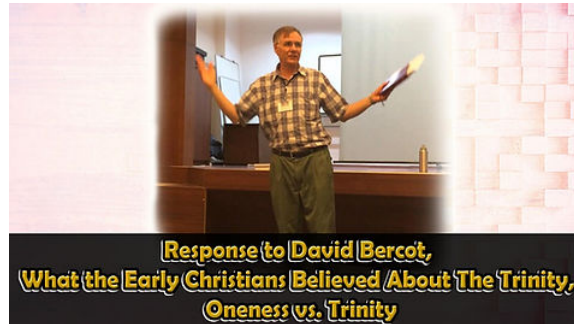




## GLOBAL IMPACT MINISTRIES

A Defense of the Apostolic  
Christian Faith

### Response to David Bercot, What the Early Christians Believed About The Trinity, Oneness vs. Trinity



#### Early Christian Writings Were Burned By The Catholic Church

Mr. Bercot depends upon the number of surviving early Christian writings in developing his understanding of theology rather than considering the historical fact that the theology of the early Christian majority was destroyed by the later Roman Catholic Church. The historical evidence proves that the majority of the earliest Christians were Oneness Modalistic Monarchians (*Tertullian, Against Praxeus 3 / Origen, Commentary of the Gospel of John, book 1, 23*) and that the later Roman Catholic Church burned the Modalistic writings while copying and protecting the writings of the Semi-Arians who held to a form of Semi-Trinitarianism before the Trinity doctrine was fully developed.

Under Sabellius, the New Advent Encyclopedia admits, "All of his (Sabellius') original works were burned."

Trinitarian author Paul Pavao wrote, "No writings of Praxeas or Sabellius survive today because they were considered heresy by the Church." (Author Paul Pavao, *Christian History for Every Man. Greatest Stories Ever Told. 2014. <http://www.christian-history.org/page-name.html>*)

#### The 325 AD Nicene Creed Is Not Trinitarian

Mr. Bercot claims that he is a Trinitarian who believes in the early Nicene Creed rather than the later so-called Athanasian Creed. However, the early Nicene Creed of 325 is not a true Trinitarian Creed as it favors Oneness Modalism rather than the later Trinitarian doctrine.

At 2:07 into Mr. Bercot's lecture entitled, "What The Early Christians Believed About the Trinity," Mr. Bercot said, "Most Western Christians do not believe in the early Nicene Creed even though they say that they do."

#### [Play video clip from 2:07 – 2:17](#)

What Mr. Bercot means is that most Western Christians really believe in the fifth century Trinitarian Athanasian Creed rather than the fourth century Nicene Creed because the fourth century Nicene Creed is not what most Trinitarians would consider an orthodox Trinitarian Creed.

#### [Play video clip from 24:15 to 25:49](#)

At 24:15 into his lecture, Mr. Bercot said, "Yet most Western Christians do not grasp this distinction. In fact, Augustine, who was not very learned in his Greek; he came up with an explanation of the Trinity that departed very markedly from that which the church had always believed up until that time that was a thorough misunderstanding of the Nicene Creed. And it is Augustine's theology, it is his explanation of the Trinity that is known to us Westerners as the Athanasian Creed, but don't confuse the Athanasian Creed with the Nicene Creed."

Mr. Bercot pretends that the 325 Nicene Creed is a Trinitarian Creed even though the words "Trinity," "three persons," and "coeternal" are never used in it. Yet Mr. Bercot was correct when he stated that Augustine "came up with an explanation of the Trinity that departed markedly from that which the church had always believed."

Mr. Bercot correctly understands that the early Nicene Creed of 325 actually contradicts the Trinitarian theology of the later so called "Athanasian Creed" which was produced from the writings of Augustine in the fifth century. What Mr. Bercot fails to grasp is that the early Nicene Creed of 325 actually supports Oneness Modalism rather than Trinitarianism.

