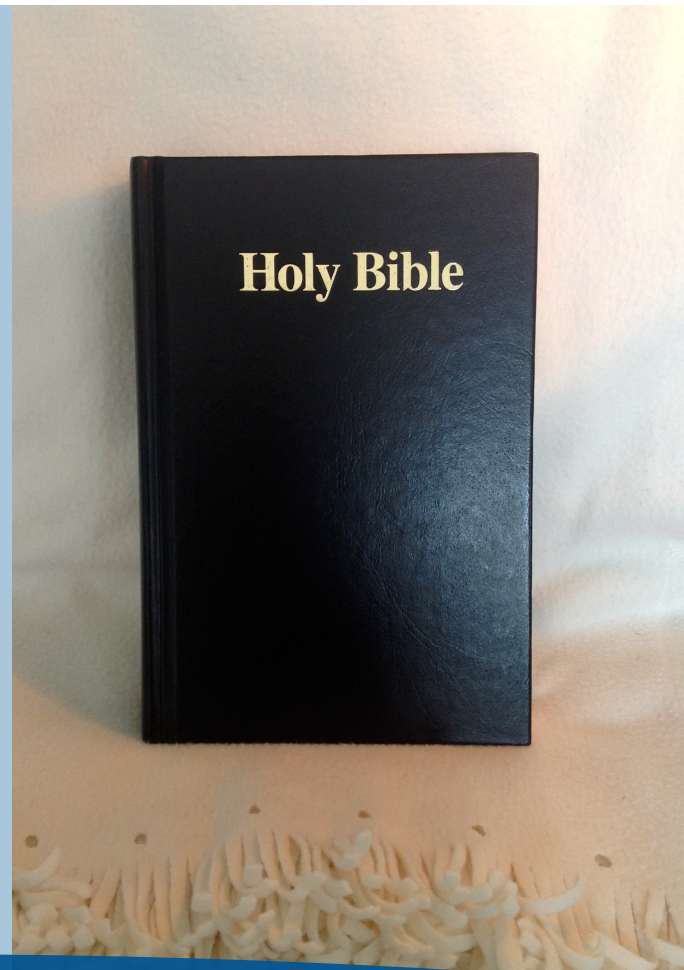


*“...try the spirits whether they are of God”*

# LOST DOCTRINES

## THE PERSON OF GOD



## THE PERSON OF GOD

The Bible is very clear that we have to believe that God exists!

**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.

And Jesus, says that there is but one God, and faith in him is essential for salvation

**Mark 12:29** And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; **The Lord our God is one Lord:**

**John 17:3** And this is life eternal, that they might **know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ**, whom thou hast sent.

So we can see from just considering these scriptures that:

- We have to believe that God Exists,
- We have to believe that he is One, and the only True God
- We must must Know Him

Paul says that those who saw the glorified Son of God saw a close resemblance of “**the image of God**”:

**2 Corinthians 4:4** In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is **the image of God**, should shine unto them.

But are we to take the word “image” here as literal or figurative? Well we find that Paul expands on this point in his letter to the Hebrews

**Hebrews 1:1** God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

**:2** Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his[ Grk a]Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by [Grk. Dia- on account of] whom also he made the worlds; [Grk. Aions-Ages]

**:3** Who being the brightness of his glory, and the **express image** of his **person**, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;”

It generally follows that a son bears the physical image or resemblance of his father; and Christ, (we are told here) bears “the **express image** of his [Father’s] **person**”.

The Expanded Bible renders this as: “**shows exactly what God is like**”;

Then it lists the literal meanings of the original Greek, here, in this context as:

“is the **exact representation/imprint/stamp of His being/essence/nature.**”

So Paul is using the words “**image**” and “**person**” in a literal physical sense.

The English word “person” chosen here by the KJV translators, only applies to beings in the form we bear. We do not apply the word ‘person’ to the animals etc.

The dictionary says the origin of the word is from the “Latin ‘persona’ ‘actors mask, character in a play’, later ‘human being’”, all connected with the physical form we bear.

Jesus declared clearly that he was the image of his Father when he said to Philip

**John 14:9** Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he **that hath seen me hath seen the Father**; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?

If the Fathers glorious form is reflected in Christ’s glorious form, we can learn more about the Fathers form by considering his son.

