

EVANGELION  
The Power of God

Fr. Deacon Ezra

**Chapter 1**  
**THE GOD**  
**WE WORSHIP**

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## INTRODUCTION

### *EVANGELION*

Let me introduce you to a term that may be new to you. *Evangelion. Eh-vahn-GEL-ee-on.*

(The g is hard as in gallon.) Now say it again. *Eh-vahn-GEL-ee-on. Evangelion.*

Let's face it. Most of us have outgrown the arrogance of believing we are invincible. Many of us are now aware that not all dreams come true. Life simply has not turned out the way we thought it would.

Others of us outwardly look good. But when we're all alone, and there is no one around—after we take our mask off, we don't look so good.

All of us just want to be loved. We want to be accepted and included. We want to be part of something larger than ourselves. We know there is more to life than what we've found. We're looking for meaning. We're looking for a purpose. We know something is missing. We want to be successful. We're just not sure what the best measure of success is.

Some of us are running on fumes. Our emotional tank, or our psychological tank, or our physical tank, or our sociological tank, or our financial tank is past empty. For a few—our tanks aren't quite so empty. But hardly any of us has a full tank.

Life is tough. The commercials tell us that life doesn't get any better than this. But whatever the "this" is they're advertising is fleeting and momentary. The truth is—we hope life is better than

what we have. We hope it gets better. For most of us—it hasn't gotten better—and the doubt is growing—that it never will.

Evangelion can change all that. Evangelion is the spiritual power at work in the universe. Evangelion is the spiritual power at work in us. But Evangelion is not at work in us without our permission. Each one of us has free will—we can say, No. Most of us have never given Evangelion permission to be at work in our lives. We have never said yes to spiritual power. We have never let the power of Evangelion be at work in our lives. We have never said yes to Evangelion.

Evangelion is the spiritual power at work in us. In each of the seminars that follow—we will talk about some familiar things—but we will talk about them in some very unfamiliar ways—ways that bring life and not death. You will have choices to make. You can say yes—you can say no.

I promise you this. If you say Yes and Yes again—Evangelion will begin to be at work in you. It does not matter how full or how empty your tank is. The power of Evangelion will begin to be at work in you. If you come each week, in eight weeks you'll notice that something is different—something is there that wasn't there before.

You will not see Evangelion—but I will introduce Evangelion to you. I will not talk about Evangelion—but Evangelion will be present in what I say. If you say yes—not only will

something be different in eight weeks—but if you say yes again and again—Evangelion—the spiritual power of the universe will be at work in you the rest of your life.

Evangelion is like yeast—it only takes a little bit to turn flour into a loaf of bread. But like yeast—Evangelion is not instantaneous. It takes time—but if you give it time—your whole life will change. Evangelion is like the tiniest seed. It only takes a crack in a sidewalk for a seed to take root and grow into a tree. You give Evangelion the smallest opening—and it will become like a mighty tree in your life. If you say yes to Evangelion—you will discover the only measure of success that counts—and you will have at work in you the only power that can make you successful.

### ***EAST vs. WEST***

East is East. And West is West. And never the two shall meet, or so the saying goes. As long as we are safely embedded deep within our cultural and intellectual borders—East and West never meet. But Evangelion takes us out of our comfort zone. In Evangelion, East meets West. It does not take long to discover that East and West approach life from radically different perspectives. For example—what is a tree?

In the West we get our chainsaw and cut down a tree. We count the number of rings to determine how old the tree was. We notice fat rings for wet and prosperous years—and skinny rings for the dry years with little rain. We strip the bark and notice whether there was disease under the bark. We look for evidence of insects. We notice whether woodpeckers have been at work on the tree. We cut into the trunk of the tree and observe the interior stem. We carefully

remove a single layer of cells from a leaf with our scalpel. Under a microscope we observe the green presence of chlorophyll. We speculate on photosynthesis—the interaction of sun light with chlorophyll that creates plant sugar.

Finally we surmise the movement of water and nutrition from the soil through the roots, up the stem and out the branches to the leaves—where sunlight interacts with the chlorophyll to create botanical life within the tree. With our lab book filled—confident we know what a tree is—we turn out the lights. We leave behind a lab book full of notes—a pile of saw dust—and a dead tree.