Church historian Jaroslav Pelikan wrote that Marcellus of Ancyra "proved an embarrassment to Nicene Orthodoxy" because he and other "Sabellian" Monarchians were among "the signers in 325 (Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition*, Vol. 1, Pg. 207)." How could the Modalists have signed the Nicene Creed if the early Nicene Creed was a true Trinitarian Creed? Thus it is clear that the 325 Nicene Creed was designed in such a way that the Modalistic bishops had no problem signing the Creed while the Arians who denied the divinity of Jesus Christ could not sign it. Therefore the early Nicene Creed does not clearly support the Trinitarian doctrine because it does not spell out what Trinitarians believe.

Church historian B. B. Edwards pointed out that the early 325 Nicene Creed actually contradicts later Trinitarian theology while affirming Modalism:

"It lies, moreover, on the very face of the Nicene Creed, that it acknowledges the Father only as the Monad of the Godhead: 'We believe in One God the Father almighty, maker of all things visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God the only begotten of the Father, etc.' Jesus Christ as here presented to us is not the one God, but the one Lord who was begotten of the substance of the one God or the Father, etc. The Father then, as presented in this Creed (Nicene), is not merely a distinct person, i.e. not merely one of the three persons, and on an equality with the other two; but he is the original, independent, self-existent monad.'" (*"THE BIBLICAL REPOSITORY AND QUARTERLY OBSERVER. By B. B. EDWARDS", Under Remarks of the Nicene Creed, The Biblical Repository and Classical Review, American Biblical Repository, Page 295*)

According to the early Nicene Creed, God the Father alone is the “independent, self-existent monad” and “the Son of God” was “begotten of the substance of the one God or the Father (Heb. 1:3 “Who being the brightness of his glory [the Father’s glory] and the express image [“hypostasis” = the Father’s “Substance of Being”] of his person [the Father’s Person] ...”)” via his virgin conception. Hence, the Nicene Creed of 325 actually teaches that the One God who is “the only true God” (John 17:3) is the Father and that the Son “was begotten (lit. “born”) of the substance of the one God” the Father Himself. Therefore the early Nicene Creed was not a Trinitarian Creed like the later so called Athanasian Creed; as the early Nicene Creed actually taught that the Son is the “substance of Being” (see “hypostasis” = “Substance of Being” in Heb. 1:3) of the only true God the Father Himself who had his beginning by his virgin begetting rather than as another eternal true God Person beside God the Father.

#### The 5th Century Athanasian Creed Is The True Trinitarian Creed

The so called “Athanasian Creed” was written by an unknown Catholic author within the fifth or early sixth-century and not by the fourth-century bishop Athanasius (Under “Athanasian Creed,” Wikipedia says, “It has since been widely accepted by modern scholars that the creed was not authored by Athanasius, that it was not originally called a creed at all, nor was Athanasius’ name originally attached to it ... The most likely time frame is in the late fifth or early sixth century AD – at least 100 years after Athanasius. The theology of the creed is firmly rooted in the Augustinian tradition, using exact terminology of Augustine’s *On the Trinity* (published 415 AD)”). The fifth or sixth century Roman Catholic author of the Athanasian Creed used some of the fifth-century writings of Augustine of Hippo to develop the so called “Athanasian Creed.” Hence, we know that the author of the Athanasian Creed could not have been Athanasius who lived before the time of Augustine (Athanasius lived in the fourth century while Augustine lived in the early fifth century). Therefore the fourth-century bishop of Alexandria named Athanasius could not have been the author of the so called Athanasian Creed.

At 2:18 into Mr. Bercot’s lecture, Mr. Bercot said, “The Doctrine of the Trinity had become so jumbled that I’m not even going to be able to cover it in an hour...”

#### [Play video clip from 2:18 – 2:54](#)

Mr. Bercot is referring to the later fifth or sixth-century so called “Athanasian Creed” becoming “so jumbled” that he would not “be able to cover it in an hour.” Remember that Mr. Bercot had said that “Most Western Christians do not believe in the early Nicene Creed even though they say that they do.” Mr. Bercot was saying that most modern Western Christians really believe in the later “jumbled” Athanasian Creed rather than the earlier Nicene Creed of 325.

#### The Begotten God or The Begotten Son of God

#### [Play video clip from 49:25 – 49:30](#)

At 49:25 Mr. Bercot said, “The early Christians had no trouble talking about Jesus as the begotten God.”