We have an account of Christ’s glorious form after his resurrection in

#### **Luke 24**

**:34** Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.

**:36** And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.

**:38** And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?

**:39** behold **my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see**; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.

**:40** And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his **hands and his feet**.

**:41** And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat?

**:42** And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb.

**:43** And he took it, and **did eat before them**.

Jesus showed the marks of his crucifixion in his hands and feet, to prove he was the same crucified Christ, but now resurrected and immortal. Paul preached that the “saints” (ie the believers) including himself, shall likewise receive bodily immortality at the resurrection day:

#### **Philippians 3:**

**11** if by any means I might attain to the resurrection of the dead

**20** For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:

**21** Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto **his glorious body**, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

The glorious form of the saints (believers), which they receive at Christ’s return, is here shown to be “like unto” Christ’s “glorious body” (v21) which, as we have seen, is in the “image of God”(as we have read in 2 Corinthians 4: 4)

The lord Jesus says that this glorified physical state is identical to The angels form in:

## Luke 20

**:35** But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage:

**:36** Neither can they die any more: for they are **equal unto the angels**; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.

We know from many instances in the bible that the angels share the same form as we do, (ie the form of The Father). For example three of them appeared to Abraham

**Gen. 18:1** He sat in the tent door in the heat of the day;

**:2** And he lift up his eyes, and looked, and lo! **three men** stood by him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground,

**:3** And said, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant:

**:4** let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree;

**:5** and I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on...

Abraham thought they were ordinary wayfarers, and desired to extend his hospitality towards them. Paul, referring to the circumstances in Hebrews says

**Heb 13:2** Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have **entertained angels unawares**.

**Gen 18:5** ...And the men said unto Abraham, So do as thou hast said.

**:8** And Abraham took butter and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and **they did eat**."

In the next chapter, we read:—

**Gen 19:1** And there came **two angels** to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing them rose up to meet them, and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground,

**:2** and he said, Behold, now, my lords, turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house, and tarry all night, and wash your feet; and ye shall rise up early and go on your ways. And they said, Nay, but we will abide in the street all night.

**:3** And he pressed upon them greatly, and they turned in unto him, and entered into his house; and he made them a feast, and did bake unleavened bread, and **they did eat**.

Lot, also, like Abraham, supposed his angelic visitors to be ordinary men, and was among the number of those who "entertained angels unawares." He was only brought to a knowledge of their true character when they said "Bring all that thou hast out of this place, for we will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before the face of the Lord; and the Lord hath sent us to destroy it." (Gen. 19:12,13).

So we see just like the Lord Jesus after his resurrection, these Angles looked like ordinary men and could eat and drink.

Man being in the image of God takes us back to the creation. The most common original word for God in the Old Testament is, ELOHIM. This word has a few other applications in the bible, and is itself plural, but when its referring to The heavenly Father Himself its

usually accompanied by the singular verb. Throughout the account of creation in Genesis one, the original for “God” is ELOHIM and the accompanying verb is always singular.

The heavenly Father prepared this present creation through the agency of His angels; and he addresses them thus in :-

**Genesis 1:26,27**

**26** And God said, **Let us make man in our image** [Heb. TSELEM], after our **likeness**: [Heb.DEMUT] and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

**27** So God created man in his own **image** [Heb.TSELEM], in the **image** [Heb.TSELEM] of God created he him; male and female created he them.

The original word in the Hebrew for “likeness” here is DEMUT and for “image” is ZELEM.

**DEMUTH**

in the AV-translation it is rendered: likeness 19times, similitude 2, like 2, manner 1, fashion 1  
Meanings:-

likeness, similitude, adv 2) in the likeness of, like as.

**TSELEM** : generally is translated “Image”

For example, we get these words again in Gen.5

**Genesis 5:1** This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the **likeness** [Heb.DEMUTH] of God made he him;

**:3** And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own **likeness**, [Heb.DEMUTH] after his **image** [Heb.TSELEM]; and called his name Seth:

So we see that just as Adam’s son reflected the “**likeness**”, [Heb.DEMUTH] and “**image**” [Heb.TSELEM]; of his father Adam(v3), so Adam reflected “the **likeness** [Heb.DEMUTH] of God” (v1) who was the only Father Adam had.

