Chapter 3 – **Here, There and Everywhere**

We have been created in the image of God with a very limited degree of two of His specific attributes, the first being intelligence. At birth we have a brain that is virtually an empty vessel. Over time it accumulates what our senses experience, filtered through each individual’s unique brain pathways according to prior thinking, choices, and experiences. At some point we may even try to come to an understanding of our infinite, eternal Father God. If we do so, we will learn that, unlike us, He has omniscience. Exactly what does *omniscience* mean?

Webster’s 1828 dictionary says the following: “OMNISCIENCE, OMNISCIENCY, n. [L. omnis, all, and scientia, knowledge.] The quality of knowing all things at once; universal knowledge; knowledge unbounded or infinite. Omniscience is an attribute peculiar to God.”

The second specific attribute of God that we are born with in a very limited degree is strength, or power, both physical and mental. As we increase in age, we generally increase in strength. At some point, though, we plateau and then begin a decline in this attribute. We learn that God has something we find difficult to understand, since it is outside and beyond our experience. He is said to have *omnipotence*. What does *omnipotence* mean?

In the same dictionary, we read, “OMNIPOTENCE, OMNIPOTENCY, n. [L. omnipotens; omnis, all, and potens, powerful.] 1. Almighty power; unlimited or infinite power; a word in strictness applicable only to God. Hence it is sometimes used for God. The works of creation demonstrate the omnipotence of God….

“2. Unlimited power over particular things; as the omnipotence of love. Almighty power; unlimited or infinite power; a word in strictness applicable only to God. Hence it is sometimes used for God. The works of creation demonstrate the omnipotence of God. Unlimited power over particular things; as the omnipotence of love.”

The third attribute of God that is unique to Him alone is omnipresence. What is *omnipresence*?

Again, we resort to Webster’s 1828 dictionary for the definition: “OMNIPRESENCE, n. s as z. [L. omnis, and presens, present.] Presence in every place at the same time; unbounded or universal presence; ubiquity. Omnipresence is an attribute peculiar to God.”

While we have endless reasons to be grateful for divine omnipotence and omniscience, it is the importance to humanity of God’s third attribute of omnipresence that will be referred to in this chapter, as well as other chapters of this book. It is especially relevant in any discussion about the Godhead, for if understood, it prevents misunderstandings.

Much of what we will study, with the resulting conclusions, will be how the pioneers understood the Godhead. They searched the Scriptures and believed God’s Word “as it read,” without additional hermeneutical interpretations. That simple fact is why our pioneers were non-trinitarian.

What did the Bible tell them? The same as it tells us. Here is what Jesus said, as recorded in John 14:23: “Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” But in order for the Father and the Son to abide in us— in our hearts/minds—there must be a non-physical way they can do so. It can only be done by the Spirit of God and of Christ. They come to us now spiritually, not physically. This is what Romans 8:9-11 told the pioneers, and now tells us: “But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the *Spirit of God dwell in you*. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if *Christ be in you,* the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the *Spirit of him* that raised up Jesus from the dead *dwell in you*, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his *Spirit that dwelleth in you*.”

Four times we are told of God’s Spirit and/or Christ’s Spirit dwelling “in us.” (There is only “one Spirit,” so they have the same Spirit. Eph 2:18; 4:4) There is no mystery; the language is straightforward and plain. The “Spirit of truth,” also known as the Comforter, is none other than God and Christ in their omnipresence. In John 14:17-18, Jesus stated that fact clearly to His disciples: “Even the Spirit of truth … ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.” A divine Being, whom they already knew because He was dwelling with them as He spoke to them, would soon be “in” them—meaning by His invisible, omnipresent Spirit, which Jesus referred to in the third person as “the Spirit of truth.” But in the next verse, He left no doubt as to the identity of that coming Comforter: “I” will not leave you comfortless; “I” will come to you.” This is the literal Word of God accepted as truth near-unanimously by our denominational predecessors for the first 100 years of our existence.

 The same teaching is throughout the New Testament: “Christ in you, the hope of glory.” “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself.” The Holy Spirit is their non-physical presence! Read how God’s prophet affirms the teaching of Scripture: “By the Spirit the Father and the Son will come and make their abode with you.” (BEcho Jan. 15, 1893)

Despite this evidence so plain a child can comprehend it, it has been rejected. The “new view” of Trinitarianism claims that the Holy Spirit is a third, separate God, and *not* the biblical “Spirit of God” and “of Christ.” The chasm between the two views is deep; they are so different in their understanding of the Holy Spirit that both can’t be correct.