Mr. Bercot is incorrect as the earliest Christians did not use the phrase “only begotten God.” The historical evidence proves that the earliest Christians cited John 1:18 as the “only begotten Son” rather than “only begotten God.” Origen appears to be the first Christian writer to cite John 1:18 as the “only begotten God” in about 230 AD. Since the earlier Christian writers cited John 1:18 as “only begotten Son” before “only begotten God” crept into the text, it makes sense that the earlier Christian writers would have correctly cited John 1:18 rather than Origen’s later citation of John 1:18.

Irenaeus cited John 1:18 as “only begotten Son” in the second century (about 180).

“For no man, he says, has seen God at any time, unless **the only-begotten Son of God, which is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared [Him]** (John 1:18). For He, the Son who is in His bosom, declares to all the Father who is invisible.” (Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, book 3, chapter 6, *New Advent Encyclopedia*)

Clement of Alexandria cited or referenced John 1:18 as “only begotten Son” in about 200 AD (*Padagogus* I, 3; *Stromata* I, 26; *Stromata* V, 12). Hippolytus cited John 1:18 as “only begotten Son” in about 205 (*Against Noetus* V). Tertullian cited John 1:18 as “only begotten Son” in about 212 AD (*Against Praxeus* VIII). But Origen of Alexandria cited John 1:18 as “only begotten God” in about 230 AD (*Origen’s Commentary of the Gospel of John*, book 2, 24). Therefore the earliest manuscripts of John 1:18 which were cited by the earliest Christians had to have contained the words “only begotten Son” rather than the later interpolation cited by Origen of Alexandria in about 230 AD.

#### The Essence of Arianism

Mr. Bercot further stated that the essence of Arianism is to believe, “that there was a time when the Son of God did not exist.”

#### [Play video clip from 5:20 – 5:27](#)

Mr. Bercot later cited Tertullian as a true Trinitarian even though Tertullian wrote that “...**there was a time when neither sin existed with him (the Father), nor the Son** (Tertullian, *Against Hermogenes*, chapter 3).” Hence, according to Tertullian, there was a time when the Son did not exist with the Father as a living Son. Therefore Tertullian and other Semi-Arians like him could not have believed in the later Trinitarian theology which developed into an alleged timeless God the Son.

According to the famed church historian, Johannes Quasten, Origen’s later doctrine of a timeless eternal Son was “a remarkable advance in the development of theology and had a far reaching influence on ecclesiastical teaching (Quasten, *Patrology* Vol. 2, Page 78).”

Since it was Origen of Alexandria who first came up with the idea of a timeless eternal Son in about 230 AD, all of the earlier Christian writers could not have believed in an alleged timeless eternal Son. Therefore all of the early Christian writers that Mr. Bercot cited were not true Trinitarians because they believed like Arius in that “there was a time when the Son was not (“If the Father begat the Son, he that was begotten had a beginning of existence: and from this it is evident, that there was a time when the Son was not. It therefore necessarily follows, that he had his substance from nothing” - Quoted in *Church History*, by Socrates of Constantinople, Book I, Ch. 5).”

#### [Play video clip from 45:30 – 46:41](#)

At 45:30 into his lecture, Mr. Bercot actually cited Tertullian as a true Trinitarian even though he clearly believed in a Semi-Trinitarian form of Arianism.

“**He is made, a second in manner of existence** in position, not in nature. He did not withdraw from the original source but went forth. This is the begetting of the Son going forth from the Father to create the universe.”

If God the Father “made” the Son to be “a second manner of existence in position” then the Son of God could not have timelessly existed as an Almighty God Person. For how can the Almighty as the Almighty ever be “made” while remaining timeless? And how can the Almighty as the Almighty ever hold a second manner of existence or position under a greater God Person than Himself?

Mr. Bercot cited Tertullian and said, “You have two beings, one who commands that the things be made and the other who creates.”

Here Mr. Bercot cites Tertullian stating that one God Person commanded an inferior God Person to create all things for Him even though Hebrews 2:7 cites Psalm 8:5-6 to show that the Father appointed the Son to rule over the works of His hands.

