



THE  
TRINITARIAN  
HERESY

*Foreword*

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ELDER

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# THE TRINITARIAN HERESY

*False Doctrine*

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# Recovering Apostolic Pentecostal Oneness of God, Jesus-Only Message — Jesus Is the Almighty God in Christ!

## Introduction — Purpose, Definitions, Method

Purpose: States my thesis plainly — the Bible reveals one God undivided whose Name and Person is the Lord Jesus Christ. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are titles of that one God, not three separate divine distinct persons. Trinitarianism, teaching three co-equal divine persons, is a later creedal innovation, not the Apostolic Pentecostal faith that was once delivered unto the saints (Jude 3–4).

Definitions: Explain “titles” (Father, Son, Holy Spirit), define “Oneness/Modalism” (theological term critics use), define “Trinitarianism” as later three-divine person doctrine — it is heresy, it’s paganism — and explain method: primary reliance on Scripture (exegesis), supported by historical practice (apostolic Pentecostal water baptism in Jesus’ Name and preaching in Jesus’ Name and teaching in Jesus’ Name and casting out devils in Jesus’ Name and water baptism) and careful reading of early fathers.

Method note: Distinguish biblical exegesis from historical description. Make clear the claim: the New Testament presents Jesus as the one Almighty

God (Jehovah) now manifest in the flesh; therefore baptism, worship, and salvation belong in His Name.

## Chapter 1 — Biblical Monotheism and the Identity of Jesus

Purpose: Show that the Bible's monotheism is consistent with the claim that Jesus is the one Almighty God.

Key texts to develop: Isaiah 9:6; Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:21–23; John 1:1–14; John 8:24, 58; John 10:30–38; John 14:6–20; 1 Timothy 3:16; 1 Timothy 2:5.

Main argument steps:

1. Old Testament theophanies and Jehovah: demonstrate that titles like LORD/Jehovah characterize the one God.
2. Isaiah 9:6 and 7:14 as prophetic anticipations: the Messiah is called Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Immanuel — a single person bearing divine titles.
3. Matthew 1:21–23 applies Immanuel to Jesus — showing the titles are fulfilled in Christ.
4. John 1:1–14: the Logos is God and became flesh — Logos = the one God manifest in Christ.

5. Jesus' "I am" statements (John 8:58) identify Him with the divine name revealed to Moses (Exod 3), connecting Jesus with Jehovah.
6. Jesus' unity with the Father (John 10:30–38) is best read as one divine person manifesting in modes/titles rather than two distinct co-equal persons.

7. 1 Timothy 3:16 (who was manifested in the flesh) and 1 Timothy 2:5 underscore the unique Mediator who is God and man in one Person.

Exegesis snippet:

- Isaiah 9:6: "For unto us a child is born... and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God (El-Gibbor), Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." Read as one figure receiving divine titles. Matthew cites Isaiah's Immanuel promise as fulfilled in Jesus (Matt 1:23), confirming the OT title applied directly to Christ. Therefore the OT's divine titles attach to the one Messiah. The Lord Jesus Christ is Jehovah manifested in the flesh. Dual nature in his deity: Jesus is the Father in his deity; in his humanity the Son — robed in one person, the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Primary quote suggestions: Matthew 1:21–23; John 1:1–14; Isaiah 9:6; John 8:58; 1 Tim 3:16.

## Chapter 2 — Water Baptism in the Name of The Lord Jesus Christ for the Remission of Sins (Acts 2:38)

Purpose: Show Apostolic Pentecostal baptismal practice and the New Testament insistence on the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ as the center of salvation and that the only valid way to be baptized is in Jesus' Name (Acts 2:21, 2:38; 4:12; Acts 8; Acts 10:43–48; Acts 16:31–32; Mark 16:16–17; Acts 19:1–6; Acts 22:16; Romans 6:1–6; Gal 3:27).

Key points:

1. Apostolic Pentecostal formula: The New Testament presents water baptism in Jesus' Name and the Baptism in the Holy Ghost and fire with the evidence of speaking in tongues in Jesus' Name and salvation is only in the Name of The Lord Jesus Christ (Acts examples).
2. The baptismal practice recorded in Acts is consistent with preaching “in Jesus' Name” and administering baptism into the Name (singular).
3. The Oneness view explains why baptism centers on Jesus' Name — because He is the one Lord and God (Acts 2:36).

The Acts record repeatedly links conversion, water baptism in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and

the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ as what we are to do in everything in his name (Col. 3:17). Peter's sermon (Acts 2:36–39) calls believers to be baptized "in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ" for remission (Acts 2:38); Peter declares "there is no other name under heaven" (Acts 4:12). The apostolic Pentecostal church's practice and teaching make sense: Jesus is the One Divine Name — the Name of the One God is the Lord Jesus Christ. This directly supports the Oneness of God doctrine of the Bible: baptism into Jesus' Name is baptism into the Name of the one God who is The Lord Jesus Christ.

Primary citations: Acts 2:38; Acts 4:12; Acts 8:16–17; Acts 10–11; Acts 19:5.

### Chapter 3 — Early Apostolic Pentecostal Practice and Writings

Purpose: Survey early Christian worship, baptismal formula, and preaching to show Apostolic Pentecostal oneness in practice; it was done in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ (Luke 24:47; Acts 2:38).

Evidence to examine:

- Didache (baptismal instructions), early house-church liturgies, and recorded sermons emphasizing the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Quotations from early writers that emphasize Jesus

is Lord and the divine Name is the Lord Jesus Christ.

- Main argument: While later creeds formalized terminology, early Apostolic Pentecostal practice centered on Jesus' Name and worship of the one Lord Jesus Christ. Use careful readings of Ignatius, Justin, and others to show how Acts and apostolic practice were normative.
- Note: The Didache's baptismal instructions, alongside Acts accounts, show baptismal ritual significance focused on the Lord and the Name; this suggests apostolic continuity with Jesus-centered liturgy.

## Chapter 4 — Modalists / Oneness Apostolic Witnesses in the Early Church of the Book of Acts

Purpose: Reassess figures labeled “modalists” (Noetus, Praxeas, Sabellius, Paul of Samosata) and show that Oneness theology has early roots and should be distinguished from crude caricatures.

Main points:

1. Patristic accusations often simplify opponents' positions; reconstruct modalist views from fragments and reports.
2. Show the continuity of a Oneness thrust in some early teachers: emphasis on one God revealing

Himself through Father, Son, Spirit titles.