Two reasons make it clear that this is no small matter. First, “the Father and Son *alone* are to be exalted.” (SD 58) We want to be sure that we never exalt another god, as that would be a violation of God’s first commandment, “Thou shalt have no other gods before me.” God lets us know exactly how having another god before Him affects Him: “… For I the LORD thy God am a *jealous* God….” Exodus 20:5

Secondly, we must be certain that the possibility of Satan intercepting worship meant for the Father and the Son alone never becomes a reality. The concept of a third God invites worship due that God, just as worship is due to Father and Son, the two other Gods of the Trinity teaching. If thoughts are centered on, and worship is given to, and prayers are prayed to the Trinity doctrine’s third God, Satan will triumph in his plan to divert worship from the true God to a false god of his own devising, for as you read for yourself, the Holy Spirit is the omnipresent presence of God and Christ. Over and over, the Spirit of prophecy teaches us this important point: “Jehovah, our Father, and His Son Jesus Christ are *alone* to be exalted. The knowledge of God is eternal life to those who receive it….” (Ms 11, June 29, 1898)

Two important points must be made concerning this quotation. First, if there were a third God called “God the Holy Spirit,” why then would He not be exalted, as well? Secondly, Mrs. White wrote, *“The knowledge of God is eternal life to those who receive it.”* In messages from Scripture and the pen of Inspiration, God has given us the correct understanding of Himself. Those messages, or teachings, can dispel the false teaching that has come into our ranks. Correct understanding is critical, for it obviously affects our eternal life. Jesus made the same point when He said, “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” (John 17:3) A correct knowledge of God is our safeguard against deception and our hope of eternal life.

Unfortunately, what we have here in our day, in our denominational midst is Jeremiah 6:16-17 fulfilled: “Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, *We will not walk therein*. Also I set watchmen over you, saying, Hearken to the sound of the trumpet. But they said, *We will not hearken*.”

Jeremiah is telling Seventh-day Adventists today to ask for the “old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein,” but certain in leadership have said, *“We will not walk therein.”* While Isaiah 58:12 calls for this generation of Seventh-day Adventists to be restorers of paths to dwell in, every Adventist that is rejecting these explicit God-given statements in these chapters is saying to God, *“…We will not hearken.”* These “we will not” refusals are no small matter.

Here is a serious quotation from the writings of Ellen White—a quotation that explicitly reveals the identity of the Holy Spirit: “We want the Holy Spirit, which is Jesus Christ.” Could that be plainer? Here is the sentence in its full context: “‘If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering.’ ‘And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him because we keep his commandments and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.’ ‘And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life. Little children keep yourselves from idols.’ The Lord is soon to come. We want that complete and perfect understanding which the Lord alone can give. It is not safe to catch the spirit from another. *We want the Holy Spirit, which is Jesus Christ.* If we commune with God, we shall have strength and grace and efficiency.” (Lt 66, April 10, 1894)

“It is not safe to catch the spirit from another. We want the Holy Spirit, which is Jesus Christ.” You cannot with honest heart make that absolutely clear statement say or mean anything else—unless you are willing to deny the divine inspiration of Ellen White.

Now consider this quotation: "Christ is to be known by the blessed name of *Comforter*. ‘The Comforter,’ said Christ to His disciples, ‘which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you, Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.’” (Ms 7, January 26, 1902)

By what name did God’s prophet say Christ is to be known? “Christ is to be known by the blessed name of Comforter.” Why? Because the Comforter is the omnipresent Spirit of Christ.

Sometimes I wonder if we read the Scriptures half-awake, when nothing registers. How many of us have read plainly-stated truths several times, but because of preconceptions, the truth never registered until finally, the light dawned? We talked about John 14 earlier, but consider this further thought about the familiar passage. For three-and-a-half years, Christ was a constant comfort to the disciples by His physical presence. Then He prepared them for His departure. In John 14:16, Jesus told them, “And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you *another* Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.”Jesus was talking about Himself in His omnipresent Spirit, according to Ellen White: “This refers to the omnipresence of the Spirit of Christ, called the Comforter.” 14MR 179) Jesus reassured His disciples of His continued presence in their lives in verse 18, “I will not leave you comfortless: *I will come to you*.”Christ identified Himself as the Comforter that would come to us and abide in us. His disciples knew He was talking about Himself, so why haven’t we readily understood the same thing? “Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that *thou*wilt manifest *thyself*unto us, and not unto the world?” (John 14:22) Perhaps it is because we were taught error, so that when truth was read in God’s Word, our brains could not accept it for what it was. Yet the truth of God is abundant. Here are four more quotations from Inspiration that identify Christ as the Comforter:

“…Christ is everything to those who receive Him. He is their *Comforter*, their safety, their healthfulness….” (LHU 221)

“…We adore God for His wondrous love in giving *Jesus the Comforter*.” (19MR 297)

“There is *no comforter like Christ*, so tender and so true. He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. His Spirit speaks to the heart.” (AG 187)

“God calls upon His people, many of whom are but half awake, to arouse, and engage in earnest labor, praying for strength for service. Workers are needed. Receive the Holy Spirit, and your efforts will be successful. Christ's presence is what gives power.” (*The Central Advance*, Feb 25, 1903)

Ellen White wrote that Christ's presence, by His omnipresent Spirit, is what gives us power. Power for what? Power for service.