“YOU HAVE MADE HIM FOR A LITTLE WHILE LOWER THAN THE ANGELS; YOU HAVE CROWNED HIM WITH GLORY AND HONOR, AND HAVE **APPOINTED HIM OVER THE WORKS OF YOUR HANDS...**” Heb. 2:7 NASB

Isaiah 64:8 (HCSB), “You are our Father; we are the clay, and You are our potter; we all are the work of Your hands.”

The prophet Isaiah confirms that the Father alone created us by the work of His invisible hands. If an alleged pre-incarnate God the Son created all things as the Father’s agent in creation, how then did God the Father appoint the Son over the works of His hands? Hence, the only way that Jesus could have created all things is as the Father before becoming a human Son (Heb. 1:10; Heb. 3:3-4). Therefore the Son is the man who was born in Bethlehem who could not have created anything as a Son.

At approximately 5:36 into his lecture, Mr. Bercot said that “most Christians today (addressing most Trinitarians), at least here in the West, DO NOT HOLD TO THE NICENE CREED.”

**[Play video clip from 5:36 – 5:49](#)**

At approximately 5:29 into his lecture, Mr. Bercot further stated, “I hold to the Nicene definition” rather than the Arian “views.”

**[Play video clip from 5:29 – 5:24](#)**

Yet at 9:34 into his lecture, Mr. Bercot supports a Semi-Arian theology rather than a Trinitarian theology by saying, “The Father is the source of the existence of Jesus.”

**[Play video clip from 9:34 - 9:40](#)**

Mr. Bercot then said that the early Christians used two analogies to explain how the Son was begotten from the Father:

The Son originated with a beginning in a similar way as a beam of light from the sun.

*Note: This analogy was also used by the Modalistic Monarchians (See Justin’s account of what the Modalists believed in the mid-second century, Dialogue with Trypho 128). Sabellius used the same analogy: “Sabellius tried to solve the problem by using the illustration of the sun and its rays. The Father was the sun. Jesus is considered to be a dominate ray. He was projected for a while and then withdrawn back into the substance of the Father ... Sabellius could say Jesus was ‘Light of Lights’ and even ‘homousias’. Jesus was ‘Light of Lights’ in that He was LIKE A RAY OF THE SUN, He emanated from the Father. He was ‘homousias’ in that he was of the same substance as the Father.” (The History of the Doctrine of Justification, Chapter one “The Person of Christ” Post Tenebras Lux, Page 5 © 2010 Thomas R. Browning)*

The Son originated with a beginning as a stream of water from a spring.

If we are to believe that every star is like our sun in that each star was first created by God Himself, then the beam of light had to have gone forth from each sun after each sun was created. Yet even if God created the beams of light with each star, we cannot say that every spring began on the earth with a stream already coming out of each spring. Hence, each spring has to be filled with water before the beginning of the first stream of water ushers forth out of each spring. Therefore Mr. Bercot’s use of these two analogies used by the earliest Christians proves that the earliest Christians believed that the Son of God had a definitive beginning by being begotten in the Father’s Logos (Mind and Reason) which Mr. Bercot admits is the Father’s “Mind” and “Reason.”

#### **Mr. Bercot is Teaching the Pre-Nicene Theology of the Semi-Arians**

At about 20:40 into his lecture, Mr. Bercot struggles to explain how the early Semi-Arian Christian writers spoke of the Son of God coming forth from the Father’s logos (Mr. Bercot said that the word logos means “the Father’s word, mind, reason”) because some of the early Christian writers believed that “it is really improper to speak of him as the Son until creation, before that, we should speak of him as the logos or word (David Bercot, YouTube Lecture: <https://youtu.be/UpPmXUEK3F8> 20:40).”

Mr. Bercot clearly addressed the early Semi-Arian Christian writers who believed that the Word (Logos) of God is the mind and reason of God the Father before the Son came into existence by being literally begotten of the Father before creation. Trinitarian scholars themselves identify these Christian writers as “Semi-Arians.”