Or as we read in the New Testament

**Luke 3:38** Which was the son of Enos, which was the son of Seth, which was the son of **Adam, which was the son of God.**

Thus Adam was called “**the son of God**” in Luke 3:38 because God formed him in His own **physical similitude**. God also produced the animals, but they are not called sons, because they do not bear the Heavenly Father’s image or form. Man was to be the head over all other created things, and so man alone was fitted to bear the image of the creator. Mankind in the days of Noah, was authorised to kill and eat the animals at will, but forbidden to do such with mankind, because it would be disrespectful do the image of God, as :-

**Genesis 9:**

**6** “Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed: **for in the image of God** made he man.”

But of the animals we read:

**:2** And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered.

**:3** Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things.

That mankind are in the physical image of God, is stated clearly also in the New Testament:-

**James 3:9** Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the **similitude of God**.

**1 Corinthians 11:7** For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is **the image and glory of God**: but the woman is the glory of the man.

So when considering the context of the bodily person of God how does the Bible reconcile our findings with the Spiritual nature of God? This mystery is solved when we understand that, just as there is a natural physical body such as we have, there is also a spiritual physical body (as Christ manifested when resurrected Luke 24):-

### **1 Corinthians 15**

**:42** So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption:

**:43** It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power:

**:44** It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a **spiritual body**.

The “spiritual body” that believers are to receive in the resurrection, is physical; has “**hands and.. feet**” etc. and can thus be handled and touched (Luke 24:39) Being immortal, such are energised and sustained by the Spirit Power of God, as Paul further explains:

**54** So when this corruptible shall have **put on** incorruption, and this **mortal** shall have **put on immortality**, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

**:49** And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the **image of the heavenly**.

We have seen in Genesis 1 and 9 that man is made in God’s image (TSELEM) and likeness (DEMUTH). Contrary to many commentaries of mainstream Christianity, we are never told that this "image" and "likeness" is something to do with our moral propensities, or our personal characters. In every case, we are assured that it is an outward, **visible form that is referred to - a form that God and the angels undoubtedly share, as the weight of Scripture confirms**.

**In an attempt to circumvent the clear teaching of scripture those advocating belief in a Trinity invent a new and unique use for the word “Person” which has no credibility. For Example**

*“In speaking of the Triunity, the term “person” is not used in same way it is in ordinary usage in which it means **an identity completely distinct from other persons.**”*

*J.Hampton Keathley III, The Trinity (Triunity) of God. Biblical Studies Press, [www.bible.org](http://www.bible.org), 1997.*

There is only “One God” and we must know & believe in him to be saved.

### **Ephesians 4:**

**:4** There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;

**:5** One Lord, one faith, one baptism,

**:6 One God and Father of all**, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

If we do not understand the Biblical teaching concerning the Person of God we do not know God.



The Christadelphian pioneers all believed and preached that God has bodily form and saw this as a fundamental principle as delineated in the BASF. Robert Roberts and the brethren that assisted him in drawing up the BASF were well acquainted with the Trinitarian use of the word Person and that they were not following their example, but used the word "Person" because that's precisely what they meant! The word "person" is only applicable to a being in the form that we share. Beings of other forms, such as the animals of our creation, do not qualify for the term "person", why?, because their physical similitude is inappropriate. I have had a look at the etymology of the word "person" and it is all about physical form.

In clause 1 of the BASF<sup>1</sup> it states that there is

- **ONE FATHER**
- **dwelling in unapproachable light**
- **yet everywhere present by His Spirit**
- **which is a unity with His person in heaven.**

It is clear what Robert Roberts regarded this as a fundamental scriptural principles concerning God, which constituted part of the Gospel that needed to be believed for salvation. He states in his book "The Ways of Providence"

... "Intense personality is the first revealed characteristic of the Creator of heaven and earth. Not only the incessant use of the pronouns 'I,' 'Me,' 'He,' 'Him,' but express declarations in many forms attest it."

... "Furthermore, the form of the glorious Creator, shadowed to us in various places, completes the chain of ascending clues by which we are enabled to lay hold of that conception of the Father which is exactly suited to our spiritual requirements—the idea of a **glorious corporate intelligence** located in the heart of the universe upholding all things by the word of His power."

