

Bible Answers to Questions II Three False Doctrines

Fred R. Coulter—January 17, 2009

I got a letter from someone that said, ‘I really do not believe what you referred to in a sermon that Dr. Hermon L. Hoeh supposedly gave in 1994 about *The Thinker and the Thought, and The Utterer and the Utterance.*’

I asked some brethren in Pasadena if they could possibly get me a copy of that sermon and they brought me a copy and I listened to it. I happen to think, since this man was highly esteemed by many, many people in the Church, that it would be very instructive for us to see how this came about and what happened. And also two other difficulties that he brought upon the Church and how that came upon it and caused a lot of difficulties and problems.

How did such things happen? *The book of Jude answers it in one way, and we’re going to see that it happens in several ways!* This is why we are told by Jesus over and over again, and also through the Apostle Paul, ‘**Do not let anyone deceive you!**’ This also goes hand-in-hand in what we have seen in the Scriptures, that certain ones in the Bible—when they get old—do bad things.

What happened to David when he got into his 50s? *He saw Bathsheba!* Look what that did to the whole kingdom. But also, Bathsheba saw the king; she was not an innocent victim!

Then we look at Hezekiah, and after God gave him 15 more years and the ambassadors came from the Babylonian Empire and they had heard about how God had healed Hezekiah and gave him 15 more years. So, Hezekiah in his vanity showed them all the riches and God said to him, through the Prophet Isaiah afterward, ‘Why did you do this? Because you did it, it’s all going to Babylon. The king of Babylon is going to take it back to Babylon. But it won’t happen in your time.’

So, it kind of showed a little bit selfishness with King Hezekiah, ‘Wonderful, I’ll have peace in my day.’

Then Solomon with all the wives and all the concubines, and all the building of the pagan temples and shines for his wives, **after God had talked to him personally!** It said that ‘in his old age’ this happened (1-Kings 11).

We’re going to look at what happens along that line, but also how false doctrines can come into a church *through some very esteemed men*, and you really don’t know that they’re happening until you step back and look at it.

A little clarification on David and Bathsheba. The main thing was adultery, stealing a wife and killing a husband.

In the book of Jude we see one kind of *false prophet* that comes in. You don’t know that he’s a false prophet until after the doctrines start coming down. You may have some who are basically very straight forward in their doctrine and teaching for a long time, and then something happens, just like you throw a switch! Then the Church suffers because of the false doctrine!

Jude 3: “Beloved, when personally exerting all *my* diligence to write to you concerning the common salvation, I was compelled to write to you, exhorting *you* to fervently fight for the faith, which once for all *time* has been delivered to the saints.”

So, we are to always to “**...fight for the faith...!**” *Not only are we to guard against being deceived, but we’re also to guard against deceitful doctrines* that may sound true, *but are not*, as well as doctrines that re just **blatantly plain false!**

Verse 4: “For certain men have stealthily crept in, those who long ago have been written about, condemning *them* to this judgment. **They are ungodly men who are perverting the grace of our God, turning it into licentiousness, and are personally denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.**”

Here’s the warning! How do you deny God? *By changing God!* In this case, we’re going to look at each one of the three major doctrines that were changed to cause problems to the Church.

During the time that 2-Peter and Jude and 1st & 2nd John were being written, there was a host of *false prophets*. In history, they are today identified as the Gnostics. They were coming along writing *their own* gospels like the ‘gospel of Mary Magdalene’ and so forth. That’s why God inspired John, Andrew and Philip to do the final canonization of the New Testament, because there were so many of these documents being written, it was just flooding everywhere.

Here Peter gives a warning of it; 2-Peter 2:1: “But there were also false prophets among the people, as indeed there will be false teachers among you, who will stealthily introduce destructive heresies, personally denying *the* Lord who bought them, and bringing swift destruction upon

themselves.”

Here’s the problem that happens, v 2: “And many people will follow *as authoritative* their destructive ways; *and* because of them, the way of the Truth will be blasphemed.” *We’re going to see a mixture of all of these! Here they come in stealthily!*

Let’s see what the Apostle Paul warned about in Acts 20. He warned those who thought it would never happen to them! That’s the irony of the whole thing. Have you ever found out what someone did in the way of bringing false doctrines and you say that ‘this man wasn’t that way, how did this happen?’

