

# e ssentials

Faith in One Accord

1) TITLE: We Believe In One Living God

2) INTRODUCTION

- A. Our support Scripture text for this lesson is Deuteronomy 6:4—*"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one."*<sup>1</sup>
- B. What we believe...

*"We believe there is one living God who eternally exists in three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit" (GRCC Statement of Faith).*

- C. Many famous literary works begin with memorable words that capture our imagination or set the tone for an entire book. For example:
- i. *"Call me Ishmael"*—Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*.
  - ii. *"It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife"*—Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*.
  - iii. *"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times..."*—Charles Dicken's *A Tale of Two Cities*.
  - iv. *"In a hole in the ground there lived a hobbit"*—J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Hobbit*.

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<sup>1</sup> All Scripture from the ESV—English Standard Version, (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016)) unless noted.

- D. But one phrase that grabs our attention, and might even compel us to question our existence, are these timeless words—*"In the beginning God..."* that has entered into our human psyche, as well as time and space from the Word of God.
  
- E. GOD. We can ask the questions: Who is He? What is He? When is He? Where is He? And how can we know Him? These questions can be answered by God's written Word, the Bible, for it is in there that we may know Him with the help of the Holy Spirit.

### 3) KEY POINT

- A. Our key point is this—
  - i. There are many false gods in the world we live, but the God of Scripture is not like any of the gods of this world.
  - ii. Our God is not a god created by human hands or by human imaginations like all the other gods of this world.
  - iii. Our One true God is invested in the plight of humanity, that is, He is mindful of humanity who are made in His own image. What is this plight? What is humanity's problem? The tyranny and power of sin which we were all born with.
  
- B. What separates our God from *all* the other false gods of this world made by humanity is that our God is personal and He is not willing that any should die in their sins but be freed from the power of sin and death, and have everlasting life.
  - i. 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 3:9 (NIV)—*"The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance."*<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> NIV, *The New International Version* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011).

- ii. This promise speaks of His imminent return for His church. And delaying His return speaks of His longsuffering, His compassion, His grace and His love.
  - iii. *"He wants as many people as will to come to faith in him...Jesus is delaying his second coming so that sinners will repent and turn to him. God is not "late" at all; rather, according to his timetable, he is being exceedingly patient, giving people time to turn to him. Love is the reason that he delays the destruction of the world."*<sup>3</sup>
  - iv. In John 3:16-17, Jesus said, *"[16] For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. [17] For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him."*
- C. The One true God of this world values us and wants to reconcile us to Him in order that we may have a relationship with Him.
- i. For the believer in Christ Jesus, *"God the Eternal One, and yet the God of dying men. Every moment that we have of fellowship with the Eternal God assures us that for us there is no death. The thought of death only makes us cleave the more to the Eternal God."*<sup>4</sup>
  - ii. Romans 8:38-39 (CSB)<sup>5</sup>—*"[38] For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, [39] nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

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<sup>3</sup> Bruce B. Barton, *1 Peter, 2 Peter, Jude, Life Application Bible Commentary* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Pub., 1995), 211.

<sup>4</sup> W. Robertson Nicoll, ed., *The Sermon Outline Bible: Gen.-2 Sam.*, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1958), 195.

<sup>5</sup> CSB, *Christian Standard Bible* (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2020).

#### 4) TRANSITION

- A. So, let us look into the importance of *why* believing in the One living God who eternally exists as the Triune-God is essential to our faith in Jesus Christ.
  - i. For this teaching we will focus on believing in One living God.

### TEACHING

#### I. GOD—What or Who is He?

- A. From the very beginning of Scripture consider these words from Genesis 1:1, "*In the beginning God...*"
  - 1. Since the entirety of Scripture is inspired by God, He *is* the self-existent God, who does not prove His existence in this statement but *that He IS!*
    - a). "*In the beginning God...*" says that God has always existed and always will exist. He is *the* eternal I AM.
    - b). That is the position from the Scripture, and it is what we believe by faith.
- B. The theological term for the self-existence of God is the word *aseity*.
  - 1. "*The aseity of God is His attribute of independent self-existence. God is the uncaused Cause, the uncreated Creator. He is the source of all things, the One who originated everything and who sustains everything that exists. The aseity of God means that He is the One in whom all other things find their source, existence, and continuance. He is the ever-present Power that sustains all life.*"<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.gotquestions.org/aseity-of-God.html>

