

A Study Guide for

**THE
ONENESS
OF GOD**

David K. Bernard & Neil Stegall

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I

Christian Monotheism

A. Definitions

1. Monotheism: belief in one God.
2. Atheism: denial of the existence of God.
3. Agnosticism: assertion that the existence of God is unknown or unknowable.
4. Pantheism: belief that God is nature or the forces of the universe.
5. Polytheism: belief in more than one God.
 - a. Ditheism: belief in two Gods
 - b. Tritheism: belief in three Gods.
6. Beliefs in Christendom.
 - a. Trinitarianism: belief in three distinct persons “in” the Godhead.
 - b. Binitarianism: belief in two persons.
 - c. Strict monotheism (excluding multiple persons) with a denial of the full deity of Jesus Christ. Examples: Arianism, dynamic monarchianism.
 - d. Strict monotheism (excluding multiple persons) with an affirmation of the full deity of Jesus Christ. Examples: modalistic monarchianism (modalism); Oneness.

B. Old Testament Emphasis

1. Deuteronomy 6:4 teaches absolute monotheism.
 - a. It is the historic Jewish confession of faith, called the Shema.
 - b. It is important to teach continually (Deuteronomy 6:5-9).
 - c. It is the first and greatest commandment (Mark 12:28-31).
2. God declared His absolute oneness in Isaiah: “alone, by myself, no God beside me, none else, no God else, none like me.” (See Isaiah 37:16; 42:8; 43:10-11; 44:6, 8, 24; 45:5-6, 21-23; 46:5, 9; 52:6.)
3. Over fifty times the Bible calls God “the Holy One,” but never the holy two or three. (See Isaiah 54:5.)
4. Old Testament saints had no trinitarian concept.

C. New Testament Emphasis

1. It affirms Old Testament monotheism (Romans 3:30; Galatians 3:20; I Corinthians 8:4, 6; James 2:19.)
2. There is one God, and one mediator (John 17:3; I Timothy 2:5).
 - a. The mediator is the sinless man Jesus, in whom God was manifested. He reconciles the holy God and sinful humanity.
 - b. If there were a second, co-equal divine person, he could not be the mediator; he also would need a man to mediate between him and sinful humanity.
3. Jesus endorsed the Jewish concept of God (Mark 12:29; John 4:22).

Scripture Memorization: Deuteronomy 6:4; I Timothy 2:5

Definition: monotheism, atheism, agnosticism, pantheism, polytheism, tritheism, trinitarianism, Shema.

Questions

1. List the four different views of the Godhead proposed in Christendom.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
2. Define monotheism.
3. Compare the trinitarianism view of the Godhead with that of binitarianism.
4. What are the two extreme tendencies discernible in trinitarianism?
5. Strict monotheists in church history have been divided into two distinct classes. Name a group associated with each class and state its unique view of the Godhead.
 - a.