3. Distinguish heretical abuses (oversimplifications) from the legitimate Oneness claim that God's titles are economic/personal titles for one Person.

- Sample approach: Present each figure briefly, quote critics, then offer the best reconstruction of their teaching emphasizing oneness of God and Christ's deity.

## Chapter 5 — The Road to Creedal Trinitarianism

Purpose: Trace how philosophical categories (person, hypostasis, ousia) and political pressures led to three-person language in the councils (Nicaea 325; Constantinople 381).

Main points:

1. Explain the development of technical language — Greek philosophical vocabulary was adapted to describe the Godhead.

2. Show how debates (Arian crisis) pushed bishops to define the Son's relationship to the Father in more precise, ontological terms that ultimately distinguished persons rather than titles.

3. Argue that such terminology was not present in

Scripture; it represents post-apostolic theological construction.

The Council of Nicaea responded to the Arian controversy by affirming the Son as homoousios with the Father. That term carried metaphysical meaning unavailable to the apostles. The councils sought doctrinal clarity but did so by importing categories that reconfigured biblical language about God into an ontology of three persons — a formulation the Oneness view claims departs from apostolic language that names one God in Christ.

## Chapter 6 — Pagan Triads and Philosophical Influence

Purpose: Examine alleged pagan parallels (triads) and show why similarities do not validate Trinitarian three gods — and conversely why Oneness remains the biblical account.

Main points:

1. Survey common claims that pagan triads influenced Christian doctrine; show methodological pitfalls (correlation ≠ causation).
2. Explain that Christian titles (Father, Son, Holy Spirit) serve salvific and revelatory roles rather than

matching pagan polytheism.

3. Argue that the historical development of creedal language may have been shaped in part by Hellenistic categories — a reason to be cautious and return to Scripture.

Use this chapter to argue for biblical primacy and to show how philosophical influence can lead to extra-biblical terminology (e.g., “three persons”).

## Chapter 6 — Pagan Triads and Philosophical Influence

Did pagan thought shape the trinity? Yes — and should that matter? Yes, it should matter because the bible teaches there is only one God and his name is the Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 14:11; Isa. 45:22–23).

## My Thesis / Book

Claims that Trinitarian doctrine is simply borrowed from pagan “three-gods” triads is the truth where the Catholic church mixed paganism with Christianity. Resemblances exist between Catholic pagan triads and later Christian triadic language, but the likeness does not prove the borrowing of pagan doctrine. What is undeniable is that Hellenistic philosophy and surrounding religious vocabulary provided

categories the church later used to articulate its faith. From a Jesus-Only (Oneness) Apostolic Pentecostal perspective, those categories helped produce a theological grammar that shifted biblical titles (Father, Son, Holy Spirit) into an ontology of three divine persons — a shift that distorts apostolic Pentecostal language and risks obscuring the one God revealed in Jesus Christ. This chapter weighs the evidence, distinguishes types of influence, and explains why returning to Scripture is decisive.

## 1. Note on method: correlation ≠ causation

Scholars on both sides sometimes overstate the case. Finding a triad in Egyptian, Babylonian, or Greco-Roman religion does not prove that Christian doctrine is copied from those religions. Religions often independently form triadic groupings for structural or symbolic reasons. The crucial questions are: (a) do the triads share the same theological content (i.e., three co-equal divine persons who are the one God)? (b) is there historical evidence of direct borrowing or conscious adaptation? (c) does the triad in pagan practice function as a salvific revelation of the one God in the way the Bible presents Jesus? In most cases the answers are no.

## 2. Examples of pagan “triads” and why they differ

- Egyptian triads (e.g., Osiris-Isis-Horus): These are family or cultic groupings centered on local divine dynasties and mythic narratives; they represent polytheistic myth and cult practice, not a monotheistic revelation of one God in distinct relational titles.
- Near Eastern groupings (e.g., triads in Mesopotamia): Often political or cultic associations, not theological statements of one divine essence in three persons.
- Hindu Trimurti (Brahma-Vishnu-Shiva): A distinctly different religious system with metaphysical premises unlike biblical monotheism; moreover, Hinduism's theological categories and aims are not the same as Israel's revelation.
- Greco-Roman triads (e.g., Zeus, Hera, Athena in some local shrines): Civic or cultic configurations without reference to an ethical, covenantal, saving God.

These examples show that pagan triads typically describe multiple divine beings or local cultic families and thus differ fundamentally from the biblical claim that there is one God who reveals Himself in redemptive history. Equating them with Christian doctrine confuses form with content.

## Hellenistic Philosophy, the Logos, and the Church's Vocabulary

More relevant to the formation of creedal language is Hellenistic philosophy. Middle Platonism, Stoicism, and Jewish-Hellenistic thinkers (notably Philo) had concepts such as the Logos, the One, the Intellect, and the World-Soul. These provided Greek-speaking Christians with vocabulary to explain how God relates to the world and how revelation can be both one and manifold.

- Philo's Logos: Philo used Logos as an intermediary divine agent, a way of speaking about God's reason and action. John's Gospel ("In the beginning was the Word... and the Word was God... and the Word became flesh," John 1:1, 14) uses Logos language but does so within Jewish monotheism and with a salvific emphasis different from Philo's philosophical speculation. John is not simply repeating Philo; he is using shared vocabulary to make a unique, scriptural claim: the Logos is God and became flesh in the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Philosophical utility: Fathers like Justin Martyr and Origen used Logos and other philosophical terms to communicate to a Greco-Roman audience. These terms functioned as translation aids — a way to say biblical truths to hearers who thought philosophically. That is not, by itself, proof of doctrinal borrowing.

## How Philosophical Categories Shaped Creedal Formulations

While philosophical concepts aided dialogue, they also shaped internal theological reflection. Terms such as *ousia* (essence/substance), *hypostasis* (subsistence/person), and *prosopon* (face/persona) were Greek philosophical tools adopted to answer questions prompted by controversies (e.g., Arianism). The Cappadocian synthesis (distinguishing three hypostases in one *ousia*) is an example of using philosophical grammar to articulate how Father, Son, and Spirit relate. The Oneness critique is that this grammatical turn converted titles and relational revelation into ontological subjects — and that this conversion has real implications for worship, baptism, and the way Christians conceive of God's unity.