Acts 20:28: “**Take heed**... [watch out and be on guard; he’s talking to the elders who all better listen] ...therefore, **to yourselves**...” *The truth is that every elder, minister and teacher is responsible to police himself before God, through:*

- handling the Word of God correctly
- repenting of sin on a daily basis
- honoring the Word of God
- always holding fast to the Truth

*Because if you don’t, Satan likes to come in and snatch someone who had previously been faithful or pretty much faithful **and get them to follow some fairytale doctrine!***

“...and to all the flock...” (v 28). So, you have to watch yourself and the flock of God, because we are to feed the flock of God! That’s what Christ told Peter three times at the end of the Gospel of John. Jesus said, ‘Peter, do you love Me?’ *Yes, Lord!* ‘Feed My sheep!’ Then He asked the second time, ‘Peter, do you love Me?’ *Yes, Lord, You know I love You!* ‘Feed My lambs!’ And then the third time, ‘Peter, do you love Me?’ At this point Peter was a little upset and said, *Yes, Lord, You know I do!* ‘Feed My sheep!’ *Jesus knew what was going to happen!*

“...among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers...” (v 28). *No elder, minister, teacher, evangelist or apostle has it coming to them because of their abilities and their skill and their righteousness! **The Holy Spirit has done it!***

It’s not some office that’s kind of like a prince where you become the one where everyone brings everything to you and they’re bowing down and fawning over you with nice compliment and building you up. What happens? *If you believe all of that you can get carried away with yourself!*

“...to feed the Church of God, which **He purchased with His own blood**” (v 28). Whenever false doctrines come in, you’re not just dealing with something that is wrong—if it’s something wrong you can correct it—*but you’re dealing with leading*

the Church and the brethren astray, which Christ personally purchased with His own blood and He is the Head of the Church! He is the One we are to follow.

Verse 29: “For I know this: that after my departure **grievous wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock.**” *They start out well, but always remember: **it’s not how you start, it’s how you finish!***

Verse 30: “And from among your own selves... [it’s the ministers Paul talking to] ...men will rise up speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after themselves.” *We’ve seen that happen, too!*

There are many varieties of this, but in this particular case I want to cover three things that affected the Church of God and caused many, many, many problems through the years, and eventually signed, sealed and delivered the apostasy! As we will see, two of these events happened while the leader of the Church—Herbert W. Armstrong—was still alive! The worst one happened after his death.

If you have been in the Church a long time, you will connect with all of these. If you have not been in the Church a long time, then this will serve as a warning! Really, the names here are only to identify, not to condemn; so we can understand that it can happen to anyone.

How One Man Brought Three Critical False Doctrines into a Church of God

{<https://www.cbeg.org/false-doctrine/three-false-doctrines.html>}

The largest church of God in modern times, the Worldwide Church of God, suffered from three critical false doctrines brought into the church by one man, evangelist Dr. Herman L Hoeh. These were instrumental in leading to division in the church and finally to its demise. These three false doctrines were the direct result of sleight of hand interpretations, or just plain lies. He failed “to rightly divide the Word of Truth.” Rather, he twisted and distorted the scriptures and created false doctrines. Because he was accepted as an eminent scholar, his views were accepted and very few challenged his conclusions, yet he apparently did this in order to be politically correct with the leadership of the church.

1. A Monday Pentecost

The church leader, Herbert W. Armstrong originally miscounted the 50 day count to Pentecost and assumed that it fell on a Monday.

Let me read from the *King James Version* and we will see where Herbert Armstrong made the mistake. It could have been corrected several times when the issue came up. As we will see, it finally was in 1974. We have several booklets explaining the difficulties; I'll just review it here:

Leviticus 23:15 (KJV): "And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath..."—**Herbert Armstrong took to mean that the "morrow after the Sabbath" meant that you were to go after that day and begin counting on a Monday, instead of Sunday, the first day of the week!**

Herbert Armstrong took '**from**' to mean *away from that day*, instead of beginning *with* that day, because of the translation in the *King James*.

So, he said that if you wave it on the first day of the week, from the day, then the first day of the counts has to be on a Monday. But what happens when you do that is you split the week. You do not have whole weeks.

"...from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven sabbaths shall be complete: Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days.." (vs 15-16, KJV).

You would think that you would have it correct, because the morrow after the seventh Sabbath has got to be a Sunday. But if you start with a Monday, and it says you will "...number fifty days..." and you count 50 days, you end up with a Monday.

But the problem that you have is that you will have *partial weeks*. With a partial week you wrap around Monday to Monday and you do not have each week ending in the Sabbath. But it begins with a Monday and ends with a Monday, so you have imperfect weeks.

Let's read the correct translation in *The Faithful Version* so that we understand it, then I will explain what Dr. Hoeh did in creating this problem for the whole Church, **because he perpetuated Herbert Armstrong's error!**

I am sure that Herbert Armstrong made this error not maliciously. He just misunderstood what it said, and it could have been corrected as early as 1952; but was not corrected until 1974.

