrine of God of Jehovah's Witnesses in the light of their method of Scripture interpretation.

B. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to thoroughly examine the doctrine of God of Jehovah's Witnesses, and compare and contrast their doctrine with the doctrine of God held by Conservative Protestantism. The fulfilling of this purpose involved first, setting forth the doctrine of revelation and inspiration of the Jehovah's Witnesses, second, their doctrine of God, third, their doctrine of Christ, fourth, their doctrine of the Holy Spirit.

C. JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

The writer has felt such a study was valid because of the unparalleled boldness of Pastor Russell which runs through his life and religion. This boldness has manifested itself in brazen condemnation of the Church, or the mystical body of Christ. Another reason the writer has

exploited the miracle of mass-production and have produced many volumes in which their teaching is quite efficiently presented. Further observation revealed that the work of Jehovah's Witnesses required careful, discerning reading by which to secure such pertinent information.

Charles Taze Russell, the founder of the movement, has compiled a set of books entitled Studies in the Scriptures. These volumes were found to cover almost every topic conceivable, and to contain appropriate Scriptures to substantiate their themes. The next leader, J. F. Rutherford, maintained essential agreement with the founder in the interpretation of Scripture, and after the death of Russell in 1916 Rutherford carried the responsibility of being the chief interpreter of the Bible.¹ He was also the official spokesman for the movement. Rutherford, himself, wrote many books and pamphlets and edited the official organ of Jehovah's Witnesses, the Watchtower.

One book which is outstanding aside from Studies in the Scriptures, which was referred to in this study, was Let God Be True, written by Nathan H. Knorr, a devoted member of Jehovah's Witnesses. Anyone who reads this volume is encouraged by the author to back up what is said in the book by quotations from the Bible for proof of truthfulness and reliability.²

Other valuable works used in this study which were written by men who are not Jehovah's Witnesses were Russellism Exposed, by P. E. Hewitt; Russellism Unveiled, by Wm. Edward Biederwolf; The Chaos of

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1. Milton S. Czatt, The International Bible Students---Jehovah's Witnesses (Scottdale, Pa., Mennonite Press, 1933), p. 16.
 2. Nathan H. Knorr, Let God Be True (Brooklyn, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1946), p. 10.

The Cults, by Jan Karel Van Baalen; and, Heresies Exposed, by Wm. C. Irvine. The emphasis of these particular authors was upon statements and references from the writings of the leaders of Jehovah's Witnesses, with many scriptural refutations. The majority of these authors did good work but none of them went very deeply into any one particular doctrine.

One of the most scholarly studies of the Jehovah's Witnesses, the only one yet to appear in America, has been written by H. H. Stroup, who was not a Jehovah's Witness. His work is entitled, Jehovah's Witnesses. Mr. Stroup's work was outstanding in that before any printed materials were gathered or any bibliographies were made, he contacted Jehovah's Witnesses firsthand, that he might secure first-hand information. Mr. Stroup projected himself among the Witnesses often working with them that he might present an unprejudiced study of Jehovah's Witnesses.

Value of These Books. The volumes mentioned thus far, and many others like them, have been valuable in that they have given clearly their position or basic premise which provided the key to their teachings.

Apparent Lack. The writer found no material dealing with the particular doctrine under consideration. Only certain areas of this doctrine were sketched, using only such phrases as were necessary to prove their position. The lack of a Trinitarian doctrine led the Witnesses into unfounded interpretations of Scripture. If the Jehovah's Witnesses had allowed a Trinitarian doctrine, they would not have had to avoid

true Scripture exegesis.

E. LIMITATIONS OF THE PROBLEM

Since every doctrine of Jehovah's Witnesses could not be discussed within the limits of this study, the author felt the necessity of being selective. The doctrines presented are as follows: Revelation and Inspiration, God, Christ and the Holy Spirit.

F. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Jehovah's Witnesses. Jehovah's Witnesses was the name given to that religious group whose system was based upon a bold assertion akin to that of Joseph Smith, that there was no truth on earth until "Pastor Russell" came.³ When this movement began in 1874 by the self-styled "Pastor Russell," it became notorious the world over as the gospel of "Millennial Dawn." Other names have been given to this movement, but since 1931 the name Jehovah's Witnesses has been retained, and thus was used in this study.

Doctrine. The word doctrine is derived from the Latin doctrina, meaning to teach, denoting both the act of teaching and that which is taught; and this latter sense is now exclusively used. In a general sense, also, doctrine signifies a scientific and systematic expression of truth.⁴ In New Testament Scripture sound doctrine implies that body

3. Jan Karel Van Baalen, The Chaos of the Cults (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Wm. B. Eerdmans Company, 1952), p. 220.

4. T. Rees, "Doctrine," The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia (Chicago, Howard-Severance Co., 1915), II, 866.

of teaching generally accepted, which serves as a standard of orthodoxy (I Timothy 1:10; 6:3; II Timothy 1:13; 4:3; Titus 1:9; 2:1).⁵ The present use of the term doctrine thus derives its meaning from the Scriptural teaching.

Arminian-Wesleyanism. The term Arminian has its root in the man Jacob Arminius, whose theological position came to the fore in 1609 in opposition to the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination. Arminius and his followers maintained that the Calvinist's position made God responsible for human sin, and denied man his freedom of will.⁶ Lars P. Qualben, in his book A History of the Christian Church, states the views of Arminius as follows: (1) conditional election, (2) unlimited atonement, (3) man not totally depraved, (4) denies irresistible grace for the elect, (5) possibility of lapse from grace.⁷ Wesleyanism has its root in the man John Wesley (1703-1791), whose doctrine of evangelical perfection is recognized by many authorities as the distinctive feature of early Methodism.⁸ John Wesley's doctrine of "entire Sanctification" receives its authority from the Bible and Arminian theology.

Conservative Protestantism. This term was used to designate that evangelical group within Christendom which maintains that the Bible is the only infallible guide in faith and practice. This group includes

5. Ibid., p. 867.

6. Lars P. Qualben, A History of The Christian Church (New York, Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1942), p. 351.

7. Loc. cit.

8. George Allen Turner, The More Excellent Way (Winona Lake, Light and Life Press, 1952), p. 14.

those of the Calvinistic persuasion as well as the Arminian theological position. However, the term applies in this study specifically to the theological position held by the Arminians, which is the position of the writer.

G. ASSUMPTION

The Bible as the Word of God. It has been assumed that the Holy Bible, Old and New Testaments, is the Word of God; that it reveals the only true way to salvation; that every true Christian is bound to acknowledge and receive it by the help of the Spirit of God as the only rule and guide in faith and practice.⁹

H. METHOD OF PROCEDURE

After defining the problem, the author presented a study of the doctrines of Revelation and Inspiration, and the doctrine of God held by Jehovah's Witnesses. The author then devoted his time to the presentation of these same doctrines as held by Conservative Protestantism; which presentation was given to a comparison and contrast of their doctrines and those of Jehovah's Witnesses.

9. "Confession of Faith," The Discipline of The Evangelical and United Brethren Church (Dayton, Ohio, Otterbein Press, 1951), p. 43.

CHAPTER II

THE JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES DOCTRINE OF DIVINE REVELATION

The doctrine of Divine Revelation is quite significant in establishing the authority of the Jehovah's Witnesses movement. Their very doctrines arise almost completely from their position on the Bible as a divine revelation, viewed in the light of reason. This chapter has been devoted to a careful study of the system of Scripture interpretation used by Jehovah's Witnesses, the divisions being: First, Mixed-up interpretations; Second, The Written Word versus Tradition; Third, Peter's position toward the Word; Fourth, The Bible as the Inspired Word of God.

Mixed-up Interpretations. Jehovah's Witnesses contend that if there be any mix-up with regard to the construction of the Word of God, the mix-up lies not with God, the author of the Bible, but with the Bible's would-be interpreters, the religious leaders of the so-called "Christendom."¹

As the reader approaches the study of the Bible with this book in hand, Let God Be True, he is neither being led to study God's sacred Word according to the religious errors of Christendom, nor is he being invited to do so. He is asked to study what God himself has to say in His own Word, for 'God is not a God of confusion, but of peace.'²

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1. Nathan H. Knorr, Let God Be True (Brooklyn, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1946), p. 8.
 2. Loc. cit.

The Written Word Versus Tradition. Jehovah's Witnesses contend that none of the Bible writers, from Malachi back to Moses, made any mention of an oral law or traditional law as existing alongside the written Word of God. Knorr states in his book, Let God Be True:

Nowhere do the Bible writers declare that the oral traditions of religious men are on an equality with the recorded Word of God, or that the written Word is incomplete without such oral traditions. God's written Word is pure without manmade traditions; and those who teach and hold to such traditions and who value them as equal to or even higher than the written Word make liars of themselves.³

Peter's Position Toward the Word. Jehovah's Witnesses point out that nowhere in Peter's writings or recorded utterances does he lay claim to infallibility, but always he turns his hearers or readers to the changeless Word of God as their shining guide until the day of God's Kingdom should dawn. Peter's position was that no prophecy of Scripture is made by private interpretation.⁴

The Bible As The Inspired Word of God. Nathan H. Knorr further states that Jehovah's Witnesses claim unadulterated respect for the Bible as the inspired written Word of God, and they have done so from the very beginning of the movement.⁵ Mr. Knorr points out that the Witnesses have been able to capitalize upon the defections of the established churches at this point, for their prolific use of proof-texts has appealed to many people who respect the Bible. The Witnesses

3. Ibid., p. 12.

4. Ibid., p. 19.

5. Ibid., p. 17.

claim that the would-be interpreters outside their society are too confused to be worthy of study.⁶

However, it was observed that although Jehovah's Witnesses claim a high respect for Scripture, they are actually more prone to read notions into the Bible than to draw eternal truth out of it. The Witnesses contend that in the Scripture passage Matthew 24:16, "Let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains," Jesus was advising those of our present generations to take refuge in the "Kingdom organization" of the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society.⁷

Throughout Pastor Russell's presentation of the Bible as the Word of God, and his strong emphasis on the fact that it is necessary to go to the Scriptures for the real truth, it is important that the casual reader remember that Russell's professed championship of the Scriptures hides a thorough-going rationalism.⁸ The basic fact which accounts for the Jehovah's Witnesses doctrine of God being what it is, is their rationalistic approach to Scripture. It has been shown in this study that always what appears reasonable to the mind of a Jehovah's Witness, is of greater importance than Bible teaching. The answer that Jehovah's Witnesses give to the question, "Does God torment anyone?" will illustrate this position.

The doctrine of eternal torment can not be true for at least four separate reasons: (1) because

6. Ibid., p. 8.

7. Ibid., p. 254.

8. Jan Karel Van Baalen, The Chaos of the Cults (Grand Rapids, Wm. B. Eerdmans Company, 1952), p. 221.

it is unreasonable; (2) because it is repugnant to justice; (3) because it is contrary to the principle of love; (4) it is entirely unscriptural.⁹

That this rationalism of Jehovah's Witnesses is fundamental to the system they follow is more clearly seen from the following quotation taken from Rutherford's Divine Plan of the Ages.

We have endeavored to uncover enough of the foundation upon which all faith should be built---the Word of God---to give confidence and assurance in its testimony, even to the unbeliever. And we have endeavored to do this in a manner that will appeal to and can be accepted by reason as a foundation. Then we have endeavored to build upon that foundation the teachings of Scripture in such a manner that, so far as possible, purely human judgement may try its squares and angles by the most exacting rules of justice it can command.¹⁰

It will be clearer to most people to state that Jehovah's Witnesses set out to make Scripture square with human reason. The outstanding fact in this instance is that the ordinary rationalist, because he cannot square the Word of God with human reason rejects it; but the Jehovah's Witnesses attempt to make the Word of God acceptable to human reason, to the mind of fallen man, the unbeliever.

The observation was made that Jehovah's Witnesses contend that a statement of the Word of God which belongs to one epoch or dispensation is not to be applied to another, as things stated of one age are not always true of another.¹¹ Finally it was observed that quotations from

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9. J. F. Rutherford, The Harp of God (Brooklyn, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1928), p. 47.
 10. J. F. Rutherford, The Divine Plan of the Ages (Brooklyn, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1886), I, 10, 11.
 11. Milton S. Czatt, The International Bible Students--Jehovah's Witnesses (Scottsdale, Pa., Mennonite Press, 1953), p. 15.

Scripture which do not accurately apply to a particular age are assigned to another age without regard to the original meaning of the text. In this way, Pastor Russell concluded that he had found a truly glorious and harmonious plan that rejects not one but harmonizes every part and item of the Word. Russell was bold to assert that no other system of theology claimed, or ever attempted to harmonize in itself every statement of the Bible.¹²

Summary. While the Bible is the seat of authority for the Jehovah's Witnesses, it is the Bible as interpreted by them. If there seem to be any mixed-up interpretations, it is because of the leaders of the so-called Christendom and not Jehovah's Witnesses. Tradition can in no manner exist alongside the written Word of God. For Jehovah's Witnesses, Revelation is biblio-centric.

The Jehovah's Witnesses make no claim to special revelation by visions, dreams, intuition or special religious experience. Their founder, Pastor Russell, endeavored to set forth the plan of God, past, present, and future, in a way more harmonious, beautiful and reasonable than is generally understood.¹³

Truth seekers are exhorted to empty their vessels of the muddy waters of tradition and fill them at the fountain of truth, God's Word.¹⁴

The Jehovah's Witnesses view of the Bible is a Divine Revelation of God. The following chapters clearly show how their conception of

12. Rutherford, The Divine Plan of The Ages, I, 348.

13. Czatt, Loc. cit.

14. Rutherford, The Divine Plan of The Ages, I, 12.

the Bible affects their doctrine of God. When difficult Scripture passages arise implying perhaps ideas of Trinity, the rationalism of the Jehovah's Witnesses has come forth to explain these passages which contradict their beliefs.

CHAPTER III

THE JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES DOCTRINE OF GOD

If one is to understand the teachings of any religious system, he must have a clear comprehension of its doctrine of God. The first task of theology is to establish and unfold the doctrine of God.¹ Therefore, in this study of the Jehovah's Witnesses an attempt has been made to understand their view of God.

In view of the fact that Jehovah's Witnesses have no systematic theology as such, difficulties were experienced in arranging their beliefs in systematic order. This chapter has discussed the following phases in their doctrine of God. First, Jehovah, the self-existing One; Second, the name Jehovah as applied only to the Father in Glory; Third, Scripture teaching respecting the Father, Son, and their Unity; Fourth, God the Father, and God the Son; Fifth, A False Trinitarian doctrine; Sixth, Appellations of Deity in the Old Testament; Seventh, God and Lord in the New Testament; Eighth, Jehovah, the Author of the Atonement; Ninth, Objections to Scripture Substantiated.

Jehovah, The Self-existing One. There was a time when Jehovah was all alone in the universal space. All life and energy and thought were contained in Him alone. Yet he could not have been lonesome, for he is self-contained, which means he is complete in himself and lacks nothing. Then came the time when Jehovah began to create. At the

1. H. Orton Wiley, Christian Theology (Kansas City, Missouri, Beacon Hill Press, 1949), I, 217.

time creation began, Jehovah came to be God to all his creation.²

But when speaking to Moses, thus: 'I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty (the superior or most mighty God), but by my name Jehovah was I not known to them' (Exodus 6:3).

However, Jehovah's Witnesses claim, by the name Jehovah, God was recognized among his people. The name is used hundreds of times through the Old Testament, but is covered, they contend, in a large degree from the English reader; this covering is the result of an error of the translators who have rendered it Lord.³

Jehovah. The Name Applied to The Father in Glory. The Jehovah's Witnesses are strong in maintaining that the name Jehovah is not applied in Scripture to our Lord Jesus Christ, but that it is the distinctive and special name of the Heavenly Father.⁴ They proceed to discredit Scripture passages held by Conservative Protestants which do support the view that the name Jehovah is applied to Jesus Christ. Observe how the Witnesses handle Jeremiah 23:5,6 (King James version), "I will raise unto David a righteous branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgement and justice in the earth. . . and this is the name whereby he shall be called, 'The Lord our Righteousness'." What is the explanation of the Jehovah's Witnesses? Merely this:

The translators in their zeal to find a place where the name Jehovah was associated with Jesus as a name,

2. Nathan H. Knorr, Let God Be True (Brooklyn, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1946), p. 26.

3. J. F. Rutherford, The At-one-ment Between God and Man (Brooklyn, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1916), V, 40.

4. Ibid., p. 41.

have given us a poor translation. No difficulty would appear if it had been translated, 'Our Righteousness of Jehovah.'⁵

Here is an instance of the Jehovah's Witnesses using a passage of Scripture that has no relevance to the point they are attempting to make.