### Why the Possibility of Influence Matters for Oneness Theology

Two key points matter to the Jesus-Only conviction:

- First, even if Hellenistic thought influenced church vocabulary, influence is not identical to biblical endorsement. The church should be cautious about letting extra-biblical categories determine doctrine. Scripture must remain the norm, and theological language should be subordinate to biblical revelation.
- Second, the adoption of philosophical categories contributed to a semantic shift: Father, Son, and Spirit moved from being titles that describe how the

one God reveals himself and acts to being reified as three distinct subjects. That reification is precisely what Oneness theology resists: the movement from one God revealed in Christ (titles) to three co-equal persons (subjects) is a hermeneutical and theological change, not a straightforward reading of the apostles.

## Responses to Common Trinitarian Replies

- “Many Christian doctrines developed in dialogue with culture; so what?” True — contextualization happens. But contextualization should translate Scripture, not replace it. Where cultural categories reshape the meaning of the biblical text, Christians must reassess.
- “The Logos concept in John proves a philosophical borrow.” John uses Logos language because it was available; but John’s Logos is uniquely incarnational and covenantal. The content is scriptural revelation, not mere philosophy.
- “Triadic language was simply an attempt to protect divine unity and distinctness.” Protecting orthodoxy is necessary, but Oneness insists protection must not sacrifice the Bible’s primary way of naming God: one Lord, Jesus Christ (Acts 4:12). Philosophical precision should serve Scripture, not displace its grammar.

## Practical Conclusions and a Pastoral Caution

- Distinguish form from content: superficial similarities to pagan triads do not prove that Christian doctrine is pagan, but philosophers' vocabulary did shape later theological grammar.
- Recover biblical categories: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit should be understood primarily as titles and revelatory descriptors connected to the one God revealed in Christ. The church must not elevate philosophical categories to rule over the scriptural witness.
- Teach history critically: Christians should learn how theology developed, including the role of Hellenistic thought, without allowing that development to supplant apostolic practice and language.

## Conclusion

The presence of triadic motifs in surrounding religions and the church's use of Hellenistic philosophical vocabulary are historical realities that bear on how doctrine was later expressed. For Oneness theology the decisive corrective is scriptural fidelity: even if philosophers gave the church words that later helped form creeds, the church's confession must be rooted in the apostles' witness — the one God who is now known in Jesus Christ. Where philosophical categories have obscured that witness by turning titles into separate divine subjects,

the church must return to apostolic language and practice: worship the one Lord Jesus Christ, baptize into His Name the Lord Jesus Christ, and read Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as titles. We are not to baptize in titles; we are to baptize in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ only. Any other way is not valid. The one Jesus is the Almighty God in Christ.

## Chapter 7 — Theological Implications: Incarnation, Atonement, Salvation in the Name

Purpose: Show doctrinal consequences of Oneness theology for incarnation, atonement, mediation, and salvation.

Main points:

1. The incarnation is the one God (Jehovah) becoming flesh in Jesus (John 1; Phil 2; 1 Tim 3:16).
2. Atonement as accomplished by the one God-Man (Jesus) maintains divine agency and personal mediation (1 Tim 2:5).
3. Practical implications for prayer, worship, and evangelism: Christians call on the Name of the only Lord (Acts 4:12).
  - Exegetical notes: 1 Timothy 3:16 (“manifested in the flesh”) to argue the glory of God experienced in

Christ's person; 1 Timothy 2:5 underlines the singular mediator.

## Chapter 8 — Pastoral and Ecclesial Effects: How Creedal Trinitarianism Changed Worship

Purpose: Describe how creedal Trinitarianism changed church life: baptismal formulas, liturgy, and public devotion.

Topics:

1. How baptismal practice altered (three-fold formula vs. Jesus' Name baptism is biblical).
2. Changes in catechesis and worship language; the effect on preaching the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ.
3. Practical pastoral tasks for restoring Jesus-Name worship and baptism in water in Jesus' Name congregations.
  - Include a sample Jesus-Name baptismal liturgy in the appendix.

The worship of a Trinity of three distinct divine persons is not different from certain forms of paganism. To worship a trinity of three divine co-equal persons who are distinct and separated is the

worship of three gods. Trinitarianism, as commonly taught in denominational churches, asserts three different gods: God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost. That is why they insist on “three-in-one” and “one-in-three” language. From a Oneness perspective, that is mathematically and theologically impossible and is false doctrine.

Baptism in titles erases the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Preaching, evangelism — how we need to restore Apostolic Pentecostal practice of Acts 2:38 and the worship of one God whose Name is the Lord Jesus Christ.

### Thesis / Book

When the church moved from the Apostolic-Pentecostal, Jesus-Name pattern preserved in the book of Acts and the epistles to post-apostolic creedal formulations emphasizing three distinct divine persons, important changes followed in worship, baptism, liturgy, theology, and pastoral life. Some developments guarded truth under pressure (e.g., defense of the Son’s divinity), but others displaced apostolic Pentecostal practice of worshiping one God and His Name is Jesus and changed doctrine and language into a paganism of worship of a trinity of gods: baptismal formulas shifted, Christ-centered worship was reframed, catechesis adopted

extra-biblical categories, and the practical expectation of Spirit-baptism with evidence of speaking in tongues diminished in many traditions.

This chapter documents those pastoral and ecclesial effects from a Oneness Apostolic Pentecostal perspective and gives concrete steps pastors and churches can take to restore Apostolic Pentecostal doctrine and practice while exercising charity and wisdom in a divided ecclesial landscape.

## 1. Liturgical Shifts: From Jesus' Name to Triadic Formulas

- Apostolic Pentecostal practice in Acts shows converts baptized “in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ” and receiving the Holy Ghost with the evidence of speaking in tongues (Acts 2; 8; 10; 19). Over time liturgies increasingly used the triadic formula “in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost” (Matt 28:19 is treated here as a later liturgical formulation).
- Effect: The centrality of the Name “Jesus” in public rites declined in many places. Baptism as an enactment into the one Lord Jesus Christ was reinterpreted as a threefold invocation that can obscure the apostolic Pentecostal link between Jesus' Name and remission/Spirit.

## 2. Baptismal Theology and Practice

- Shift: Baptism became associated with theological categories (Trinitarian language) and ecclesial authority rather than the apostles' Jesus-Name enactment.
- Effect: Many churches adopted the three-name formula as standard, while the practice of baptizing explicitly into the Name of The Lord Jesus Christ and expecting the Spirit with tongues faded in non-Pentecostal traditions.

### 3. Worship and Prayer Language

- Shift: Corporate prayer and doxologies increasingly structured their address by reference to Father, Son, Holy Spirit as distinct persons in liturgy and hymnody.
- Effect: Devotional emphasis moved from calling on the Lord Jesus (Acts 4:12; “in the name of Jesus”) to more abstract Trinitarian language. While reverent, this sometimes reduced direct Jesus-centered invocation and the expectation that Christians would address God through Jesus.