Leviticus 23:10: "Speak to the children of Israel and say to them, 'When you have come into the land which I give to you, and shall reap the harvest of it, then you shall bring *the premier* sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest. And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD to be accepted for you. On the next day after the

Sabbath the priest shall wave it'" (vs 10-11).

Very clear! You can't miss that! That's what it means!

Verse 15: "And you shall count to you **beginning with the next day after the Sabbath...**"—*inclusive counting!* Remember, counting is not like addition and subtraction. Counting is that you begin *with the day* and you number each day.

"...beginning with the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven Sabbaths shall be complete. Even unto the day after the seventh Sabbath you shall number fifty days...." (vs 15-16).

This is one of the errors that the *King James Version* has. So, it's easy to understand how Herbert Armstrong—when he was coming to understand about the Holy Days—made an error in figuring the count. Unfortunately, *that lasted for 40 years!*

In 1952, Herbert Armstrong commissioned Dr. Hoeh—who at that time just graduated as one of the original students of Ambassador College—to look into the problem of counting Pentecost, because up in Eugene, Oregon, they had a split in the Church because when they counted the way it should be counted, they came up with Sunday and not Monday.

Herbert Armstrong would have accepted Sunday if Herman Hoeh would have said it was Sunday. But he didn't do it! So, let's see how Armstrong handled this:

...HLH accommodated HWA, believing that "an apostle's" error was inspired truth....

One of the problems of rigid hierarchy!

...In order to justify this erroneous count, in Leviticus 23, he deliberately misinterpreted the term "the Sabbath," Hebrew, *ha shabbat*, to read "week"...

You can find this in one of the old correspondence courses!

...Hebrew, *shavua*....

two different words

...Thereby, making it possible to have partial, or imperfect weeks, for the counting of the seven weeks and Sabbaths to Pentecost. Thus, making "the morrow after the seventh Sabbath" to read as "the morrow after the seventh week"—a Monday. This erroneous count then incorrectly made Pentecost "on the morrow after the seventh first day of the week."

For forty years the WCG kept Pentecost on the wrong day. Then in 1974...

Because there was a great furor among the ministers, pastors and even the evangelists at that time over the correct counting of Pentecost. I attended the conference for it in 1974!

...a special ministerial conference was held to correct this mistake. At that time HLH admitted that he had done this because he believed that HWA's error was inspired truth, which it was not. The WCG then changed to the correct day, and began to follow the scriptural instructions to begin the count of the 50 days on [beginning with] the first day of the week—then seven complete weeks were to be counted, each week ending in a weekly Sabbath, or 49 days.

However, the total count was to be 50 days; and the 50th day was “the morrow after the seventh Sabbath”—not the seventh week.

Slight of hand!

The correct count always makes Pentecost fall on the first day of the week after the seventh Sabbath. It is the only first day of the week that the church is to keep—a special Holy Day.

Just to use a little common reasoning, Monday cannot be the day after the Sabbath, which falls on a Saturday. *Can't be!* So, that was finally corrected.

2. Falsely Claiming that the year of the Crucifixion to fall in 31 AD instead of the correct year of 30 AD.

We have exactly the same problem that we had with the first one, only this becomes a little more involved.

This mistake was an old doctrine that HWA had accepted from the SDA's—an Ellen G. White error. The Bible clearly teaches that Jesus Christ was crucified on the Passover day, in the middle of the week—a Wednesday.

However, according to the Hebrew Calculated Calendar, the Passover of 31 AD fell on a Monday, March 26....

We have that in *A Harmony of the Gospels* and also in the Bible, all the listing of the Holy Days during Jesus' life. Plus we added in 31^{AD} to show how it should fall.

...It did not fall on a Wednesday in that year. HLH then proceeded to analyze some obscure Rabbinic arguments about the cycle of the leap years of the Hebrew Calendar. He completely misinterpreted their arguments and declared that in 142 AD the Jewish calendar officials changed the leap cycle, **which the Rabbis never did.** With this sleight of hand, HLH could then make it falsely appear that the Passover in 31 AD fell on a Wednesday and not on a Monday. However, just before HLH died in 2004 in a letter to Michael Geramono he confessed to what he had done and admitted that he was wrong. He admitted that Jesus was not crucified in 31 AD, but rather 30 AD, April 5, which is the correct historical date.

I believe that the United Church of God—even today—accepts 31^{AD} as the year of the crucifixion. The point of bringing this out is that once you have a false doctrine inserted into the beliefs of a church, it can follow along and cause problems for a long, long time.