The Jehovah's Witnesses deny that Psalm 110 can be used to prove that Jesus is in Scripture called Jehovah. They are confident that the Scriptures do not authorize the use of the great name Jehovah as the appellative for any other being than our Heavenly Father. They conclude by stating,

We have seen that no one ever intimated that the Heavenly Father and the Heavenly Son were one in person, nor that they are equal in glory and power,----- as is, without divine authority declared in the creeds and catechisms of men.⁶

Scripture Teaching Respecting the Father and the Son and Their Unity. The Jehovah's Witnesses contend that a sharp distinction should be drawn between a confession of faith in a Trinity, and a confession of faith in the unity of the Heavenly Father, Jehovah, and the Heavenly Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit.⁷ They have well noted that the Trinitarians hold that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are of one substance and power, and co-eternal, as stated in the Church creeds. But what do the Witnesses contend? Rutherford states that,

. . .the Bible, while showing the absolute unity between the Father and Son and holy Spirit in the

5. Ibid., p. 42.

6. Ibid., p. 53.

7. Ibid., p. 59.

various steps of salvation, most positively contradicts the thought that the Father and Son are one in person, denies that they are equal in majesty and power, except as shown before, that the Father has glorified the Son, has highly exalted him and given him a name above all others except His own; ---making him His agent and representative in the exercise of all power in heaven and in earth.⁸

Moreover, the very words Father and Son, imply a difference, and contradict the thoughts of the Trinity and oneness of person, because the word Father signifies lifegiver, while the word Son signifies one who has received life from another.⁹

A question the Witnesses ask is, "In view of the fact that there is no valid Scripture support for the doctrine of the Trinity, why is it that this Trinitarian concept is so deeply entrenched among Christians?" They answer it quickly by stating that, "It is one of the dark mysteries by which Satan, through the Papacy, has clouded the Word and character and plan of God."¹⁰

Conservative Protestants would ask Jehovah's Witnesses, "Why would Satan be interested in adding to the luster of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ in this Trinitarian concept?" They reply:

It has always been Satan's policy to misrepresent the truth, to misrepresent the Bible, and to make its teachings appear unreasonable and self-contradictory, in order to hinder mankind from seeing the great beauty and reasonableness and harmony which inhere in the divine plan and Word. The more absurdities Satan can get interwoven into man's views respecting the Creator, the better he will succeed in separating from the service of God those who are of reasonable and logical mind.¹¹

8. Loc. cit.

9. Ibid., p. 60.

10. Ibid., p. 61.

11. Loc. cit.

The general acceptance of the doctrine of the Trinity and the tenacity with which it is held, is based upon the superstitious fear inculcated by the Roman clergy, and later by Protestant clergy, under the implied threat that whoever denies the Trinity is taking the straight road to eternal torture. At the same time it is admitted that the doctrine is incomprehensible, and therefore that nobody really believes it, because nobody can, in a true sense, believe an incomprehensible thing. And various doctrines and practices, not only of Protestantism, but also of Catholicism, deny the doctrines of the Trinity: for instance, that all Protestants pray to the Father, in the name of Jesus; for Jesus' sake; thus recognizing the fact that they are two separate persons, and not one person.¹²

It is evident that the Witnesses have a very limited concept of the real basis for the Trinitarian doctrine.

God The Father and God The Son. It is interesting to notice in this section how Jehovah's Witnesses supposedly examine a few Scriptures which Trinitarians use to support their thesis. From Rutherford:

It is claimed that our Lord Jesus is spoken of as God, and that there is but one God, and hence God the Father and God the Son must be two names for one person. Let us examine this question in the light of the divine Word, taking nothing for granted. We labor under the disadvantage that almost all translators of the Old Testament have not been exact or uniform in their translations of the several names of deity.¹³

The appearance is that the Trinitarians who translated our Common Version Bible feared to render the name Jehovah as a proper name in every instance, lest the people should realize the fact which theology denies,---that the title Jehovah belongs only to the great 'I AM,' the Father. The Trinitarian translators probably preferred to use the word Lord instead of Jehovah, in order that Christians accustomed to

12. Ibid., p. 64.

13. Ibid., p. 65.

the use of the word Lord as a title for our Savior, Jesus, might in reading the Old Testament think that he, and not the Father, Jehovah, is usually referred to.¹⁴

Suffice it to say that it is the position of Conservative Protestantism that all these names such as Elohim, Jehovah, or Jahweh, El Shaddai, and Adonai, as found in the Old Testament, are continued in the New Testament, and find their culmination in the revelation of God in Him, whose name is above every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, (Ephesians 1:21).¹⁵

A False Trinitarian Doctrine. To those in the ranks of Conservative Protestantism, no fact more clearly establishes the uniqueness of the Christian view of God than that of the Trinity. It is God seen as Triune and yet one---the doctrine of Trinitarian theism---which by a single declaration sets off the Christian view of God from all others. The God who reveals Himself in the sacred Scriptures is the God who makes Himself known tri-personally, who declares and discloses Himself to be Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

To Jehovah's Witnesses, the Trinitarian doctrine is a senseless, God-dishonoring doctrine.¹⁶

Never was there a more deceptive doctrine advanced than that of the Trinity. It could have originated only in one mind, and that the mind of Satan, the Devil.¹⁷

14. Ibid., pp. 65,66.

15. Wiley, Christian Theology, I, 241.

16. J. F. Rutherford, Reconciliation (Brooklyn, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1928), p. 101.

17. Loc. cit.

Furthermore, Jehovah's Witnesses contend:

Inasmuch as the general thought of Christendom is greatly perplexed by this 'Doctrine of Trinity,' a doctrine which its most pronounced advocates admit they do not understand, and can not comprehend or explain, therefore it is appropriate that we take time to examine some of those Scriptures which are supposed to give some support for this confusing doctrine of men, for which no authority can be found in the Word of God.¹⁸

We have already called attention to various Scriptures which state that there is but one Almighty God--not two, nor three, nor more. We now call attention to the fact that the word Trinity does not occur in the Scriptures; nor does any word occur there of equivalent meaning; nor is any statement made which even unreasonably could be interpreted to signify such a thing.¹⁹

The question arises with the Witnesses, concerning the Trinitarian view, "How could there be three Gods and yet only one God?" If there be three Gods, they reason, "equal in power and in glory," as the catechisms declare, then it is untrue to say there is only one God.²⁰

The writer must state here that the preceding statements constitute an incorrect presentation of the Trinitarian doctrine to Jehovah's Witnesses, as presented by their leaders, Charles Taze Russell and Judge Rutherford. That these leaders fully understood the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity, can be seen from their own writings. Let us note two instances from volume five of Studies in the Scriptures:

18. Rutherford, The At-one-ment Between God and Man, V. 54.

19. Ibid., p. 55.

20. Loc. cit.

There are three persons in the one God--the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost: 'these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory.'²¹

.....
'That there are three gods in one; to wit, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, all three equal in power, substance, and eternity.'²²

The following examples are from Russell's and Rutherford's statements concerning the Trinity, which statements they have presented to their followers as being the view held by Conservative Protestantism.

They (Trinitarians), declare in one breath that there is only one true God--yet in the same breath, they declare that there are 'Three' Gods.²³

It is a doctrine of 'Three Gods' in one God;²⁴
.....
even arguing that Jesus was God the Father²⁵
.....
Does not every intelligent person know that if God is ONE in person he cannot be THREE?²⁶

The Witnesses are quick to point out I John 5:7 as being spurious, and thus the supporters of the Trinitarian doctrine are supposed to be without any data in their favor. The fact is acknowledged by many great Conservative Protestant scholars that some passages are not in all of the older manuscripts, yet this in no way minimizes the belief in the doctrine of the Trinity.

21. Ibid., p. 166.

22. Rutherford, Reconciliation, p. 100.

23. Rutherford, The At-one-ment Between God and Man, V. 55.

24. Ibid., p. 60.

25. Ibid., p. 94.

26. Ibid., p. 166.

Appellations of Deity in the Old Testament. Jehovah's Witnesses state that the name Jehovah is properly rendered only four times, where it seemed impossible to do otherwise, (Exodus 6:3; Psalms 83:18; Isaiah 12:2; 26:4). It is rendered God 298 times, and Lord over 5,000 times. The title Adonai, properly rendered Lord, is once rendered God. The title Adon, is rendered Sir, Master, Lord. The word Elohim, with its modifications eloah, elah, and el, occurs over 2500 times. These most frequently refer to Jehovah, but in many instances are applied to others: hence the connections must determine who is referred to.²⁷

These are facts and quotations from the King James version of the Bible which will demonstrate the Scriptural consistency in referring to the Lord Jesus Christ as God (elohim), and Adon (Master, Lord), and as Adonai (my Lord), and yet never as Jehovah.²⁸ Observe the following statements as given in The At-one-ment Between God and Man, pp. 67-69:

1. Elohim (Mighty) translated Angels - Psalm 8:5
2. Elohim (Mighty) translated Gods - Deut. 6:4
3. Jehovah the (Almighty), Elohim contrasted with other Elohim (Mighty ones) - Psalm 86:6-8
Psalm 95:3; 50:1; Exodus 15:11; Psalm 96:4
4. Elohim applied to Men. ----- Gen. 23:6
Exodus 7:1; 21:6; 22:8,10; 22:28
5. Saints called Elohim - - - - - Psalm 82:6
John 10:34; I John 3:2; II Peter.
6. Elohim rendered Great. . . Strong - - I Samuel 14:15
Genesis 30:8; Psa. 36:6; Ezekiel 32:21.

God and Lord in the New Testament. In the New Testament the matter of the names of deity is simplified by the use of fewer words; but it may be said that nothing whatever in the words used distinguishes

27. Ibid., p. 66.

28. Loc. cit.

the Father from the Son in the words rendered Lord and God.²⁹

Rutherford claims:

The matter is left entirely to the judgement of the reader, and indicated only by the construction of the sentence--except where the word (Θέος) is used twice in the same clause the Greek prepositive article is sometimes used, so as to give the effect of the God in contrast with a God. An illustration of this is found in John 1:1: 'The Word was with the God (ὁ Θεός), and the Word was a God (Θέος).' But the careful student (free from prejudice) will generally have no difficulty in determining the thought of the Apostle.³⁰

Were it proper at this point to point out the glaring error in the handling of the Greek on the part of Jehovah's Witnesses, one could see very clearly why they speak as they do. However, such a discussion has been presented later in the study.

Jehovah, The Author of the Atonement. That Jehovah God claims for himself the authorship of the great plan of the Atonement, which is still in the progress of development, having begun at Calvary, is a basic tenet of Jehovah's Witnesses. This atonement, the Witnesses claim, will not be complete until the close of the millennial age, when the Lord Jesus Christ, the Mediator of the Atonement shall deliver up the dominion of earth, restored and in full subordination to the Father.³¹

In harmony with this view of the Witnesses, are numerous Scriptures, for instance, 'I am Jehovah thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Savior.' Again, 'I am Jehovah, and beside me there is no Savior.' Again, 'I am Jehovah thy God from the land of Egypt, and thou shalt know

29. Ibid., p. 70.

30. Ibid., p. 71.

31. Ibid., p. 32.

no God but me: for there is no Savior beside me.'
Isaiah 43:3; 60:16; Jude 25.³²

If this thought were fully received--that the Almighty Jehovah himself, is the Savior, the Author of the great plan of salvation and executor of it, through his willing agents and representatives, it would deliver many from the false conceptions of the relationship between the heavenly Father and his heavenly Son, in respect to the salvation of mankind.³³

A proper view of God our heavenly Father shows us that he is perfect in all the attributes of nobility of character, perfect in his justice, so that the sentence of his righteous law can not be infracted even by himself; perfect in wisdom, so that his plan and arrangement, not only with respect to man's creation, but also with respect to man's salvation, the Atonement, were all so complete that no failure, nor any necessity for change of the divine plan could arise; as it is written, 'I am the same, I change not, saith the Lord.' He is perfect in his love, that there could be no greater love possible, and yet that love in full balance and accord with the other divine attributes, so that it could spare the sinner only in harmony with the just program marked out by divine wisdom. He is perfect in power, so that all his good purposes, and good intentions, and just program, and loving designs, fully coordinated, shall be executed, and bring the originally designed result.³⁴

As it is written, 'My word that goeth forth out of my mouth shall not return unto me void; it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereunto I sent it.' (Isaiah 55:11; Mal. 3:6; Acts 15:8).

When we thus see from the Scriptural standpoint that the great Jehovah himself is the author of salvation brought unto us by our Lord Jesus, God's representative, it leads us to

32. Ibid., p. 33.

33. Ibid., p. 35.

34. Loc. cit.

more fully and properly honor and love our Almighty God.³⁵

Jehovah's Witnesses contend in this preceding thought that whereupon Jesus Christ was obedient unto death, God hath highly exalted Him, this being God's reward for His wonderful obedience and manifestation of his Father's spirit of love, in the sacrifice of himself on behalf of sinners. However, they continue,

. . .these Scriptures do not indicate (Phil. 2:9-11), that the Lord Jesus was the Father, nor that he has been exalted to take the Father's place upon the heavenly throne, as some leaders of 'Christendom' would have us believe. On the contrary, these Scriptures show the heavenly Father as the superior in honor and power, as the Benefactor who thus glorified and exalted the Son, and set him at his own right hand, and made him a sharer in the throne, angels and all hosts of heaven being subjected to him.³⁶

Objections to Scripture Substantiated. "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and Him only shalt thou serve." (Matthew 4:10). It is the claim of Christendom that the fact the Lord Jesus received worship without rebuke, signifies that he is Jehovah; and that the preceding words of Scripture imply that for any being but Jehovah to receive worship would be wrong.³⁷ Again, from Rutherford:

We, Jehovah's Witnesses answer, Not so! To interpret these words is to think into them a meaning which they do not contain, and to make them contradictory to the teaching of other Scriptures. Jehovah's decree respecting Christ, 'Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee,' had already been recorded through the prophets;

35. Loc. cit.

36. Ibid., p. 39.

37. Ibid., p. 72.

and also his decree, 'Let all the angels of God worship him.' (Ps. 2:7; 97:7; Heb. 1:5,6).³⁸

The Witnesses contend, "Our Lord knew this." Also he knew the angelic messengers of Jehovah had in the past worshipped as representatives of Jehovah; and that he himself was the chief messenger, the Only Begotten Son, the 'Messenger of the Covenant', whom the Father had sanctified and sent into the world. He knew consequently that whoever honored him honored the Father also. The Witnesses point out that his own words were, "He that honoreth not the Son, honoreth not the Father which sent him," (John 5:23).³⁹

Here again is evidence that Jehovah's Witnesses, because of their concept of Jesus Christ as only God's first-created being, and God's representative, they naturally must follow in their reasoning to such an interpretation as given in the preceding paragraph. Their reasoning also shows that they have not comprehended the significance of worship, for all true worship belongs to God alone. Conservative Protestantism now speaks:

Let us notice especially the phrase, 'That all men should honor the Son.' If then, the Son is to be honored, even as the Father is honored, then the Son must be God, as receiving that worship which belongs to God alone. To worship any creature is idolatry. Christ is to be honored; therefore Christ is not a creature; and, if not a creature, consequently the Creator. In Genesis 1:1, God is said to have created all things: in John 1:3, Christ is said to have created all things: the same unerring Spirit spoken in Moses and in the

38. Loc. cit.

39. Ibid., p. 73.

Evangelists: therefore Christ and the Father
are one.⁴⁰

The Witnesses next use John 10:30, "I and My Father are One," to prove that our Lord Jesus is not entitled to the name Jehovah.

Rutherford contends:

Having vague, mysterious thoughts respecting Trinity, a remarkably large number of otherwise intelligent people seem to forget that there is any other kind of oneness than personal oneness. On the contrary, however, in all other uses of the word the thought is that of harmony, a oneness of plan, purpose and will and mind. How blind a theory can make us, is well illustrated by the fact that our Lord's own explanation and illustration of the manner in which he and the Father are one is generally overlooked. He said in prayer to the Father, (John 17:9, 20-23) in essence, 'That they all may be one, as thou Father are in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us. . . . that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them and thou in me, that they may be Perfect in One.' Here the oneness of the Church, for which the Lord prayed, is specifically stated to be exactly the same as the oneness between the Father and the Son. That oneness of the Church is the oneness of mind and not a personal oneness, thus it needs no discussion.⁴¹

The concluding passage which Jehovah's Witnesses attempt to substantiate is John 14:9, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."

They quote as follows:

Our Lord meant us to understand in these words that it is impossible for a man (Fleshly) to see God, a spirit being. Thus the Apostle testified, 'No one has seen God at any time; the only Begotten God---the One existing within the bosom of

40. Adam Clarke, The Holy Bible Commentary of Both Old and New Testaments (New York, Lane and Scott, 1851), V, 551.

41. Rutherford, The At-one-ment Between God and Man, V, 75.

the Father—he interpreted (him),⁴² (John 1:18).

He meant them to understand what the Lord declared to Moses, 'No man can see my face and live': and hence that if the Father would show himself to humanity, it could only be either by miraculously opening man's eyes to discern the spiritual glory (thus exposing man to death), or else by God's manifesting himself in a body of flesh: -- in such a manner that men could discern something of his character by contact. And this is exactly what God did do. God's mind, God's will, was fully represented in his Only Begotten Son, our Lord, when he was made flesh and dwelt amongst men. He therefore was the best, the closest, the most positive representation of God that it was or would be possible to give to mankind.⁴³

Summary. A picture or study of the Jehovah's Witnesses doctrine of God has thus been presented. Jehovah, himself, is the Author of the Atonement, the Author of our salvation brought to us by Jesus Christ, God's representative. As the self-existing one, there was a time when Jehovah was alone in the universal space. Only at the time of creation did Jehovah become God to his creation. The name Jehovah is applied only to the Father in glory, never to our Lord Jesus Christ. The Trinitarian doctrine is senseless and God-dishonoring, and cannot be understood because it is clearly unscriptural.