Now give your full attention to this explicit quote: “The reason why the churches are weak and sickly and ready to die, is that the enemy has brought influences of a discouraging nature to bear upon trembling souls. He has sought to *shut Jesus* *from their view as the Comforter*, as one who reproves, who warns, who admonishes them, saying, ‘This is the way, walk ye in it.’” (RH Aug. 26, 1890) Satan, working through menhe has ensnared, is trying to keep us from realizing that our precious Lord is the One who dwells in us so closely as our invisible Comforter. How very welcome our Saviour is, and how much we need Him so close to us! But Satan and his servantswant you to believe that the Holy Spirit is someone else—someone we don’t know—a third God, and not the Spirit of God and of Christ. Don’t believe it; your eternal life is at stake in this matter. Eternal life is “that they might *know* thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” No third God is mentioned in this explanation of how we may receive eternal life.

Isaiah 60:1-2 has never had more meaning then it does at this time in earth’s history: “Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee.”

Brothers and sisters, if we accept what the Bible literally says about God and His Son and the Spirit, as the pioneers of Adventism did, we would have to conclude that our leaders have been deceived and have passed the deception on to us. Let me tell you about myself. I first came into Adventism fifty-seven years ago. I was once an ardent defender of the Trinity doctrine—in particular, tritheism. I once bought into such beliefs as three co-eternal, co-existent, co-equal Gods who had no beginning and no relation to one another. None preceded the other in point of time; none came after the other; all three selecting which role they would play in the great controversy. I also believed the lie that Jesus *permanently* gave up His attribute of omnipresence when He became a man. I taught and defended these errors because I trusted the leadership who taught me. I rose up against non-trinitarians, thinking they were so deceived. But when I finally analyzed the trinitarian beliefs, I saw that they really make no sense at all. I was reminded of the biblical counsel that we are to trust no man. Rather, we are to be noble Bereans and check *all* the sources for ourselves, earnestly praying for divine guidance that our Savior is more than happy to give through His comforting omnipresence.

It has been three-plus years since I learned and accepted the non-trinitarian position about the Godhead that our pioneers believed and taught. I thank God that a dear friend encouraged me to study the issue with no bias or prejudice. The evidence for our pioneer’s non-trinitarian position is solid and irrefutable. As truth began to unfold, I felt so betrayed. But as the light continued to dispel the darkness, I felt liberated! Praise God! I fell more deeply in love with our God and His Son, once I understood who They really are and what They, in *agape* love, have done for me and the whole world. They are real to me and dwell in me. Precious, precious truth!

If you study the issue with a closed mind, having prejudice and bias, you will be looking for errors and you will miss entirely what the Holy Spirit could show you. But if you study the issues presented in this book as a novice learner, God will lead you to understand the same truth about the Godhead that He showed to the pioneers and to me. Please understand that to believe in a third god called “God the Holy Spirit” is to place another god before the Father, who commanded, “Thou shalt have *no other* gods before me.” “Before” is not the same as “coequal.” It means “instead of me,” or “in addition to me.” The “God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” is alone the true God. That is the testimony of Jesus Himself in John 17:3. (Eph 1:3; 1 Pet 1:3)

Answer this summary question, please: The Jews of Christ’s time were dutifully keeping the fourth commandment while simultaneously rejecting the Son of God. How can God save a person who chooses to willfully break the first commandment while dutifully keeping the fourth commandment? In other words, which is more important—the Sabbath, or the God of the Sabbath?

Satan is counting all trinitarian Seventh-day Adventists as his victims in the great controversy; he triumphs over their misplaced loyalty. As for those who choose to pray to “God the Holy Spirit,” Satan is in the perfect position and always ready to intercept such prayers. He’s done something similar before; read *Early Writings,* pages 55-56.Also, remember what Isaiah 14:13 said of Satan? “For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north.” We have just read quotations where God’s prophet identified the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of the Father and the Spirit of the Son in their omnipresence. That means we may rightly pray to the Father or the Son, but if we pray to “God the Holy Spirit,” for which there is no scriptural authority, we will be praying to a counterfeit third god, a role that Satan is all too ready to fill. We will have put another god before/ instead of/ in addition to our sovereign and holy LORD of all, “who only hath immortality.” A false God cannot give us eternal life; only the true God can. Leaders in Adventism who encourage such praying to a false god—and there are many—do not understand the gravity of the situation. They do not realize the eternal ramifications of what they are encouraging the people to do. Isaiah 9:16 tells us the seriousness of the matter: “For the leaders of this people cause them to err; and they that are led of them are destroyed.”