Which commandment is Satan most interested in, in getting you to transgress? *The first commandment!* This becomes important, and once you grasp the understanding of this, you will see how Satan has deceived every single religion on earth, ***and how accepting not worshiping the true God in the true way blinds people to understanding!***

Exodus 20:1: And God spoke all these words, saying, ‘I *am* the LORD your God, Who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.... [God alone can save you] ...**You shall have no other gods before Me**” (vs 1-3).

If Satan can make you miss the mark in understanding the nature of God—because that is the fundamental thing that if Satan can get you off the mark on—he can get you going down the road of other false doctrines. When they began to radically change the doctrines in the Worldwide Church of God from Biblical Truth to mainstream Protestant theology, ***the first thing that was attacked by Dr. Herman Hoeh and Dr. Stavrinides—a supposed Greek scholar—was to change the nature of God!***

If you change the nature of God you are going to miss the mark, ***and you are not going to know Who God is!*** So, if you attack the first commandment and you get people to believe something that is not true—and in some cases might sound blessedly true—***you begin missing the mark!***

One of the doctrines that identifies the so-called Christian churches of the world is that they all believe in some form of a trinity! The Bible teaches the duality of God all the way through; there's no variation: ***God the Father and Jesus Christ!***

I got to thinking about how many sermons I've given through the years on *the nature of God and Christ*. Why are there so many? Some of them will be a little repetitious, that is true, however, I want you to understand that this is so fundamental that we have got to have the repetition so we really learn it. This is not something you can learn in just five minutes, or ten or fifteen minutes, or one sermon and now you've got it. There are many clever arguments that come along, and we also have to include into this category Anthony Buzzard and Ken Westby—we graduated from Ambassador together—and they preach a *One god*, and Christ was a created being.

That's a little bit different than the trinity, but what happens is that you *move off course* and what you end up doing by changing the nature of God is you deny Christ, and if you deny Him, who else do you deny? *The Father!*

Well, the argument is supposedly to uphold the Father. Here in John 1 this is so basic and so fundamental, but when you understand that John put this here because of all of the attacks against the nature of God and Jesus Christ, by all of the Gnostics. The Gnostics believed in different things, many of the same doctrines that we have today, and a lot of those doctrines came from the pagan Greek religions before Christianity. A lot of the Greek philosophy that Stavrinides taught came straight out the pagan cauldron of Greek philosophy.

But since he was an 'eminent scholar' in the Church and understood Greek—because it was his native language—no one would dare challenge him.

John 1:1: "In *the* beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." The way we have understood it is—which is correct—the Greek word for *was* is 'en' that can mean ***before the beginning of the creation of the earth and the heavens was the Word***—'ho logos'!

"...and the Word was with God He... [the Word, 'ho logos'] ...was **with**... [Greek: 'pros': toward] ...God..." (v 1).

In fact, the phrase *face-to-face* in the Greek is 'prosopon.' This is important, because that's what the Greek is telling us. Let's look at some other identifying things as we go along.

"...and the Word was God" (v 1). In the Greek the order of the words is a little different than it is in English. The word for God is 'theos.' The

word for the One Who is with God is 'ho theos' meaning *the God!*

When we come to "...the Word was God" the Greek reads: 'theo en ho logos,' but 'ho logos' is the subject; 'en' tells that He was 'theos.'

Why is there not a definite article 'ho theos' connected with 'ho logos'? *Because John wanted us to understand that the Word, Who became Jesus Christ, was the Lord God of the Old Testament!* And as the Word coming to the earth, was 'theos' meaning He had all of the exact qualities, character and attributes of 'ho theos' to identify *two Who are God!*

That was the purpose in this simple opening and sentence, yet, this is the one that is attacked so often. It comes from the Greek philosophy and the Hellenistic Greek teaching of Philo that 'logos' was a manifestation of the thought of God.

Verse 2: "He was in *the* beginning with God"—'ho theos.

Verse 3 tells us something very, very important, which unfortunately, those who believe in a created Jesus—that He did not exist until He was conceived in the womb of the virgin Mary—how can you answer this question if that is the case. That's what Anthony Buzzard and Ken Westby teach, and also what Dr. Hoeh later taught with a little different version.

Verse 3: "All things came into being through Him, and not even one *thing* that was created came into being without Him"—*Jesus!* What does this tell us? *That Jesus was the One Who spoke the word and the world was created!*

Gen. 1 also gets into the nature of God and 'Elohim.' The Hebrew is quite unusual in this way:

- there is a singular for God: 'Eloah'
- there is a plural for God: 'Elohim'

The 'im' is equivalent to the 's' in English, meaning that it is a singular word meaning *more than one*. So, when we read in John 1 that *nothing came into being except that He brought it into being* the One of 'Elohim' created the heaven and the earth.

