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## The Gospel Proclamation

# Christadelphian Unamended First Principles

## Proposition 1

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**PROPOSITION 1** – That the only true God is He who was revealed to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, by angelic visitation and vision, and to Moses at the flaming bush (unconsumed) and at Sinai, and who manifested Himself in the Lord Jesus Christ, as the supreme self-existent Deity, the ONE FATHER, dwelling in unapproachable light, yet everywhere present by His Spirit, which is a unity with His person in heaven. He hath, out of His own underived energy, created heaven and earth, and all that in them is. Deut. 6:1; 1 Kings 8:30-39,43-49; 1 Chron. 29:11-14; 2 Chron. 16:9; Neh. 9:6; Job 9:4; 26:13; 28:24; 34:21; 36:5; Job 38-40; Psa. 33:13-14; 44:21; 62:11; 92:5; 94:9; 104:24; 123:1; 124:8; 139:7-11; 145:3; 146:6 147:4-5; 148:5; Prov. 15:3; Isa. 26:4; 28:29; 40:13-27; 3:10-12; 44:6-8; 45:5; 46:9-10; Jer. 10:12-13; 23:24; 27:5; 32:19, 25; 51:15; Amos 9:2-3; Matt. 6:9; Mark 12:29-32; Acts 14:15; 17:24; 27-28; Rom. 1:27; 1 Cor. 8:4-6; Eph. 4:6; 1 Tim. 1:17; 2:5; 6:15-16.

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### What It Means

Proposition 1 emphasizes that there is only one God, and that this God is the one of the Bible. It is the God who revealed Himself to the fathers and Moses. It is the God who was “manifested in the flesh” by Jesus doing His will perfectly. Although God is a Spirit who dwells in unapproachable light, He is also omnipresent, meaning that His existence permeates everywhere through His Spirit Power. This God created everything in heaven and in earth by His own power, and it all therefore belongs to Him and is in His control.

### Scriptural Testimony

This doctrine is the first of the building blocks towards a belief in the word of God and forming a relationship with Him. While there are many verses that confirm the fact there is but one God, I have selected a few which provide scriptural proof He alone is in control of all things since the beginning of His creation.

We see these principles taught starting at the very beginning of the Bible. Genesis 1:1-2 records,

**Genesis 1:1-2** – *In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. (2) And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.*

Here we see two things. First, we have God creating the heavens and the earth. Nothing existed prior to this, and this is the beginning of God’s plan for all that He creates thereafter. How much time elapsed from the creating of the heavens and the earth is unknown. What we do know is that in approximately 4000 BC, God continues with His plan for creation. This is where we come in, for it’s now that God creates man in His image.

The second thing we see relates to God’s Spirit. We see that the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. The Hebrew word for Spirit is “ruach” which means “breath” or “mind”. So, we have the breath of God creating the form of the earth which comes from the mind of God. The Spirit of God is acting upon what God wants done. God speaks a command, and it is accomplished through His Spirit power. This same force which

made the heavens is still at work today. God resides in the heavens and works amongst the kingdom of men, rising up and taking down whom He will to fulfill His prophecy.

God used His Spirit-power to create the sun, moon and the stars. God brought forth grass and all the vegetation that his future creations would have for food. He created the fowls of the air and the fishes under the water. God then created the cattle, creeping things, and beasts of the earth after their kind (or species). Again, God spoke these commands, and His Spirit carried them out.

This same creative power of the Spirit breath of God is what formed man. In Genesis 2:7 we are told,

**Genesis 2:7** – *And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.*

The Hebrew meaning for the word “soul” is life, creature, person, a living being. We are alive because of the breath of God. Just as in the beginning with Adam, the breath of God is breathed upon all mankind at birth, and we become a living person. All mankind since the creation of Adam and Eve are made in the image of God and have been given the free will to partake of the benefits of loving our creator and living our lives in a way that is pleasing to Him. We are here because of our Heavenly Father.