### 4. Theological Education and Clericalism

- Shift: The rise of theological schools and systematic theology taught metaphysical categories (ousia, hypostasis, person) as foundational to orthodoxy.
- Effect: Pastors and teachers trained primarily in creedal schools often passed on technical vocabulary that congregations could not easily

map back to apostolic Pentecostal practice. Clerical authority and credentialing sometimes displaced house-church apostolic simplicity, leading to a gap between academic theology and the lived worship and baptismal practice of the early Apostolic Pentecostal church.

## 5. Sacramentalism and the Priesthood

- Shift: In some streams, sacramental theology and a developed priesthood made ordination, sacraments, and ecclesial offices the primary means of grace.
- Effect: The vibrant apostolic pattern — immediate conversion, baptism in Jesus' Name, hands-on impartation of the Baptism in the Holy Ghost with the evidence of speaking in tongues — gave way to mediated access through sacraments and clergy.

## 6. Evangelism and Mission Practice

- Shift: Missionary approaches shaped by creedal catechesis emphasized doctrine in abstract terms and catechumenal instruction.
- Effect: Some missionary methods prioritized catechetical assent to creeds before baptism and Spirit-experience. In contrast, the apostolic model tied proclamation, baptism in Jesus' Name, and receiving the Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues.

## 7. Marginalization of Oneness and Charismatic Expectation

- Shift: Institutional orthodoxy sometimes labeled Oneness or modalist expressions as heretical and marginalized them from wider ecclesial participation.
- Effect: Oneness groups were often excluded from dialogue; charismatic markers (tongues as initial evidence) were dismissed by many traditions. This produced both persecution and an internal strengthening of Oneness identity — but also a barrier to mutual understanding.

## 8. Pastoral Costs: Confusion, Polarization, and Loss of Apostolic Simplicity

- Pastoral consequences include confused catechesis, polarization between scholars and laypeople, and loss of the apostolic simplicity that made the early church accessible and powerful.

Principles for Restoration — A Pastoral Roadmap  
Restoration does not mean reckless division or  
disrespect for history. It means returning to apostolic  
patterns as normative while pursuing unity in gospel  
essentials. Practical steps:

### a) Re-teach Biblical Categories First

- Start with clear, Scripture-based catechesis: God is one (Deut 6:4); Jesus is Jehovah manifest (Isa 9:6; Matt 1:23; John 1:1–14); baptism in the Name of Jesus is apostolic (Acts 2:38; 19:5–6).
- Define terms: titles vs. persons; revelation/

economy vs. ontology.

b) Restore Baptism in the Name of Jesus with Expectation of the Holy Ghost

- Reintroduce the apostolic baptismal form publicly and explain its biblical basis; follow baptism with laying on of hands and expect the Spirit's coming (Acts 2, 8, 10, 19).
- Teach about tongues as the initial physical evidence of Spirit-baptism (as your tradition holds), and practice patient, faithful expectation in services.

c) Re-center Worship and Prayer on the Incarnate Lord

- Encourage prayers “in the name of Jesus” and include sung and spoken worship that calls on the Lord’s Name; teach congregations to pray directly to God through Jesus.

d) Equip Leaders with Pastoral and Biblical Training, Not Only Technical Theology

- Train pastors in biblical exegesis, Acts-centered ecclesiology, baptismal theology, and Pentecostal pneumatology alongside historical theology.

e) Restore House-church Dynamics and Immediate Pastoral Care

- Encourage small groups and house assemblies where baptismal catechesis, Spirit-seeking, and

discipleship happen organically.

f) Engage Trinitarian Christians with Charity and Clarity

- Maintain a winsome apologetic: present Scripture plainly, quote Acts evidence, and avoid inflammatory polemics. Seek dialogue on common gospel ground.

g) Provide practical liturgies and catechetical materials

- Offer sample baptismal liturgies, baptismal classes, prayers, and hymns that reemphasize Jesus' Name.

### A Sample Restoration Plan (12–18 months)

- Months 1–3: Teach a sermon series on “The Name of Jesus” (Acts, John, Isaiah), hold Bible classes, and distribute catechetical leaflets.
- Months 4–6: Begin baptizing new converts publicly “in the name of Jesus Christ” with laying on of hands and expectant prayer for the Spirit.
- Months 7–12: Start regular Spirit-seeking meetings and small group practice; train lay leaders to assist in baptisms and prayer for the Spirit.
- Months 12–18: Establish mentoring for leaders, produce worship resources centered on Jesus’ Name, and begin patient outreach to neighboring congregations for dialogue.

## Conclusion

The shift from apostolic practice to creedal, philosophical formulations produced both benefits (defense of the Son's divinity) and costs (loss of apostolic baptismal practice, diminished Jesus-Name centrality, curtailed charismatic expectation).

Restoration is a pastoral project. It requires humility, scriptural fidelity, patient teaching, and practical reformation of worship and baptism. Churches that recover the apostolic pattern — baptizing in Jesus' Name, expecting the Holy Ghost with evidence, preaching Jesus as Jehovah in deity and humanity — will find renewed power for evangelism, discipleship, and holiness. Restoration must proceed in charity toward others, calling all Christians to return to Scripture as the final authority and to seek unity in essentials while holding to the apostolic witness about the Name and Person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

## Chapter 9 — Responding to Objections

Purpose: Anticipate and answer common Trinitarian criticisms using Scripture, logic, and historical argument.

Objections to cover and brief replies:

1. “But John 14–16 distinguishes Father, Son, and

“Spirit” — reply: these are economic distinctions and relational titles within the one God’s revelation; Jesus promises the Spirit proceeds from the Father but will be given in Jesus’ Name (John 14:16–17, 26).

2. “What about passages that seem to indicate distinct persons?” — reply: examine each passage contextually (e.g., baptism scene, transfiguration) and show how one God’s self-revelation can manifest relationally without implying three co-equal eternal persons.

3. “Trinity is orthodox; modalism was condemned” — reply: distinguish pastoral abuses and caricatures from the biblical Oneness claim; defend continuity with apostolic practice.

- Provide exegetical responses to John 14–16, John 10, Pauline passages often used for Trinitarian proof, and key patristic citations.

### Conclusion — Call to Restore Apostolic Doctrine and Practice

Restate the thesis: Jesus is Jehovah; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are titles of the one Almighty God in Christ.