- a). 1<sup>st</sup> Chronicles 16:36—*"Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting!"*
  - b). Therefore, God has always *been*, and will always *be*.
- C. As the Uncreated Creator, God created the world out of nothing by His authority meaning *"without any preexisting material... To say that he created 'out of nothing' is to confess the mystery, not explain it."*<sup>7</sup>
1. *Ex nihilo* is Latin meaning *from nothing*. Hebrews 11:3 (NLT)<sup>8</sup> says, *"By faith we understand that the entire universe was formed at God's command, that what we now see did not come from anything that can be seen."*
  2. In terms of creation, *ex nihilo* means God created all things by His divine will from nothing, meaning not from pre-existing materials or sources but through His sovereign words—*"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."* God *IS* the source!
    - a). Have you ever tried the meaningless futile exercise of creating something out of *nothing*!?
    - b). Can you produce wood out of nothing, out of thin air without cutting it down from any forest or by ordering it from your local lumber yard but out of nothing and build a house with it?
    - c). Can you produce a slab of marble without going to a local quarry or to a vendor to create a beautiful work of art?

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<sup>7</sup> J. I. Packer, *Concise Theology: A Guide to Historic Christian Beliefs* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1993), 21.

<sup>8</sup> NLT—*New Living Translation*, Tyndale House Publishers, (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2015)

- d). God has given humanity the ability to create anything with the sources He has created for us to use, but we are not created to create anything out of nothing. Why not? Because we are not the Uncaused God!
3. God is our Creator, who is not bound by, nor is He *in* time and space within our created order yet He maintains stability and order within our universe.
- D. How God expressed His self-existence (His aseity) is found in Exodus 3:13-14—  
*"[13] Then Moses said to God, 'If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' what shall I say to them?' [14] God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM.' And he said, 'Say this to the people of Israel: 'I AM has sent me to you.' "*
1. The words *"I Am"* is the title of Deity as One who existed through *ALL* eternity.
  2. The God of the Bible is the God without cause. If God needed a cause to exist, then He has ceased to be God.
    - a). The self-existent God brought *ALL* things from nothing into existence.
- E. The aseity of God who is the Supreme Uncaused Being is the Uncreated One who created all life. *"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth."*
1. Isaiah 43:10 says, *"You are my witnesses," declares the Lord, "and my servant whom I have chosen, that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he. Before me, no god was formed, nor shall there be any after me."*
    - a). From the NLT—*"But you are my witnesses, O Israel!" says the LORD. "You are my servant. You have been chosen to know me, believe in me, and understand that I alone am God. There is no other God— there never has been, and there never will be."*

## II. The LORD our God Is One

- A. Now, Deuteronomy 6:4 says, *"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one"*—proclaiming that there is one living God.
1. In Judaism's confession of faith this is called the Shema which derives from the Hebrew word *hear* (שמע)—*"Hear, O Israel."*
  2. But the words *"The LORD our God, the LORD is one"* points to monotheism. Mono = *one*, theism = *God*—one God.
    - a). A theist is someone who believes in God. Therefore, *"monotheism is 'the belief that only one God exists.'"*<sup>9</sup>
    - b). Later on, we will look into the Biblical reality of the Trinity, the Triune-God. But take note what one commentator shared about the monotheistic view—This affirmation of monotheism does not negate the biblical concept of the Trinity. The term 'God' ('ēlōhîm) is plural, alluding to the Trinity, while 'one' ('eḥād) the Lord is one implies unity among the Persons of the Godhead (compare with Gen. 2:24, where the same term for 'one' describes Adam and Eve).
      - (i) Just as there is oneness in a marriage between a husband and wife, there is oneness in our one Triune God—God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.
- B. Amazingly, our One true God is the great initiator. He was the one who came to the Israelites who were enslaved to Egypt, and not the other way around.