Genesis 1:2: "And the earth was without form and void, and darkness *was* upon the face of the deep, and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters"—*first flood right there!* It's by the Spirit of God by which He does things, God commands and they are created.

Verse 3: "And God said, 'Let there be light.' And there was light."

Let's read John 1 so we can understand what Genesis is telling us, so that we have no mistake

about it. The Father is not the One Who is speaking in Gen. 1.

John 1:3: “**All things** came into being through Him, and not even one *thing* that was created came into being without Him.”

So, the One of ‘Elohim’ here—and the rest of the Bible tells us that there are two of ‘Elohim’ and I’ll show you that in a very unique and simple way.

So, the One Who said, “Let there be light” (Gen. 1:3); is light created? *Yes!* Who brought it into being? *The One Who in the New Testament is called the Word, or Logos, and He was God! Because God created!*

Genesis 1:6: “And God said, ‘Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters *from* the waters.’ And God made the firmament, and divided the waters, which *were* under the firmament from the waters, which *were* above the firmament; and it was so” (vs 6-7)—those were the clouds!

- Where does the water come from? *From rain and snow!*
- Is there water up there? *Yes!*

There is a vastness of space between the earth and the clouds. And the clouds are the water that are above the firmament!

(go to the next track)

The Hebrew word for God is ‘elohim’—plural. This is also reflected in Gen. 1:26. This has been another one of these enigmatic verses that is hard for people to comprehend if they don’t understand the Truth. So, I’ll give you a very simple answer in just a minute.

Genesis 1:26: “And God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness...’” The Jews explain “US” as meaning a singular God and the host of angels. That’s not correct. In rejecting Jesus Christ you have to come up with an explanation of it. But what does “US” mean. We have a very simple explanation, and this is why the whole Gospel of God is critical to understanding the nature of God the Father, because Jesus came to reveal Him, and the nature of Jesus as God in the flesh.

John 17:4—Jesus is praying to God: “...I have finished the work that You gave Me to do. And now, Father, glorify Me with Your own self, **with the glory that I had with You before the world existed**” (vs 4-5). The Greek tense of the word *was* means *existed!*

He was a glorified being—God, one of ‘Elohim’—and He had the glory as the Father did.

So, He says: “...glorify Me with Your own self, **with the glory that I had with You before the world existed.**”

Verse 13: “But now I am coming to You; and these things I am speaking *while yet* in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in them. I have given them Your words, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world” (vs 13-14).

A true Christians will not be part and parcel of the worldly system that is here. We live in the world, **but we are not of the world!** That gives us a challenge in overcoming.

Verse 15: “I do not pray that You would take them out of the world... [sometimes we wish God would] ...but that You would keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in Your Truth; Your Word is the Truth” (vs 15-17).

It’s from the Word of God that we are getting the Truth of the nature of Christ and God the Father.

Verse 18: “Even as You did send Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, so that they also may be sanctified in *Your Truth*” (vs 18-19)

John 10:17: “On account of this... [because He’s bringing the sheep to the Father] ...the Father loves Me: because I lay down My life, **that I may receive it back again.**”

In #27 if the Hebrews series: I have an in depth sermon on the *Covenant Between God the Father & the Son.*

Verse 18: “No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have authority to lay it down and authority to receive it back again. This commandment I received from My Father.”

God did this by coming down and becoming flesh, as a human being, to save mankind, and He did it voluntarily. That’s why in Heb. 1 it says, ‘By Himself He had purged our sins and sat down on the right hand of God.

I’m going to read you something that you probably know but many people do not know, which will answer the question of who is the ‘US’ in Gen. 1:26.

You can’t understand the Old Testament without the New Testament and you can’t understand the New Testament without the Old Testament, yet, the New interprets the Old to a much greater degree than the Old interpreting the New.

John 17:20: “I do not pray for these only, but also for those who shall believe in Me through their word” So, Jesus’ prayer is constantly ongoing wherever the Gospel is being preached **that we will believe through the preaching.**

Verse 21—this is the key and answers the question Who is the ‘US’: “That they all may be one, even as You, Father, *are* in Me, and I in You; **that they also may be one in Us...** [God the Father and Jesus Christ; that’s Who the US are in Gen. 1:26; not some majestic council of God] ...in order that the world may believe that You did send Me.”

This will also tell us what Jesus did; Philippians 2:5: Let this mind be in you, which *was* also in Christ Jesus; Who, although He existed in *the* form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God” (vs 5-6).