After quoting James 9:3; 1Cor 11:7, 2Cor 4:4, Col 1:15, Heb 1:3, Zech 13:7. he says

"From this results the conviction that the Father is not only **glorious substance, even spirit substance**, but that this substance has the **human form in its perfection.**"

And in the summary at the end of the book he says

"**It is a first principle** of the subject that **God is a glorious person, dwelling in heaven**, yet filling the immeasurable universe by His Spirit, which is the effluent energy of **His person**, constituting the basis, or force, or first cause of all things in heaven and earth; in this Spirit all things exist.

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<sup>1</sup>Clause 1 BASF

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.

Isa. 40:13-25; 43:10-12; 44:6-8; 45:5; 46:9-10; Job 38-40; Deut. 6:1-4; Mark 12:29-32; 1 Cor. 8:4-6; Eph. 4:6; 1 Tim. 2:5; Neh. 9:6; Job 26:13; Psalms. 124:8; 146:6; 148:5; Isa. 40:25-27; Jer. 10:12-13; 27:5; 32:17-25; 51:15; Acts 14:15; 17:24; 1 Chron. 29:11-14; Psalms. 62:11; 145:3; Isa. 26:4; 40:26; Job 9:4; 36:5; Psalms. 92:5; 104:24; 147:4-5; Isa. 28:29; Rom. 16:27; 1 Tim. 1:17; 2 Chron. 16:9; Job 28:24; 34:21; Psalms. 33:13-14; 44:21; 94:9; 139:7-12; Prov. 15:3; Jer. 23:24; 32:19; Amos 9:2-3; Acts 17:27-28; Psalms. 123:1; 1 Kings 8:30-39, 43, 49; Matt. 6:9; 1 Tim. 6:15-16.

RR clearly defines his terms here, it is crystal clear what he meant when he said “person” he is not following the Trinitarian model and developing a new and inaccurate meaning for the word, but in effect confirms that a “person” only “exists” in bodily form; hence this is what he meant in Clause 1 BASF: “...the supreme self-existent Deity...His person in heaven.”

To recap he says that God is

- **“a glorious corporate intelligence located in the heart of the universe”**
- **“Father is glorious substance, even spirit substance,”**
- **“this substance has the human form in its perfection”**
- **“It is a first principle of the subject that God is a glorious person”**

Another example of his writings on the subject is in “True principles and uncertain details”<sup>2</sup> If we were to take RR’s brief statement here as to the “True Principle” on this subject without any consideration of scripture teaching, or what he and other pioneers believed when he wrote it, we would have to accept Trinitarians and the whole of Christendom, for they could all say Amen to this statement!!

RR’s definition of the form of the person of God, is not presented as an uncertain detail, he is quite definite on the subject. The “*Uncertain Detail*” is concerning “what form or aspect **His person** is shown” and relates to that of which “it is not possible in our present circumstances to be certain”. But that “**His person**” “exists” in bodily form, and that we are made in His physical similitude, is taught with certainty by RR, so this can not be what he is referring to. The question then arises as to what might he be alluding to as “*Uncertain Detail*” concerning precisely “in what form or aspect His person is shown”?

Clearly he is referring to the sort of inappropriate childish speculations that have been raised in recent years by opponents of this teaching. For example what colour God’s hair might be, does he need to clean his teeth, or whether he has a mucous membrane were just the sort of speculations which RR imagined might arise! RR clarifies his thinking in answer to a correspondent in 1889 Christadelphian pg.105 he shows that the precise “FORM AND ORGANISATION” of the spiritual body cannot be known at present, but that the outline shape is not in doubt.

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<sup>2</sup> True Principles and Uncertain Details

#### GOD

**GENERAL PRINCIPLE.**—“He that cometh to God *must believe that HE IS* (RR’s capitals) and that He is *the rewarder* of them that diligently seek Him.” There can be no question as to our duty where men become unbelieving or **doubtful of God’s existence**, or of His favourable disposition towards and purpose to openly reward the men who are diligent in their quest of Him and ready in their obedience.