With regard to the unity between the Father and the Son, Jehovah's Witnesses maintain that even though the Bible shows absolute unity between the Father and the Son, and the Holy Spirit in the steps of salvation, it contradicts the thought that the Father and Son are one in substance. The Father signifies life-giver; the Son signifies one who

42. Ibid., p. 77.

43. Loc. cit.

has received life. There is Scriptural consistency in referring to our Lord Jesus Christ as God (elohim) and Adon (Master, Lord) and as Adonai (my Lord), but never as Jehovah. Nothing whatever in the words used in the New Testament distinguish the Father from the Son in the words rendered Lord and God.

Concluding this summary the following quotation has been given which reveals their distaste for the idea of Trinity, but states their concept of God.

The doctrine of the Trinity of the Godhead is well-suited to the dark ages which it helped to produce. God is a solitary being from eternity, unrevealed and unknown. No one has existed as his equal to reveal him.⁴⁴

44. Keith L. Brooks, "Russellism," The Spirit of Truth and The Spirit of Error (Los Angeles, American Prophetic League, n.d.), n.p.

CHAPTER IV

THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST

The Jehovah's Witnesses doctrine of Christ has been divided into several divisions which deal with his person and work. Again, the lack of a systematized theological position on the part of the Witnesses was noticed. They have used any Scripture passage they could find to prove their position, irrespective of whether or not the passage was meant to teach what they were trying to teach. The writer has discussed their so-called doctrine of Christ as follows: First, Jesus Christ, The Creation of God; Second, Christ at His Incarnation Nothing more Than A Perfect Human Being; Third, The Work of Christ on the Cross Only The Work of a Mere Man; Fourth, Upon Christ's Resurrection He became Once More a Spirit Being; Fifth, The Christ in Glory, The Ascended and Exalted Savior, is Only A Spirit and Has No Humanity Whatsoever.

Christ the Creation of God. The Witnesses believe Christ to be God's first created being. In their view, Christ was a created angel, and before He came into the world He was none other than the Archangel Michael. Rutherford states:

Our Redeemer existed as a Spirit before he was made flesh and dwelt among men. At that time, as well as subsequently, Christ was properly known as 'a god'--a mighty one. As chief of angels and next to the Father, He was known as the Archangel (highest or messenger), whose name, Michael, signifies, 'Who as God' or 'God's representative.' As he was the highest of all Jehovah's creation, so also he was the first, the direct creation of God, the 'Only Begotten,' and then he, as Jehovah's representative, and in the exercise of Jehovah's power, and in his name, created all things,--angels,

principalities, and powers, as well as the earthly creation.¹

The Witnesses next show the Scripture evidences substantiating the preceding quotation by turning to the first chapter of John.

Here our Lord, in his prehuman existence is referred to as 'The Word' (Greek, Logos). 'In the beginning was the Logos.' Dr. Alexander Clarke says, concerning this Logos: 'This term should be left untranslated for the same reason that the names Jesus and Christ are left untranslated. As every name of the Savior of the world was so descriptive of some excellencies in his person, nature, and work, so the epithet, Logos, which signifies a word, a word spoken, speech, eloquence, doctrine, reason, or the faculty of reason, is very properly applied to him.' The Evangelist, in his epistle, used the same title in respect to our Lord again, denominating him 'The Word of Life,' or 'The Logos of Life.'--- I John 1:1.²

The Witnesses contend that the title, "Word of God--Logos of God" is very fitting by which to describe the important work or office of our Master, prior to His coming into the world. They claim the Logos was the heavenly Father's direct expression of creation, while all subsequent expressions of divine wisdom, power and goodness were made through the Logos.³ Again they state:

It is said that in olden times, certain kings made address to their subjects by proxy, the king sitting behind a screen, and addressed the people aloud on subjects whispered to him by the king, who was not seen: and such a speaker was termed the 'King's Logos'. Whether or not this legend is true, it well illustrates the use of this word Logos in connection with the prehuman existence of our Lord and Master, and his very grand office as the Father's representative, which the Scriptures, in this

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1. J. F. Rutherford, The At-one-ment Between God and Man (Brooklyn, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1899), p. 84.
 2. Ibid., p. 85.
 3. Ibid., p. 86.

connection and elsewhere, point out as having been his office.⁴

The Witnesses further contend that the Apostle, writing under inspiration, tells us that "The Logos" was in the beginning with the God, and the Logos was a God. Note Rutherford's argument:

This is a literal translation of the Greek, as can be readily confirmed by anyone, whether a Greek scholar or not. The Greek article (ho) precedes the first word God, in this verse, and does not precede the second word God, thus intentionally indicating God the Father and God the Son in a case where without the article the reader would be left in confusion. Similarly the article precedes the word God in the second verse. The entire verse therefore reads, ----'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with (ὁ Θεός) the God, and the Word was (Θεός) a God. The same was in the beginning with (ὁ Θεός) the God'. -- John 1:1.⁵

What beginning is here referred to? The Witnesses contend that it is not the beginning of the existence of Jehovah, the God, the Father, because he is "from everlasting to everlasting," and never had a beginning. (Psalm 41:13; 90:2; 106:48). But Jehovah's work had a beginning, and it is to this beginning that reference is here made--- the beginning of creation.⁶ Thus the Witnesses, in their understanding of this statement, imply that our Lord Jesus, in his pre-human existence, as the Logos, was with the Father in the very beginning of creation.

The Witnesses maintain that this fact confirms the inspired statement that the Logos himself was "the beginning of the creation

4. Loc. cit.

5. Loc. cit.

6. Loc. cit.

of God": for this is the precise statement of the Apostle, who assures us that our Lord is not only "the Head of the body, the Church," and the "firstborn from the dead," but also the beginning of all creation ----"that in all things he might have the preeminence." His words are:

He is the image of the invisible God,--'firstborn of all creation,' because by him were all things created, those in the heavens and those on the earth, visible and invisible,--whether thrones or lordships, or governments, or authorities: all things were created by him and for him, and he precedes all things, and in him all things have been permanently placed, (Colossians 1:15-18).⁷

Jehovah's Witnesses turn also to the word of prophecy concerning the Only Begotten, declaring him as being Jehovah's first-born, saying, "I will make him, my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth." (Psalm 89:27). They state also that our Lord (referring to his own origin), declared himself to be "The faithful and true Witness," "the beginning of the creation of God," (Rev. 3:14).⁸ Rutherford claimed:

The expression 'the Only Begotten' Son of God is intended to convey the fact that the Logos was himself the only direct creation or begetting of the heavenly Father, while all others of God's sons (angels as well as men), were his indirect creation through the Logos.⁹

Accordingly Jehovah's Witnesses follow, that the Logos, "the beginning of the creation of God, called also by Isaiah the Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God," (Isaiah 9:6), in all details harmonizes with the account given in John 1:1-18.

Jehovah possessed me in the beginning of his day, before his ways of old. I was set up from everlasting

7. Loc. cit.

8. Ibid., p. 87.

9. Ibid., p. 88.

from the beginning, or ever the earth was (formed). When there were no depths (seas), I was brought forth: when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were set before the hills, was I brought forth; while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depths: when he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: when he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his command: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: then was I by him, as one brought up with him; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him, (Proverbs 8: 22-30).¹⁰

In addition to Jehovah's Witnesses have noted respecting the Logos, - that he was not only the beginning of the creation of God, and the first-born, but additionally his Only Begotten Son, and that all other creations were by him and through him, - they have found a beautiful corroborative statement in our Lord's own words, saying: "Fear not, I am the first and the last; I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive forevermore," (Rev. 1:17). Again, "These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive," (Rev. 2:8). Thus they conclude:

In no other way or sense than as the 'Only' direct creation of God, through whom all else was created, could our Lord be the first and the last of God's creation. Any other view, therefore, would be an incorrect one, and in conflict with all the foregoing Scriptures.¹¹

In the preceding paragraphs, the writer has pointed out Scriptures used by the Witnesses to support their views on Christ being the

10. Ibid., p. 93.

11. Loc. cit.

creation of God. It was not the purpose of the writer to set forth a Scriptural refutation at this point, however it is necessary to pause briefly to note the level of their view of Christ.

Is Christ a created Archangel conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary instead of the uncreated, eternal Son of God, as Conservative Protestants have been taught in God's holy revelation to believe? In man's worship of this ever blessed and only begotten One, has it been all only an Archangel who has been the object of his love and adoration? Not only are such questions repulsive in the extreme, but positive answers to them would deny to our Lord Jesus Christ His eternity, His co-existence with God, His deity.¹²

If Christ was created He was not co-existent with God. And following this belief, the Witnesses say that there was a time when Christ did not exist. He was not the eternal, uncaused, unbegun personality. He was not before all things and by Him all things were not made that were made. He, Himself was made. God made Him.

Conservative Protestants declare such views are unwarrantable and inexcusable in face of the plainest statements of Scripture. It seems well nigh blasphemy,--for around Christ and His person the Bible pours all the wealth of its matchless revelation. His pre-existence and His deity are unmistakably declared. Christ is the everlasting and self-caused One, the alone fullness of the eternal Being.¹³

The Witnesses teach that Christ never was God. They teach that

12. Wm. Edward Biedervolf, Russellism Unveiled (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., n.d.), p. 10.

13. Ibid., p. 11.

Christ had a beginning: God created Christ. Christ is not the uncaused, self-existent second person of the everlasting and Triune God. Thus, in denying to Christ His eternal existence and His deity, the Witnesses not only rob Him of the glory due Him, but they brand Him as a shameless falsifier, guilty of blasphemous treason against the eternal God.

Against His eternal existence, against His deity all the powers of hell and all the enemies of the Godhead on earth, from Arius the Lybian to the modern Unitarian, have combined to discredit the existing and divinely given system of Christian faith, and now Jehovah's Witnesses become an instrument of holy assault.¹⁴

Christ at His Incarnation. Jehovah's Witnesses declare that Christ at His Incarnation gave up His spirit being, and that while He walked on earth He was nothing more than a "perfect human being."

Rutherford contends:

When Jesus was in the flesh he was a perfect human being; previous to that time he was a perfect spiritual being; and since his resurrection he is a perfect spiritual being of the highest or divine order.¹⁵

The common thought of Conservative Protestants in respect to our Lord's manifestation in the flesh is usually expressed in the word "Incarnation." This usual thought the Witnesses believe to be wholly incorrect, and unscriptural. Again they cling to Rutherford's teaching that:

14. Ibid., p. 12.

15. J. F. Rutherford, The Divine Plan of the Ages (Brooklyn, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1911), I, 179.

The 'Incarnation Theory' is that our Lord's human body, which was born of Mary, was merely a clothing, a covering for his spiritual body. The thought therefore attached to our Lord's earthly life, according to this theory, is that our Lord during his earthly life was still a spirit being, exactly as before, except that he used the flesh that was born of Mary, and that was known as the man Christ Jesus, as his veil or medium of communication with mankind, after the manner in which angels had appeared in human form previously--to Abraham, to Manoaah, to Lot and others, (Gen. 18:1,2; 19:1, Judges 13:9-11, 16).¹⁶

The Jehovah's Witnesses maintain that the so-called orthodox clergy, in order to support their false dogma of the Trinity, have been forced to accept from Satan and teach another lie, to wit, that they insist that when Jesus was on earth he was both God and man in completeness. For Jehovah's Witnesses this theory is wrong. They contend such a theory or teaching concerning God's plan is a direct contradiction to His plain Word.¹⁷ Furthermore,

The record concerning Jesus' prehuman existence, his being begotten and his birth, entirely disproves the theory that he was incarnated. The Scriptures previously cited show that he was begotten in the womb of a woman, Mary, by the holy Spirit, the power or energy of Jehovah, that thereafter he was born in the same general manner that other children are born of a woman, (Luke 2:9-11); that he grew to manhood's estate and increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man, (Luke 2:40-52). None of these things would have been necessary were he merely an incarnated being, a spirit being, inhabiting a body of flesh. He worked at a carpenter's trade until he was thirty years of age, at which time he began his ministry. At that time he went to John to be baptized in the Jordan, (Luke 3:21-23). Immediately following that he spent forty days and nights in the wilderness, fasting and studying Jehovah's plan,

16. Rutherford, The At-one-ment Between God and Man, V. 54.

17. J. F. Rutherford, The Harp of God (Brooklyn, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1928), p. 102.

(Luke 4:1-14). If Christ were God incarnate, this experience in the wilderness would seem wholly unnecessary.¹⁸

Having thus stated their position the Witnesses go on to contend that because of the incorrect premise of the clergy of Christendom, on the matter of the Incarnation, many confused and unscriptural ideas have evolved respecting the various incidents of our Lord's life and death; for the logic of this "Incarnation Theory" would imply that our Lord's prayers were feigned.

Why? Because, says this theory, Christ was God himself; hence it is argued that his prayers were merely pro-forma, to make an impression upon the disciples who were about. The same theory is bound to suppose that our Lord's death was merely an appearance of death, for they argue that Jesus was God the Father, who, being from everlasting to everlasting, cannot die: hence that the apparent cry, 'My God, my God, what hast thou forsaken me?' and dying, were merely pro-forma, to make an impression upon the minds of those who heard and saw. The logical argument of this theory therefore is that there was no real death for man's sins, but merely an appearance of one, a spectacular effect, a dramatic show, a deception produced for a good purpose; to favorably influence the sympathies of mankind.¹⁹

However, to the Witness mind this theory is wrong, and violently in opposition to the truth of the subject, as presented in the Word of God. They contend that the Scriptural declaration is not that our Lord assumed a body of flesh as a covering for a spiritual body, but that he actually laid aside, or, as the Greek renders it, "divested himself of," his prehuman conditions, and actually took our nature, or,

18. Ibid., p. 103.

19. Rutherford, The At-one-ment Between God and Man, V, 94.

as our text declares, "the Logos was made flesh."²⁰

It was not that he seemed to become poor for our sakes, yet actually remained rich in the possession of the higher spiritual nature all the time; no, he actually became a man. 'As by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead,' (I Corinthians 15:21).²¹

"But let no one misunderstand us," say Jehovah's Witnesses, "that we mean our Redeemer became a man such as we are, full of inherited imperfections and blemishes." The Witness view declares that we must take the Biblical description in that Christ was "holy, harmless, separate from sinners," (Hebrews 7:26,28; Luke 1:35).²² To them, Jesus was a perfect man and the only perfect man that ever lived upon earth, aside from Adam when he lived in Eden.²³

Thus the Witnesses maintain that the clergy who have taught and yet teach the Incarnation dogma, refuse to hear and obey the truth, and thereby put themselves in the same class to which the Pharisees were assigned by Jesus.²⁴

What is the effect of such teaching by Jehovah's Witnesses regarding the Incarnation of Christ? Their teaching more than ever denies His divinity, and robs Christ's Incarnation of all its worth. The Witnesses most assuredly are expert exegetical contortionists. It has

20. Ibid., p. 95.

21. Loc. cit.

22. Loc. cit.

23. J. F. Rutherford, Reconciliation (Brooklyn, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1928), p. 116.

24. Ibid., p. 117.

seemed almost an insult to reason to spend time with such unwarrantable interpretation of the Word of God. The following quotation gives briefly the position of Conservative Protestantism:

The Jews stoned Him because He claimed to be divine, (John 10:33). He said, 'He that hath seen me hath seen the Father,' (John 14:9). Paul said, 'God was manifest in the flesh,' (I Tim. 3:16). John said, 'And the Word (the Son of God), was made flesh and dwelt among us,' (John 1:14). He did not cease to be the Son of God in doing so. We as Conservative Protestants maintain Christ changed His form, for He was in the form of God, but His person He did not change, and He was both God and man, two natures in one person as the Bible teaches and the church has always believed.²⁵

The writer has shown in a later section the true development of this phase of the doctrine of Christ.

The Work of Christ on The Cross Only The Work of a Mere Man.

This phase properly would come under their doctrine of salvation, which doctrine has not been treated in this study. However, concerning Christ's person, it was necessary to note their position at this point.

"As a human being Christ gave himself a ransom for men."²⁶

It was His flesh, His life as a man, His humanity, that was sacrificed for our redemption. There was no divinity on the cross; no deity there. Ours was only a human Savior.²⁷

Thus it is quite necessary to say that this denies the Atonement, and robs it of its power! Do not the Scriptures testify that no man

25. Biederwolf, Russellism Unveiled, p. 13.

26. J. F. Rutherford, The Time is at Hand (Brooklyn, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1914), II, 107.

27. Ibid., p. 129.

by his wealth, his self-sacrifice or his character can redeem himself, much less redeem anyone else? Could one trust the redemption of his soul to any mere man, however, wise, however great, however holy or perfect or Adam-like before his fall? This is the question Conservative Protestantism asks the thoughtful reader.