Offer concrete steps:

1. Restore New Testament baptismal practice (teach and practice baptism in Jesus' Name).
2. Preach the Name of Jesus as the one Lord and God.
3. Educate congregations biblically about Oneness theology and the difference between biblical titles and extra-biblical creedal terms.
  - Encourage charitable dialogue with Trinitarian Christians while calling for repentance from doctrinal error.

## Appendices and Tools

- Appendix A: Key primary texts and translations (Isaiah 9:6; Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1; John 1; John 8; John 10; John 14; 1 Timothy 3:16; 1 Timothy 2:5; Acts references).
- Appendix B: Timeline of controversies and councils (concise, factual).
- Appendix C: Glossary — define “titles,” “person,” “hypostasis,” “modalism,” “Trinitarianism,” “Oneness.”
- Appendix D: Sample sermons and baptismal liturgy in Jesus' Name.
- Bibliography: Oneness authors (David K. Bernard), selected patristic texts, and scholarly works for background (Hanson, Pelikan, Ayres) to anticipate objections.

## Selected Exegetical Passages

### 1. Isaiah 9:6 → Matthew 1:21–23

- Exegesis: Isaiah assigns the coming child divine titles — “Mighty God” and “Everlasting Father.” Matthew explicitly applies the Immanuel prophecy to Jesus (Matt 1:23). If Isaiah’s titles attach to the Messiah and Matthew applies that to Jesus, the New Testament identifies Jesus with titles belonging to the one God. This supports the claim that the Old Testament’s divine names are fulfilled in the one person Jesus Christ.

### 2. John 1:1–14

- Exegesis: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... And the Word became flesh.” The Logos is both God and (now) flesh — a single divine eternal Spirit undivided manifest in the Lord Jesus Christ. This is best read as identification of Jesus with the one God who now appears in human form.

### 3. John 8:58 and John 10:30–38

- Exegesis: Jesus’ “Before Abraham was, I am” intentionally invokes the divine name revealed in Exodus. The Jewish hearers understood this as a claim to deity and sought to stone Him. Jesus’ later “I and the Father are one” language signals oneness of being/identity in mission and essence, not two

separate co-equal divine distinct persons as later defined in creedal language. The Oneness reading sees Jesus as the one God speaking and acting in the role of his flesh for our salvation.

#### 4. 1 Timothy 3:16 and 1 Timothy 2:5

- Exegesis: 1 Tim 3:16 speaks of the mystery of godliness: God manifested in the flesh. 1 Tim 2:5 names one mediator between God and men — the man Christ Jesus. These verses support the claim that the one God has been uniquely manifest in Christ and that Christ alone is the mediator, which coheres with the Oneness affirmation that Jesus is the one God in person.

### Chapter 10 – Biblical Monotheism and the Identity of Jesus: Jesus Is the One Almighty God in Christ

#### Thesis

The Bible proclaims one God (Deut 6:4). The New Testament identifies that one God as the Lord Jesus Christ — the same divine Jehovah who spoke and acted in the Old Testament — now revealed in the flesh as the Lord Jesus Christ. The titles Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are not three separate divine persons but titles used of the one Almighty God in Christ, who is God himself manifested in flesh for our salvation and known to us in the Person of Jesus Christ. This

chapter establishes that claim from the Scriptures themselves.

## The Old Testament Background: One God is Jesus — Jehovah who has become our Savior

Israel's confession was unequivocal: "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD" (Deut 6:4). The name LORD (Hebrew YHWH, often rendered Jehovah) designates the self-existent, eternal, undivided Spirit — the Lord Jesus Christ in his deity — covenant God who reveals, promises, and saves. Old Testament theophanies and prophetic titles attach divine attributes to the one God alone — attributes later applied to the Lord Jesus Christ Messiah. If the Messiah is spoken of with divine titles, the New Testament consequently connects that Messiah with the one true God, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Isaiah's prophecy is decisive. Isaiah 9:6 reads: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God [El-Gibbor], The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." These are not casual honorifics but titles of deity of the Lord Jesus Christ. That a single child is called "Mighty God" and "Everlasting Father" indicates the Father incarnate in the flesh is the Messiah. The Lord Jesus Christ will bear the titles

and functions of the One True God manifest in the flesh. Isaiah 7:14 likewise promises a sign: “Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.” Matthew explicitly applies that prophecy to Jesus (Matt 1:22–23), declaring the Immanuel promise fulfilled in Christ. Matthew thereby places upon Jesus the Old Testament divine titles and the identity of God with us — the very identity of Jehovah; Jesus is Jehovah manifested in the flesh.

## 1. Matthew’s Fulfillment: Immanuel and Divine Titles Applied to Jesus

Matthew 1:21–23 reads: “Thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins... Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which is, being interpreted, God with us.” Matthew’s point is straightforward: the prophecy that assigns divine titles to the coming child is fulfilled in Jesus. If Isaiah’s titles describe the one God and Matthew applies them to Jesus, then Jesus is presented as that one God undivided, the eternal Spirit in his deity — Jehovah on his divine side — now manifest among men.

## 2. The Logos: John’s Identification of Jesus as the Divine One

John 1:1–14 is central: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us... we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” The Logos (the Word) existed as God; then that same Logos became flesh as the Lord Jesus Christ. This is not a statement of two competing divine beings but of one divine reality that became incarnate. The Word’s incarnation establishes that the one God has been made known in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

### 3. Jesus’ “I AM” Statements: Claiming the Divine Name

Jesus repeatedly uses “I am” language that echoes God’s self-revelation in Exodus. In John 8:58 He says, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.” The Jewish hearers understood the force of those words and sought to stone Him (v. 59). The expression “I am” (Greek *ego eimi*) evokes the divine name revealed at the burning bush (Exod 3:14). Jesus therefore identifies Himself as the self-existent Jehovah of Israel, indicating that He is the same eternal Jehovah now personally known and revealed in the Lord Jesus Christ.

