

Jude 3

Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints.

1 Timothy 6:3

If anyone advocates a different doctrine and does not agree with sound words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the doctrine conforming to godliness...

Hebrews 2:3

How will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard...

Mark 1:14, 15

Now after John had been taken into custody, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

Luke 8:11-13

Now the parable is this: the seed is the word of God. Those beside the road are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their heart, so that they will not believe and be saved. Those on the rocky soil are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no firm root; they believe for a while, and in time of temptation fall away.

Micah 4:6-8

"In that day," declares the LORD, "I will assemble the lame and gather the outcasts, even those whom I have afflicted. I will make the lame a remnant and the outcasts a strong nation, and the LORD will reign over them in Mount Zion from now on and forever. As for you, tower of the flock, Hill of the daughter of Zion, to you it will come -- Even the former dominion will come, the kingdom of the daughter of Jerusalem."

Daniel 7:27

Then the sovereignty, the dominion and the greatness of all the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the people of the saints of the Highest One; His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all the dominions will serve and obey Him.

Revelation 5:9, 10

And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are you to take the book and to break its seals; for you were slain, and purchased for God with your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth."

F.F. Bruce on the Kingdom Gospel

Acts 20:24, 25: “The grace of God revealed in Christ is the subject of the Good News. It is evident from a comparison of this verse with the next (v. 25) that the preaching of this Gospel of grace is identical with the proclamation of the Kingdom. The proclaiming of the Kingdom is the same as testifying to the good news of God’s grace, v. 24.”

(Commentary on the Greek Text of Acts, 1949, p 379, 380)

Edwin Lutzer of Moody Bible Church

“I believe the Gospel of the Kingdom is different from the Gospel of the grace of God. The Gospel of the Kingdom had to do with the preparation of the people of *Israel* for the coming millennium. If they had repented Christ could have established the Kingdom... The Gospel of the grace of God has nothing to do with the Kingdom *per se* but is a message of repentance which makes *us* members of God’s family.”

(Edwin Lutzer, Moody Bible College, Oct. 30th, 1996)

Paul Johnson

“We do not know whether the theology of John the Baptist was limited to the crude Messianism of the Gospels.”

(History of Christianity, p. 20)

Clarence Larkin on Daniel

“The word ‘Gospel’ means good news. The Gospel of the Kingdom is the good news that God is going to set up a kingdom of the earth over which David’s son will reign (Luke 1:32-33). This gospel was preached by John the Baptist and his disciples: ‘Repent because the Kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ Before the king’s death the gospel which had been preached only in Palestine, and not to the whole world, was withdrawn...

Clarence Larkin, cont'd

...It is to be preached again after the church has been caught out. Between the two preachings of the Kingdom of God gospel, past and future, we have the preaching of the Gospel of the grace of God which is the proclamation of salvation through faith in the atoning sacrifice of Christ on the cross.”

(Daniel, 1929, p. 261)

Dr. D. James Kennedy

“Jesus Christ is God — not a mere created being...This is the most basic, important and distinctive teaching of the New Testament — that Jesus Christ is God Incarnate. Only Jesus claimed to be divine, not Moses, Mohammed, Confucius.”

Dr. D. James Kennedy The Person of Jesus Christ

“Many people today think that the essence of Christianity is Jesus’ teachings, but that is not so. If you read the Apostle Paul’s letters, which make up most of the New Testament, you will see that there is almost nothing said about the teachings of Jesus. Throughout the rest of the New Testament there’s little reference to the teachings of Jesus, and in the Apostles’ Creed, the most universally-held Christian creed, there is no reference to Jesus’ teachings. There is also no reference to the example of Jesus...

D. James Kennedy, cont'd
Truth Notes, "How I know Jesus is God,"
Nov. 17th, 1989

...Only two days in the life of Jesus are mentioned – the day of his birth and the day of his death. Christianity centers not in the teachings of Jesus, but in the person of Jesus as Incarnate God, who came into the world to take on himself our guilt and die in our place.”

Dave Hunt of Berean Call Ministries
Berean Call, Jan. 2007

“God promised Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and their seed everlasting possession of the physical land on this earth with prescribed boundaries (Gen. 11:31; 12:1, 5, 6, 7; 13:15; 15:7, 18-21; 17:7, 8; 26:3-5; 28:13, 14; 35:9-12; I Chron. 16:15-18, etc.) For example, ‘I will give to you and to your seed after you...all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession and I will be their God’ (Gen. 17: 7, 8)...