**Uncertain Detail.** — But as to how or where **He exists**, and in what form or aspect **His person** is shown and how surrounded—whether He inhabits a world of His own or be the radiant centre of a cluster of celestial worlds; and whether His name means I SHALL BE or I AM, or both, and I HAVE BEEN as well (as in the Apocalyptic formula, “which art and wast and art to come”), there is truth concerning all these points—truth that we shall know and revel in when we are spirit, but it is not possible in our present circumstances to be certain as to any of them, and we should do wrong to insist on any particular opinion as to them. The admission of the true principle that God exists and that He will reward His lovers and friends is all we can claim in fellowship at the hands of fellow-believers.



**Form and Organisation** (G. P.)—We cannot pretend to measure God, or even adequately compare Him to any mere human standard. The glory of the incorruptible so far transcends the glory of the corruptible that it is impossible to institute anything beyond the very faintest comparison (Rom. 1:23; Isa. 40:18). Still there are some comparisons that are directly expressed in the Scriptures, and some others that are involved. At these let us take a brief look. First, with regard to the numberless variety of creatures that God made, it is said, of man alone, that He was made in the image of God (Gen. 1:26, 27; 5:1; 9:6). This is confirmed by what is again recorded in the New Testament (1 Cor. 11:7; Acts 17:28, 29). Now, this “image” or “likeness” must refer, to some extent, to both form, faculty, and function. The three things cannot well be separated. Now, so far as all created intelligences are concerned, these are manifestly inseparable from organisation, and physical law, for God has constituted man to some considerable extent a self-governing body. But between human nature and the “divine nature,” of which we are invited to be ultimately partakers by the gospel (2 Pet. 1:4), there are some differences involving the abolition, or at least the suspension, of some functions necessary to the objects of the present animal economy. Of this we have an illustration in the saying of Christ, that in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God (Matt. 22:30). Made like the angels at first, with respect to form and faculty, but for the present “a little lower” than they, with regard to nature and function; we are destined at the last (subject to Christ’s approval) to become their equals in nature, life, function, power, and glory. A state of existence impossible to mere “earthly vessels.” Like the “third heaven,” it is the third stage in the process of ascension from the earthly to the heavenly, and from the natural to the spiritual (1 Cor. 15:46–49). First, being “born of the flesh” (John 3:6), we are descendants of him of whom it is recorded that he “was the Son of God” (Luke 3:38), and for which reason, as Paul says (quoting from one of the Grecian poets), “we are also his offspring.” In this we have the raw material of God’s purpose—God’s image in living clay. Next to this, in being “born of water,” we become sons of God upon the still higher principle of being born again of the incorruptible seed, or the word of the kingdom of God sown in the heart (1 Pet. 2:23; Matt. 13:19). It is of this result that John says, “Now are we the sons of God.” This in due time (in the case of the faithful) will be followed by what Christ calls being “born of the Spirit” (John 3:5–7), as the result of which a man thenceforward “is Spirit” as Christ says, that is, being no longer flesh and blood (which cannot enter the Kingdom of God), he has now entered upon the last degree of qualification, that introduces a man to eternal incorporation into the perfected immortal family of God (Rev. 21:7; Luke 20:36). It is only in this last stage of the work that we rise to a bodily participation in the “Divine Nature” of which however, for the time being, Christ is both the example and the guarantee of its final attainment. Now concerning this, says John, “It doth not yet appear what we shall be,” but says he, “when Christ shall appear we shall be like him, and we shall see him as he is;” for as Paul also says, “we shall appear with him in glory.” This accomplished, the likeness of the “children of light” to the “Father of Lights” may be accounted complete—a completeness in which flesh will have been exchanged for spirit; the natural for the spiritual; the earthly for the heavenly; mortality for immortality; corruption and death for life and incorruption; dishonour and weakness for glory and power. This will be an ascension to the Father, such as Christ has already been the subject of. What the Father is, such, ultimately, in varying degrees (1 Cor. 15:41, 42), will be all His sons; but what flesh, blood, bone, muscle, brain, hair, and vital organ will be, when converted into spirit, we can only faintly conceive; or what faculties and functions will be permanently stereotyped in the spiritual body, what added, what changed in harmony with the new situation, or what entirely disestablished, we can only conjecture. Sufficient to know that our identity will be preserved intact, that we shall know and be known (1 Cor. 13:12); and that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets (Luke 13:28), together with the twelve Apostles of the Lamb (Matt. 19:28; Rev. 21:14), will be as distinguishable one from the other as Michael and Gabriel among the angels or Christ himself, from the rest of those by whom he will be for ever surrounded and “admired.” The appearance of angels, in so many instances, who have been taken for men, suggests that the **“human face divine”** is the highest form of intelligence known to either heaven or earth, and a form, that at the last is to be spiritualised and glorified and rendered permanent. When the pure in heart see God (Matt. 5:8; Heb. 12:14), **they will not look upon a mere shapeless concretion of power, or aggregation of nature’s forces, but upon the glorious personal archetype of the universe, of whose person Christ is already the “express image,” the very impress of his substance, and the effulgence of his glory** (Heb. 1:3; Rev. Ver.). **To this image of himself, the Father has designed that all His sons shall at last be conformed** (Rom. 9:29); so that in the end, as Christ says, “they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us” (John 17:21).