The Witnesses do not stop here. They declare that they themselves as the children of God through their sacrifice are a part of the ransom price for sin. Rutherford says, "We, as members of Christ's body, are yielding up our lives in sacrifice during this age, and these sacrificial lives counted in with His constitute the blood of Christ which seals the new covenant between God and the world."²⁸

Christ at His Resurrection Once More a Spirit Being. After being dead three days, Christ was raised to life--to the perfection of spirit being, born of the Spirit--"the first born from the dead." "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Jesus, therefore, at and after his resurrection, was a spirit--a spirit being, and no longer a human being in any sense.²⁹ "But this is a denial of the resurrection of Christ's body," says Conservative Protestantism. "No matter," say the Witnesses, for,

After Christ's resurrection he had power to appear, and did appear, as a man, in order that he might teach his disciples and prove to them that he was no longer dead; but he was not a man, and was no longer controlled by human conditions, but could go and come as the wind, and none could tell whence he came and whither he went. 'So is

28. Biederwolf, Russellism Unveiled, p. 14.

29. Rutherford, The Divine Plan of the Ages, I, 231.

every one that is born of the Spirit,' (John 3:8).³⁰

Jehovah's Witnesses declare that the body of Jesus crucified and buried in Joseph's tomb was never resurrected. What then became of Christ's body? Rutherford states:

We know nothing about it, or what became of it, except that it did not decay or corrupt, (Acts 2:27, 31). Whether it dissolved into gases or whether it is still preserved somewhere as the grand memorial of God's love, of Christ's obedience, and of our redemption, no one knows;--nor is such knowledge necessary.³¹

The Witnesses scoff at those Christians who have the idea that our Lord's glorious spiritual body is the very same body that was crucified and laid away in Joseph's tomb; and that they expect, when they see the Lord in glory, to identify him by the scars he received on Calvary. The Jehovah's Witnesses state that to hold such an idea is a mistake, especially in the light of the fact that no one knows where the body is. They contend that:

To hold such a view would prove that Christ's resurrection body is not glorious or perfect, but scarred and disfigured. It would also prove that we do not know what a spirit body is. It would further prove that our redemption price was taken back, for Jesus said, 'My flesh I will give for the life of the world.' It was his flesh, his life as a man, his humanity, that was sacrificed for our redemption. And when he was raised to life again by the power of the Father, it was not to human existence, because that was sacrificed as our purchase price. And if that price had been taken back, we would still be under the condemnation of death, and without hope.³²

30. Loc. cit.

31. Rutherford, The Time Is at Hand, II, 130.

32. Ibid., p. 129.

The chief priests invented the lie that Christ's disciples stole His body to deceive the people. Now Jehovah's Witnesses have come with the bigger lie that God did it to deceive the disciples. What did God do with it? Witness theology claims he either dissolved it into gases or he has it in His possession as a "corpse." To all of Conservative Protestantism, such claims are shocking blasphemy, daring and sacrilegious speculation.

If Jesus was only a spirit and was no longer human in any sense as the Witnesses maintain, then He had no right to say to His disciples, "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have," (Luke 24: 36-40); for whatever the nature of His resurrected body, (I Cor. 15: 44), Jesus here denied that He was nothing but a spirit.

The Witnesses deny the resurrection of the body of Christ, the great fundamental upon which the validity of Christianity as a supernatural system rests; and if Christ be not risen from the dead then Christian hopes are in vain, and of all men they are most miserable, (I Cor. 15:19).

Following this, Jehovah's Witnesses must, of course, declare that the Christ in glory, the ascended and exalted Savior, is only a spirit and that He has no humanity whatsoever, as He now sits at the right hand of God. Thus we come now to the fifth and last point under consideration, in the study of the Jehovah's Witnesses doctrine of Christ.

The Christ in Glory, Only A Spirit, With No Humanity. This is another absurd teaching of this strange and radical perversion of Scripture. "As Christ now sits at the right hand of God, He has no

humanity whatsoever."³³

We must bear in mind that our Lord is no longer a human being in any sense or degree. We must not forget what we have already learned, that natures are separate and distinct. Since He is no longer in any sense or degree a human being, we must not expect him to come again as a human being, as at the first advent.³⁴

To Conservative Protestants, all this which Jehovah's Witnesses maintain is a plain denial of Christ's high-priestly intercession, to say nothing of the fact that the disciples saw Him ascend in His humility, (Acts 1:9), and that the Scriptures declare that the martyred Stephen saw the Son of Man standing by the side of the glory of God, and that Zechariah, by the Spirit, reveals to us that when He comes again, one shall say to Him, "What are these wounds in thy hands," all of which proves His now existing humanity--to say nothing of all this Paul expressly declares that "there is one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus," (I Tim. 2:5).³⁵

And, furthermore, all this arbitrary subversion of the Lord's high-priestly function is made in the face of the fact that it was upon His human nature that it was based. But the Witnesses will not have it so.

They teach that Christ lost His spirit being at His Incarnation and became only a man. They teach that Christ lost His human nature at His Resurrection and became again only a spirit being. They teach that Christ was not divine before His Incarnation nor during it. They teach that Christ became

33. Ibid., p. 107.

34. Loc. cit.

35. Biederwolf, Russellism Unveiled, p. 18.

divine only after or upon His Resurrection. They teach that Christ in glory, now, is only a spirit being.³⁶

Summary. Perhaps the most outstanding fact of the Witnesses doctrine of Christ was that they contend strongly that Christ was God's first-created being. In other words Christ is not very God, and there was a time when Christ was not. The pre-human existence of Christ meant only that the Logos was with the Father in the very beginning of creation, (all other creations were by and through the Logos).

Christ at His Incarnation was nothing more than a "perfect human being." There was no part of the divine nature or spirit nature within the man Christ Jesus as He walked upon earth. The Incarnation theory of orthodox Christianity is held to be wholly unscriptural. And, as the perfect man, it was only Christ's humanity that was sacrificed at Calvary. There was no divinity on the cross. Following this, Christ at His resurrection was once more a spirit being, and in no sense partook of the human nature. Finally, it must not be expected that Christ will come as a human being as He did at the first advent. Conservative Protestants hold this view to be heretical!

36. Ibid., p. 19.

CHAPTER V

THE HOLY SPIRIT OF GOD

In this chapter the teachings of Jehovah's Witnesses have again been compared with the teachings of Conservative Protestantism. The doctrine of the Holy Spirit has been treated as completely as possible, using the materials and information of the Witnesses. But again the writer discovered that because of a lack of a systematic presentation of their doctrines, it was quite difficult to discuss each phase of the doctrine in equal proportion.

This chapter has been divided into the following divisions:

First, Who, Where, What is the Holy Spirit; Second, The Meaning of the Word Spirit; Third, God is a Spirit; Fourth, Divine Will, Influence, Power, Spirit; Fifth, The Holy Spirit as the Channel of the Atonement; Sixth, The Parakletos, the Comforter; Seventh, The Holy Spirit and Pentecost; Eighth, Spirit Fightings Within and Without the Saints; Ninth, The Witness of the Spirit; Tenth, Supposed Objections Considered; Eleventh, Summary.

Who - Where - What - Is The Holy Spirit? Again the Witnesses go immediately to the testimony of God, the Word of God. They claim to rely wholly upon the Lord for all knowledge concerning the Holy Spirit. However, again Rutherford contends:

Let us place our reliance wholly upon the Lord, and seek to know the meaning of what he declares respecting the holy Spirit, bringing every truth into harmony, assured that the truth will stand

such an investigation.¹

The Holy Spirit is variously defined in the Scriptures, and to rightly understand the subject these definitions must be considered together. Notice that the holy Spirit is styled, 'The Spirit of God,' 'The Spirit of Christ,' 'The Spirit of Holiness,' 'The Spirit of Truth,' 'The Spirit of Sound Mind,' 'The Spirit of the Father,' 'The Holy Spirit of Promise,' 'The Spirit of Meekness,' 'The Spirit of Grace,' 'The Spirit of Adoption,' 'The Spirit of Prophecy.'²

Jehovah's Witnesses contend that it is impossible to harmonize these various statements with the ordinary idea of a third God; but that it is entirely consistent with every one of them to understand these various expressions as descriptive of the spirit, disposition, and power of one God, our Father; and also the spirit, disposition, and power of our Lord Jesus Christ, because He is at-one with the Father.³ Again, from Rutherford:

The words translated in our Bible, Holy Ghost, should be properly be translated holy Spirit. The holy Spirit is the invisible power and energy of Jehovah. And the wrong thoughts respecting the Spirit of God and the Spirit of man has been intensified and deepened by the fact that the translators have used the phrase 'Holy Ghost' without the slightest authority--the original Greek word being (pneuma)--spirit. And the word ghost to the uneducated, has a very vague meaning, which, nevertheless, is very positively identified with the thought of personality.⁴

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1. J. F. Rutherford, The At-one-ment Between God and Man (Brooklyn, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1916), p. 167.
 2. Loc. cit.
 3. Ibid., p. 168.
 4. Ibid., p. 169.

Chapter Three stated that the leaders of Jehovah's Witnesses had a proper understanding of Conservative Protestantism's view of the Trinity, but that they had misrepresented the Trinitarian position to their own people. Again, Jehovah's Witnesses say that there is absolutely no ground whatever for thinking or speaking of the Holy Spirit as another God, distinct in personality from the Father and the Son.

The Witnesses further state:

Quite to the contrary of this, notice the fact that it was the Father's spirit that was communicated to our Lord Jesus, as it is written, 'The Spirit of The Lord God is Upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel.' (Luke 4:18). Again, 'And the Spirit of Jehovah shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge, and of reverence for Jehovah,' (Isaiah 11: 2,3).⁵

It is urged by leaders of Christendom, say the Witnesses, that our Lord's reference in John 14:26 proves that the Spirit is a person, because our Common Version (King James) reads thus: "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." But a glance at the Greek text of this passage shows that the translators were influenced by their prejudices on this subject, for there is no ground for the use of the words whom and he. The Diaglott renders the verse thus: "But the helper, the holy Spirit, which the Father will send in my name, shall teach you all things and remind you of those things which I said to you."⁶

5. Loc. cit.

6. Ibid., p. 170.

Jehovah's Witnesses contend that the same criticism is applicable to John 14:17, which in the King James Version reads: "The Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him, but ye know him, for he dwelleth in you, and shall be in you." They say:

Here the expresseion, Spirit of Truth, is evidently used in contrast with the Spirit of Error. The passage has no reference whatever to a person, but to the influence of the truth, and the effect of the same upon the Lord's people. The Diaglott translation of this verse is: 'The Spirit of truth, which the world cannot receive, because it beholds it not, nor knows it; but ye know it, because it operates in you and will be in you.'⁷

Again, 'When he the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear that shall he speak; and he shall show you things to come. He will glorify me, for he shall receive of mind and shall show it unto you,' (John 16:13,14). In this passage the Greek word (ἐαυτου) is translated himself, yet the same word is frequently translated itself.⁸

The Witnesses are ready with many illustrations to prove their position, but they most assuredly have not looked into the original Greek text to see that they are in direct opposition to the exact rendering of the words which they have been discussing. One example has been given by Thayer which follows:

In the Greek word (ἐαυτου), this is properly used of the third person, singular and plural, to denote that the agent and the person acted upon are the same. Thus in John 16:3, (ἐαυτου) is rendered in the masculine, and could not be rendered in the neuter, because of the very fact that the

7. Loc. cit.

8. Loc. cit.

word (ἐκεῖνος) (he) is a masculine demonstrative pronoun, the two persons thus being the same. Thus the statement of the Witnesses, that the word (ἐκεῖνος), rendered (he) in John 16:13, might with equal propriety be rendered that, this, those, the same, she, it, cannot be supported by actual fact which we find in the study of the Greek text itself.⁹

Jehovah's Witnesses attempt to avoid the accepted use of the pronouns by stating that it is not infrequent to attach to a virtue or quality the gender of the person or thing to which it belongs. Observe their reasoning:

Therefore, because the heavenly Father is designated as masculine, it would be proper that his power, his spirit, his every influence and characteristic should be similarly designated in the masculine form. If it were not for the general misconception viewing the holy spirit as a person, and not merely a divine spirit, influence, or power, there could be no particular criticism made of the use of the masculine pronouns in respect to the holy Spirit; because God is recognized as masculine, as the Author and source of life and blessing. So then, let us not overlook the fact that the use of the personal pronouns does not prove that the holy Spirit of God to be another person from the Father and the Son---another God.¹⁰

In the preceding quotation of the Witnesses, (actually of the leaders themselves), evidence is seen of their misrepresentation to their people of the Christian doctrine of the Trinity.

The Meaning of the Word Spirit. The question arises at this juncture, "What senses or meanings attach to the words 'Holy Spirit' as used in Scripture? What qualities of the divine character or power

9. J. H. Thayer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (New York, American Book Company, 1889), p. 163.

10. Rutherford, The At-one-ment Between God and Man, V, 172.

are represented by the word spirit?" Jehovah's Witnesses proceed to examine the strict meaning of the word spirit, and then the different methods of its use in Scripture.

The word spirit in the Old Testament, is in the translation of the Hebrew word (ruach), the root meaning of which is wind. The word spirit in the New Testament comes from the Greek word (pneuma), whose primary significance is likewise wind. Because the wind is both invisible and powerful, these words (ruach) and (pneuma) gradually took on much wider meanings and came to represent any invisible power or influence, good or bad. Since divine power is exercised through channels and by agencies beyond human sight, therefore this word spirit came more and more into common use in connection with all the Lord's dealings. Naturally it also came into common use in connection with such influences as are invisible; for instance, to represent the breath of life; the power by which man lives which is invisible, designated the spirit or breath of life; also for the power of the mind, which is invisible, called the spirit of the mind. Life itself is a power and is invisible, and hence was called spirit by ancient authorities.¹¹

Ruach in the Old Testament is translated blast four times, breath twenty-eight times, mind six times, smell eight times, wind and windy ninety-one times. In every instance the thought behind the word is an invisible power or influence.¹²

Samples of the translations of ruach are found in Exodus 15:8; Genesis 6:17; 7:15; Job 12:10; Exodus 15:10; Psalm 148:8; Isaiah 7:2. Samples of Pneuma in the New Testament (besides ghost, and spirit, life, spiritual, and wind) are found in Revelation 13:15; I Corinthians 14:12; John 3:8. The Witnesses contend that all these translations were made by Trinitarians, but they themselves do not object to

11. Ibid., p. 173.

12. Ibid., p. 174.

them. They maintain they are quite proper. The Witnesses, however, call attention to them as proofs that the words ruach and pneuma, rendered spirit, do not signify personality, but do signify invisible power or influence.

God is A Spirit. From the Witness point of view, this is to say that God is a powerful, but invisible being, and likewise angels are called spirits, because they too in their natural condition are invisible to men, except as revealed by miraculous power.¹³ The Witnesses contend that the Holy Spirit spoken of in II Peter 1:21, who moved holy men of old to speak and write, was the holy influence or power of God, which made fruitful their minds, causing them to bring forth thoughts such as God wished to have expressed. In this passage, of all passages, to deny the personality of the Holy Spirit as the Witnesses do, is certainly out of keeping with true exegesis.

From the point of view of Conservative Protestantism, it is inconceivable that any influence or power could possibly dictate to these holy men of God what they should speak and what they should write.

Divine Will, Influence, Power, Spirit. These words immediately imply that the steps and operations of the Holy Spirit will be in harmony with holiness. Also, God exercises his spirit or energy in many ways, using various agencies in accomplishing various results. To illustrate, notice the Witness conception of Genesis 2:4, "Jehovah

13. Ibid., p. 175.

God created the heavens and the earth." They point out that it is not necessary to suppose that Jehovah personally handled the elements, but that he used various agencies, "All things being of the Father," by his energy, his will, his spirit, this energy was exercised through the Logos.¹⁴ Let us now notice what the Witnesses understand the Holy Spirit to mean in the light of their interpretation of the Scriptures.

The holy Spirit is God's power exercised in any manner, but always according to the lines of justice and love, and hence always a holy power.-- This power may be an energy of life, a physically creative power, or a power of thought, creating and inspiring thoughts and words, or a quickening or life-giving power, as it was manifested in the resurrection of our Lord.--The holy Spirit is the begetting or transforming power or influence of the knowledge of the truth. All who come under the influence of God's plan of truth and righteousness are properly said to be under the influence of the Spirit or disposition of the truth, and are properly described as begotten of the truth to the newness of life.¹⁵

The Holy Spirit as the Channel of the Atonement. The great work of the Atonement could not be properly understood, if the work of the Holy Spirit, in connection therewith, were overlooked.