Dave Hunt, contd.

...No such promise of possession of a particular land on this earth was ever given to the church! Israel possessed this land for centuries. How could the church, whose inheritance is in heaven, replace physical Israel on earth?...The church never was promised a land, never occupied a land, never was cast out of that land for her sin, never was promised that she would be brought back into it. The church is not Israel.”

F.F. Bruce on Preexistence and Trinity

“On the preexistence question, one can at least accept the preexistence of the eternal Word or Wisdom of God which (who?) became incarnate in Jesus. But whether any New Testament writer believed in his separate conscious existence as a ‘second Divine Person’ [i.e. of the Trinity] before his incarnation is not so clear. On balance I think John did. I am not nearly so sure about Paul.”

(June 13th, 1981, correspondence)

Bruce on Preexistence and Trinity

“Paul identifies Christ with the creative word or wisdom of God which certainly existed as long as God did.”

(July 29th, 1981)

Bruce on Futurism

“I am heartily at one with Mr. Lang on the fundamental principle that the true interpretation of Revelation is the eschatological one. This is commonly acknowledged by unbiased modern scholarship...

(Foreword to Lang on Revelation)

Bruce on Futurism

...It is sometimes suggested that the introduction of the 'futurist' interpretation was the work of the Jesuits. No doubt Rebeira and other Jesuit scholars of the 16th and 17th centuries were glad to counter the Protestant exegesis which identified the antichrist with the papacy. But what they did was not to invent a new exegesis, but to republish the primitive one, in as far at least, as the scheme was futuristic."

(Foreword to Lang on Revelation)

Dr. W.R. Matthews, Dean of St. Paul's

“It must be admitted by everyone who has the rudiments of an historical sense that the doctrine of the Trinity formed no part of the original message. St. Paul did not know it, and would have been unable to understand the meaning of the terms used in the theological formula on which the Church ultimately agreed.”

(God in Christian Experience, p. 180)

H.G. Wells on the Kingdom of God

“As remarkable, is the enormous prominence given by Jesus to the teaching of what he called the Kingdom of God, and its comparative insignificance in the procedure and teaching of most of the Christian churches. This doctrine of the Kingdom of Heaven, which was the main teaching of Jesus, and which plays so small a part in the Christian creeds, is certainly one of the most revolutionary doctrines that ever stirred and changed human thought. Is it any wonder that to this day this Galilean is too much for our small hearts?”

(H.G. Wells, *The Outline of History*, vol. 1, p. 426)

James Dunn on Preexistence

“To avoid confusion, therefore it would be better to speak of the Johannine Christ as the incarnation of God, as God making Himself known to human flesh, not as the incarnation of the Son of God (Intro to *Christology in the Making*, xxvii)...To speak of Christ as himself preexistent, coming down from heaven, and so forth, has to be seen as metaphorical; otherwise it leads inevitably to some kind of polytheism.”

James Dunn Replies to me

“Our problem is language and conceptuality. What do we really mean by Son and Person? Son is an analogy. God did not beget Jesus as fathers beget sons. Person is not person like you and I are persons. So I can and do affirm God as Trinity.”

Dunn on Preexistence

“The most obvious conclusion therefore is that there was no conception of a pre-existent Messiah current in pre-Christian Judaism prior to the Similitudes of Enoch [whose date is uncertain]...Trypho (150 AD) dismisses the idea that Christ preexisted and asserts: ‘We all expect that Christ will be a man born of men’ (*Dialogue* 49:1)...

Dunn on Preexistence

...That the Messiah himself existed before creation is nowhere stated in the Tannaitic literature...The name of the Messiah is the *idea* of the Messiah, or more exactly the idea of redemption through the Messiah. This idea did precede creation.”

(Klausner, *Messianic Idea*, p. 460). Strack Billerbeck II, 334ff., Vermes, *Jesus*, 138, Mowinkel, *He That Cometh*, 334 (294, *Christology*)

The Trinity: The Problem

Dr. Boyd: *Trinity and Oneness Pentecostals*

Trinitarians are quite clear that God is one: “There can be no question that the Bible does uniformly and unequivocally teach that there is One God. Certainly it was the proclamation ‘Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one’ that formed the cornerstone for everything that was distinctive about the faith of God’s people in the Old Testament. The message of God’s uniqueness and singularity is driven home literally hundreds of times throughout the pages of the Old Testament (Isa. 42:8, 43:10, 44:6). It is therefore an incontestable fact that the Bible is monotheistic through and through. No biblical author would have entertained the idea that there could be more than one supreme being...

