

Oneness Pentecostalism

refuting the errors

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Oneness Pentecostals teach, among other things, that God is One Person. They call this “The Oneness of God” which is a modern day version of a third century heresy known as “Monarchianism”. Monarchianism and Oneness Theology both teach one God and one Person. They deny the doctrine of the Trinity. Another common name for their belief is “Jesus only” Pentecostalism. They believe that only Jesus is God, denying any separate persons of the Father and the Holy Spirit, stating that the Father and the Spirit are the divine nature of Jesus Christ.

Patripassionism and Sabellianism returns!

Sabellius was a third century heretic who claimed that God was three only in relation to the world. He claimed that God appeared in three different manifestations or “modes”. Sabellius taught a more sophisticated form of patripassionism. Patripassionism is the belief that the Father had come to earth and died under the appearance of the Son [patri=father; passion=suffer]. Sabellius taught that a divine monad, through a process of expansion projected itself successively in revelation as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. As Father it revealed itself as Creator and Lawgiver. As Son it revealed itself as Redeemer, and as Spirit it revealed itself as the giver of grace. All three modes were expressions of the same person.

Today, Oneness Pentecostals teach both of these theologies:

Patripassionism in Oneness Pentecostalism:

A prominent leader in the oneness movement is Ken Raggio, he says, “Most people do not realize that Jesus Christ was only literal incarnation of the one Holy Spirit - our Father”

Patripassionists teach that God the Father came into a body, forming the person we call Jesus.

Modalism or Sabellianism in Oneness Pentecostalism:

Today the Oneness Pentecostals teach a similar theology to that of Sabellius. One difference is that most Oneness Pentecostals will acknowledge the co-existence of modes. In other words, a Oneness Pentecostal will believe that the mode of Father and the mode of Son existed together while Jesus was on earth so that “The Father” was the name for the divine side of Jesus and “The Son” was the human side of Jesus.

Problems with Oneness Pentecostalism:

To refute Oneness theology, we need to establish two facts: 1) The Son of God is divine and not merely the human nature of Jesus. 2) The Son of God and the Father are distinct persons.

Once these points are established, we have shown that God is at least two, and not merely one Divine Persons. After that we could show also the divinity and Personage of the Spirit to then establish the Trinity. But to refute Oneness theology, we need only to establish the 2 points listed above.

Who is the Son? Is he divine or human?

This is the most important question in regards to answering a Oneness Pentecostal. According to modern Oneness Pentecostalism, “as man, Jesus is the Son.” Patripassionism emphatically teaches this.

The Son of God is Divine:

”But about the Son he says,

”Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever,

and righteousness will be the scepter of your kingdom.” [Hebrews 1:8]

“For this reason the Jews tried all the harder to kill him; not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself **equal with God.**” [John 5:18]

Two distinct persons:

Separate source of words:

Jesus said that when He spoke, He did not speak His own words, but rather the words of His Father when He said,

“These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me. “[John 14:24]

If the Father were merely the divine nature of Jesus, then Jesus would call His words His own, and NOT that of another. *If Jesus is the only person of the GodHead, then He would be exhibiting the symptoms of a split personality!*

Separate wills:

When Jesus prayed in the Garden, He prayed, "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done."

If Jesus was praying to His divine nature, as Oneness Pentecostals claim, then Jesus would be divided in His wills.

When taken together, the separate source of words and separate wills can only mean one of two conclusions:

- 1) Jesus exhibited separate words and wills because He was part God and part man. This would mean that half of Him was God and half of Him was man and the two were distinct and at times demonstrated separate wills.
- 2) Jesus, being 100% man and 100% God was a separate Person from God the Father, and at the same time was one with Him in being and essence.

Refuting #1 can be done by showing that Jesus did indeed have the complete fullness of God, and was not just part God. Colossians 1:19 would suffice here. Also we would then show that Jesus' human nature was not separated from His divine nature. Mark 2:5-12 would suffice here to show that the “Son of Man” was equated with the Godly authority of forgiving sins.

#1 is also easily refuted by showing that there was yet another person, besides Jesus, who is worshipped as God.

The Father on the throne is not worthy to open the scroll, only the Lamb is!

In Revelation 5:1-9 we read that God, who was seated on the throne held a scroll. But no one was worthy to open it! Finally, the Lamb of God [Jesus] takes the scroll and opens it. Only He can open it, because He was slain. In this story, both the Father on the throne and the Lamb are worshipped. This shatters Patripassionism, which states that the Father became flesh and was slain on the cross. This also shatters modern-day Patripassionist Oneness Pentecostals for the same reason! This passage also renders modal Oneness Pentecostalism invalid due to the two Persons being shown here.