Why? *Because He was God! ;In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*

- not less than God
- not the thought of God
- not the utterance of God

But God!

Verse 7: “But emptied Himself...” In order to become a human being He had to divest Himself of His glory, because the glorious form of God would incinerate the flesh of a human being. So, He could not take on the flesh of a human being unless He emptied Himself of most of His glory as God.

Remember when Moses said, ‘Show me your glory,’ what did God tell him? *No man can look upon My face and live!* He would be incinerated. Flesh cannot co-exist in the glorious spiritual presence of God—*period!* So, Christ emptied Himself, retained as much of God as He could:

“...and was made in *the* likeness of men, and took the form of a servant” (v 7).

Notice the answer to Genesis 1:26: “...‘Let Us make man in Our image after Our likeness...’” So that God—one of ‘Elohim’ Who became Jesus Christ—could ‘empty Himself’ so that He could come ‘in the likeness of man’ so that mankind:

- upon repentance
- acceptance of Jesus Christ
- receiving of the Holy Spirit
- salvation at the resurrection

can become like God!

Philippians 2:7: “...took the form of a servant; and being found in *the* manner of man, He

humbled Himself...” (vs 7-8). *He humbled Himself greater than any man every thought possible of what humility really would be!*

“...and became obedient unto death... [I lay My life down and have commandment to receive it back] ...even *the* death of *the* cross. Therefore, God has also highly exalted Him and bestowed upon Him a name, which *is* above every name; that **at the name of Jesus every knee should bow**” (vs 8-10). ***You’re not going to worship anything less than God!***

“...of *beings* in heaven and on earth and under the earth” (v 10). That means there’s a day of reckoning coming, which will probably be the second resurrection, for all of those who followed false religions in the world. There’s going to come a day of reckoning that all the dead popes are going to be resurrected in the second resurrection—if they haven’t committed the unpardonable sin—and *they’re going to have to confess that they were not Christ’s vicar!*

Christ does not need a vicar! They were not equivalent to God! As well as all the pagan emperors who proclaimed that they were God, etc., etc., all the way down through history.

Verse 11: “And every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord to *the* glory of God *the* Father.”

- Was Jesus God?
- Is Jesus God?

What we’re doing is looking at all the Scriptures that also verify. In understanding the Word of God, you have to take the Scriptures, properly divide them and add them together to understand what it’s talking about. Not take one Scripture and fight another, and since you don’t like them, throw them away.

1-Timothy 3:16: “And undeniably, **great is the mystery of Godliness...**” In other words, what God is doing to convert people, to help them to come to have the mind of Christ, to give them the Spirit of God so they can be born into the Kingdom of God. That is “**...the mystery of Godliness...**”!

How does God do it on the earth? *Through His Spirit!* To the people in the world, it’s a mystery. To us, we understand it, because God has opened our mind and given us understanding and given us His Spirit!

“...God was manifested in *the* flesh...” Who was the only One manifested in the flesh that was called God? *The One Who is named Jesus; couldn’t be anybody else!*

Let's verify that again, John 1:4: "In Him was life... [not a thought] ...and the Life was the Light of men. And the Light shines in the darkness, but the darkness does not comprehend it. There was a man sent by God, whose name was John. He came for a witness, that he might testify concerning the Light, so that through him [John] all might believe. He was not the Light, but *came* that he might testify concerning the Light. **The True Light...** [Christ, the Light of the world] **...was that which enlightens everyone who comes into the world**" (vs 4-9).

What does that mean? *God gives the spirit of man to every single human being, and it comes from the creative power of Christ!*

Verse 10: "He was in the world, and the world came into being through Him, but the world did not know Him." Isn't that true?

Whenever you watch any of these programs talking about the universe, the animals, etc., what do we have? *Evolution! The Big Bang!* They don't know God! There are some astronomers who believe in God. There are some scientists who are creationists.

Verse 11: "He came to His own... [the Jews and the Israelites] ...and His own did not receive Him."

- they hated Him
- they killed Him
- they crucified Him

Imagine that! God comes to you in the flesh so He can talk to you in the flesh, and you kill Him! That's an amazing thing!

Verse 12: "But as many as received Him..."—*a choice!* Salvation is a free gift, but you have to choose it. If someone gave you a gift and you put it on the table and you never pick it up and use it, whose fault is it? *Your fault, because you didn't exercise your choice to receive it!*

Verse 12: "But as many as received Him, to them He gave authority to become *the* children of God, *even* to those who believe in His name; who were not begotten by bloodlines, nor by *the* will of the flesh, nor by *the* will of man, but by *the* will of God" (vs 12-13).