Robert Roberts also writes clearly on this subject in Christendom Astray.

To summarise from Christendom Astray<sup>3</sup> RR believed that the Scriptures teach the following Truths:

- **“the located existence of Deity”**
- **“He must have an existence”(in Heaven)**
- **“He exists nowhere else.”**
- **“He is a person who exists”**
- **“His proper person”**
- **“the Father is a tangible person.”**

So to return to the BASF it is crystal clear what RR meant when he wrote:

**“the ONE FATHER, dwelling in unapproachable light, yet everywhere present by His Spirit, which is a unity with His person in heaven”**

That this statement was specifically designed to exclude the “popular predilection” to believe that God is “without corporeal nucleus, without local habitation, “without body or parts.”

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<sup>3</sup> Christendom Astray

“Some shrink from the suggestion that Deity has a **located existence**. Why should they? **The Scriptures expressly teach the located existence of Deity**. We submit **the evidence**: Paul says in 1Tim.6v16. *God dwells “IN THE LIGHT which no man can approach unto.”* Here is a **localisation of the person of the Creator**. If God were on earth in the same sense in which He dwells in LIGHT UNAPPROACHABLE, what could Paul mean by saying that man cannot approach? If God dwells in UNAPPROACHABLE LIGHT, **He must have an existence** there, which is not manifested in this mundane sphere. This is borne out by Solomon's words “*God is IN HEAVEN, thou upon earth*” (Ecclesiastes5v2); “therefore let thy words be few.” Jesus inculcates the same view in the prayer which he taught his disciples: “Our Father *which art IN HEAVEN*.” So does David, in Psalm 102v19,20 “He (the Lord) hath looked down from THE HEIGHT *Of His sanctuary*; from HEAVEN did the Lord behold the earth, to hear the groaning of the prisoner.” And again, in Psa.115v16 “The HEAVEN, even the HEAVENS, are the Lord's; but the *earth* hath He given to the children of men.” Solomon in the prayer by which he dedicated the temple to God (recorded in the 8th chapter of I Kings), made frequent use of this expression “Hear Thou IN HEAVEN *Thy dwelling place*.” It is impossible to mistake the tenor of these testimonies they plainly mean that the Father of all is **a person who exists** in the central “HEAVEN OF HEAVENS” as **He exists** nowhere else. By His Spirit in immensely-filling diffusion, He is everywhere present in the sense of holding and knowing, and being conscious of creation to its utmost bounds; but in **His proper person**, all-glorious, beyond human power to conceive, He dwells in heaven”

... There is great and invincible repugnance to this evidently Scriptural and reasonable, and beautiful view of the matter. It is the popular habit, where serious views of God are entertained at all, to conceive of Him as a principle or energy in universal diffusion—without **corporeal nucleus**, without **local habitation**, “without body or parts.” **There is no ground for this popular predilection**, except such as philosophy may be supposed to furnish. Philosophy is a poor guide in the matter. Philosophy, after all, is only human thought. It can have little weight in a matter confessedly beyond human ken. The question is, What is revealed? We need not be concerned if what is revealed is contrary to philosophical conceptions of the matter. Philosophical conceptions are just as likely to be wrong as right. Paul warns believers against the danger of being spoiled through philosophy (Col.2v8). Philosophy or no philosophy, **the Scriptures quoted plainly teach that the Father is a tangible person**, in whom all the powers of the Universe converge.”