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<sup>9</sup> [https://www.blueletterbible.org/faq/don\\_stewart/don\\_stewart\\_299.cfm](https://www.blueletterbible.org/faq/don_stewart/don_stewart_299.cfm)

1. As I said before, our God, the Supreme Uncaused God of all creation always takes the first initiative towards humanity.
2. In the Garden of Eden when both Adam and Eve sinned against God, it was God who reached out to them and not the other way around. God the Initiator.
  - a). And after both husband and wife were done blaming each other, God initiated the plan of salvation (Gen. 3:15).
  - b). When God saw the fig leaves Adam and Eve wore to cover their guilt and shame, God initiated a better plan to cover their guilt and shame due to their sin by killing an innocent animal.
    - (i) And this was the very first time they watched a life drain out of an innocent life when they saw its blood shed because of them, a shadow of Jesus shedding His blood for us for the forgiveness of our sin.
  - c). And then God took its skin, made them garments and covered both Adam and Eve of their nakedness. Today we are clothed in Christ's righteousness.
  - d). Jesus being the greater atoning sacrifice would not only forgive us our sins but died to take away our sins.
  - e). Jesus became the better and final sacrifice (Hebrews 9:23-26) who as the Lamb of God came to die for the sins of the world (John 1:29).
    - (i) 1<sup>st</sup> John 3:5 (NLT)—*"And you know that Jesus came to take away our sins, and there is no sin in him."*



3. And this is true for us today—God came to us through the physical manifestation of the person of Jesus Christ who is God.
4. Jesus Christ came to our world, to our “spiritual Egypt” and rescued us from the slavery of sin and death.

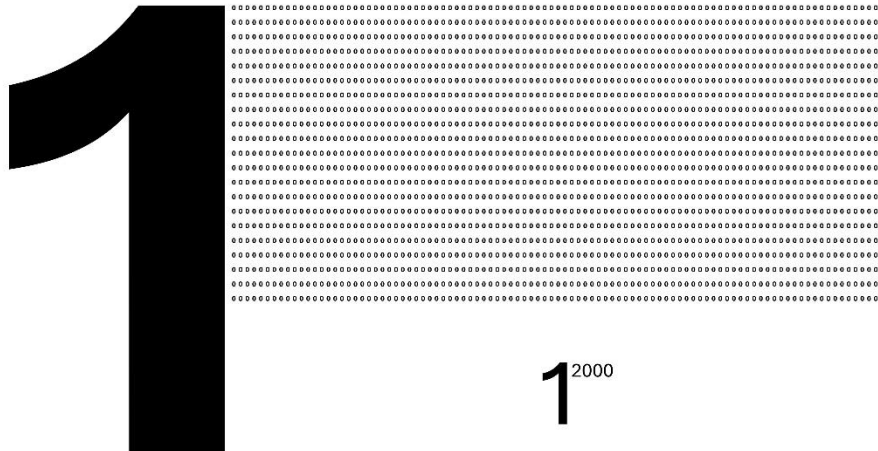
### III. The Incomparability of Our One Living God

- A. But let’s go back to Genesis 1:1—*“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth...”*
  1. God as used here in the Hebrew is *Elohim* which is the name for God in the plural tense, implying the Holy Trinity.
  2. And in the Shema, the capitalization of the word LORD is another name of God. This name in Hebrew is “Yahweh” or “Jehovah” which is translated “LORD” in many English Bibles.
- B. This begs the question— How do we know that the One living God of the Bible is the God who exists?
  1. Consider Calvary Chapel Pastor Don Stewart’s answer which *“includes the uniqueness and the reliability of the Bible, predictive prophecy, the [historical] resurrection of Jesus Christ and the changed lives of the believers.”*<sup>10</sup>
    - a). There are close to 6,000 original manuscripts of the New Testament that by 90-95 A.D. the entire Bible consisting of both Old Testament and New Testament was completed only decades within Jesus’s physical bodily resurrection and ascension.

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<sup>10</sup> [https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/stewart\\_don/faq/does-the-god-of-the-bible-exist/14-how-do-we-know-that-the-god-of-the-bible-is-the-god-who-exists.cfm](https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/stewart_don/faq/does-the-god-of-the-bible-exist/14-how-do-we-know-that-the-god-of-the-bible-is-the-god-who-exists.cfm)

- b). As for predictive prophecy, consider the words of Christian apologist and astrophysicist, Hugh Ross who shared—*“Unique among all books ever written, the Bible accurately foretells specific events-in detail-many years, sometimes centuries, before they occur. Approximately 2,500 prophecies appear in the pages of the Bible, about 2,000 of which already have been fulfilled to the letter—no errors. (The remaining 500 or so reach into the future and may be seen unfolding as days go by.) Since the probability for any one of these prophecies having been fulfilled by chance averages less than one in ten (figured very conservatively) and since the prophecies are for the most part independent of one another, the odds for all these prophecies having been fulfilled by chance without error is less than one in  $10^{2000}$  (that is 1 with 2,000 zeros written after it)!”*<sup>11</sup>