The holy Spirit has much to do with the presentation of the Atonement--making manifest to the believer the divine forgiveness, as well as guiding him into full reconciliation of heart to God. It was under the influence of the holy Spirit, received by our Lord Jesus at his baptism, at the beginning of his ministry, that his consecrated heart was enabled to see clearly and distinctly the Father's will, the proper course, the narrow way of sacrifice, and to appreciate the exceeding great and precious promises, whose fulfillment lay beyond his humiliation

14. Ibid., p. 183.

15. Loc. cit.

and death at Calvary. By the holy Spirit, therefore, our Redeemer was enabled to perform his great work, being guided thereby to do that which was pleasing and acceptable to the Father, and which provided the ransom for all humanity.¹⁶

The Witnesses maintain that this subject of the Holy Spirit, its office and operation, has been grievously misunderstood by many of the Lord's people for centuries, and only in the light of the rising Sun of Righteousness--in the light of the parousia of the Son of Man--is the subject becoming clear and reasonable, as it was to the early church.¹⁷

The doctrine of the Trinity, which we have seen began to rise in the second century, is responsible in a large measure, for much of the darkness which blends with the truth on this subject in many Christian minds, much to their disadvantage,--confusing and mystifying all religious convictions.¹⁸

The Witnesses contend there is consistency in Scripture teaching that the Father and the Son are in full harmony and oneness of purpose and operation. Equally consistent is the Scripture teaching respecting the Holy Spirit--that it is not another God, but the spirit, the influence, or power exercised by the one God, our Father, and by his Only Begotten Son;--in absolute oneness, therefore, with both of these, who also are at-one or in full accord.¹⁹

But how different is this unity of the Father, the Son, and the holy Spirit from that held and taught under the name of Trinity, which in the

16. Ibid., p. 164.

17. Ibid., p. 165.

18. Loc. cit.

19. Loc. cit.

language of the Catechism (Questions 5 and 6) declares, 'There are three persons in the one God--the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory.' Certainly this theory is as unscriptural as it is unreasonable. Verily, if it were not for the fact that this Trinitarian nonsense was drilled into us from earliest infancy, and the fact that it is taught in Theological seminaries by gray-haired professors, in many ways apparently wise, nobody would give it a moment's consideration. How the great Adversary ever succeeded in foisting it upon the Lord's people to bewilder them, and render much of the Word of God of none effect, is the real mystery which will probably not be solved until we know 'even as we are known in glory.'²⁰

In studying the material of the Witnesses, the writer discovered that they seemingly have given abundant Scripture testimony to the effect that there is but one Almighty God--Jehovah; and that he has highly exalted his first-begotten, his only Begotten Son, to his own nature and to his own throne of the universe; and that next to these in order of rank will be the glorified Church, the Bride, the Lamb's wife and joint-heir.

The Parakletos, The Comforter. Parakletos is rendered Comforter in John 14:16,26, but the thought usually conveyed by the word comfort (namely to soothe, to pacify) is not here the correct one. The correct one, according to the Witnesses, is that of help, encouragement, assistance, strengthening. Rutherford states:

Thus our Lord's promise implied that the Holy Spirit which the Father would send in Jesus' name and as Jesus' representative, would be near his followers a present help in every time of need--the holy power by which he would guide and direct

20. Ibid., p. 166.

his people and enable them to walk by faith and not by sight.²¹

The Witnesses claim that this power of God is invisible to men but its effects are tangible and visible. They illustrate by the electric current in the copper wire, which if connected to a motor of a trolley-car, manifests itself in the movement of the car. They conclude that the Holy Spirit is the spiritual energy or power of God, in that it moves, enlightens, warms and instructs all who, having the proper conditions in themselves, are brought into connection with it through its proper channels.²²

The Witnesses conclude that nothing connected with the preceding reference to the Holy Spirit as another Comforter or helper implies that another God is meant, or another person of a trinity of Gods.

They refer again to Studies in The Scriptures:

The connections show on the contrary that the comforting or strengthening holy Spirit is the Spirit of the Father and the Spirit of the Son. It should be remembered too, that the words he, him, himself, used in referring to the Parakletos, might with equal right be translated she, her, herself, or it, itself.²³

The view of Conservative Protestantism with regard to these interpretations has been given in a later chapter. To accept the preceding paragraphs and quotations as final and true without intensive research into the original Greek texts, one would most certainly fall into the same channel of error that Jehovah's Witnesses have fallen

21. Ibid., p. 203.

22. Loc. cit.

23. Ibid., p. 204.

into. Briefly note the following paragraph:

And I will ask the Father, and another Paraclete will he give you, that he may remain with you forever. . . .but the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and will bring to your remembrance all things which I said unto you (John 14:16,26).²⁴

The preceding passage is rendered as found in the original Greek text, "Another Comforter" (ἄλλον παράκλητον). This is another of like kind, besides Jesus who becomes our Paraclete, Helper, Advocate with the Father (I John 2:1; Romans 8:26). So the Christian has Christ as his Paraclete with the Father, the Holy Spirit as the Father's Paraclete with the Christian. Thus as Jesus was a definite personality, and this Paraclete is to be of like kind, certainly one can be dogmatic in holding to the personality of the Holy Spirit, and not as a power only, as the Jehovah's Witnesses contend.²⁵

The Holy Spirit and Pentecost. In this sphere, Jehovah's Witnesses again deny anything in connection with the narrative of Pentecost which necessitates the thought of a personal Holy Spirit, separate from the Father and the Son. Rutherford contends:

Quite the contrary: the fact that the holy Spirit was received in them all, of itself implies that the holy Spirit is not a person, but an influence, a power exerted by a person--the power or influence of

24. George R. Berry, The Interlinear Literal Translation of The Greek New Testament (Chicago, Wilcox and Follett Co., 1897), p. 290.

25. Archibald T. Robertson, Word Pictures in The New Testament (New York, Harper and Brothers, 1931), IV, 252.

God exerted in and upon his newly adopted children.²⁶

Another note of interest with regard to the teaching of the Witnesses on the Holy Spirit is, that whoever becomes truly united with Christ, and thus truly united with all the members of the body of Christ, needs not pray for present or future Pentecostal blessings, but may look back with joy and confidence to the original Pentecostal blessing as evidence of the Father's acceptance of the church as a whole. In other words, the Witnesses contend that only those who are ignorant and misled will continually pray for baptisms of the Spirit, for even the Apostles did not pray for future Pentecosts.²⁷

Spirit Fightings Within and Without the Saints. It is most interesting to notice the plea of Jehovah's Witnesses that the majority of Christians (nominal Christians), even including sanctificationists, know little about the real spirit battles and victories, because the majority have never made a proper consecration, that they might receive the Holy Spirit of truth. Their thought here is that some people consecrate to social reform work, and they get only the spirit of social reform and its blessings.²⁸ They say:

All of these consecrations, and the spirits resulting, have both good and evil influences. Any of them are far better than a consecration to evil and its spirit of evil. But none of these compare to the consecration taught in the Scriptures and exemplified in our Lord Jesus Christ. This true

26. Rutherford, The At-one-ment Between God and Man, V, 210.

27. Ibid., p. 216.

28. Ibid., p. 183.

consecration brings to the heart the holy Spirit,
the spirit of truth which the world cannot receive.²⁹

The writer was amused at this quotation, for if the Holy Spirit is not a being possessing personality, what is it then that comes to the heart which the world cannot receive, an influence? It would seem that at this point their illogical logic breaks down.

The Witness of the Spirit. It is the opinion of Jehovah's Witnesses that the reason more people do not have the witness of the Holy Spirit is because of the erroneous view they hold concerning the Holy Spirit.

The difficulty lies largely in the erroneous view that the Spirit is a person, and which seeks to apply personality to its witnessings. When the fact is recognized that the Spirit of God is any power or influence which God may be pleased to exercise, the subject is clarified and the 'witness of the Spirit' becomes a matter of easy distinction.³⁰

Supposed Objections Considered. It is the claim of Jehovah's Witnesses that many passages of Scripture translated by the Trinitarians have been given a bias or twist which causes an apparent disagreement between some of these which we have quoted, and the reasonable view of the subject under discussion. In this section material has been presented to show how the Witnesses have taken a variety of Scriptures, those they feel are confusing to many, and have attempted to remove all objections of these Scriptures in the light of their

29. Ibid., p. 194.

30. Ibid., p. 228.

teachings.

They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance, (Acts 2:4).

This text according to the Witnesses describes a two-fold operation of the Holy Spirit. They claim support from Rutherford:

It was the mind, disposition, Spirit of God, operating in the disciples, as the Spirit of adoption, bringing their hearts into closeness of sympathy and touch with the Father, and with the glorified Redeemer. . . . God's holy Spirit or power or influence acted also upon them, conferring special gifts for a testimony to the world. While it would be unreasonable in the extreme to think of a God getting personally into one man, there is not the slightest unreasonableness in the thought that the power of the Highest, the power, the influence of Jehovah could be in and upon and in millions without, in anywise interfering with the personal presence of Jehovah upon the throne of the universe.³¹

Peter said, 'Ananias, why hath Satan filled thy heart, to lie to the holy Spirit, and to keep back part of the price of the land,' (Acts 5:3). . . . 'thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God,' (Acts 5:4).

It will be noticed, say the Witnesses, that the Apostle uses the words God and holy Spirit interchangeably in verse three and verse four. The thought is the same. God's Holy Spirit, acting through the apostles, was God's representative; and consequently, in lying to the apostles who represented God and his Holy Spirit, Ananias and Sapphira were lying to God, lying to the "holy Spirit of God," whose agent and representative Peter was.³²

31. Ibid., p. 269.

32. Loc. cit.

Again, The Witnesses claim, that nothing in the words of Acts 8:29 seems to imply the necessity of another God, "The Spirit said unto Phillip, 'Go near, and join thyself to this chariot.'" They understand that the Lord, by his Spirit, influence, power, directed and instructed Phillip to approach the chariot of the eunuch.³³

In what manner Phillip was directed of the holy Spirit we are not informed, and it would be unwise to speculate. Our God has at his disposal unlimited means for communicating his wishes to his people.³⁴

In the passage Acts 10:19, "The Spirit said unto Him, 'Behold three men seek thee,'" the Witnesses maintain that the same answer is applicable to this passage as to the preceding objection.

It is quite immaterial to us how the power, influence, Spirit of God, addressed Peter, giving him this information.³⁵

In Acts 16:6, "Forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia," the Witnesses again deny the personality of the Holy Spirit.

We are not informed specifically how the Apostle and his companions were forbidden to prosecute the preaching work in Asia, but apparently they were hindered or not permitted to go into Asia,---the unfavorable circumstances preventing. But no matter how they were hindered; God was directing the work; he used invisible power to direct them as his servants.³⁶

In I Corinthians 2:13, ". . . which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost

33. Ibid., p. 273.

34. Ibid., p. 274.

35. Loc. cit.

36. Ibid., p. 276.

teacheth." Does this not prove the personality of the Holy Spirit?

"It does not," is the Witness's reply! Rutherford states:

This Scripture proves that the holy Spirit or mind of God, when received by his children, fits or prepares their minds to comprehend his plan. How clear it is that the spirit is not a person, but the disposition or influence of God in them.³⁷

Summary. To summarize the presentation of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, single thoughts from each preceding section have been taken. The last quoted paragraph is from one of the many writings of J. F. Rutherford.

The holy Spirit is not another God, but the spirit, influence, or power exercised by the one God, our Father, and by his Only Begotten Son.³⁸

The holy Spirit is the invisible power of Jehovah. The term holy ghost has been used by the Trinitarian translators without the slightest authority, thus giving the vague impression of 'personality' to some, which is an unscriptural impression.³⁹

The terms ruach and pneuma, rendered spirit, do not signify personality, but do signify invisible power or influence.⁴⁰

The holy Spirit is the begetting or transforming power of the knowledge of truth.⁴¹

The Parakletos, the Comforter, is the holy power by which the Lord would direct and guide his people and enable them to walk by faith and

37. Ibid., p. 279.

38. Ibid., p. 165.

39. Ibid., p. 169.

40. Ibid., p. 173.

41. Ibid., p. 183.

not by sight.⁴²

At Pentecost, the fact that the holy Spirit was received in them all, of itself implies that the holy Spirit is not a person, but an influence, a power exerted by a person--the power of God exerted upon his newly adopted children.⁴³

The supposed objections to Scripture arise from a bias or twist of the Trinitarian translators.⁴⁴

The Scriptures conclusively prove that the holy Spirit is not a person, and is therefore not one of the gods of the Trinity. The holy Spirit (mistranslated Holy Ghost) is the holy power of Jehovah God conferred upon his beloved Son and upon others whom he authorized to represent him.⁴⁵

42. Ibid., p. 203.

43. Ibid., p. 209.

44. Ibid., p. 263.

45. J. F. Rutherford, Reconciliation (Brooklyn, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1928), pp. 115, 116.

CHAPTER VI

COMPARISON AND CONTRAST

The three essential phases of the Jehovah's Witnesses doctrine of God have been presented in the preceding (four) chapters. The concluding part of this study is a comparison and contrast of the Jehovah's Witnesses doctrine of God and Conservative Protestantism's doctrine of God.

A. COMPARISON

Method of Procedure. Two divisions are made in this chapter. The first division contains the doctrines of Conservative Protestantism as follows: First, the doctrine of Divine Revelation and Inspiration; Second, a glimpse of the Trinitarian doctrine, followed by a discussion of each person in the Godhead, God the Father, Christ the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The second division contains, in a chart form, a contrast of the views of the Jehovah's Witnesses and Conservative Protestantism.

The Doctrines of Revelation and Inspiration. Revelation may be defined in a broad sense as "every manifestation of God to the consciousness of man, whether through nature and the course of human history, or through the higher disclosures of the Incarnate Word and the Holy Scriptures."¹

1. H. Orton Wiley, Christian Theology (Kansas City, Missouri, Beacon Hill Press, 1949), I, 125.

Such a definition suggests two divisions which have been discussed in this section: (1) general revelation which includes nature and events in history; (2) special revelation which includes the redemptive work of God as recorded in the Holy Scriptures.

The first phase of general revelation is nature. By this we mean the disclosure of God through the physical universe considered apart from man. Wiley states:

Nature is filled with the Divine Spirit and reveals God as the atmosphere is filled with sunlight and reveals the sun. But the language of nature falls upon darkened intellects and dulled sensibilities and must be read in the dim light of a vitiated spiritual nature. However, the more God is otherwise known, the more this whole infinite, visible creation declares His invisible glory, and reveals His hidden nature and will, and to this the testimony of every spiritually renewed soul bears joyful witness.²

Turning now to revelation through history. History belongs to human volition. It is a record of what men have done, but - -

There is an inner directing Presence in history and an Authoritative Will above it which directs all to an expressed goal, a fullness of time. This goal is the coming of the Word made flesh, the Incarnate Son of God standing out on the plane of human history as God manifest in the flesh. In the light of this historical fact, we are able to look back through the pages of history and recognize purpose in events; and we are able to read the words of the prophets and see their predictions fulfilled. As the central point of all history He has had His impress upon it.³

It is necessary now to turn to the second division, that of special revelation.

2. Ibid., p. 128.

3. Ibid., p. 133.

By special revelation we refer to the redemptive purpose of God manifested in Christ Jesus, as over against the more general revelation of His power manifested in His creative works. General revelation is basic and fundamental, but implies a revelation on a higher and personal plane. Also, the fact that sin entered the world as an event later than the creative fiat, necessitates a special revelation if God's attitude towards sin is to be understood, and His purpose of redemption effectually made known to men.⁴

The Bible is that special revelation and is God's way of disclosing himself and his plan of redemption to man. This revelation provides what man could not understand of God through nature and history.

Christ is presented in the Bible as the central figure of this special revelation, for He is the perfect manifestation of God. Hebrews 1:3 points to this fact very clearly.⁵

Christ is, therefore, the perfect and complete revelation of God.

Inspiration. In a theological sense, inspiration signifies the operation of the Holy Spirit upon the writers of the books of the Bible in such a manner that their productions became the expression of God's will. It was by this means that the Scriptures became the Word of God.⁶

The term inspiration means literally the 'breathing of God,' or 'the breathing into,' and is therefore the extraordinary agency of the Holy Spirit upon the mind in consequence of which the person who partakes of it is enabled to embrace and communicate the truth of God without error,

4. Ibid., p. 135.

5. Ibid., p. 137.

6. Ibid., p. 167.

or defect.⁷

A more general definition would state that inspiration is the actuating energy of the Holy Spirit by which holy men chosen of God have officially proclaimed His will as revealed to men in the sacred Scriptures.

When the Holy Bible was written, the Holy Spirit operated upon the hearts and minds of the writers, preparing their minds for the reception of truth, (II Timothy 3:16), thus enabling them to communicate this truth without error. The character of the sacred writers is stated in II Peter 1:21, '... Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.'⁸

This doctrine of Inspiration does not teach that God dictated the Scriptures as a business man would dictate to a stenographer. Nor does the doctrine claim that all parts of the Bible are of equal value as teaching religious truth.

The Holy Spirit simply supervised the men who were writing, in such a way that while they were left in full possession of their own faculties, and while they used other sources in the collecting of their own information, writing that information in their own style and with their own choice of vocabulary and diction, yet they were prevented from writing what was not true, and guided in the selection of just the facts that God wanted written for His people.⁹

Conservative Protestantism does not claim that all parts of the Bible have equal value in the teaching of religious truth, but all of it is true and just the truth that God wants his people to have. This

7. Ibid., p. 167.

8. Ibid., p. 169.

9. Floyd E. Hamilton, The Basis of Christian Faith (New York, Harper and Brothers, 1946), p. 282.

is the doctrine of Inspiration which Conservative Protestantism believes the Bible teaches. Furthermore, the Conservative Protestant doctrine of inspiration may be substantiated by the scripture II Timothy 3:16, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." Therefore, if the Bible is not true, the doctrine of inspiration may be disproved, but if the Bible is true, it necessarily follows that the doctrine of Inspiration is also true.