Verse 1: "...and the Word was God." *We just read that He was God manifested in the flesh!*

Verse 14: "And **the Word became flesh...**" ***God became flesh!*** God emptied Himself and was made in the likeness of man and humbled Himself to the death of the cross!

"...and tabernacled among us (and we ourselves beheld His glory, *the* glory as of *the* only

begotten with *the* Father), full of grace and truth" (v 14).

Read in the Gospels how that when Jesus told someone that their sins have been forgiven, what did the Pharisees say? *Who is He to do that, because only God can forgive sin?* Well, He was God manifested in the flesh! He was given in His ministry the authority to forgive sins.

This creates definite problems for those who do not believe that Jesus was God before He became a human being. How many Scriptures do they have to have to convince them that their arguments are wrong? How can they possibly reason around John 1:1, 14; 1-Tim. 3:16 and Philip. 2? *They can't!*

I tell you, I did like Patton when he came against Rommel, I read their book. So, in the sermon series I go through the book! I show that in their version that Christ was not God before He became a human being, is precisely the same arguments that the hostile Jews used against Jesus, because the Jews are very clever, too. They read the New Testament and they tear it apart with their destructive reasoning.

Whenever you look and analyze the style of teaching that's in the Bible, their way of reasoning is that they take one Scripture that looks like it fights against the other and make it appear that the Scriptures do not agree with each other. Just like a carnal-minded defense attorney will come against the prosecution and take something totally out of context and make a big false case as to why his guilty defendant is innocent. They do the same thing by taking different Scriptures where it says that *the only one between man and God is Jesus the man*. 'If He's Jesus the man, how can He be God?' ***Because God became a man!*** That's how they do it! Here's one they can't get around:

Titus 2:11: "For the grace of God, which brings salvation for all men, has appeared; teaching us that, having denied ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live moderately and righteously and Godly in this present world, **looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our Savior and great God Jesus Christ**" (vs 11-13).

That's not talking about two; that's talking about *one*, the "...Savior and great God Jesus Christ." Jesus Christ is God, was God, and was God manifested in the flesh. *That's pretty hard to get around!*

I will show you the deliberate slight of hand, and as a scholar I contend Herman Hoeh knew better. I'll show you why and prove it from the Greek. Could he read Greek? *Yes!* I'll show you why

3. Changing the Nature of God the Father and Jesus Christ.

This was his most egregious error—falsifying the nature of God. After the death of HWA, he did this to placate the new leadership of Joseph Tkach Sr. and Jr., who were in the process of introducing many false doctrines into the WCG. This error facilitated the Tkach's efforts to replace the true teachings of the Scriptures and force the church to accept many Mainstream Protestant doctrines.

Everyone who has been in Worldwide and lived through the 90s understands what that means.

This subsequently led to the total demise of the WCG. In a sermon that HLH titled "Unfinished Business" in July 1994, he falsely reasoned that in John 1:1 "the Word," [Greek, *ho Logos*] did not refer directly to Jesus Christ and that "the Word" was not God, as the Greek text clearly says. Rather, he claimed that "the Word" was a Divine thought in the mind of God the Father, who was the "Thinker," and the One Who became Jesus was in His thoughts. Hal's reasoning was very twisted and completely incorrect.

His major contention to arrive at such a completely erroneous conclusion was based on a total fabrication—a concocted lie! He claimed that the Greek word *theos* in the phrase, in John 1:1, "And the Word [*ho logos*] was God [*theos*]," did not mean that Jesus, "the Word," was God before He came in the flesh. Rather, HLH claimed that the One who became Jesus was only a "Divine thought" of the Father and He did not come into existence until the Father uttered His thought and Jesus was conceived in the womb of the virgin Mary. How did he arrive at such a conclusion?

This was really an old Greek philosophy, which he probably got from Stavrindes, and was a pagan way to define God. Also, this is very similar to what the Buddhists think, and Dr. Hoeh had very close relations with the Buddhist monks in Los Angeles and even helped lay the mosaic in the floor of their new pagan temple.

Again, in old age *don't make mistakes!* He was close friends with those monks. They invited him to come down there. And at the dedication and opening it, he actually helped them burn incense!

He did so by changing the meaning of the Greek word *theos*, God, to mean "Divine." However, the Greek word for "Divine" is *theios*, not *theos*.

Think of it this way, we have the word 'con'; we have the word 'coin.' Does the addition of the one letter 'i' change the meaning? *Yes!* That's what HLH did.

In doing so HLH claimed that "the Word" was not "God" but a divine thought of God the Father. Thus, the divine thought of the Father became His utterance and Jesus was then brought into existence when He was conceived.