2. As for Jesus’s physical bodily resurrection—this is an actual historical event with many eyewitnesses and historical writings. Jesus’s historical resurrection is as factual as Neil Armstrong landing and walking on the moon.
- C. Furthermore, God’s existence can be seen through His creation. Romans 1:20—*“For ever since the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky. Through*

<sup>11</sup> <https://reasons.org/explore/publications/articles/fulfilled-prophecy-evidence-for-the-reliability-of-the-bible>

*everything God made, they can clearly see his invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature. So, they have no excuse for not knowing God."*

1. Nevertheless, Don Stewart made this point—*"In addition, nature cannot tell us anything about where sin came from, how it can be pardoned, or how to live a holy life. The various religions of the world give testimony to this fact. They all have the witness of nature before them yet they reach different conclusions about which God exists and what is demanded from human beings. For these things, we must go to God's special revelation, the Bible. Divine revelation gives us explicit knowledge about God. Thus, any conclusions about God's character and purpose which one might derive from nature must be evaluated in light of what God has said about Himself, and what Jesus Christ revealed about God. Nature is indeed a witness to God's might and power, but it does not supply all the knowledge a sinner needs to develop a personal relationship with God. That is the purpose of God's written Word, the Bible."*<sup>12</sup>

D. But this expression of truth—*"The LORD our God, the LORD is one"*—has a deeper revelation.

1. Another pastor writes, *"The word translated 'one' is the Hebrew word 'echad,' which speaks not of an absolute unity, but a compound unity. When the rabbis explain the word 'echad' they hold up one fist, then point out that this one fist is also made up of five fingers – it's a compound unity. This is a beautiful way to describe the Trinity. God is a compound unity. He is one God, who exists in three distinct persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit."*<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> [https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/stewart\\_don/faq/does-the-god-of-the-bible-exist/13-what-does-nature-tell-us-about-the-existence-of-god.cfm](https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/stewart_don/faq/does-the-god-of-the-bible-exist/13-what-does-nature-tell-us-about-the-existence-of-god.cfm)

<sup>13</sup> Calvary Chapel Pastor Sandy Adams <https://www.sandyadams.org/sermon/deuteronomy-5-8/>

- E. In truth, we cannot speak the Oneness of God without mentioning the Trinity. The Oneness of God is eternally linked to the three Persons of the Trinity—God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit—which we will address next week.
1. But if anything, this shows that there is no god like our One living God. When God blessed Hannah from her barrenness and gave birth to Samuel, 1<sup>st</sup> Samuel 2:2 showed her gratitude and joy saying, *"There is none holy like the Lord: for there is none besides you; there is no rock like our God."*
    - a). What Hannah declared then and what we declare today is the *incomparability* of our One God. She found everything she could ever want in God. She was satisfied in Him.
    - b). This is just one of many reminders from the Old Testament that our One living God, Yahweh, the great I AM, reveals His character through His personal interactions with humanity and how good He is to us.
    - c). We serve a God of justice, righteousness, and holiness, whose ways are beyond human understanding. Yet, He is also a God of compassion and mercy, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love who answers prayers according to His purposes.
  2. And our incomparable God is manifested in the person of Jesus Christ.
    - a). Jesus' sacrificial death on the cross demonstrates the depth of God's love for humanity, offering forgiveness and reconciliation to all who repent.
    - b). Also, Jesus' resurrection from the dead confirms His authority over sin and death, displaying His incomparable power to conquer the grave.