The leaders of Jehovah's Witnesses have claimed unadulterated respect for the Bible as the inspired written Word of God, as does Conservative Protestantism. Where does the error of the Witnesses show forth then? The writer contends that one must be aware of a very subtle rationalism on the part of Jehovah's Witnesses. Certain doctrines are unreasonable to Jehovah's Witnesses, and they state their case very brazenly. But if the Bible is the Word of God, which both groups contend, Conservative Protestantism maintains it is not proper to say whether the doctrines taught in the Word of God seem reasonable or not. Hamilton contends:

If God has given them to us, they must be true, and it is our place to study them and accept them as true, whether we can reconcile them with our finite minds or not. One of the greatest difficulties we have with certain of these doctrines is that they are an attempt to explain infinite truths in finite language.¹⁰

Conservative Protestantism further states that it is to be expected that under such circumstances one might not be able to grasp the full significance of the doctrines, or to reconcile the facts

10. Ibid., p. 274.

which God reveals to men with their finite human experiences and finite minds. This does not mean that they are irreconcilable with reason, but simply that man does not have the facts sufficient to reconcile them.¹¹ Hamilton further states:

If God were to reveal anything to mankind, certainly it would not be truths which man could reach through his unaided reason, but truths which man could not possibly learn without such divine revelation as the Bible. We do not claim, therefore, that it is possible to prove the truth of the doctrines of the Christian religion by the human reason.¹²

No one who admits that the Bible is the Word of God, has any logical right to question the truth of the doctrines taught therein.

Summary. If the Bible is the Word of God, then it is the duty of Christians to accept its teachings and doctrines, no matter how distasteful to the sinful heart they may be. If God has revealed them, then they are rational regardless of what we may think of them, or how impossible it may seem to be to prove their truth or to reconcile them with the rational side of man's nature.¹³

Therefore, because Jehovah's Witnesses hold the Bible to be the Word of God, to be true to this belief, they will of necessity have to accept its teachings and doctrines, no matter how unreasonable they may seem to their finite minds. Conservative Protestants may draw the conclusion that because of the non-acceptance of the doctrine of the

11. Loc. cit.

12. Loc. cit.

13. Ibid., p. 282.

Trinity, Jehovah's Witnesses actually are denying the very point for which they contend, that the Bible is the Inspired Word of God.

Hamilton's view is as follows:

No matter how irrational a doctrine may be to the mind of a Conservative Protestant, he falls back on faith in a rational God who can and does resolve the seemingly irrational mysteries, in His infinite knowledge. 'Now we see through a glass, darkly, but then face to face.'¹⁴

The Trinity and Doctrines of God the Father, Christ, and the Holy Spirit. To present an adequate concept of the Christian doctrine of God, one must begin with the Trinity.

The Trinitarian belief immediately sets off the Christian view of God from all others. It is therefore, unique and has no parallel either in the history of religion or philosophy. There have been many religious groups outside the Christian tradition that have taught a personal God, but in these groups there has been either one or many. This problem of many gods has been resolved in the Trinity which teaches a monotheism (one God) and also teaches three divine persons within the Trinity (which denies the plurality of Gods).¹⁵

Since those who acknowledge the existence of a personal God never question his Fatherhood, the Witnesses being no exception, it is evident that the question regarding the Trinity resolves itself into the proof of the Deity of the Son and the Holy Spirit.

The Old Testament Conception of the Trinity. The writer has taken the position that the doctrine of the Trinity, like all other

14. Ibid., p. 282.

15. Duane L. Bassett, "A Critical Study of Mormon Doctrine" B.D. Thesis in the Western Evangelical Seminary Library, unpublished, 1952, p. 109.

New Testament truths, was contained in germ in the Old Testament; but only with the revelation of God in Christ could it come to full development. Pope, in his Compendium of Christian Theology states:

The doctrine of the Trinity, like every other doctrine, had the mystery of divine education in the Church, its slow development. Remembering the law, that types of progress of the Old Testament doctrine must be traced in the light of the New Testament, we can discern throughout the ancient records a preintimation of the Three-One, ready to be revealed in the last time. No word of ancient record is to be studied as standing alone; but according to the analogy of faith, which is no other than the one truth that reigns in the organic whole of Scripture.¹⁶

H. Orton Wiley contends that it is necessary to remember that in the light of the Christian dispensation, there are many passages in the Old Testament which are seen to contain implicitly the doctrine of the Trinity. These intimations are found in references to the plural use of names of God, the Angel of Jehovah, the Aaronic Benediction, the Trisagion, the use of the terms Word and Wisdom, and the descriptions of Messiah.¹⁷

The Use of Plural Names to Designate Deity. Theologians in every age, have asserted that it is impossible to explain the use of the plural rather than singular nouns, unless there be a plurality of persons in the Godhead. Hence, the allusion to the doctrine of the Trinity, which in the progress of revelation was afterward to be clearly revealed.

16. William Burt Pope, A Compendium of Christian Theology (New York, Hunt and Eaton, n.d.), I, 260.

17. Wiley, Christian Theology, I, 398.

This plural use is found in the opening sentences of Genesis, where it is stated that In the beginning God (i.e. Elohim or the Gods) created the heavens and the earth, (Gen. 1:1). Again in verse 26, And God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.' Also in Genesis 3:22. . . And the Lord said, 'Behold, the man is become as one of us.'¹⁸

The Angel of Jehovah. This phrase as used from Genesis to Malachi is another expression which contains implicitly the thought of the Trinity.

The Angel is the messenger or manifestation of God, which although separated from God is nevertheless identified with Him. While the phrase is sometimes used to denote a human messenger and at other times a created angel, it is with these few exceptions used to designate the pre-incarnate Logos. It is very necessary that we remember that the 'Angel of the Lord' refers directly to the eternal Logos, who while distinct from Jehovah is yet Jehovah himself.¹⁹

It is in the descriptions of the Messiah that the clearest vision of the Second person of the Trinity as the Divine Son is given. Note such passages as Isaiah 9:6; Micah 5:2; Psalm 45: 6,7; Hebrews 1:8,9; and Malachi 3:1.

The Son and Spirit in the New Testament. It is to the New Testament that one must turn for the full revelation of the Son as the Second person of the Trinity; and for the personality and deity of the Holy Spirit as the adorable Third person. The writer has chosen only a few outstanding proof texts, for the wealth of Scripture expressions

18. Loc. cit.

19. Ibid., p. 399.

is too great to try to cover them all.

The deity of Christ is sustained by the following classes of Scripture: (1) Those which refer to His pre-existence, John 1:15; 8:58; 6:51, 3:13; 17:5. (2) Divine names and titles are applied to Christ. He is called 'Lord,' Isa. 40:3; Matt. 3:3; Romans 10:13; Joel 3:32; John 20:28; Acts 10:36. He is called 'God,' John 1:1; Titus 2:13; I John 5:20. (3) Divine attributes are ascribed to Christ, such as self-existence, John 2:19; 10:17,18; 5:26; eternity, John 1:1,2; 17:5,24; Hebrews 1:8,10-12; I John 1:2; omnipresence, Matthew 18:20; 28:30; John 3:13; Ephesians 1:21; omniscience, Matthew 9:4; 12:25; 10:15; 16:30; 21:17; Colossians 2:3; Rev. 2:23; omnipotence, Matthew 28:18; Luke 21:15; John 1:3,10; I Cor. 1:24; Ephesians 1:22; Phil. 3:21; Colossians 2:10; Rev. 1:18; immutability, Hebrews 1:11,12; 13:8. (4) Divine works are ascribed to Christ. Creation, John 1:3,10; I Cor. 8:6; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:10. He upholds and preserves all things, Col. 1:17; Heb. 1:3. He forgives sins, Mark 2:5-10; Luke 5:20-24; 7:47-49; Acts 5:31. He gives the Holy Spirit, Luke 24:40; John 16:7; Acts 2:33. He gives peace, John 14:27; 16:33; Romans 15:33; II Cor. 13:11. He gives light, John 1:4-9; 8:12; 9:5; I John 1:5-7. He gives eternal life, John 17:2. He confers spiritual gifts, Ephesians 4:8 13. (5) Divine worship is offered to Christ. Matthew 14:33; Luke 24:51, 52; Acts 1:24; 7:59; Heb. 1:6; Rev. 5:13.²⁰

The personality and deity of the Holy Spirit do not require the same extended discussion, as that which has just been given to the deity of the Son, inasmuch as many of the principles involved have already been considered, and, too, an extended discussion has been given in the section which follows on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit.

That the Holy Spirit's person is distinct from that of the Father and the Son is clearly taught in the Scriptures. He is called the Spirit; the Spirit of God; the Holy Spirit; the Spirit of glory. He is spoken of by our Lord as the Comforter or another

20. Ibid., pp. 402-403.

Comforter.²¹

That the Holy Spirit is more than an influence or an attribute is brought out clearly in John 14:16 and John 14:26. In these passages the Holy Spirit is clearly stated to be the Third Person, as the Father is the First and the Son the Second in the Trinity.

The highest evidence of personality in the Third Person of the Trinity is the fact that a personal pronoun with a neuter noun is used in reference to the Holy Spirit. 'It is a departure from the ordinary rule to use a masculine pronoun with a neuter noun,' says Dr. Hodge, 'unless the masculine is warranted by the fact that the person referred to may be called 'He'. Hence the use of the masculine pronoun is strong evidence that the writers of Sacred Scripture intended to set forth the personality of the Holy Spirit.'²²

The deity of the Holy Spirit may be proved Scripturally, by a collation of texts as in the case of the Divine Sonship, however, this phase has been discussed in the section on the Holy Spirit. Some references are, Acts 5:3,4; I Cor. 12:6-11; II Cor. 3:17; Heb. 1:1; II Peter 1:21; 1:11.

The position maintained by Jehovah's Witnesses is that the doctrine of the Trinity is a senseless, God-dishonoring doctrine. They claim such a doctrine is unreasonable from beginning to end, and cannot be understood or explained. Conservative Protestantism admits that of all the Christian doctrines, the most difficult to explain and understand is the doctrine of the Trinity. Conservative Protestantism does not claim that it is possible to prove its truth by rational argument or by evidences external to the Bible, but they do point out

21. Ibid., p. 404.

22. Ibid., p. 405.

words of explanation which remove some of the misunderstanding about this doctrine.

The definition given of this doctrine in the Westminster Shorter Catechism is as good a definition as any: "There are three persons in the Godhead; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory." What is meant by this definition is that the Christian God is one God, not three Gods, but that in this single Godhead there are three equal persons, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.²³

Conservative Protestants must admit that the human reason has extreme difficulty in even understanding how this can be true, and that the doctrine could never have been discovered by the unaided reason. The doctrine must be accepted only because God has revealed it to us in the Bible; and though it is difficult to understand, that cannot be used as an argument against our accepting it as true, if God has revealed it. The very difficulty of understanding it lies in the fact that it is an attempt to explain the infinite nature of the hidden mysteries of God in finite language.

God the Father. To formulate a definition one must establish certain limits; this is the meaning of definition. It may be seen, therefore, that the human mind can never define God who is unlimited. Only the infinite can comprehend the infinite.

God is represented in the Bible as '...dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see. . .',

23. Hamilton, The Basis of Christian Faith, p. 278.

(I Timothy 6:16). The nearest approach to a definition of God is found in Exodus 3:14: '...I AM THAT I AM.' This reference asserts His existence without attempting to prove it and further declares that His essence can only be known by Himself.²⁴

The writer has discovered that the burden of the Scriptures is not to prove the existence of God, but they do boldly assume and emphatically declare the existence of God.

The Names of God. The question has been asked, "What is the value of the use of Divine names as a revelation of the idea of God?"

The progressive revelation of God to man, as found in the Scriptures has its origin and development in the use of Divine names, through which God has communicated in varying degrees, something of the unsearchable mystery which surrounds His being.²⁵

Two names, Elohim and Jehovah, when taken in their Old Testament unity, declare the being of God as absolute and necessary. There are many other names applied to Deity, but these two are supreme and run throughout the older period of revelation.

Two other names, El Shaddai and Adonai, are important also with reference to God. All of these names are continued in the New Testament, and find their culmination in the revelation of God in Him, whose name is above "every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come," (Ephesians 1:21).

The central idea of Elohim indicates the primary revelation of God's power, through the forces of nature and constitution of man. The advanced meaning of Jahveh lifts the concept of God from the plane

24. Bassett, "A Critical Study of Mormon Doctrine," p. 111.

25. Wiley, Christian Theology, I, 241.

of power to that of personal relationships. The meaning of El Shaddai is given as "God Almighty"; also as "breasted"; nourisher or life-giver, (Job 3:12); and as the shedder-forth of blessings temporal and spiritual. The distinctive meaning of Adonai expresses possession and sovereign dominion. It means Lord or Master in the Greek, a term frequently applied to Christ.²⁶

The words Elohim and Jehovah are frequently united in the Scriptures, and when so used express the personal nature of God. Furthermore, there is connected in the divine names, a revelation of the God of creation, a revelation of the God of redemption, and when the name El Shaddai is used, there is given also the nature of the relation of God to His redeemed people.²⁷

In these names, therefore, is veiled the fuller revelation of the Triune name, which we have seen found expression in God the Father, Christ the Son as the Incarnate Word, and the Holy Spirit as the Paraclete or Comforter. Also, with reference to the divine names, in a previous chapter²⁸ Jehovah's Witnesses contended that the name Jehovah is never applied to Jesus Christ. However, the fact of the matter is that the name Jesus literally means Jehovah-Savior.²⁹

The Attributes of God. The attributes of God are the several qualities and perfections of the divine nature. Our knowledge of the divine essence is very limited, and all man can know of his perfections is what has been revealed to him in nature and his Word (Christ). Even

26. Ibid., p. 248.

27. Ibid., p. 249.

28. Above, p. 18.

29. Robert Baker Girdlestone, Synonyms of the Old Testament (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, 1952), p. 38.

with all this help man can only know God the Father in part, for God is incomprehensibly great.

Only briefly have the attributes been given here, for in the section regarding Christ, the One who reveals to us the Father, the attributes are seen more clearly. We find: (1) Unity. There is but one God—one self-existent being. Deut. 4:35; Isaiah 45:21,22; I Cor. 8:4; Ephesians 4:6. (2) Eternity. God alone is eternal. God is; God has ever been; God will ever be. Psalm 102:27; 90:2; Isaiah 40:28; 57:15. (3) Spirituality. God is Spirit, not body, nor mind, nor matter. Since he is Spirit we can understand why all worship must be spiritual.

There is one God, the cause of all things, the fountain of all perfection, without parts or dimensions, for he is eternal, filling the heavens and the earth, pervading, governing, and upholding all things, for he is an infinite spirit.³⁰

(4) Omniscience. God is infinite in knowledge. Hebrews 4:13; Psalm 147:5. (5) Omnipresence. God is a spirit, and is therefore essentially present everywhere. One outstanding reference in Scripture is Psalm 139:7-10. (6) Omnipotence. This attribute is essential to the very nature of God. If he were not almighty, he would not be perfect and independent. His power is incomparable. Psalm 62:11; Job 26:14. (7) Immutability. What God now is he always was, and always will be, eternally the same. Malachi 3:6; Psalm 102:27. Thus trusting in the immutability of God, anyone who comes to God for refuge, has a strong consolation.

30. Jonathan Weaver, Christian Theology (Dayton, Ohio, United Brethren Publishing House, 1900), p. 24.

(8) Holiness. God is originally holy; he is so of and in himself; and the author and promoter of holiness among his creatures. This is an essential attribute of the divine essence, and is infinite, immutable, and eternal.

The holiness of God is both negative and positive, for it not only implies the absence of all evil, but the presence of 'all possible, positive, operative goodness.'³¹

Relative holiness may be found in men, and man is called upon to be holy. Through the Atonement the way has been made possible, and if it were not possible for man to be relatively holy, God would not require it. (9) Justice. God is eternally just, ". . .A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, just and right is he." (Deut. 32:4).

(10) Truth. Truth, like holiness, inheres in the very nature of God. The one cannot exist without the other. Exodus 34:6; Psalm 31:5; 117:2.

(11) Goodness, Mercy, Love, Benevolence, Longsuffering. All of these inhere in the attribute of goodness. But for the goodness of God, man should not know anything about his mercy, love, benevolence, and longsuffering.³² Psalm 106:1.

Summary. There is, and of necessity must always be, the most complete and perfect harmony in all the attributes. Weaver concludes:

God is bound by the immutability of his own perfections, so that he cannot perform a single act by the exercise of any one of his attributes.³³

31. Ibid., p. 28.

32. Ibid., p. 31.

33. Loc. cit.

Who can contemplate all these attributes inhering in one person, and not be impressed with a sense of God's greatness? "Great is the Lord and highly to be praised," (Ps. 48:1).

Christ. Is Jesus Christ truly and properly God? This is a question of great importance, for the whole plan of salvation hinges upon it. The deity of Christ is a matter of revelation and must be settled by a direct appeal to the Scriptures. If Jesus Christ is very God, the Scriptures must affirm it.

Divine Titles Given to Christ. Divine titles are given to Christ which belong to no being in the universe but God. "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever," (Heb. 1:8).