RR was not the only one to speak clearly on this matter C.C.Walker and John Thomas were equally emphatic, in an answer to a correspondent (The Christadelphian Page 348 CC Walker 1907<sup>4</sup>) he declares clearly and unambiguously that

- **“spirits,”- all have bodies**
- **The angels - are all bodily beings**
- **the Eternal Father Himself is - a bodily Being**

Robert Roberts provides a quote from John Thomas regarding his definition of the “scripturally-revealed conception of the Father” in the Ways of Providence article quoted from earlier <sup>5</sup>, John Thomas says that God is

- **incorruptible substance**
- **spirit substance**
- **one body**

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<sup>4</sup>The Christadelphian Page 348 CC Walker 1907

....“But, says our friend, Mr. Roberts has not proved that “Spirit cannot exist without the body;” the question is, “Can a spirit exist apart from a mortal body?” Now, here is a mixing up of things that differ, “*spirit*” and “*a spirit*.” The former can and does exist without a body, for it is the power of God in whatsoever form manifested. But the latter, if taken to mean a disembodied person, is not a Bible conception at all. The Bible does indeed speak about **“spirits,” but these all have bodies**. The angels are said to be God’s “ministering spirits,” but they are all **bodily beings**. Jacob wrestled with one, Abraham entertained three unawares, and very many other illustrations of their bodily reality could be given. Christ has now an **immortal body**, being equal to the angels in nature, and superior to them in rank. And **the Bible conception of the Eternal Father Himself is certainly that of a bodily Being**. We know the Prayer Book says that God is “without body, parts, or passions”; but we cannot reconcile that with the apostolic word, as, for instance, James 3:9, “God even the Father . . . and men which are made after the similitude of God.” **If God the Father be “without body, parts, or passions,” there can be no such similitude as is here said to exist.**

It is not the slightest use “X” saying “Science would tell him (Mr. Roberts) that matter has the marks of being a manufactured article.” “Science” does not know what “matter” is. Scientific men are diligently investigating the question still. **And God is far above out of human sight. All that we can know of God, and of the life that He has manifested upon earth, we must get through revelation and through Christ.**”

<sup>5</sup> Ways of Providence page 9

Dr. Thomas, in a scrap written just before his death, and found among his papers afterwards, thus defines the foregoing scripturally-revealed conception of the Father, of whom are all things: “Absolute power, from whose incorruptible substance or hypostasis free spirit radiates, is before all existing things. This self-existing incorruptible substance is essentially spirit—spirit substance—a concentration and condensation into one body of all the attributes, intellectual, moral and physical of omnipotence—all things are out of Deity (1 Cor. 8:6). All things being out of Deity, they were not made out of nothing. The sun, moon and stars, together with all things pertaining to each, were made out of something, and that something was the radiant effluence of His substance, or free spirit, which pervades unbounded space. By free spirit, all created things are connected with the centre of the universe, which is light that no man can approach unto, so that not even a sparrow falls to the ground without the Father, who is not far from every one of us.....

John Thomas makes himself just as clear in Phanerosis<sup>6</sup>

### **The Father-Spirit, unveiled, is, then, a bodily form**

You may have noticed how the pioneers in their remarks often contrast the Truth of the matter with the views held by apostate christianity viz.

**RR** “It is the popular habit, where serious views of God are entertained at all, to conceive of Him as a principle or energy in universal diffusion—without corporeal nucleus, without local habitation, “without body or parts.” There is no ground for this popular predilection, except such as philosophy may be supposed to furnish”

**CCW** “We know the Prayer Book says that God is “without body, parts, or passions”; but we cannot reconcile that with the apostolic word,..”

**JT** “...other children of the Old Man affirm that “God is immaterial”; by which they mean that He is not matter, or substance, or body; but an inconceivable something they call “spirit,” an incorporeal, unsubstantial, immaterial spirit, which is as near to nothing as words can express.”