Under “Arianism” the New Advent Encyclopedia explains that the “Semi-Arians ... **from an early date** affirmed the likeness, either without adjunct, or in all things, or in substance, of the Son to the Father, **while denying His co-equal dignity and co-eternal existence. These men of the Via Media were named Semi-Arians ... while they affirmed the Word of God to be everlasting, they imagined Him as having become the Son to create the worlds and redeem mankind** ... Five ante-Nicene Fathers are especially quoted: **Athenagoras, Tatian, Theophilus of Antioch, Hippolytus, and Novatian**, whose language appears to involve a peculiar notion of Sonship, as though it did not come into being or were not perfect until the dawn of creation. To these may be added **Tertullian and Methodius**. Cardinal Newman held that **their view, which is found clearly in Tertullian, of the Son existing after the Word, is connected as an antecedent with Arianism.**”

**[Play video clip from 20:40 – 21:28](#)**

At 20:40 into his lecture, Mr. Bercot said, “Some would say that it is really improper to refer to him as the Son before creation (Mr. Bercot is clearly referring to the Semi-Arian writers such as Tertullian, Theophilus, Athenagoras, and Hippolytus). **For before that we should speak of him as the logos or word but they would say that when he went forth from the Father to create the universe then we could also speak of that as being the begetting of the Son. And in that sense you could say that there was a beginning of the Son of God;** not that he did not exist before his being begotten, but it was at that point that he went forth from the Father to create the world.”

Mr. Bercot incorrectly interprets the theology of the early Semi-Arians who taught that the impersonal word of the Father existed before the Son began in time. The Semi-Arians had taught that the Son only existed in the mind and plan of the Father within the Father’s logos (Reason, mind, expressed thought), but when God the Father wished “to create the universe then we could also speak of that as being the begetting of the Son.” Hence, the Semi-Arians believed that the “Foreknown” Son (1 Peter 1:20) existed impersonally within the heart and mind of God but did not have his actual living existence until he was begotten. The Oneness Modalists held to the same view except that the Modalists believed that the Son as the Son did not become a living Son until he was “granted life in himself (John 5:26)” as a human life at his virgin conception (See Origen’s description of the theology of the Modalists in his Commentary of the Gospel of John 1:23).

#### **The Oneness Modalistic Christian Majority**

In the early third century (AD 200 -225), Tertullian confessed that the Oneness Modalists were “they that always make up the majority of the believers” in the West (Tertullian, Against Praxeus, 3) and Origen confessed that the Oneness Modalists were “the general run of Christians” in the East (Origen, Commentary of the Gospel of John, book 1, 23). Therefore we can be certain that the Oneness Theology of the Modalists was the most prominent view of the early Christians about one hundred years before the 325 A.D. Council of Nicaea.

The Semi-Arian theology of the Son existing within the mind and planning of the Father harmonized with the Modalistic majority in that both views admitted that the Son existed within the Word/Logos of God the Father before he was granted life in himself. Yet the Semi-Arians departed from the Modalistic Christian majority when they affirmed that the Son of God was begotten twice: once in heaven before his virgin conception and again at his conception. According to Origen (Origen’s Commentary of the Gospel of John, book 2, Chapter 23), the Modalists taught that the Son was “the utterance of the Father deposited” in words until the Word of God the Father actually became flesh as a living Son via virgin conception (Luke 1:35).

### Mr. Bercot is Teaching a Form of Arianism

#### [Play video clip from 33:26 – 34:13](#)

At 33:26 into his lecture, Mr. Bercot said, “The Father begets the Son and therefore has his origin or arche (*“arche” means “beginning”*) in the Father. Now does this make the Son less divine than the Father? Does this reduce the Son to being a demi-god? Not at all because being unbegotten is not an aspect of divinity. It is a personal attribute. Okay, so the Father is unbegotten and the Son is begotten. There is a difference between the two; they are not equal in that sense. And yet begotten and unbegotten are not characteristics of divinity, they are personal characteristics.”

Contrary to Mr. Bercot’s opinion, the distinctions between the Father and the Son are clearly distinctions between the divine attributes of the Father and the human attributes of the Son rather than distinctions between two alleged true God Persons. Mr. Bercot certainly errs when he says that the word “un-begotten” is not “an aspect of divinity.” The word “un-begotten” is clearly “an aspect of divinity” while “begotten” is clearly an aspect of humanity.