Boyd, cont'd

...This strict monotheism is by no means forgotten when we enter the New Testament era. Rather it forms the presupposition of the Christ-centered faith articulated in the New Testament (Mark 12:29ff; I Cor 8:4-6; Eph. 4:4; I Tim. 2:5). It is therefore an incontestable fact that the Bible is monotheistic through and through. No biblical author would have entertained the idea that there could be more than one supreme being. This is the cornerstone to ancient and to contemporary Judaism.”

Dr. W. N Clarke, 1909
Professor, Colgate University

“[In the NT] there is no mystery about their oneness and no attempt to show that there are three in one. The word Trinity is never used and there is no indication that the idea of Trinity had taken form. It has long been a common practice to read the New Testament as if the ideas of a later age upon this subject were in it, but they are not. In the days of the Apostles the doctrine of the Trinity was yet to be created. But the materials for it were already there, and the occasion for the growth of the doctrine was sure to arise.”

Elohim is not a proof of plurality in God

“With regard to *Elohim*, it has been held by many that in the plural form of the word there was shadowed forth the plurality of persons in the Godhead and the mystery of the Trinity was inferred therefrom. Such according to Peter of Lombard, was the true significance of *Elohim*. But Calvin, Mercer, Drusius, Bellarmine have given the weight of their authority against an explanation so fanciful and arbitrary.”

Dr. Sir William Smith, “Jehovah,”
Dictionary of the Bible

Armstrong: Trinity in the Public Mind

“Most of those who profess and call themselves Christians, both in this country and in the rest of the world, are in the habit of saying that Jesus is God. It is taught by the creeds. The average Englishman holds this opinion in a vague and loose sort of way. He has not thought out exactly what he means by it. So he carries about with him in his mind four propositions:

1. Jesus Christ is God.
2. God is our heavenly Father.
3. Jesus Christ is not our heavenly Father.
4. There are not two Gods.

Yet he has never considered how to reconcile these four separate opinions of his together. It has probably not occurred to him that they are inconsistent with one another...The average Englishman has not troubled himself with the matter.”

Richard Armstrong, *Trinity and Incarnation*, 1904

Dunn on Luke 1:35

“Luke is more explicit than Matthew in his assertion of Jesus’ divine sonship from birth (1:32, 35). But here too it is sufficiently clear that it is a begetting, a becoming, which is in view, the coming into existence of one who will be called, and will in fact be the Son of God, not the transition of a preexistent being to become the soul of a human baby, or the metamorphosis of a divine being into a human fetus... Luke’s intention is clearly to describe the creative process of begetting....Similarly in Acts there is no sign of any Christology of preexistence.”

(Christology in the Making, p. 51)

A. Reville, D.D., *History of the Dogma of the Deity of Christ*, 1905

“For Matthew and Luke there was no thought of preexistence or incarnation associated with the mystical dogma of the virgin birth. The fact is that virgin birth and preexistence cannot be reconciled. A preexistent being who becomes man reduces himself to the state of a human embryo, but he is not conceived [or begotten] by action exterior to himself in the womb of a woman. Conception is the point at which an individual is formed who did not exist before at least as an individual.” (p. 43)

A. H. Newman on the Trinity

“It is a contradiction, indeed, and not merely a verbal contradiction, but an incompatibility in the human ideas conveyed. We can scarcely make a nearer approach to an exact enunciation of it, than of saying that one thing is two things.”

(Sadler's *Gloria Patri*, p. 39).

Dr. John Blanchard on *echad*
11th April, 2005

“Following our recent correspondence I have taken theological and academic advice and it seems clear that in the final paragraph on page 450 of *Does God Believe in Atheists?* my comments on the Hebrew word *echad* are inaccurate. I am very grateful to you for pointing this out, and assure you that in the future printings of the book the paragraph will be replaced by one that uses other Old Testament arguments for the plurality of Yahweh’s being. Thank you again for preventing that particular error being perpetuated in the book.”

Is Orthodoxy Orthodox? Dr. Norman Snaith

Dr Snaith, Methodist: “Your sons, O Zion, against your sons, O Greece’ (Zech. 9:13) arose first as a rallying cry in days long ago when some Jews sought to reinterpret Judaism in order to make it more acceptable to Greek ways of thought and life. There have always been Jews who have sought to make terms with the Gentile world and it has in time meant the death of Judaism for all such...The question needs to be faced as to whether it is right. Our position is that the reinterpretation of Biblical theology in terms of the ideas of the Greek philosophers has been both widespread and everywhere destructive to the essence of Christian faith...