Views with which they were very well acquainted having all been taught these things in the churches in which they were raised. Not having had such an experience can actually prove to be a problem as CCW highlights:

The jealousy of our pioneer brethren for the truth is a thing to be remembered. A generation has passed away and a new generation is rising. Conditions are changing continually; and it would be only too easy for those who have never known the evils of the ecclesiastical systems out of which their parents have escaped with much sorrow and loss, to reproduce those very things in some degree a generation or two hence.—Ed. (Christadelphian 1919 pg.217)

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#### <sup>6</sup> Phanerosis

The source or fountain of power in the universe is one. It is a unit. Therefore, everything which exists is “*ex autou*” out of Him. Hence the Creator did not “make all things out of nothing.” This is the teaching of theology, the “orthodox theology” of the Old Man of the Flesh; and which leads many of his children to affirm that “matter is God,” understanding by “*matter*” that which is cognizable by the five senses. Hence the sun, the moon, and the stars, and all the things they can see, taste, feel, smell, and hear upon earth, are God. They confound that which “is of Him” with the “**Him**” out of whom all things proceed. On the other hand, other children of the Old Man affirm that “*God is immaterial*”; by which they mean that He is not matter, or substance, or body; but an inconceivable something they call “spirit,” an incorporeal, unsubstantial, immaterial spirit, which is as near to nothing as words can express. *Nothing making all things out of nothing* is the Old Man’s theology concerning God and the fountain of all things, reduced to its simplest terms. But the Scripture declares that *pneuma ho Theos esti* literally, *Spirit is the Theos*. I say simply *theos*, because we shall yet have to ascertain the New Testament sense of *Theos*. “Spirit,” then, is the *Theos* commonly called God. But more than this, this Spirit is the Father; that is, the One *ex autou*, out of whom are all things. This appears from what is affirmed of “Spirit” and of “Father.” Jesus says in John 5:21: “The Father raises up the dead and quickeneth,” or makes the grave-emergent dead incorruptibly living; and in chapt. 6:63, he says: “It is the Spirit that quickeneth,” or makes alive. The Father and the Spirit are, therefore, the same; nevertheless, the word “spirit” is often used in other senses. It is the “FATHER - SPIRIT” that Paul refers to in 1 Tim. 6:16, whom no man hath seen in His unveiled splendour. Veiled in flesh, “*the Vail of the Covering*” (Exodus 35:12); he that discerneth him who spoke to Philip, “saw the Father” (John 14:9; 12:45). But, veiled or unveiled, the Father-Spirit is substantial. Speaking of the Unveiled Father-Spirit, Paul says in Heb. 1:2, 3, that the Son is the *Character* of his *Hypostasis*, rendered, in the common version, “express image of his person.” The Son is the *character* or exact representation, and the Father is the *hypostasis*. In reference to the former, the Father says, in Zech 3:9: “Upon One Stone there shall be Seven Eyes; behold I will engrave the *graving* thereof (that is, of the stone), saith He who shall be hosts.” The *graving* engraved on the stone is termed, in Greek, *character*, an impress wrought into a substance after some archetype or pattern. The archetype is the *hypostasis*, so that *hypostasis* is the basis or foundation of *character*; wherefore the same apostle in Col. 1:15 *eikon tou Theou tou aoratou*, styles the *character* engraved the IMAGE of *Theos* the Invisible.

Seth was the image of Adam, and Adam, the image of *Elohim* (Gen. 1:26; 5:3). Like Seth, Jesus was an image of Adam, but only in relation to flesh. Adam the First was the image of *Elohim*, and this was in relation to bodily form. Body and form were the *hypostasis* of Adam and Seth; that is, they were the basis or foundation of the images so named. Where body and form do not exist, there can be no image; therefore, where image is predicated of *hypostasis*, that *hypostasis* must have both body and form. **The Father-Spirit, unveiled, is, then, a bodily form;** and as all things are “*out of Him*,” He is the focal centre of the universe, from which irradiates whatever exists.

The matter CCW was referring to was not related to the Person Of God but he is clearly expressing a general concern, and his fears have sadly proved well founded. The majority of the members of "Christadelphia" today no longer believe and teach the biblical doctrine concerning the person of God.

As John Thomas says:

...other children of the Old Man affirm that "God is immaterial"; by which they mean that **He is not matter, or substance, or body**; but an inconceivable something **they call "spirit,"** an incorporeal, unsubstantial, immaterial spirit, **which is as near to nothing as words can express."**

The simple fact is that there are only two options :

**God has bodily physical form  
or  
God is an Immortal Soul**

**If we believe that God is the third person of a Trinity we do not know him.  
If we believe that God is an Immortal Soul we do not know him.**