- c). And through His resurrection, Jesus offers the promise of eternal life to those who follow Him, transcending the limitations of human existence.
3. And, for those in Christ Jesus, the incomparability of God is revealed through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit who guides and empowers believers to live transformed lives through the truth of God's Word and for spiritual service.
  4. Therefore, there is no god like our God who is unmatched in His character, power, holiness, grace and love.
- F. In his book *"The Incomparableness of God,"* 17<sup>th</sup> century English Puritan George Swinnock stated that *"He who knoweth God aright is fully satisfied in him; when he once drinketh of the 'fountain of living waters,' he thirsteth no more after other objects."*<sup>14</sup>
1. This right here ought to lead us to worship our One incomparable God of Scripture for who is like Him!
    - a). To say that our God is One is to say there is no one like Him; He is beyond comparison; there is no one to compete with Him, and we are to worship Him.
  2. But unfortunately, humanity likes to make gods into their image, into someone or something they want *it* to be while rejecting the One true living God of Scripture. To create our own version of god to our own liking is no god at all.
    - a). Harvest Christian Fellowship pastor and evangelist, Greg Laurie writes, *"More than two hundred years ago, the French philosopher Voltaire said, "God made man in His image, and man returned the favor." Humans have*

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<sup>14</sup> George Swinnock, *The Works of George Swinnock, M.A., vol. 4* (Edinburgh; London; Dublin: James Nichol; James Nisbet and Co.; G. Herbert, 1868), 486.

*always preferred to design their own gods rather than worship the One who actually exists. We love to customize our iPods, iPads, iPhones, and iTunes to suit our tastes, and many of us prefer an iGod too — programmed, personalized, saying what we want Him to say, doing what we want Him to do. We edit out the tracks we don't like and keep the ones we do. Here's the trouble with a custom-designed god: It isn't real."*<sup>15</sup>

3. Furthermore, when humanity is not busy creating a god of their own liking or choosing, people portray the God of the Bible in every form of medium available and mock Him as some kind of cosmic-killjoy, distant, impersonal or the source of everyone's sufferings.
  - a). But when we open the Scripture, we find the One holy God who desires to reconcile us sinful sinners unto Himself in order that we may have a relationship with Him, our Creator through His Son Jesus Christ. And we say Hallelujah!

#### IV. We Love and Worship Our One True Living God

- A. Now, the Shema continues in Deuteronomy 6:5-6 saying, *"[5] You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. [6] And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart."*
  1. This portion of the text—the LORD is One—ought to drive us to love and worship our One true living God.
  2. *"You shall love the Lord..."* is a command, a reminder to the children of Israel that they were unlike the nations around them who served other multiple gods; that they serve and live for the One true living God.

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<sup>15</sup> Greg Laurie, *Essentials Bible Study: A Deeper Look at Foundational Topics of the Faith* (Dana Point, CA: Kerygma, 2013).

- a). And this is a great reminder for us as well, since we love our Lord Jesus, we are saying we are not like the world. We are saying we belong to Jesus and Him alone!
  3. And now they were commanded to love the LORD God who is one with all their heart, with all their soul and with all their might.
  4. But as we grow to know our holy and gracious God, to love Him becomes more than just a command but a willingness to intentionally live in our devotion to Him, and Him alone. Why? For there is no god like our incomparable God.
- B. However, the truth that the LORD is One and that we are to love Him is not limited to the Old Testament but is carried into the New Testament.
1. One source stated that *"The commandments, statutes, and judgments the Lord gave to Moses in the late 15<sup>th</sup> century BC presented a challenge to late Jewish scholars, who decided to organize and number them. In the 12<sup>th</sup> century AD, the great scholar Maimonides categorized all the laws he discerned in the Torah (the first five book of the Bible) into 613 distinct items. At the time of Jesus, scholars had already begun these discussions; they had in mind a great many laws when they asked Jesus their question concerning "the great commandments."*<sup>16</sup>
  2. But then Jesus arrives. In Matthew 22:37-38, as Jesus was being tested was asked which commandments was the greatest, He responded not with the Ten Commandments or all the laws found in the Torah, but with a portion of the Shema reducing all of God's commandments to two.

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<sup>16</sup> Dr. David Jeremiah, *The Jeremiah Study Bible*, (Worthy Publishing, a division of Worthy Media, Inc., 2013), 236.

- a). The second one was to love your neighbor as yourself. This is our horizontal response to others.
  - b). But the first was *"[37] You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. [38] This is the great and first commandment."*
    - (i) This is our vertical response to our One true God.
3. *"With all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind"* speaks of wholeheartedness.
- a). It speaks of our total commitment and devotion to our One living God.