John 10:30–38 further shows this identification: Jesus declares, “I and my Father are one.” The Jews again

pick up stones to stone Him for blasphemy (v. 33). Jesus' defense points to His works and Scripture's witness: He argues that if Scripture calls those works divine and He is sent and empowered by the Father, the oneness He claims is not merely of purpose but of identity. The Oneness reading takes these statements to mean that Jesus is the one God expressing Himself as Father and Son in deity and humanity in the one person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

#### 4. There Is No Distinction in the Godhead: Titles, Not Separate Persons

John 14–16 records relational language: the Father is Jesus, the Son is Jesus, and the Holy Ghost is Jesus in the sense that these are titles, roles, or offices of the one undivided God. Jesus is the Father in the work of creation, Jesus is the Son in redemption, and Jesus will send His Spirit, the Comforter, in His Name. The Spirit is the omnipresent eternal Spirit — the Spirit of God in the believer. The passages describe roles and relations in the work of salvation. The Oneness understanding reads them as roles, titles, or offices — Father in creation, Son in redemption, Holy Ghost in regeneration — rather than as evidence of three separate divine persons.

#### 5. The Mediator Who Is God and Man: 1 Timothy 2:5 and 1 Timothy 3:16

The apostle Paul insists on the uniqueness of the Mediator: “For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus” (1 Tim 2:5). The mediator is both the man Jesus and the one God who has become man; the New Testament emphatically ties mediation to the incarnate God. 1 Timothy 3:16 speaks of “God manifest in the flesh” (KJV: “Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh...”). The mystery of godliness is not three gods acting as mediators but the one God made manifest in Christ to redeem mankind. These verses underscore the Oneness claim: the God who saves is the same God who was manifested in Jesus Christ.

## 6. Acts and the Apostolic Practice: Baptism and the Name of Jesus

The apostolic era centers salvation on the Name of Jesus. Peter’s sermon at Pentecost culminates in the call to repentance and baptism “for the remission of sins” in connection with the Name (Acts 2:38). Peter later declares “there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). The examples of Acts show that the early church preached, baptized, and invoked the Name of Jesus — the singular Name of the one Lord God. Acts 8, 10–11, and 19 likewise show conversions and baptisms anchored in the Lordship and Name

of Jesus. The Oneness understanding explains this coherently: if Jesus is the one God, baptism and salvation in His Name are baptism and salvation into the one God.

## 7. The Biblical Term “Trinity” Is Extra-Biblical

The English word “Trinity” and the technical vocabulary of “three divine persons” do not appear in Scripture; they are theological constructs developed in post-apostolic debates. The New Testament presents Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but it never instructs the churches to worship three separate divine beings. The biblical pattern is worship and obedience to the one Lord Jesus Christ. The development of creedal language came as the church sought to guard against specific errors (for example, Arian denial of the Son’s divinity). However, guarding truth should not lead us to import non-biblical ontological categories that appear to divide the one God into three distinct, co-equal persons. The Oneness case insists: define God by what Scripture plainly teaches — the one God who is known and revealed in the Lord Jesus Christ.

### Conclusion

Taken together, the Old Testament prophecies, Matthew’s fulfillment, John’s Logos theology, Jesus’ “I

am” claims, Paul’s insistence on one mediator, and the apostolic practice in Acts form a consistent biblical witness: the one Almighty God is now revealed in the Person of Jesus Christ. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are titles and relational descriptions within the one God’s self-revelation. Baptism, worship, and salvation in the apostolic church were centered on the Name of Jesus because Jesus is the Name of the one God. This is the decisive foundation for the Oneness position: the Bible, read on its own terms, identifies the Lord Jesus as Jehovah manifest in the flesh — the Almighty God in Christ.

## Chapter 11 – Baptism and the Name of Jesus: Apostolic Practice, Scriptural Mandate, and Theological Significance

### Thesis

The New Testament consistently links repentance, water baptism, and salvation to the Name of Jesus. The apostolic pattern in Acts shows believers baptized into the singular Name of the Lord Jesus Christ and receiving the Holy Ghost and fire with the initial evidence of speaking in tongues. This chapter examines the key Acts passages, explains Matthew 28:19 from a Jesus-Name/Oneness perspective, surveys early liturgical evidence, and draws theological and pastoral conclusions: baptism in the

Name of Jesus is the apostolic pattern because Jesus is the one Almighty God revealed in the flesh, and reception of the Spirit is accompanied by the sign of speaking with other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance.

## 1. Peter at Pentecost: Baptism in the Name and the Gift of Tongues (Acts 2:1–4, 38)

At Pentecost the Holy Ghost came with visible and vocal signs. Acts 2:1–4 records that when the Spirit fell the apostles “were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” Peter’s call to repentance and baptism follows this event: “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost” (Acts 2:38, KJV). The pattern is clear: the Spirit came and the apostles spoke in tongues as the first outward demonstration of the Spirit’s presence. The Oneness Pentecostal understanding asserts that when the Holy Ghost is received as in Acts, it is accompanied by the evidence of speaking in tongues — the initial physical sign that the indwelling Spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ has come (sometimes described as “Holy Ghost and fire” in Acts 2:3).

## 2. There Is No Other Name: The Centrality of Jesus (Acts 4:12)

Peter's later declaration reinforces the exclusivity of Christ's Name: "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). On the apostolic understanding, salvation is bound to the one Lord's Name. If Jesus is the Name of the one God (as argued in Chapter 1), then the apostolic insistence on baptism and calling upon the Name of Jesus corresponds to worship and salvation being directed to the one God in Christ — and to receiving the Spirit of that same Lord, with tongues as the manifest evidence.

### 3. Samaritan Baptisms and Apostolic Commission (Acts 8:12–17)

When Philip preached in Samaria many believed and were baptized "in the name of Jesus Christ" (Acts 8:12). However, they did not receive the Holy Ghost until Peter and John came and laid hands on them (Acts 8:14–17). The record shows: (1) conversion and baptism are in the Name of Jesus; (2) reception of the Spirit is associated with apostolic authority and the laying on of hands; and (3) when the Spirit came in apostolic pattern, it was accompanied by evidence. The Oneness reading sees here the apostolic pattern of baptism in Jesus' Name followed by reception of the Holy Ghost with the accompanying sign.

## 4. Cornelius and Gentile Conversion (Acts 10–11)

At Cornelius' house the Holy Ghost fell upon the Gentiles while Peter spoke, and they “glorified God” (Acts 10:44–46). Verse 46 notes they “spake with tongues, and magnified God.” Observing this, Peter said they should be baptized (Acts 10:47–48). This instance again connects the coming of the Spirit with speaking in tongues as the persuasive sign to Jewish believers that God had given the same gift to Gentiles. The Oneness position holds that speaking in tongues is the initial evidence that the indwelling Spirit has arrived in the life of the new believer.