If this be said of the Son of God, Jesus Christ, then Jesus Christ must be God; and it is the purpose of Paul to prove this. The words here quoted are taken from Psalms 14:6,7. This verse is very correctly considered a proof of the deity of Christ, but some late versions of the New Testament have endeavored to avoid the evidence of this proof by translating the words thus: God is thy throne for ever and ever, using (ὁ Θεός) as the nominative case. However, the nominative case is often used for the vocative, and entire construction requires it should be used here. The original Hebrew word can not be consistently translated in any other way than 'Thy throne, O God, is forever and to eternity.' It is both worlds, and extends over all time and will not exist through endless duration.³⁴

The only reference found where the Jehovah's Witnesses make use of this verse is the statement that the "bride" is exhorted to reverence the King's Son as her Lord. The true meaning, however, is

34. Adam Clarke, The Holy Bible Commentary of Both Old and New Testaments (New York, Land and Scott, 1851), VI, 690.

perfectly clear. God the Father is speaking unto His Son and calling Him "God."³⁵

Turning to Matthew 1:23, "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel; which is, being interpreted, God with us." This passage relates to the gospel themes, and is spoken of concerning Jesus Christ. All Conservative Protestants agree that Christ, and He only, is the Savior of the world. But who and what is He? The Scriptures state, "He is God."

Other great passages of Scripture such as Romans 9:5; I Timothy 3:16; Titus 2:13,14, could be discussed at great length on this matter of divine titles, but it is necessary to proceed to the discussion of the attributes of Christ.

Christ Has the Attributes of Deity. If Christ has attributes of deity ascribed to Him, which belong to God alone, how are Conservative Protestants to account for this if Jesus Christ was not God? Much is said about good men such as Abraham, Moses, Samuel, David, and Isaiah, but to none of them are ascribed titles and attributes such as are ascribed to Jesus Christ.

Christ was Pre-existent. ". . .whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." (Micah 5:2).

In every age, from the beginning of the world, there has been some manifestation of the Messiah. He was the hope, as He was the salvation of the world, from the promise of Adam in paradise, to His manifestation in the flesh four thousand years after. From everlasting, from the days of time;

35. P. E. Hewitt, Russellism Exposed (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Zondervan Publishing House, 1951), p. 8.

from time as it came out of eternity. That is, there was no time in which He has not been going forth--coming in various ways to save men. And He that came forth the moment time had its birth, was before that time in which he began to come forth to save souls that He had created. He was before all things. As He is the Creator of all things, so He is the Eternal, and no part of what was created. All being but God has been created. Whatever has not been created is God. But Jesus is the Creator of all things; therefore He is God; for He cannot be a part of His own work.³⁶

Again, notice another passage speaking of the pre-existence of Christ. "The first-born of every creature. . .," (πρωτόκος πασης κτίσεως). . .the first-born of all creation.³⁷

As image points to revelation, so first-born points to eternal pre-existence. Even the reference in Revelation 1:5 is a little ambiguous, for we must avoid any suggestion that Christ was the first of created things, which is contradicted by the following words: in Him were all things created. The true sense is, born before the creation. This fact of priority implies sovereignty. He is exalted above all thrones, etc., and all things are unto (εως) Him, as they are elsewhere declared to be unto God.³⁸

One of the key verses which denotes the pre-existence of Christ, is also one which the Witnesses very dogmatically deny as setting forth Christ's pre-existence, is John 1:1.

Here the Logos of John is the real, personal God, the Word who was originally before the creation with God, and was God, one in essence and nature, yet personally distinct; the revealer and interpreter of the hidden being of God; the reflection and visible image of God, and the

36. Adam Clarke, The Holy Bible Commentary of both Old and New Testaments, IV, 722.

37. Marvin R. Vincent, Word Studies in the New Testament (New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1908), III, 468.

38. Loc. cit.

organ of all His manifestations to the world. This Word, the Logos, which John was referring to, was the Lord Jesus Christ, who was in the beginning with God, and was God.³⁹

The phrase was with God (*ἦν πρὸς τὸν Θεόν*) does not convey the full meaning, but there is no single English word which will give it better. The preposition (*πρὸς*), which, with the accusative case, denotes motion towards, or direction, is also often used in the New Testament in the sense of with; and that not merely as being near or beside, but as a living union and communion; implying active motion of intercourse. 'The eternal life which was with the Father' (*πρὸς τὸν πατέρα*), (I John 1:2). Thus John's statement is that the divine Word not only abode with the Father from all eternity, but was in the living, active relation of communion with Him.⁴⁰

The Attributes of Christ. As Jesus Christ is the revelation of God the Father, it will be noted that the attributes of duty in the preceding section will correspond to Christ, however, the Scripture passages will be in addition to those already given. (1) Immutability is ascribed to Christ. Hebrews 1:12; 13:8, are two well-known passages denoting immutability. It has ever been the faith of the Church that immutability belongs to God, and to him only. Thus, since the sacred writers have ascribed this attribute to Christ, our conclusion is, of necessity, that Jesus Christ is the very eternal God. (2) Eternity as an attribute is found in Isaiah 9:6 and Rev. 22:16, which is ascribed to Christ, thus again He must be very God. (3) Omnipotence, or almighty power, has been ascribed to Christ as well as God. Note Matthew 28:18; Col. 1:16,17; Rev. 1:8; Genesis 1:1. If Christ is omnipotent, then He must be God. (4) Omnipresence of Christ, is

39. Vincent, Word Studies in the New Testament, II, 32.

40. Ibid., p. 34.

ascribed in Hebrews 1:3, ". . .upholdeth all things by the word of His power." In Colossians 1:17, omnipresence is seen also: "By Him all things consist." Thus to uphold and support all things requires a universal presence.

Jesus, Himself, gave two promises setting forth His omnipresence in Matthew 18:20, 'For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them,' and 'Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.' Dr. Miley says, 'Only an omnipresent being---omnipresent with infinite efficiencies of a personal agency---could truthfully assert such fact and give such promises.'⁴¹

(5) Omniscience is ascribed to Christ in John 21:17; 16:30; Col.2:3.

If Jesus Christ knoweth all things, even the thoughts of the heart, and if all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid in Him, He must be omniscient, and if omniscient, he must truly be God.

The Works Ascribed to Christ Prove His Deity. Moses opened up the history of the world by the statement that, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," (Genesis 1:1). Conservative Protestants in all ages have accepted this statement as true. Thus the work of Creation is ascribed to Christ. Now to prove that Jesus is God, it is only necessary to show from the Scriptures that He created and sustains all things.

The facts set forth in John 1:1-3 are: (1) that the Word (Logos) was in the beginning. (2) This Word was God. (3) This Word made all things. (4) The Word was made flesh. (5) This Word was God manifest in the flesh.⁴²

Colossians 1:16,17 is another passage denoting Christ as the

⁴¹. Weaver, Christian Theology, p. 38.

⁴². Loc. cit.

Creator of the universe; of all things visible and invisible; of all things that had a beginning, whether they exist in time or in eternity.

Paul the Apostle, states also that whatsoever was created was created for Himself; that He was the sole end of His own work; that He was prior to all creation, to all beings, whether in the visible or invisible world; that He is the pre-server and governor of all things; for by Him all things consist.⁴³

Allowing St. Paul to have understood the terms which he used, he must have considered Jesus Christ as being truly and properly God. Creation is the work of Him who is unoriginated, infinite, unlimited, and eternal. Since the Scriptures claim that Jesus Christ is Creator of all things, then Jesus Christ must be, truly and properly God.⁴⁴

Another work ascribed to Christ, is forgiveness of sin. No being in the universe can pardon sin but God. Psalms 51:4 and Exodus 34:6, 7 point out that the Lord God forgiveth sin. Others in the New Testament are, Matthew 9:6, Col. 3:13; Acts 5:31. It may be seen from these passages that the pardoning of sin is the work of Christ. If Jesus Christ were not God He could not forgive sin.

Jesus Christ is the object of Worship. To worship any being other than God is idolatry. Such passages as Matthew 4:10; Rev. 19:10; Acts 24:14, show that one must worship God. With these Scriptures in mind, turn and read Luke 24:51,52; Matt. 14:33; 28:8,9; Rev. 5:11-13. In these Scriptures it is seen how Jesus Christ received worship from various persons, and He did not rebuke them for their worship of Him.

43. Clarke, The Holy Bible Commentary of Both Old and New Testaments, VI, 516.

44. Loc. cit.

The highest order of worship, both in heaven and in earth, belongs to Jesus Christ--not to the human form of Christ, but to that divine nature that dwelt in Him. It is not the 'man Jesus Christ' that men and angels worship, but the divine Christ--the Almighty God, that was manifest in the flesh.⁴⁵

Christ claimed equality with the Father. No created being ever claimed equality with God. John 5:18; Phil. 2:6; Col. 2:9; 1:19; 1:15 are all passages which teach that Christ is equal with God. In no sense can Christ be equal with God unless He is divine in nature.

The Godhead is translated from the word (θεότης) which signifies deity, or divine nature. So then, all the fullness of deity or the divine nature dwelt in Him. Again, Christ is not only the image, but the express image of the invisible God, and the brightness of his glory. It cannot be said that Christ in His human form was the express image of the invisible God. The reference must be to the divine nature.⁴⁶

These facts, namely, equal with God; all the fullness of the Godhead bodily dwelling in Him, and the express image of the invisible God, have established the deity of Christ. With John one is able to say, "This is the true God, and eternal life."

The writer and all Conservative Protestants are in full agreement with the following statement from Weaver.

The whole plan of human redemption through the merits of Jesus Christ rests upon the doctrine of Christ's supreme divinity, or that He was truly and properly God manifest in the flesh. Remove this corner-stone from our holy Christianity and immortality and eternal life disappear. Allow Jesus Christ to be God, and we

45. Weaver, Christian Theology, p. 42.

46. Ibid., p. 43.

have a solid rock upon which to build our hope of heaven.⁴⁷

Deny the preceding quotation, and hope vanishes! This is exactly what Jehovah's Witnesses have done. Because the divinity of Christ, the divine Sonship, the deity of the Holy Spirit, and the Trinity are more or less wrapped up in hidden truths to the finite mind, Jehovah's Witnesses have sought to denounce belief in such teachings. But as for Conservative Protestants, happy for them that coming to God they are not required to know what He is, but to believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.

The Humanity of Christ. The term used to denote the humanity of Christ is hypostatic union. This term implies the union of the human and the divine nature in the person of Jesus Christ. Not two persons in one nature, but two natures in one person. Jesus Christ was very God and very man. Man is not required to understand this in order to be saved. He need say only, "I believe God."

Jesus Christ is not only truly and properly God, but He is truly and properly man. Christ assumed our whole nature except sin. He had a true human body, a true human soul, and a true human spirit; and in this perfect man dwelt "all the fullness of the Godhead bodily."⁴⁸

It is necessary to note Scripture passages denoting Christ's humanity. (1) He is called man in Hebrews 7:24; 10:12; I Tim. 2:5; Hebrews 3:3. (2) He was born of woman, John 2:1; Luke 2:7; Gal. 4:4;

⁴⁷. Loc. cit.

⁴⁸. Ibid., p. 45.

Phil. 2:7,8. Thus Christ had a true human body. (3) He was the seed of Abraham and the son of David. Gal. 3:16; Gen. 22:18; Rev. 22:16; Matt. 22:42,43; Romans 1:3. (4) Christ's manner of life upon earth proves that He had a true human body. He hungered, thirsted, ate, drank, was weary, slept, rested, wept, was sorrowful, and died. All these things prove His humanity.

In the plan of human redemption it was necessary that these two natures be united. Neither without the other could have made an atonement for the sin of the world. The divine nature could not suffer, and the human nature unsanctified by the presence of the divine, could not have rendered satisfaction to an infinite law.

This, then, is the Savior in whom we are to trust for eternal salvation. Because He was man, perfect and complete, he can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. Because He is God, He can forgive and sustain us. In the twofold nature of Christ we have all. All we need on the human side we can find in Him; and all we need on the divine side we can find in Him. 'He is able to save to the uttermost,' for 'He is the true God and eternal life.'⁴⁹

The Holy Spirit. The doctrine of the Holy Spirit is a cardinal doctrine in the theology of Conservative Protestantism. Because there are mysteries connected with it is no argument against it. No finite mind can comprehend spirit. All we know, or can know, about the deity of the Holy Spirit is what is revealed to us in the Scriptures. The writer has chosen to present first the personality and deity of the Holy Spirit; second, the influence and office of the Holy Spirit.

It was not until the Council in 381 A.D. that the defining of the

49. Ibid., p. 47.

doctrine of the Holy Spirit took place. It is as follows: "And we believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of life, who proceedeth from the Father, and with the Father and the Son, together is worshipped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets." However, creeds are subordinate to the Holy Scriptures and one must seek to find whether or not the Scriptures teach the doctrine of the personality and deity of the Holy Spirit.

Personality of the Holy Spirit. Personality implies that the Holy Spirit is a real and distinct person in the Godhead, not separate in essence from the Father and the Son, but of one substance and eternity with them. The writer previously stated that Conservative Protestantism contends there are three distinct persons in the Godhead--the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. These are of one essence, "personally distinct, yet in unity of the Godhead." Furthermore, the names and appellations given to the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures are such as belong to God, and to him only.

With regard to the masculine pronoun, this is applied to the Holy Spirit, the same as to the Father. If the Holy Spirit is not a real person, it would not be proper to use terms that can mean nothing else. Two Scripture passages are illustrative at this point. "But the Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things," (John 14:26). "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth is come, he shall guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak from himself; but what things soever he shall hear, these shall he speak: and he shall declare unto you the things that are to come," (John 16:13,14).

In these passages the masculine pronoun is used, and these pronouns apply directly to the Holy Spirit. If, as some teach, (Jehovah's Witnesses), the Holy Spirit is only an influence, how are Conservative Protestants to interpret the Savior's language? Again, from Weaver:

There is no stronger appellation of personality in any language than the masculine pronoun as used in these passages and applied to the Holy Spirit. We should observe further that in these same passages there are ten personal acts ascribed to the Holy Ghost which are 'only proper to a being of intelligence and personality'. They are: to be sent, to teach, to come, to reprove, to guide, to speak, to hear, to show, to take, to receive. If the Holy Spirit is nothing more than an abstract influence, quality, attribute, or energy, how are we to account for the personal acts ascribed to him?⁵⁰

The Name Given to the Holy Spirit Proof of Deity. He is called God. But Peter said, "Why hath Satan filled thy heart to lie to the Holy Ghost? . . . thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God," (Acts 5:3,4). Peter charged Ananias with lying to the Holy Ghost, which he affirms is lying to God. Thus the Holy Ghost is God. Observe Weaver's treatment of the following Scripture passages:

Observe the passages in which the new birth is ascribed directly to God. 'Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God,' (John 1:13). 'For whatsoever is begotten of God overcometh the world,' (I John 5:4).⁵¹

In John 3:5-7, our Lord teaches that we are born of the Spirit. The same work is ascribed to God and to the Holy Spirit, thus calling the Holy Spirit God. Compare Isaiah 6:5,9,10 with Acts 28:

50. Ibid., p. 52.

51. Loc. cit.

25,27, and you will see that whom the prophet calls the Lord of hosts, the apostle calls the Holy Spirit. 52

The Attributes Ascribed to the Holy Spirit. These attributes are such as belong to no other being but God. (1) Eternity. "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish unto God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (Heb. 9:14). (2) Omnipresence. "Whither shall I go from thy spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence?" (Psalm 139:7). (3) Omnipotence. "By word and deed, in the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Holy Spirit," (Romans 15:18,19). (4) Omniscience. "For the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For who among men knoweth the things of man, save the spirit of man, which is in him? . . . even so the things of God none knoweth, save the Spirit of God," (I Cor. 2:10,11). This is a strong passage, "The Spirit searcheth." Could the Spirit search if he is not a person? Could the Spirit search the deep things of God, and know them, if he is not omniscient?

All these attributes do not belong to any created being; nor do they inhere in any mere influence, energy, or quality; they belong to God, and to him only. The passages discussed apply directly to the Holy Spirit; therefore, the Holy Spirit must be God.

The Work of the Holy Spirit. His work is that of an executive officer in the Holy Trinity. The Holy Spirit could never perform an

52. Loc. cit.

official act if he were not a personal identity. (1) Creation. "And the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, 'Let there be light': and there was light," (Gen. 1:2). "The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty giveth me life," (Job 33:4). In this passage, personal action is ascribed to the Holy Spirit; he moved, created, and made. All this could not be said of a mere influence, energy, or abstract attribute. (2) Inspiration. ". . . men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit," (II Peter 1:21).

God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, (Heb. 1:1). How did God speak to the Fathers? Paul says 'by the prophets'. But how did he speak by the prophets? Peter answers this, 'For no prophecy ever came by the will of man: but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Ghost,' (II Peter 1:21). What Paul says God did, Peter says the Holy Ghost did; therefore, the Holy Ghost must be God.⁵³

The work of the Holy Spirit as set forth in the Scriptures not only includes creation and inspiration, but preservation, regeneration, witnessing with our spirit, quickenings, comfortings, guiding, and upholding. In this relation Weaver points out:

The Holy Spirit is associated with the Father and the Son in the ordinance of baptism. Would God associate himself in such intimate relation with a mere influence, or energy? 'Into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,' (Matthew 28:19). This text can never be explained by those who deny the personality and deity of the Holy Ghost.⁵⁴

53. Ibid., p. 54.

54. Loc. cit.

With regard to the apostolic benediction, Dr. Miley says:

It is not a mere form of words, but an earnest prayer. . .for the richest spiritual blessings. These blessings can never be conferred only through personal divine agency. This love of God the Father is the personal bestowment of the gifts of his love. This grace of Christ is the personal gift of the benefits of his redemptive work. Hence this communion of the Spirit must signify his personal agency in our spiritual life. The personality of the Spirit is as real as that of the Father and of the Son.⁵⁵

The gifts of the Spirit listed in I Corinthians 12:4-11, prove beyond all doubt his personality. He gives wisdom, faith, power, and knowledge. The Scriptures teach also that the Holy Spirit is grieved, lied to, is resisted, is blasphemed against, searches and knows all things. All these stand as proofs conclusive of the deity and personality of the Holy Spirit, for which Conservative Protestants contend.