I challenge Mr. Bercot to respond to how any “personal attribute” of God can somehow be relegated to being a non-divine “personal attribute.” For how can any of the personal attributes of God within His Divine Personality not be a Divine Attribute of Himself? And if one true God Person can hold a divine attribute that is not held by another true God Person, then the alleged true God Person who lacked a divine attribute could not be a fully complete Almighty Divine Person. Therefore Mr. Bercot is indeed teaching a form of Semi-Arianism by articulating that the Son is another distinct god person (a “demi-god”) who is lesser in divine attributes than the only true God who is the Father.

The Scriptures teach that it is impossible for our only true God to lack any divine attribute otherwise the Almighty could not be truly the Almighty. For if God as God lacked any divine attribute then He could not be the true God Himself.

Mr. Bercot is correct when he said that the word “begotten” is “not” a characteristic “of divinity” because God as God cannot be “begotten” (“begotten” literally means “born”), but Mr. Bercot is incorrect when he alleged that the word “unbegotten is not an aspect of divinity.” Therefore the distinctions between the Father and the Son are not distinctions between two true God Persons, but rather, they are ontological distinctions between the divine attributes of God as God outside of the incarnation as the Father, and Immanuel God with us as a true man inside of the incarnation as the Son (as a true man).

### Only Oneness Theology Brings Harmony to all of the Scriptures

Oneness (Modalistic) adherents affirm that when God became a man, His Divine Spirit remained unchangeable in the heavens (*Mal. 3:6 “I am Yahweh, I change not”*) while He simultaneously reproduced or copied His own Essence of Being as a fully complete human being within the virgin. (*See Heb. 1:3 “Who being the brightness of His glory and the express image [charakter = a “reproduction” or “copy” from an “original”] of His Person.”*)

#### [Play video clip from 34:37 – 34:48](#)

At 34:37 into his lecture, Mr. Bercot said, “The Father is also different from the Son in that the Father could not have become incarnate; nor can he ever make himself visible to human eyes.”

Mr. Bercot’s statement contradicts the words of inspired scripture in Hebrews 1:3 and in Colossians 1:15.

Hebrews 1:3 states that the Son of God is “the brightness of his glory (the Father’s glory) and the express image of his person (addressing the Father’s Person).” Hence, the Father’s Divine Person was “reproduced” or “copied” (*the meaning of karakter in Heb. 1:3 means that the Son is the copied image of the Father’s Divine Person as a true human person*) as the visible image of the invisible Father.

Colossians 1:15 states that the Son is “the image of the invisible God” as the image of the invisible Father made visible in the flesh as a true man living among men. Would Mr. Bercot be willing to claim that the Son is the image of an alleged invisible God the Son or would he acknowledge that the Son is the image of the invisible Father? The context of Colossians chapter one is clearly addressing the Son as the visible image of the invisible Father. Thus the inspired texts of scripture clearly reveal that the “Mighty God” and “Everlasting Father” became incarnate as the child born and son given who is now our human prince of peace (*Isaiah 9:6*).

“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” Isaiah 9:6 ESV

#### [Play video clip from 34:58 – 35:12](#)

At 34:58 into his lecture, Mr. Bercot said, “The Father is the ultimate source, not only of the universe but also of the Trinity. If he as the source of the Trinity had become man and died, that would have been the end of the Trinity. That was impossible. That could not be done.”

Mr. Bercot speaks of God as if he is a non-omnipresent finite man. Surely our omnipresent God can act, speak, and exist in multiple locations all at once without vacating heaven to end his own existence. Since Mr. Bercot admits that the Father alone “is the ultimate source” of the Son, he is actually admitting that the Son is the man who had his beginning (arche) by his human conception and begetting. For no passage of inspired scripture ever contradicts Luke 1:35 which informs us why the Son is called the Son in the first place.