## 5. Ephesus and the Distinctive Practice (Acts 19:1–6)

Paul’s encounter at Ephesus also follows the pattern. Paul found disciples who had received only John’s baptism; after baptizing them “in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ” he laid hands on them, and “the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied” (Acts 19:5–6). This is a clear apostolic sequence: water baptism into the Name of Jesus, apostolic laying on of hands, and the coming of the Spirit with tongues as the initial, visible evidence.

## 6. What Does “In the Name of Jesus” Mean? Identity, Authority, and the Spirit’s Seal

“In the name of Jesus” involves both authority and identity. The apostles baptized into the Name because it is the personal, saving Name of the one God. In addition, the reception of the Spirit — the Spirit of Jesus — is often portrayed as the sealing and empowering presence that follows belief and obedience, with tongues as the Spirit’s initial outward witness. The name is not an empty formula; it binds the believer to the person and power of the Lord Jesus Christ, whose Spirit is poured out.

## 7. Matthew 28:19 and the Threefold Formula — Apostolic Practice over Later Formulation

Matthew 28:19 instructs baptizing “in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” The Oneness reading understands the singular “name” to reflect one Name that encompasses Father, Son, and Holy Spirit — the Name that is ultimately revealed in Jesus Christ. The apostolic practice recorded in Acts shows how the Commission was enacted: the apostles baptized in the Name of Jesus, and the Spirit’s coming in those instances was evidenced by tongues. Where later liturgical formulas developed, the earliest normative record preserved in Acts — baptism in Jesus’ Name with reception of the Spirit and tongues — carries apostolic authority for practice.

## 8. Early Liturgical Evidence and Historical Notes

Some early writings (e.g., Didache) reflect triadic liturgies, but the Acts record remains the normative apostolic example of how salvation, baptism, and the Spirit's gift were experienced. The Oneness view holds that the apostolic pattern is authoritative: baptism in Jesus' Name followed by the reception of the Holy Ghost, with speaking in tongues as the initial evidence of the indwelling Spirit.

## 9. Theological Significance: Baptism, Remission, the Spirit, and Tongues as Initial Evidence

The apostolic links among baptism in Jesus' Name, remission of sins, the reception of the Holy Ghost, and speaking in tongues carry decisive theological weight for Oneness Pentecostals. Peter ties baptism in Jesus' Name to remission (Acts 2:38). The coming of the Spirit in Acts is repeatedly accompanied by tongues (Acts 2, 10, 19). Therefore, speaking with other tongues is the initial physical evidence that the Holy Ghost has been received and now indwells the believer. The practical implication: believers should seek baptism in the Name of Jesus and await the Spirit's coming, asking God to receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost and the evidence of speaking in other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance.

## 10. Pastoral Application and a Jesus-Name Baptismal Form with Expectation of Tongues

Pastorally, churches should teach and practice the apostolic pattern with expectation that the Holy Ghost will come in the experience of believers and provide the initial evidence of speaking in tongues.

- Gospel proclamation and confession of faith in Christ.
- Baptismal declaration: “I baptize thee in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.”
- Immersion in water.
- Apostolic laying on of hands, prayer, and invitation to receive the Holy Ghost: “Receive ye the Holy Ghost, and may the Lord fill you with the Spirit and with fire; if you have received the Holy Ghost, you will speak with other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance.” (Wait and pray expectantly for the evidence.)
- If tongues do not immediately manifest, continue to pray, teach, and lay hands as the church follows apostolic precedent and seeks the Spirit with faith.

## Conclusion and Transition

The apostolic Pentecostal pattern in Acts binds baptism in Jesus' Name with the reception of the Holy Ghost, and the Spirit's coming in the recorded instances is accompanied by speaking in tongues. For Oneness Apostolic Pentecostals, speaking in tongues is the initial, outward evidence that the indwelling

Spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ has been received. Chapter 3 will survey apostolic preaching and early Christian writings to show how early worship and catechesis reflected Jesus-centered devotion and the baptismal and Spirit patterns.

## Chapter 12 — Early Apostolic Practice and Writings: House-Church Worship, Baptismal Formulas, and the Lord Jesus as the Godhead

### Thesis

The New Testament apostolic pattern (Acts) centers worship, baptism, prayer, and preaching on the Lord Jesus Christ and His Name. Early Christian practice in house churches preserved that Jesus-centered devotion. Later patristic and liturgical developments show a mix of continuity with apostolic practice and the gradual introduction of extra-biblical technical language. From a Jesus-Only (Oneness) conviction, the earliest living practice of the church points to worship and initiation in the Name of Jesus as normative. This chapter surveys apostolic house-church life, early liturgical evidence, and the testimony of the Apostolic Fathers and other early writers, highlighting the centrality of the Lord Jesus and the baptismal/Spirit patterns carried from Acts.

#### 1. Apostolic House Churches: The New Testament

## Pattern Continued in Practice

The New Testament itself locates the early church in domestic assemblies — breaking of bread, prayer, teaching, baptismal instruction, and the use of the Name of Jesus. The letters to early churches assume local, intimate gatherings: believers met in “the house of” such-and-such (Rom 16:5; 1 Cor 16:19; Col 4:15). Within these contexts the apostolic pattern recorded in Acts — preaching Jesus, baptizing in His Name, expecting the Holy Ghost — became living practice.

Key biblical motifs carried into early worship:

- Praying “in Christ” or “in the Name” of the Lord (see numerous Pauline salutations and exhortations).
- Breaking bread “in remembrance of” the Lord Jesus (Luke/Pauline material), worship directed to the Lord’s person and atoning work.
- The baptismal imperative tied to the Name (Acts examples) likely formed the normative catechesis given in house churches before public baptism.

For the Oneness apologist, the domestic and apostolic Pentecostal character of early assemblies reinforces the point that the earliest living faith centered on the person and Name of Jesus rather than on later abstract theological categories.

### 1. The Didache, Early Liturgies, and Baptismal

## Formulas

The Didache (late first/early second century according to most scholars) provides an important early snapshot of Christian liturgy. It contains a baptismal instruction (Didache 7:1) that reads in many manuscripts: “Baptize in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” This triadic formula is the earliest explicit example of a formal threefold baptismal liturgy outside of the New Testament.

Two observations for the Jesus-Only case:

- Acts remains the descriptive normative record of apostolic practice performed by the apostles themselves; the Didache shows that a triadic formula was used in some early communities but does not displace the apostolic record in Acts where baptisms are recorded in Jesus’ Name (Acts 2, 8, 10, 19).
- The presence of the triadic formula in early liturgy demonstrates that diverse ritual expressions existed. Liturgical formulations sometimes reflect theological reflection and evolving vocabulary rather than the original apostolic Pentecostal enactment. Where liturgy diverged from apostolic practice, Oneness conviction urges restoration of the apostolic pattern — baptizing in the Name of Jesus and expecting the Spirit as in Acts.