This same God who created all things is also the God of Israel. He selected a people to carry His name, and He revealed Himself to Abraham for this purpose. God therefore refers to Himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in many places, Exodus 3:15 being just one. He also revealed Himself to Moses when the nation of Israel was to be born, and Moses clearly taught the people of Israel that this God is the only God.

**Deuteronomy 6:4** – *Hear, O Israel; The LORD our God is one LORD.*

He is the God that brought them out of Egypt, represented by a pillar of fire by night and a cloud by day.

Perhaps the two clearest passages which show that there is only one God come from Isaiah. In Isaiah 45, God tells Israel,

**Isaiah 45:5** – *I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me ...*

He also says in

**Isaiah 44:8** – *Is there a God beside me? yea, there is no God; I know not any.*

While there is only one true God, man has made many “gods” of his own. All the other gods that have ever been worshipped are man-made, and the Bible speaks clearly about this and shows their folly:

**Psalms 96:5** – *For all the gods of the nations are idols: but the LORD made the heavens.*

Psalms 115 shows the true nature of these idols, saying,

**Psalms 115:3-7** – *But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased. (4) Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. (5) They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not: (6) They have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not: (7) They have hands, but they handle not: feet have they, but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat.*

All other gods are merely carvings of stone and rock or figments of man’s imagination. Isaiah explains this in even more depth in Isaiah 44:8-20 for those who would like to read it on their own.

## **Why This a First Principle**

A belief in the one God of Israel is an essential principle for a number of reasons. It is the first proposition in our Statement of Faith because it forms the foundation on which all other principles of the truth are built.

Salvation is dependent upon having a relationship with and being reconciled to the one God. In Isaiah 43, God tells His people Israel that He alone is the creator and savior.

**Isaiah 43:10-11** – *Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen; that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he; before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. (11) I, even I, am the LORD; and beside me there is no saviour.*

The “savior” aspect is closely tied to God being the God of Israel, for He calls Himself “*the Holy One of Israel*”. The Prophet Isaiah says in

**Isaiah 48:17** – *Thus saith the LORD, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I am the LORD thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go.*

The Holy One of Israel tells us what we should do, not any other god. Note also that God is the holy *one* of Israel. There are no others.

Here is the point: seeing that there is a plan of salvation provided by God, believing in other gods prevents one from partaking in this plan. Believing in other gods limits God’s power and ability because there would therefore be others which could interfere with His plan. Other gods would diminish the power of His Word and His authority. God has said that He is the only one, and believing in others is not to believe His word. We are told in

**Hebrews 11:6** – *But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*

God alone must be sought. Believing in other gods is therefore offensive to the true God. There are verses in Exodus and Deuteronomy that tell us our God is a jealous God. And why not? After all, it was He that created all things. He demands exclusive worship, and rightly so, for He is the One True God and He knows what’s best for His creation.

Worshipping false gods is putting one’s faith in something other than Him. It is giving credit to wood and stone which should be given to the true Creator. We must recognize that God is who He says He is and devote ourselves to Him. Deuteronomy teaches what God requires of us, saying,

**Deuteronomy 10:12** – *what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul,*

Believing and “walking in the ways” of other gods directly contradicts what the true God requires of us.

God not only tells us that He is the only God, but He specifically calls man to understand and believe it. The importance of believing and understanding this first principle is shown very clearly in Acts 17. There, we find Paul speaking to Gentiles of Athens who believed in many gods. They believed there were so many gods that they had dedications to what they called “the unknown god” just in case they missed one. I am going to read verses 22-30, and note carefully what Paul says to the people, for we will see all of these elements we have been discussing tied together:

**Acts 17:22-30** – *Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, **him declare I unto you.** (24) God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that*

*he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; (25) Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; (26) And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; (27) That they should **seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him**, though he be not far from every one of us: (28) For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. (29) Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device. (30) And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but **now commandeth all men every where to repent**: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained...*