“The angel answered and said to her, ‘The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason, the holy Child shall be called the Son of God.’” Luke 1:35 NASB

Inspired scripture clearly states, “...for that reason the holy child shall be called the Son.” Hence, the Son of God is called the Son because of the Holy Spirit descending upon the virgin to make a copied image of the Father’s Invisible Spirit (*Heb. 1:3 “hypostasis” = “Substance of Being”*) as a visible human image of Himself. Therefore, Jesus Christ the Son is the image of the invisible God the Father made visible in the flesh to save his people from their sins.

### Mr. Bercot’s Contradictory Teaching About God’s Divine Attributes

#### [Play video clip from 35:24 – 35:49](#)

At 35:24 into his lecture, Mr. Bercot said, “The Church understood that these are not attributes of divinity. Rather, these are differing characteristics of the Father and the Son. So the early church agreed with scripture that the Father is greater than the Son as to personal attributes but not as to nature.”

It is ridiculous for Mr. Bercot to state that the “personal attributes” of the Father and the Son can somehow be relegated to non-divine attributes while alleging that the Father and the Son are two true God Persons of an alleged Trinity. In contradistinction to Mr. Bercot’s view, Oneness theology affirms that the divine characteristics of the Father are His Personal Attributes while the distinct human attributes of the Son are not necessarily divine attributes. By referring to “personal attributes,” Mr. Bercot is claiming that the divine attributes of one true God Person can be different from the divine attributes of another true God Person. If the divine attributes of one God Person are lesser in power and authority than the divine attributes of another true God Person, then the lesser God Person would not be equal to the superior God Person. Thus, Mr. Bercot is actually promoting an inferior god person under a superior true God Person which is a form of Semi-Arianism rather than Trinitarianism.

Mark 13:32 clearly informs us that the Son does not know the day or the hour of his own second coming. Yet the divine attribute of omniscience (All-Knowingness) only belongs to God the Father Himself because the human child born and son given is not ontologically God with us as God. For when

God's omnipresent Holy Spirit reproduced His own "Substance of Being" to become a true human being within the virgin (*Heb. 1:3*), God also became a true human son with us in a genuine and full human existence who could not have known all things in his newly formed human spirit (*Heb. 2:17*).

**Play video clip from 35:49 – 36:10**

At 35:49 into his lecture, Mr. Bercot said, "The Son and the Holy Spirit possess the full attributes of divinity but **the Father possesses unique personal attributes that make him greater than the Son and the Holy Spirit** ... the Father is the begetter, **He is the origin of the Trinity.**"

Mr. Bercot actually admits that two alleged true God Persons, "the Son and the Holy Spirit," do not hold all of the divine attributes that "the Father possesses" in the Father's "unique personal attributes." Hence, Mr. Bercot alleges that the Father is "greater than the Son and the Holy Spirit" within His "unique personal attributes".

How can Mr. Bercot claim that an Almighty true God Person actually exists as the Almighty while lacking "unique personal attributes" that only belong to a "greater" Almighty God Person, namely the Father? Mr. Bercot cannot have it both ways. For a true God Person as a true God Person cannot be a lesser Almighty Divine Person distinct from a fully complete Almighty Divine Person. For it is impossible for the Almighty as the Almighty to be anything less than 100% Almighty, otherwise he could not be the Almighty.

**The Humanity of Jesus Explains the Difference of Attributes**

**Play video clip from 37:06 – 37:38**

At 37:06 into his lecture, Mr. Bercot talks about a "hierarchy of order within the Trinity" in which the Son is under the authority of the Father. Yet how can a true God Person be lesser in power or authority than another true God Person while remaining a true God Person?

Oneness theology explains the submission of the Son to the Father within Christ's true humanity alone, not within his divine nature.

**Play video clip from 49:45 – 50:32**

Mr. Bercot cited scripture to show that **the Son can do nothing by Himself**, but only what he sees the Father doing and that the Father is greater than the Son.

"So Jesus replied, 'Truly, truly, I tell you, the Son can do nothing by Himself, unless He sees the Father doing it. For whatever the Father does, the Son also does.'" John 5:19 BSB

"...**the Father is greater than I.**" John 14:28

I ask Mr. Bercot how a true God Person "can do nothing by Himself" as an Almighty God Person and how a true Almighty God Person could say that "the Father is greater than I?" For it is impossible for an Almighty God Person to be unable to "do nothing by Himself." And it is impossible for a true Almighty God Person to ever state that another God Person "is greater than" Himself while remaining the Almighty. Therefore the only scriptural way to describe the distinctions between the Father and the Son is to understand them as distinctions between the Son's true humanity (God as man) and the Father's true divinity (God as God).

