

## DOCTRINE FOR THE YOUNG

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# GOD IS A DIVINE MAN

by the Rt. Rev. George de Charms

It is written in Matthew that when John the baptist baptized the Lord in the river Jordan:

*“Behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased’ ” (Matt. 3: 16, 17).*

This has been understood by many people to mean that there are three separate Persons in God, and that each of these is a God. The "voice from heaven" is thought to be the voice of the Lord's "Father" saying concerning the Lord, who was being baptized, "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." "The Spirit of God" who was seen "descending like a dove, and lighting upon" the Lord, is thought to be a third Person, who is called "The Holy Spirit."

While the Lord was living in the world, it did appear at times as if He and the "Father" were two separate persons. This is because, when the Lord was being tempted by evil spirits He often prayed to the "Father" asking for help. And He seemed to refer to three different persons when He said to His disciples after His resurrection:

*“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:19).*

On the other hand, the Lord said many times that He and the Father were One. For instance, when Philip said unto Him:

*"Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us." Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, "Show us the Father"? Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? (John 14:8-10).*

In many other places in the Word it is said that there is only one God, as in the prophecy of Isaiah:

*“Look to Me, and be saved,  
All you ends of the earth!  
For I am God, and there is no other.  
(Isaiah 45: 22)*

That the Lord Jesus Christ is that one God, the Lord Himself declared after He had risen from the grave, saying to His disciples:

*"All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth." (Matt. 28:18)*

How can we understand this? You remember what is said in the Book of Genesis:

*"God created man in His own image, In the image of God created He him." (Genesis 1: 27)*

If therefore there are three separate Persons in God, there must also be three separate persons in every man, because man is said to be created into the "image of God." But there are not three separate persons in man. Think about this.

There are, however, three distinct things in God, and also in every man. There is a "soul", a "body" and that which goes out or "proceeds" from the body by means of speech and action. Consider what happens when someone offers you a choice between two different things, and you have to decide which of them you prefer. You think within yourself, "Do I want this one or would I rather have the other one? To whom then are you speaking? You are not speaking to another person, but to your inner self. What happens when you want to do something you know is wrong? Something within you, which is called your conscience tells you not to do it. This conscience is not a separate person, but is your inner self.

So it was also with the Lord. When He prayed to the "Father" He was deciding to think and act according to His "inner Self" and was not speaking to another "Person." The "Soul" which is called the "Father" was really the Lord's inner Self. His outer Self was the body, by means of which He was seen and known by people, while He lived in the world. After His crucifixion, when He had risen from the dead, this "body" was glorified, and was seen in heaven by the disciples when their spiritual eyes were opened. They recognized Him as the same Lord whom they had known and loved while He was on earth; but now they knew that He was a Divine Man. Even before He was crucified the Lord showed this glorified body to Peter, James, and John on the mountain called the "mount of transfiguration." The Lord had taken these three disciples apart from the others, and when they were alone together on the top of the mountain it is said:

*"He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light" (Matthew 17: 2).*

Many people saw the Lord's body, while He was in the world, but did not really see Him, because they did not believe that He was the Lord. They thought He was merely a man like themselves. They heard what He said, but did not believe that it was the Truth. They saw the wonderful miracles of healing He performed, but they insisted that these were done by some trick or ruse. Therefore, although they saw the Lord's body, heard His teaching, and beheld His marvelous works, they did not see the Lord, nor did they know Him. To them it did appear as if there were three separate "Persons" in the Lord. And so it must appear to any one who does not believe what the Lord says, and who deny His Divine power to perform miracles. The appearance of three Persons is not really in the Lord, but only in the minds of those who do not believe in Him but insist that He is an ordinary man like themselves.

There is only One God, in One Person, in whom there is a soul or inmost Self, a Body by which He may be seen and known by angels and men, and all the wonderful things He says and does which are said to "Proceed" from Him. This One Divine Person is the risen Lord Jesus Christ, who is "Our Father which art in heaven" to whom we pray. When we pray to Him we must think of Him, even as He appeared to the three disciples on the Mount of Transfiguration, and as He appears in heaven to the angels. This is the One God, a Divine Man, of whom it is said:

*“You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Matthew 22:37-39).*

**Text: Matthew 3:16, 17**