Not until that time! How much theology do you have to know to disprove that? All you need to do is have *Wigram's New Testament Greek Concordance*. Here's what I found:

In the Greek New Testament, *ho theos* is used 1311 times and is consistently translated into English as "God." **Not once is it ever translated as "Divine"!**

I looked at every Scripture!

Such an interpretation by HLH is a gross error—a fabricated lie. And as a scholar he must have known better than to recklessly change the inspired Word of God!

The Greek word for "Divine" is *theios*, and is translated as "Divine" in II-Peter 1:3-4...

Let's see how it is used. 'Theos' is a noun describing or designating *God*. 'Theios' is actually an adjective describing *a quality* that comes from God, because *God is God*.

2-Peter 1:3: "According as His Divine power..." 'Theos' is God, 'theios' is the power that comes from God: *Divine power!* It's describing an attribute, not a person.

"...has given to us all things that *pertain* to life and Godliness, through the knowledge of Him Who called us by *His own* glory and virtue; through which He has given to us the greatest and *most* precious promises, that through these you may become partakers of **the Divine nature**, having escaped the corruption *that is* in the world through lust" (vs 3-4).

...and as "Godhead" in Acts 17:29.

Two other Greek words are also translated as "Godhead." In Romans 1:20, the Greek word is *theiotes*; and in Col. 1:9 the Greek word *theotes*, is used.

To come and say that ‘Theos’ in John 1:1 means ‘theios’—Divine—is a complete, absolute inexcusable, unfathomable thing that Dr. Hoeh did. When I listened to the sermon on the cassette tape that I was given, it blew me away.

I listened to it very intently, and not once did Herman Hoeh in that sermon ever open his Bible and read a Scripture, in the nearly hour and a half.

What is evident is this—which is a good lesson for all of us—anyone who is a minister or teacher, God holds you responsible to rightly divide the Word of God. And God holds you responsible to rightly put it together and to uphold the Truth. **Never at any time**, for political, promotional reasons, personal reasons or vanity, to try and elevate ourselves to acceptance by others, **are we to change the Word of God!**

I hope that Dr. Hoeh repented of this before he died. I don’t know how else to do it. You can take all the good that he did—and he did a lot of good—you can take all of the things that he did well—and he did many, many things well.

But when you have three false doctrines brought into a Church of God that leads the last one to its utter destruction and going against the true teachings of the Bible, *that is a serious thing!* There are brethren and people out there who are still suffering the spiritual mental and emotional effects of what went on in the Worldwide Church of God.

Some of them have never recovered and have gone straight out into the world, because of what the men did! I don’t bring this to you as anything of a joyful task at all! But I bring it to you because today there is a movement among the Churches of God to try and get rid of Jesus as being God before He became human. Part of that goes right back and lays at the doorstep of Satan the devil! ***He is trying to take down Christ in the eyes of all the people of the world, to bring all the religions of the world into a wonderful one-world accepting religion.***

That’s the thing behind it. One last thing: Jesus said, ***‘If you deny Me, I will deny you!’*** where this falls with this, I cannot judge, and it’s not for me to do so! But it should serve as a warning to all of us that we need to remain faithful all the time, and never get around to playing ‘tinker-toy’ with the nature of God, ***because you’re going to end up violating the first commandment and have other gods before the true God!***

Scriptural References:

- 1) Jude 3-4
- 2) 2 Peter 2:1-2
- 3) Acts 20:28-30
- 4) Leviticus 23:15-16, 10-22, 15
- 5) Exodus 20:1-3
- 6) John 1:1-3
- 7) Genesis 1:2-3
- 8) John 1:3
- 9) Genesis 1:6-7, 26
- 10) John 17:4-5, 13-19
- 11) John 10:17-18
- 12) John 17:20-21
- 13) Philippians 2:5-7
- 14) Genesis 1:26
- 15) Philippians 2:7-11
- 16) 1 Timothy 3:16
- 17) John 1:4-13, 1, 14
- 18) Titus 2:11-13
- 19) 2 Peter 1:3-4

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 1 Kings 11
- Hebrews 1

Also referenced:

- [How One Man Brought Three Critical False Doctrines into a Church of God](https://www.cbcg.org/false-doctrine/three-false-doctrines.html)
{<https://www.cbcg.org/false-doctrine/three-false-doctrines.html>}
- Sermon Series: *Hebrews* (#27 *Covenant Between God the Father & the Son*)
- Books:
 - ✓ *A Harmony of the Gospels* by Fred R. Coulter
 - ✓ *Wigram’s New Testament Greek Concordance* by George Wigram

FRC:bo
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