## V. God, the Eternal I AM

- A. When Moses approached the burning bush, the voice of God told Moses to remove his sandals for he was standing on holy ground. And after receiving instructions in freeing the children of Israel out of Egypt, the name Moses was to give them who sent him was *"I AM WHO I AM...I AM has sent me to you"* (Exodus 3:13-34).
- 1. The children of Israel had been living in a polytheistic and pantheistic cultural society for four-hundred years; it was important that they know the identity of their One true living God, the *I AM*.
  - 2. The words "I Am" is translated as "to be" what later became "YHWH" (Yahweh) which means "I cause to be." Thus, *"Yahweh is probably a third person singular equivalent of I AM."*<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Dorian G. Coover-Cox, "Exodus," in *CSB Study Bible: Notes*, (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2017), 93.



3. The identity of God as the I AM is the name that *"should thus be understood as referring to Yahweh's being the creator and sustainer of all that exists and thus the Lord of both creation and history, all that is and all that is happening—a God active and present in historical affairs."*<sup>18</sup>
  - a). Therefore, God's name Yahweh and the I AM, are the same, pointing to His eternal self-existence.
  - b). Furthermore, the I AM came down from heaven and became human like us who said in John 8:58 (NLT), *"I tell you the truth, before Abraham was even born, I Am!"* and that person is Jesus.
  
4. 17<sup>th</sup> century English Puritan minister, Stephen Charnock wrote, *"His eternity is evident by the name God gives himself: "And God said unto Moses, I am that I am; thus shall you say to the children of Israel, 'I am has sent me to you' " (Ex. 3:14). This is the name whereby he is distinguished from all creatures; "I am" is his proper name. This description, being in the present tense, shows that his essence knows no past nor future; if it were "he was," it would intimate he were not now what he once was; if it were "he will be," it would intimate he were not yet what he will be; but "I am"—I am the only being, the root of all beings. He is therefore at the greatest distance from not being, and that is eternal. So that "is" signifies his eternity as well as his perfection and immutability. As "I am" speaks the want of no blessedness, so it speaks the want of no duration; and therefore the French, wherever they find this word Jehovah in the Scripture, which we translate "Lord" and "Lord eternal," render it "the Eternal"—I am always and immutably the same."*<sup>19</sup>

- B. There is no god like our God. In Micah 7:18-19 (CSB), the prophet Micah wrote, *"[18] Who is a God like you, forgiving iniquity and passing over rebellion for the*

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<sup>18</sup> Douglas K. Stuart, *Exodus, vol. 2, The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2006), 121.

<sup>19</sup> Stephen Charnock, *The Existence and Attributes of God, ed. Mark Jones, Updated and Unabridged.*, vol. 1 & 2, 427–428.

*remnant of his inheritance? He does not hold on to his anger forever because he delights in faithful love. [19] He will again have compassion on us; he will vanquish our iniquities. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea."*

## VI. CONCLUSION

- A. In closing, this is what we can take away about our God—Yahweh, the I AM, the LORD God who is One—He is the incomparable unchanging God who is ever present and active in our lives this side of heaven and throughout eternity.
1. The self-existent Uncaused God who appeared to Moses at the burning bush is the same God who lives in us today through His Son Jesus by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.
  2. In fact, Jesus is the bodily manifestation of the I AM who *"is the same yesterday, today and forever"* (Hebrews 13:8).
- B. So, let us love the One and only God wholeheartedly, *with all our hearts, with all our soul and with all our mind*, especially for what He has done for us by sending His Son Jesus to die for our sin, to save us from the power of sin, and live in harmony in our devotion to God in Jesus through the indwelling Spirit of God.
1. *"The word for 'love' is agapao, totally unselfish love, a love of which human beings are capable only with the help of the Holy Spirit. God's Spirit helps us love him as we ought. God wants our warmhearted love and devotion, not just our obedience. The heart is the center of desires and affections, the soul is a person's 'being' and uniqueness, the mind is the center of a person's intellect. To love God in this way is to fulfill completely all the commandments regarding one's 'vertical' relationship."*<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Bruce B. Barton, *Matthew, Life Application Bible Commentary* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1996), 443.

C. Therefore, what we believe...

*"We believe there is one living God who we are to love with all our heart and with all our soul and with all our might. We believe there is one living God who eternally exists in three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit" (GRCC Statement of Faith).*

*To God Be The Glory Forever and Ever. Amen!*