To summarize, God calls men to “repent” from a belief in false gods and believe in Him because only through Him can man find salvation. God labels belief in others gods as “ignorance”, and He calls for man to know and understand the truth because He has appointed a wondrous day when the earth will be ruled in righteousness through His son Jesus, and He wants us to partake in it. It was for this reason that God sent His son as a mediator between God and man. As Paul says in

**1 Timothy 2:5** – *For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;*

How do we “feel after, and find” God as we just read from Paul? In 1 Timothy 6:16, we are told that God dwells “in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see.” If God dwells in unapproachable light but salvation is dependent upon having a relationship with Him, we might wonder how we are to approach Him.

We do not approach Him physically, but rather by seeking him with our hearts and minds. We are told in James 4:8 to “*Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you.*” We seek and draw nigh unto God through studying His word and through prayer, seeking direction in our lives and forgiveness of our sins. Through prayer, we have the power to communicate with the Creator of the heavens and the earth.

1 Timothy 6:16 and 1 John 4:12 also mention that no one has seen God because He resides in unapproachable light. Jesus teaches this as well declaring in

**John 1:18** – *No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.*

Even though nobody has seen God Himself, the Bible records cases where man has seen angels who appear in the form of God. Exodus records that Moses went up Mt. Sinai to speak with God, and Acts 7:38 informs us that this was actually an angel – not God Himself. Nevertheless, the radiant power of God’s manifestation was enough to make Moses face shine upon coming back to speak to God’s people. He experienced the power of God as we learn in Exodus 34:29-35.

We saw earlier how the power of God created the heavens and earth. This same creative power was also what formed the man Jesus Christ – the Messiah. In Luke 1, we see how Mary conceived and the son of God was born.

**Luke 1:34-35** – *Then said Mary unto the angel, how shall this be, seeing I know not a man? (35) And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy (Spirit) shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore, also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.*

God used His limitless power to impregnate Mary with a son. What’s important here is how her son is described as the Son of God, not as God the Son. He was born of a woman, with the same sinful flesh as all that have been

born. Jesus was not God as we focus on more clearly in a later episode. What the Bible says in 1 Timothy 3:16 is that Jesus was “God manifest in the flesh”. Christ represented all that His Father wanted done on His behalf. Jesus did God’s will so completely that He was God’s representative on earth. Jesus therefore says in

**John 14:9** – *he that hath seen me hath seen the Father.*

Christ fulfilled all that God required, giving His life up on the cross, thus becoming the perfect sacrifice for sin.

What does this mean for those who believe in the God of Creation? It means that God created the plan for salvation, Christ fulfilled the plan, and through both God and Christ, we have the opportunity to be part of the good fruit that will make up the coming kingdom when Jesus returns. Entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven on earth is therefore predicated on one’s belief that He is One God.

For young and old alike there are a number of other reasons for searching out God and drawing near to Him. Believing in God and that He is in control of all things provides us with a calming of our daily lives. One doesn’t have to fear what other gods or beings could do to them because these do not exist. One doesn’t have to be over-concerned with the chaos that’s around us in the world because we know that God is in control, working in the earth to fulfill His prophecy. The Psalmist writes in

**Psalm 91:2** – *I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God, in him will I trust.*

Praying daily for God’s help in our lives, to guide us, to watch over us, to forgive us of our sins, is a large part of the calming in our lives that God provides.

Our access to God also means that we are never alone. God is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Praying for guidance is just one of the benefits of making God a part of our daily lives. We are sinful creatures, but God is willing to forgive us of our sins if we sincerely repent of those sins and make the commitment to change our ways with God’s help.

To close, the prophet Micah summarizes the importance and benefit of this doctrine for us in

**Micah 6:8** – *what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?*

Knowing and believing in the true God is the first step to walking with Him, and when we walk with God, we have the hope of being an heir of the Kingdom of God which He has promised to establish on this earth through His son Jesus Christ. You will learn more about this great man in the next segment.

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