Snaith continued

...Father Hebert (RC) rightly sees in the Catholic system a conception of salvation conceived in Aristotelian terms and 'an idea of Beatitude...closely related to the Neo-Platonic idea of the Vision of the One and bearing little relationship to the Beatitudes of the Gospel.' Equally rightly he sees a marked tendency in contemporary Protestantism 'to lay emphasis on the development of personality and a human movement towards the realization of ethical ideals. The Kingdom of God is regarded as something achieved by human effort.'"

*The Nature and Destiny of Man, by
Reinhold Niebuhr, vol. 2, p. 61*

The mixture of God and man is
“logical nonsense.”

The Myth of God Incarnate, by John
Hick, 1977, p. 35

“The simple equation ‘Jesus = God’ not only fails to represent what Christian tradition has claimed, but is distinctly odd. To reduce all of God to a human incarnation is virtually inconceivable.”

Godet on Luke 1:35

“Therefore the holy thing begotten in you will be called the Son of God.”

“By the word ‘therefore’ the angel alludes to his preceding words: he will be called the son of the Highest. We might paraphrase it: ‘And it is precisely for this reason that I said to you...’ We have then here, from the mouth of the angel himself, an authentic explanation of the term SON of GOD, in the former part of his message. After this explanation Mary could only understand the title in this sense: a human being of whose existence God Himself is the immediate author. It does not convey the idea of preexistence.”

A.T. Hanson on the Trinity

“No responsible New Testament scholar would claim that the doctrine of the Trinity was taught by Jesus, or preached by the earliest Christians, or consciously held by any writer of the New Testament. It was in fact slowly worked out in the course of the first few centuries in an attempt to give an intelligible doctrine of God.”

(The Image of the Invisible God)

F. F. Bruce on Acts 13:33

“‘raised up’ – that is by raising him up in the sense in which he raised David (v. 22). For *anistemi* in this sense, see 3:22; 7:37; 3:26 (‘raised him up and sent him’). The promise of v. 23, the fulfillment of which is described in 13:33, has to do with the sending of the Messiah, not his resurrection (for which see v. 24). The addition of ‘from the dead’ in v. 34 differentiates this use of ‘raise up’ from its use in v. 33.”

(Acts of Apostles, Commentary on Greek text)

Dorner on Trinity

“The second defect is that these [Nicene] teachers determine rather negatively than positively what ‘hypostasis’ is. But when the idea of the Father suffering (patripassionism) was rejected, the question naturally suggested itself: How shall we determine the nature of the distinction between the God who became man and the God who did not become man, without destroying the unity of God on the one hand, or interfering with Christology on the other. Neither the Council of Nicea, nor the Church Fathers of the 4th century satisfactorily answered that question (p. 330)....Through their labors the pantheistic and deist conception of God and the heathen and Jewish error was excluded...the How of the procession of the Son and the Spirit is unsearchable” (p. 331).

Professor Colin Brown,
currently at Fuller Seminary

“The title ‘Son of God’ is not in itself a designation of personal deity or an expression of metaphysical distinctions within the Godhead. Indeed to be a ‘Son of God’ one has to be a being who is *not* God”...

(“Trinity and Incarnation,” *Ex Auditu*, 7, 1991)

Professor Colin Brown,
Fuller Seminary

...It is a common but patent misreading of John's gospel to read it as if it said: 'In the beginning was the Son, and the Son was with God and the Son was God.' What has happened here is the substitution of Son for word (*logos*) and the Son is thus made a member of the Godhead which existed from the beginning."