The Majesty Ascribed to the Holy Spirit, Direct Proof of Personality and Deity. "Therefore I say unto you, Every sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven," (Matt. 12:31). It matters not what man calls this Holy Spirit--call it an influence, an energy, a power, a manifestation, or an abstract attribute,---he can never make sense out of this fact until he admits the personality and deity of the Holy Spirit. It is the view of Conservative Protestantism that when it is admitted that the Holy Spirit is a real and distinct person in the Godhead, and equal in power and glory with the Father and the Son, all these

55. John Miley, Systematic Theology (New York, Eaton and Mains, 1892), I, 273.

Scriptures are plain, otherwise they are without explanation.

The titles, works, attributes, honors, and majesty ascribed to the Holy Ghost throughout the Scriptures are such as belong to no being in the universe but the Lord of hosts. We conclude therefore, that the Holy Ghost is God, equal in being with the Father and the Son.

Influence and Office of the Holy Spirit. A discussion of the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, would not be complete without reference to the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit. The importance of the personal presence of the Holy Spirit can not be overestimated. The church is powerless for good without this Spirit life. Jesus bade His disciples to go and teach all nations, but they should wait until they received the Holy Spirit.

The Christian Church is the sphere of the Spirit's administration. He quickens the Word as it is preached; convinces of sin, righteousness, and judgement; renews the heart; cleanses the soul by the application of the blood of atonement; adopts into God's spiritual family; enlightens the understanding; comforts, guides, and strengthens the church. Romans 8:26,27 is a passage which every professing Christian should study. 'And in like manner the Spirit also helpeth our infirmity: for we know not how to pray as we ought; but the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered; and he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.'⁵⁶

Jesus Christ is our Advocate with the Father; the Holy Spirit makes intercession for us, not by supplications to God, but by directing our supplications, which is the peculiar work and office of the Holy Spirit. We know not how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit helpeth us, so that by his intercessions our prayers are heard and answered. He is ever present, directing and making them effective, thus the life and power of

56. Weaver, Christian Theology, p. 60.

the individual Christian, as well as that of the whole church, is due to the personal presence and direct influence of the Holy Spirit.⁵⁷

It is the settled belief of evangelical Protestantism that the Holy Spirit moves upon the hearts and minds of the people through the medium of his Word. The Word alone would not be effective if it were not quickened by the Holy Spirit. Note Ephesians 6:17 and Hebrews 4:12, as illustrative of this point.

However, the question has arisen, "Does the Holy Spirit operate on the mind and heart of a man separate and apart from the written Word?" Conservative Protestantism answers, "Yes," and points to Scripture for proof. "Then opened he their mind, that they might understand the Scriptures," (Luke 24:45). Our Lord did not open their understanding by the Scriptures; but that they might understand the Scriptures. Another passage, "Whose heart the Lord opened, to give heed unto the things which were spoken by Paul," (Acts 16:14). Again, Jesus told His disciples that when the Comforter was come he would "convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgement," (John 16:8). The plain meaning is that the Holy Spirit is not confined to one time, place, or people. He will "convict the world."

Finally, the direct influence of the Holy Spirit may be expected in answer to prayer. "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" (Luke 11:13). "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within

57. Loc. cit.

me," (Psalm 51:10). Why pray for the help and influence of the Holy Spirit if he can only operate upon the heart and mind through the written Word.

Summary. The doctrine of the Holy Spirit is one of the cardinal doctrines of Conservative Protestantism. God uses instrumentalities in carrying on the affairs of his government, but the Holy Spirit is the one and only agent. He is the executive officer in the Trinity. Nothing is, or can be accomplished in or through the church without the personal aid of this agent.

B. CONTRAST

Method of Procedure. The doctrines of Jehovah's Witnesses and Conservative Protestantism have been presented. It now remains to contrast these two positions. Having observed doctrinal studies of a similar nature, the writer has chosen the pattern of a chart to show the contrast. Brief statements of doctrinal position will be listed in order as they have been discussed in this study. These brief statements may be clarified by referring to material presented in the preceding chapters.

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES	CONSERVATIVE PROTESTANTISM
Revelation - Inspiration	Revelation - Inspiration
<u>Revelation</u>	<u>Revelation</u>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Bible is a divine revelation viewed in the light of reason. 2. Jehovah's Witnesses assert that the Bible is the inspired written Word of God. 3. They interpret the Word of God in a manner that will appeal to, and can be accepted by, reason as a foundation. 4. The Word of God must square with human reason, and be acceptable to it. 5. Single Scriptures may serve as proof-texts for doctrine. 6. A Scripture passage belonging to one dispensation may not be applied to another. 7. The six volumes, <u>Studies in the Scriptures</u> are a better key to understanding the Word of God, than the Word of God itself. 8. The Bible, as a guide to faith and practice, must first square with finite reason. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Bible is a special revelation viewed in the light of <u>Faith</u> in its author (God). 2. The Bible is the inspired written Word of God. 3. The Word of God is interpreted in such a manner that <u>Christ</u> is seen as the perfect and complete revelation of God. 4. Reason may at times be contrary to faith, but never is faith contrary to reason; it is superior to reason. 5. All Scripture must be interpreted in the light of the context. 6. Prophecy has been constituted a sign to each succeeding generation. Scriptures of the Old Testament furnish an inexhaustible amount of information upon which we may even today draw upon. Prophecy was intended to be an abiding credential throughout all time. 7. The Bible alone gives to us God's objective revelation, and is its own commentary, thus needing no <u>private interpretations</u>. 8. The Bible is infallible and an adequate guide to faith and practice. Infinity is greater than finity.

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES	CONSERVATIVE PROTESTANTISM
Trinity -- God -- Christ -- Holy Spirit	Trinity -- God -- Christ -- Holy Spirit
<p data-bbox="370 520 483 550"><u>Trinity</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="149 583 659 676">1. A deceptive doctrine, originating in the mind of Satan the Devil. <li data-bbox="149 714 643 806">2. Trinitarians claim there is <u>one</u> God; but in the same breath declare there are <u>three</u> Gods. <li data-bbox="149 844 626 903">3. If God is <u>one</u> in person he cannot be <u>three</u>. <li data-bbox="149 940 643 999">4. The Trinity is very clearly anti-Christian. <p data-bbox="402 1066 451 1096"><u>God</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="149 1129 669 1222">1. As the self-existing one, there was a time when Jehovah was alone in the universal space. <li data-bbox="149 1255 652 1314">2. The name Jehovah applied to God only, never to Jesus Christ. <li data-bbox="149 1415 669 1541">3. The Bible does not state that the Father and Son are one in person, and that they are equal in power and majesty. <li data-bbox="149 1575 610 1633">4. God and Jesus are <u>not</u> two names for one person. <li data-bbox="149 1768 669 1797">5. Jehovah God, alone is Savior. 	<p data-bbox="941 520 1055 550"><u>Trinity</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="734 583 1276 642">1. The doctrine of the Triune God is revealed in Scripture. <li data-bbox="734 714 1292 806">2. <u>One God</u>. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are one God. God makes himself known tri-personally. <li data-bbox="734 844 1260 903">3. One God subsists in three co-equal persons. <li data-bbox="734 940 1162 999">4. The Trinity is uniquely Christian. <p data-bbox="974 1066 1023 1096"><u>God</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="734 1129 1292 1222">1. God alone is eternal. God is; has ever been; will ever be. God's existence is declared. <li data-bbox="734 1255 1243 1381">2. The name Jehovah applies not only to God the Father, but to Jesus Christ, for the name <u>Jesus</u> is literally <u>Jehovah-Savior</u>. <li data-bbox="734 1415 1276 1507">3. The Bible sets forth the absolute <u>unity</u> between the Father and the Son. <li data-bbox="734 1575 1276 1734">4. All the various names of God find their culmination in the revelation of God in Christ, whose name is above every name that is named. <li data-bbox="734 1768 1227 1827">5. Jesus Christ the Son of God is the Savior of the world.

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

6. God is perfect in all of his attributes which include, eternity, justice, wisdom, love, and power.

7. Jehovah God alone may receive worship.

Christ

1. Christ is God's first-created being.

2. Christ is properly known as "a God."

3. Divine titles may not be ascribed to any being but God.

4. The Logos of God describes the work of Christ, prior to His coming into the world.

5. The Logos was in the beginning with God, and the Logos was "A God."

6. There was a time when Christ did not exist; Christ had a beginning.

7. Christ at His Incarnation gave up His spirit being; and while on earth was nothing more than a perfect human being.

8. The work of Christ on the Cross only the work of a mere man. (no divinity on the Cross).

CONSERVATIVE PROTESTANTISM

6. God is perfect in all of his attributes: unity, eternity, spirituality, omniscience, omnipresence, omnipotence, immutability, holiness, justice and truth.

7. Since Christ and the Father are one, therefore Christ may receive worship ascribed to God.

Christ

1. Christ is co-eternal with God.

2. Christ is God, the second person in the Godhead.

3. Divine titles are given to Christ which belong to no being but God, therefore, Christ is God.

4. Christ Himself is called the Logos (the Word).

5. In the beginning was the Word (Logos), and the Word (Logos) was with God, and the Word (Logos) was God.

6. Christ is pre-existent. . .
"Whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting," (Micah 5:2).

7. Jesus Christ was very God and very man. At the Incarnation the human and divine natures were united in Christ.

8. If it were only a mere man who gave his life on the cross, we are yet in our sins.

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

9. Christ at His resurrection, a spirit being only, not human in any sense of the word. (A denial of the resurrection of the body).

10. As Christ sits at the right hand of God now, He has no humanity.

Holy Spirit

1. The Holy Spirit is the invisible power and energy of Jehovah.

2. The Holy Spirit is not a person; not a third God.

3. God is a Spirit.

4. The Comforter promised by Jesus was the holy power by which He would guide and direct His people.

5. The reference to the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:4, means the mind, disposition of God which operated in the disciples

6. The term "Holy Ghost" has been used by Trinitarian translators without authority, in designating personality to the Holy Spirit.

7. Deity can in no way be applied to the Holy Spirit.

8. The attributes of God can in no way be ascribed to the Holy Spirit.

CONSERVATIVE PROTESTANTISM

9. "Behold my hands, and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have," (Luke 24:36-40).

10. "There is one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus," (1 Timothy 2:5).

Holy Spirit

1. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth.

2. The Holy Spirit is a Person, the third person of the Godhead.

3. God is Spirit.

4. "The Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things which I said to you," (John 14:16,26).

5. Acts 2:4, with regard to the Holy Spirit, there is a definite reference to personality.

6. The masculine pronoun is applied to the Holy Spirit, the same as is applied to God the Father.

7. The attributes ascribed to the Holy Spirit establish his personality and deity.

8. Each person of the Godhead is equal in all attributes.

CHAPTER VII

GENERAL SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

A. GENERAL SUMMARY

The writer of this study firmly believes that the rationalistic approach to the Scriptures has been the underlying cause of the entire heresy of Jehovah's Witnesses. The study of their six volume work, Studies in the Scriptures, which they regard as a better key to the Scriptures than the testimony of modern theologians and that of the early Fathers, has confirmed this belief. It is seldom that one will find a religious movement such as that of the Jehovah's Witnesses, who denounce so many of the long-accepted doctrines of Christianity, and yet seem to champion the Bible as the Word of God.

Jehovah's Witnesses claim to have been the only group to attempt a harmonization of all Scripture truth. They claim to have uncovered enough of the foundation of true religion---the Word of God---to give confidence and assurance in its testimony, even to the unbeliever. They have accomplished this in a manner that appeals to human reason. They have made Scripture square with human reason. The doctrine of eternal torment is a good example of their rationalistic thesis. The Jehovah's Witnesses teach that such a doctrine is impossible because it is unreasonable, contrary to the principle of love, and entirely unscriptural.

The Jehovah's Witnesses destroy the supernatural character of God's revelation. In this they stand with almost all pagan religions in opposition to the united testimony of Christendom. That it loudly speaks of the Bible as the word of God cannot blind us to this fact:

it boldly condemns those who have studied Hebrew and Greek for believing that the congruent versions of the Scriptures in all modern languages are true to the original, and substitutes as inspired a Bible that has been first submitted to the opinions of "we who have the light."

The Jehovah's Witnesses doctrine of God which includes the study of God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit is clearly out of harmony with the doctrine of God of Conservative Protestantism. The writer has tried to be as charitable as possible, not wanting to characterize the teachings of Jehovah's Witnesses as wilful deception on the part of the system's leaders. He has had to acknowledge, however, the brazen pride of the natural mind which asserts that the Bible must teach doctrines that are in agreement with the "character reasonably imputed to God."

No one can claim to be a Christian who contends that Jesus Christ is not God, but only God's first created being. No one can claim to be a Christian who contends that the Holy Spirit is not a person who bears witness to the truth which is in Jesus Christ, the Son of God. It is very evident that the Witnesses in denying these truths have had to avoid many passages of Scripture entirely.

What is the background of this heresy of the Jehovah's Witnesses? Jehovah's Witnesses are outspoken Arians (though with slight modifications). Arianism, in a word, is that heresy which denied that the Son was of the same substance with the Father, thus Christ was reduced to the rank of a creature, though He was pre-existent before the world.

How does Conservative Protestantism answer this heresy? They state that there can be no middle being between Creator and creature; no time before the world, as time is itself a part of the world.

Athanasius, the greatest theologian perhaps of all times, charges Arianism with a dualism, and even a polytheism, and with destroying the whole doctrine of salvation. For if the Son (Christ) is a creature, man still remains separated, as before, from God. No creature can redeem other creatures, and unite them to God. If Christ is not the divine Son of God, certainly man can not become a partaker of the divine nature, nor can he become in any real sense a child of God.

Because of the background of this Arian heresy in the teachings of Jehovah's Witnesses, their system must of necessity remain a bundle of error. It certainly may be said that the belief system of Jehovah's Witnesses is totalitarian. The writer has observed that one of the delights of the Witnesses is to state proudly that there is no question which they cannot successfully answer. The entire Witness movement has been built upon authoritarian methods. There has been only one real leader since the death of Charles T. Russell. This leader was J. F. Rutherford, and his word was law. What he declared to be true, humble Witnesses the world over believed to be true, forgetting the words of the leader himself: "It is entirely unsafe for the people to rely upon the words and doctrines of imperfect men."¹

The beliefs of Jehovah's Witnesses are not related to experience. One leader in this movement told Mr. Stroup that he had several other religious affiliations before he joined the ranks of Jehovah's Witnesses. This man stated that the best feature of the movement to his mind was

1. Herbert Hewitt Stroup, The Jehovah's Witnesses (New York, Columbia University Press, 1945), p. 125.

the fact that he did not have to try to harmonize his beliefs with his experiences.²

If people seeking to understand the heretical teachings of the Jehovah's Witnesses first have a grasp of the Word of God, believing it to be the infallible guide in faith and practice, they will be equipped to challenge the many Witnesses who are actively engaged in witnessing door-to door. Those who know little of the Word of God are prey for Jehovah's Witnesses.

The writer has discovered that to meet the average Witness effectively, one must have an understanding of their doctrines and their method of Bible interpretation. To consistently meet Jehovah's Witnesses, Conservative Protestants need to, "Study to show ourselves approved unto God, workmen that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth," (II Timothy 2:15).

B. CONCLUSIONS

The writer has made the following conclusions with reference to this study of the Jehovah's Witnesses.

1. REVELATION

- a. Jehovah's Witnesses contend that the Bible is a divine revelation viewed in the light of reason.
- b. Conservative Protestants contend that the Bible is a special revelation viewed in the light of faith in its author... (God).

2. TRINITY

- a. Jehovah's Witnesses state that the doctrine of Trinity

2. Ibid., p. 128.

is false and deceptive, and God-dishonoring.

- b. Conservative Protestants contend that the doctrine of Trinity is revealed in Scripture.

3. GOD

- a. Jehovah's Witnesses contend that God alone is Savior, and that the name Jehovah can not be applied to any other being but God.
- b. Conservative Protestants contend that Jesus Christ the Son of God is Savior of the world, and that Jesus literally means Jehovah-Savior.

4. JESUS CHRIST

- a. Jehovah's Witnesses claim Christ is not God, but only a created being, properly known as "a God."
- b. Conservative Protestants contend that Christ is co-eternal with God, the second person in the Godhead, pre-existent.

5. THE HOLY SPIRIT

- a. Jehovah's Witnesses contend that neither deity nor personality can be ascribed to the Holy Spirit.
- b. Conservative Protestants contend that the attributes ascribed to the Holy Spirit establish his personality and deity.

C. PROBLEMS FOR FURTHER STUDY

In the course of this particular study of Jehovah's Witnesses, the writer was made aware of many more areas of research that might be done concerning this group. One problem in particular the writer suggests would be profitable for further study, is as follows. An answer should be found as to whether or not what the Jehovah's Witnesses mean by the inspiration of the Word is the same as what Conservative Protestants mean.

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