



April 1, 2007 (Vol. 7)

THE UNITED PENTECOSTAL CHURCH

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There is a sizable group of this persuasion not far from here. Who are they? What do they believe? They are Pentecostal, obviously. This means they have many misconceptions about the Holy Spirit, miraculous gifts today, etc. But this point is not our lesson today. What I want to focus on today is the one MAJOR difference between them and other Pentecostals: their concept of God. They believe God is ONLY one being, and they firmly reject the "Trinity". (I'll refer to them as UPC for short.)

Their concept of God is that the Father is the ONLY Divine Spirit. They say the Father Himself came and dwelt in the flesh, and in this form is known as the Son. Then, when the Son returned to Heaven, He sent His own Spirit to dwell in and be with Christians. They believe that there is only one Divine Spirit who appeared these three different ways and deny that there are three distinct persons/spirits in the Godhead. Along with this they have created strange doctrines about what a person is. They say that a person MUST have flesh & blood. Thus they say that God the Father is NOT a person, but he became a person when he took on flesh. They are also divided among themselves about Jesus Christ. Some hold that the Divine Spirit was the only spirit in the body of Jesus; while others argue that the Divine Spirit dwelt in the body WITH a created human spirit. Either way, their arguments contradict Scripture.

Jesus said, "...I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me" (John 8:16). Now, the UPC (also known as "Pentecostal Oneness") doctrine teaches that since the Father is the ONLY Divine being, the Father is absolutely alone, there are no other Divine beings. They will assert in passages like John 8:16 that "Jesus' **flesh** was not alone" or "**the human spirit** was not alone". But notice further why both of these UPC views are false.

In the context Jesus refers to the Old Law that "two witnesses" confirm things (8:17). He then adds, "I am he that beareth witness of myself, **and** the Father that sent me beareth witness of me" (8:18). First of all, the one speaking is clearly not the Father. The one speaking says there are "two witnesses" - he and the Father. Thus, there MUST be two beings under consideration here. Secondly, the speaker here is not the flesh of Jesus (for flesh without the spirit is dead - James 2:24). It is rather, a living & conscious being who can bear witness of himself. Thirdly, he is SENT by the Father. He is not the Father, but is FROM the Father! Does the body of Jesus by itself fit this description? No. Does a supposedly created human spirit in Christ's body fit this description? No.

Notice further what this witness, this one sent from the Father says about Himself: "Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world" (8:23). Could the body of Jesus, the flesh by itself, say this? No. Could a created human spirit say this? No. Then who? Let the speaker himself answer: "I said therefore unto you, that you shall die in your sins: for except you believe that I AM, you shall die in your sins" (8:24). Most versions add the word "he" in italics. But the fact is that the "he" is not in the original text. The speaker is here claiming to be the "I AM" (see also John 8:58). Thus, the "I AM" says he is ONE witness of Himself and the Father is a SECOND witness (8:17-18).

Again, the UPC says that Jesus is God in the flesh, and that Jesus did not exist before the incarnation. The Father existed, but not the "person" Jesus. Their concept again is that the joining of a body and a spirit makes a "person". Thus they say the "person" Jesus did not exist before. Yet, **Jesus** bore witness of Himself that **He** was sent from above, and that **He** was one of two witnesses, and that the Father is the second witness. In other words, whatever and whoever **Jesus** is, **Jesus existed before coming to this world!** The UPC concept MUST be wrong, because they deny this truth. We all know Jesus took flesh when he was born through Mary. Yet Jesus clearly indicates that **He preexisted** this earthly existence. The flesh alone could not say this. A supposedly created human spirit with the body of Christ could not say this. Only the I AM could say this and have it be true. Thus, you have one who is the "I AM" who is a distinct individual from the Father who sent Him.

Concerning the "flesh" = "a person" idea, what is a person? A person is an individual, a spirit, a being. A person includes human beings in the flesh (our most common reference to "persons"), human beings who

have left their bodies and are waiting in Hades (like Abraham) & angels are persons. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit are persons. In fact, they are the original, infinite & eternal persons from whom all persons have come.

But notice what Jesus says, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it, and was glad" (8:56). This totally refutes the UPC idea that "flesh" = "a person". Abraham died over 1700 years before Jesus was born. Abraham's flesh was literally dust! Yet, Abraham, "he" the person, still existed, was able to see and to be glad! He had no physical body, but he was still himself. Thus, in the earlier references to Jesus, it was not the flesh of Jesus that "bore witness" or was sent from the Father. It was the Divine Spirit who is Jesus. This Divine Spirit is a Divine Person. The UPC says the Father is the only Divine Spirit. But John 8 abundantly shows that there are two Divine persons under consideration here. (John 14 shows the Holy Spirit is a third person in the Godhead, but we lack space to address that right now.)

Thus, the UPC do not believe in the same God we do. They speak of "one God", but mean "one being". In doing this they deny the very words of Jesus whom they claim to honor & serve. In denying the words of Jesus, they testify to the fact that they know not God, nor the way of God (John 12:48; 1 John 5:9-12).

Many other passages teach these Truths about God. One last quick example is: "In the beginning God created..." and "God said, Let **US** make man **OUR** image..." (Gen. 1:1, 26-27). There is only one God - one Divine nature (Deut. 6:4); but there are three individuals, three persons who make up the Godhead (Jn 1:1-2; Mt. 3:16-17; Eph. 4:4-6).

PEOPLE TO REMEMBER & PRAY FOR

Othena Kinnard (At home), **Jo Miller** (At home), **Wesley Geer** (Life Care 316), **Mag Bumbalough** (Life Care 518), **Thelma Cunningham**, **Mary Cox**, **Monie Petty**, **Dave Poteet**, **Joshua & Misty Poteet**, **Dorris Williams**, **Robert & Betty England**, **Ed Williams**, **Joe Smith**, **Lydia Poe**, **Mike Tenpenny**, **Thelma Klein**, **DeLeesa Price** (expecting) and **Alisa Fletcher** (expecting), **Kenley Streeval**. Also, **Reba Jones** (Dorris Williams' niece), **Jackie Tindle** (cancer, relative of the Sims), **Marci Miller** (Alisa Fletcher's mother), **Ocia Bell Jones** (Doris William's mother), **Ruth Williams** (Betty England's niece), **Pauline Hickey**, **Kitty Mahan** (Kathy Tenpenny's mother), **Dwayne Williams** (Dorris William's son), **Paul Grissom**, **Carl Williams** (Ed's brother).

THINGS TO REMEMBER

- **Home Bible Study** - Sat., March 31 & April 14, 28
- **Door To Door** - Every Tuesday @ 6pm.
- **Business Meeting** - Sun. April 29.
- **Ladies Class** - 2nd & Last Sunday Each Month.
- **GM** - R. McPherson, April 15-20, 2007.
- **GM** - TBA, Oct.14-19, 2007.
- **GM** - Brian Yeager, April 13-18, 2008.
- **GM** - Lanny Smith, Oct.12-17, 2008.

We Invite You To All Our Services!

Sunday Bible Study	9 am
Sunday Morning Worship	10 am
Sunday Evening Worship	6 pm
Wednesday Bible Study	7 pm

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