(Ex Auditu, 7, 1991)

Strongs on God (*theos*)

2316 *theos* {theh'-os}

Meaning: 1) a god or goddess, a general name of deities or divinities 2) the Godhead, trinity. 2a) God the Father, the first person in the trinity 2b) Christ, the second person of the trinity 2c) Holy Spirit, the third person in the trinity 3) spoken of the only and true God 3a) refers to the things of God 3b) his counsels, interests, things due to him 4) whatever can in any respect be likened unto God, or resemble him in any way 4a) God's representative or viceregent 4a1) of magistrates and judges

Origin: of uncertain affinity; a deity, especially (with 3588) the supreme Divinity; TDNT - 3:65,322; n m

NAB on Psalm 110:1

NAB Notes (Ps. 110:1)

<1> [Psalm 110] A royal psalm in which a court singer recites three oracles in which God assures the king that his enemies are conquered (Ps. 110:1-2), makes the king "son" in traditional adoption language (Ps. 110:3), gives priestly status to the king and promises to be with him in future military ventures (Ps. 110:4-7). <2> The LORD says to you, my lord: literally, "The LORD says to my lord," a polite form of address of an inferior to a superior. Cf 1 Sam 25:25; 2 Sam 1:10. The court singer refers to the king. Jesus in the synoptic gospels (Matthew 22:41-46 and parallels) takes the psalmist to be David and hence "my lord" refers to the Messiah, who must be someone greater than David. Your footstool: in ancient times victorious kings put their feet on the prostrate bodies of their enemies.

Robert Morey, *Jesus Is God*, 1983

“Jesus’ reference was to the oft-quoted Psalm 110:1, readily acknowledged by the Jews of his day to be both Davidic and Messianic, where King David called the Christ ‘my Lord’, using one of the names of Deity, *Adonai*” (p. 321).

Question to Dr. Paula Fredriksen

“I have read your interesting account of early Christianity and gained much from your research and vigorous writing. I do have an observation on a point which has been of concern to me as a teacher of NT and biblical languages. You say on p. 139 that Psalm 110:1 refers to the Messiah as *adonai*. But this is not actually so. The Hebrew is not the divine title *Adonai*, Lord God, but *adoni*, my lord, RV, RSV, etc.

It seems to me that this is rather a crucial issue, since the early Christians were not thinking of Jesus as the Lord God, as *kurios*=Yahweh, but as the human lord Messiah (Luke 2:11) *Adoni* as opposed to *Adonai*, is not the divine title in all of its 195 occurrences.”

Reply from Dr. Frederiksen

“Thank you for this note. I have just grabbed my Jewish Bible. You are absolutely right. I made a mistake. My English transliteration is wrong (also misleading) and I will take advantage of your notice to me to fix it in the next printing. I am terribly grateful to you for bringing this to my attention. We all depend on each other. Yours with thanks.”

Prof. Dale Brown of Bethany Seminary, on
Abrahamic Faith
Aug. 4, 1992

“It is an honor to have had the privilege of working with a student who edits a Journal of substance and impeccable diction and style. What you and your church put together as theology increasingly makes more sense to me. I wonder whether your Journal is getting the reviews and reading it deserves. I wonder about the nature of the dialogue, if any, you may have with liberal Unitarians. The revised hermeneutic of premillennialism is both prophetic and useful to many rooted in or attracted to the chiliastic tradition.”

Linking to Fuller Seminary

“You were given an honorable mention by Colin Brown the other day in his Systematic Theology class. He briefly commented on how the New Testament does not establish a Trinitarian creed and that there are some scholars who do not follow the early church’s attempt to establish the Trinity. One such scholar with whom he has a warm friendship teaches in Atlanta.”

Dr. John Meagher

“I think it is relevant for me to say that I am a professor of theology and of New Testament at a Roman Catholic institution...and that I think that your publication *Focus on the Kingdom* is theologically important, however much it may be neglected by the sector that I thus represent. You address radically important issues in Christian theology which are entirely appropriate because in fact the theological exercise is only adolescent and in need of further guidance. I think you are doing a good work that I hope will eventually have an impact on my own church tradition. There is much work to be done before we can, collectively, think clearly and I am glad that your magazine’s honesty about these things is so unflinching. What you are doing strikes me as a very important contribution. And I thank you for it” (2002).

Harold O.J. Brown, *Heresies*, 1984

“There was a transition within biblical monotheism, itself: from the unitary monotheism of Israel to the Trinitarianism of the Council of Chalcedon. The difference was symbolized by the transition from the prayer ‘Hear...the Lord our God is one Lord’ to the confession of the Athanasian Creed, ‘we worship one God in Trinity and Trinity in Unity’...

Harold O.J. Brown, *Heresies*, cont'd

“Was the transition from the personal monotheism of Israel to the tripersonal theism of Nicea a legitimate development of Old Testament revelation? Christians affirm that it is, holding that Nicea represents a fuller unfolding and not a distortion of the self-disclosure of the God of Israel...a valid and necessary interpretation of the claims of Jesus Christ” (p. 341).