**The Scriptures Teach Oneness Theology**

In 125 AD, Aristides of Athens explained what the majority of the early Christians believed in his Apology to the Emperor.

"The Christians, then, trace the beginning of their religion from Jesus the Messiah; and he is named the Son of God Most High. And it is said that **God came down from heaven, and from a Hebrew virgin assumed and clothed himself with flesh; and the Son of God lived in a daughter of man.**" (*Apology of Aristides, section 2*)

The earliest Christians believed that the Spirit of God came down from heaven (*Matthew 1:20; Luke 1:35; 1 Tim. 3:16; John 6:38*) to assume and clothe himself with flesh. That was when "the Son of God" as the Son of God "lived in a daughter of man." After God came down from heaven to become incarnate, that was when "the Son of God lived" as the Son in the virgin daughter of man. Therefore the earliest Christians believed that the Son as the Son did not have "life in himself (John 5:26)" until it was "granted" within the Hebrew virgin.

The only viable way to harmonize the divine attributes of God the Father with the human attributes of the Son is to believe that God became a true man in the incarnation through the virgin. For the omnipresent Holy Spirit of God the Father came down from heaven to become a true man via virgin conception and birth whilst the Father's Holy Spirit simultaneously remaining omnipresent in the heavens. Hence, the Son is the man who could do nothing by himself because the Son was "granted life in himself" as a man within the Hebrew virgin. Thus, the Divine Life of the Father ("*as the Father has life in himself*" – *John 5:26*) remained unchangeable in the heavens while the Father also granted the human Son a distinct human "life in himself" (John 5:26). Therefore the Son is not God with us as God, but rather, the Son is "Immanuel, God with us" as a true man who had to have a God who is greater than himself; otherwise, the Son of God would not have been a true man at all.

The scriptures teach that God was not only manifested in the flesh (*1 Tim. 3:16*) but that God's Holy Spirit was "copied" or "made" exactly like his human brethren (*Heb. 2:17*) as the "reproduction" or "copy" (*See character – Heb. 1:3*) of the Father's "Substance of Being" (*See hypostasis – Heb. 1:3*) as a true human being.

Oneness theology teaches that "the only true God" is the Father (*John 17:3*) who also became incarnate as a true man living among men. Oneness author Dr. Daniel Segraves wrote that Jesus is God manifest in genuine and FULL HUMAN EXISTENCE: "**Everything that Jesus did and said He did and said as who He was. God manifest in genuine and full human existence.**" (*Dr. Daniel Segraves Article, Thoughts on John 17:5, 3/23/2010* <http://evidentialfaith.blogspot.com/2010/03/thoughts-on-john-17-5-by-dr-daniel.html>)

Herein we can see the ontological distinctions between God's omnipresent existence as the Father and God's new "genuine and full human existence" as the Son. Since God became a genuine human being in the incarnation through the virgin, we know that the prayers and temptations of Jesus Christ are easily explained by his human attributes as a true man living among men. Therefore, Oneness theologians acknowledge that Jesus Christ is both "God Almighty" as to his true divine identity and "fully man" as to his true human identity because the omnipresent God Himself also became a man within the Hebrew virgin.

Oneness theology affirms that the One God who is our Heavenly Father also became a distinct human being through His incarnation in the virgin. For when God the Father's 'substance of Being' (*Hypostasis in Heb. 1:3*) became a man as a fully complete human being (*Heb. 2:17*), the new human existence of the Son was "given life in himself" (*John 5:26*) within the incarnation while the divine life of the Father retained His immutable "life in himself" (*John 5:26*) outside of the incarnation. Hence, Jesus is not God the Father with us as God the Father; He is God the Father's new human existence living with us as a genuine human being in order to "save His people from their sins (*Matthew 1:18-23*)."

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