## 1. Clement of Rome and the Emphasis on Christ's Lordship

Clement (late first century) emphasizes humility, order, and the Lordship of Christ in language that repeatedly centers on Jesus as the authority and head of the church. While 1 Clement does not lay out a baptismal formula, its high Christology and frequent invocations of the Lord point toward a practice of naming and honoring Jesus at the center of church life. Such epistolary and pastoral material reflect an early devotional focus on Christ that is consistent with apostolic practice.

## 2. Ignatius of Antioch: Strong Christological Language, but Warnings About Interpolation

Ignatius (early second century) frequently uses exalted titles for Jesus: “Jesus Christ our God” and similar phrases appear in some of his extant letters. Oneness interpreters point to these as powerful early attestations that Christians called Jesus “God” and worshiped Him accordingly. However, modern scholarship debates whether some of Ignatius’s extreme Christological phrases were later scribal interpolations; still, even conservative readings show many of Ignatius’s letters express unambiguous worship of Jesus as Lord and God’s appointed head.

### 3. Polycarp, Justin Martyr, and Early Worship

Polycarp (mid-second century) in his Letter to the Philippians honors the Lord Jesus and draws on apostolic tradition. Justin Martyr (mid-second century), known for his Logos theology, grounds worship in Christ: his First Apology describes Christian gatherings where thanksgiving is offered to “the Father and the Son” and where the Eucharist is associated with the flesh and blood of Jesus. Oneness reading: Justin’s Logos language can be read as affirming that the Logos — the divine agent — is made known in Jesus.

### 4. Irenaeus and Tertullian: Development of Categories and the Rise of Theological Precision

Irenaeus (late second century) argues forcefully for the unity of God and for the economy of salvation in Christ: a central motif in his work is recapitulation — God recapitulates humanity in the one Christ. Irenaeus stresses the saving work of Christ and the sovereignty of the Father yet speaks of the Son in ways that Oneness readers interpret as consistent with a one-God economy revealed in the incarnate Christ.

Tertullian (late second — early third century) famously used Latin theological language (e.g.,

trinitas) and argued against modalist charges with technical distinctions (persona, substantia). Tertullian's formulations are often used by Trinitarian theology to show the development of the three-person vocabulary. From a Oneness perspective, Tertullian's emergence of technical distinctions demonstrates how philosophical and legal categories eventually recast biblical language into ontological schema that go beyond apostolic expression.

## 5. Modalist Witnesses and Mischaracterizations: Noetus, Praxeas, Sabellius

A number of early figures (Noetus, Praxeas, Sabellius, Paul of Samosata) are popularly grouped under “modalism” or “patrilinearism.” Patristic writers often caricature or condemn them for collapsing distinctions improperly. A careful reading — reconstructing fragmentary evidence and taking the polemical contexts into account — shows that some of these teachers emphasized the one God who reveals Himself in different modes or titles (Father, Son, Spirit) and resisted a notion of three separate gods. Oneness scholarship argues that patristic condemnations sometimes attacked polemical oversimplifications rather than the biblical point that God is one and is known in the Name of Jesus.

## 6. The Priority of Apostolic Practice and the Weight of

Across the early writings there is a strong and persistent devotion to Jesus: prayers, eucharistic practice, catechesis, and baptismal instruction often place Jesus at the center. That said, the emergence of theological vocabulary and triadic liturgical forms in some sources demonstrates development. For Oneness conviction the critical point is this: the apostolic enactments preserved in Acts — baptisms in Jesus' Name, the coming of the Spirit with tongues, preaching the exclusivity of Christ's Name — carry normative authority for the church. Where later liturgical or theological developments depart from apostolic enactment, the church should evaluate them against the apostolic pattern and consider restoration.

## 7. Practical Markers of Early Jesus-Centered Practice

From the evidence surveyed, several practical markers emerge that Oneness congregations should emphasize as authentic continuations of early Christian life:

- Preaching Christ and His Name as the center of salvation (Acts and the Fathers).
- Baptism in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ with expectation of the baptism in the Holy Ghost with the initial evidence of speaking in tongues (apostolic sequence).

- Prayers and doxologies directed to Jesus as Lord; liturgy that keeps the incarnate Lord Jesus Christ central rather than abstract ontological constructs.
- House-church patterns of pastoral care, catechesis, and immediate application of apostolic practice in conversion contexts.

## Conclusion and Transition

Early Christian practice shows a strong continuity with the New Testament focus on the Lord Jesus Christ and the use of His Name in worship and mission. While some early liturgical texts and later theologians introduced triadic formulas and philosophical categories, the living apostolic praxis recorded in Acts and reflected in early house churches remains the primary pattern for baptism in Jesus' Name, reception of the Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues, and corporate worship. The Oneness argument urges that the church recover this apostolic Pentecostal norm — make Jesus' Name the center of baptism, prayer, and proclamation, and expect the Holy Ghost with the sign of speaking in other tongues as the apostolic Pentecostal evidence.

## Chapter 13 — The Trinitarian Heresy: False Doctrine Recovering Apostolic Oneness — Jesus Is the Almighty God in Christ

## Purpose, Definitions, Method

Purpose: State thesis plainly — the Bible reveals one God whose Name and Person are Jesus Christ. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are titles of that one God. Trinitarianism, teaching three-co-equal divine persons, is a later creedal innovation, not the apostolic faith.

Definitions: Explain “titles” (Father, Son, Holy Spirit), define “Oneness/Modalism” (theological term critics use), define “Trinitarianism” as later three-person doctrine, and explain method: primary reliance on Scripture (exegesis), supported by historical practice (apostolic baptism and preaching) and careful reading of early fathers.

Method note: Distinguish biblical exegesis from historical description. Make clear the claim: the New Testament presents Jesus as the one Almighty God (Jehovah) now manifest in the flesh; therefore baptism, worship, and salvation belong in His Name.

We will reexamine the So-Called “Modalist”  
Figures More Closely

Noetus, Praxeas, Sabellius, and Paul of Samosata — parsing patristic accusations, reconstructing their likely teachings, and showing how an authentic

Apostolic Pentecostal Oneness understanding differs from crude caricatures while remaining faithful to apostolic Pentecostal practice of Acts 2:38 as the plan of salvation.

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