In the East if we want to know what a tree is—we plant one. We discover what kind of soil it likes—wet or with good drainage. We notice how it handles the wind—whether it sways with flexible give and take—or is stern and rigid and likely to break in Oklahoma’s wind. We notice if the branches are strong enough to support bird nests—and whether birds trust the young tree enough to build their nests there.

As the years pass—we throw a rope over a lower branch and tie an old tire to the rope. We notice the bounce and spring in the limb as we swing in the tire. As we grow up we notice the little girl down the street is growing up too. We get another rope—throw it over the limb and replace the tire with a porch swing. We invite her to come and swing with us in the shade of our tree.

Time passes—we fall in love. We get married. Now our children play in the shade of the tree. We retire and tie a hammock to the trunk of the tree. Many years later—we pass away. We have

received permission to be buried near the tree. In the future our children and grandchildren will sit in the shade of the tree while they pay their respects and tell the next generation about us.

Now if you were to ask those of us in the East—what a tree is—you will get an entirely different answer than the answer you got from the first man with his lab book and his chainsaw. Our Eastern answer doesn't negate the Western answer—but it is different. We don't approach the questions of life the same way. We in the East approach life from a different point of view. We are experiential; we learn from experiencing. We are not scholastic. What we know we didn't get out of a book. Our approach is not academic; our source is the living reality itself.

### ***SPEED BUMPS AHEAD***

The Eastern approach is different. There will be a “bump” between West and East. If you have been reared in the West there will be a bump between what you already know—and what we will talk about. Some will try and fit what we say into their Western scheme of things—and we won't fit.

Your experience will be similar to learning a foreign language. Each language is its own inclusive linguistic system. You may learn the German word for God, or life, or any number of nouns. You might even insert those German nouns into an English sentence—swapping *Fenster* for *window* and saying, Could you shut the Fenster? You might think you are speaking German. Aber, Sie haben einen Fehler gemacht. (*But you have made a mistake.*) You are still speaking English.

If you wish to learn German, it is best to leave your English at the door as you enter the classroom—and learn how to speak German—or French, or Russian—or Chinese—as a completely different language. The same is true when learning spiritual languages.

The spiritual language of Evangelion is a different language. Sometimes we will use the same words—God, Trinity, and Salvation—for example. But the words will have a different meaning. Sometimes we will use entirely new words to describe spiritual realities. Along with these different words and different meanings there also comes a different attitude—an attitude of awe and wonder. In awe and wonder we worship the One who is and always remains a mystery.

This is not a Sunday School class. This is a class for adults to encounter the Gospel that conquered the Roman Empire. This is the original Gospel—not the western version we grew up with.



## CHAPTER 1 THE GOD WE WORSHIP

### ***GOD IS OUR STARTING POINT***

God is a given. In the beginning God.... We either start with God or we start with matter. It is either God or Matter. This is a choice. Neither choice is provable. Where we start is a choice.

For us—the Eastern Orthodox Christian—God is. We do not prove his existence. For us—his existence is our starting point.<sup>1</sup> The first five words of our Creed are—I believe in one God....

### ***THE MEANING OF BELIEVING***

I *believe* in one God. But what does it mean to believe? John 3:16 is the most quoted, most well-known verse in the Bible. There used to be the guy wearing a rainbow wig at football and basketball games carrying his sign that said: John 3:16. That verse reads, “For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever *believes* in him should not perish but have everlasting life.”

But what does it mean to believe? The verses prior to verse 16 give us a clue.

*And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whoever believes may in Him have eternal life.*

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<sup>1</sup> The ancient Greeks believed that nothing can come from nothing. This notion survives to the present and is found in the lyrics to a song from the musical *The Sound of Music*: “Nothing comes from nothing, nothing ever could. So somewhere in my youth or childhood I must have done something good.” But the Eastern Church has always believed in God as the creator who created *ex nihilo*, out of nothing. Something has come out of nothing. We and the universe we live in have come out of nothing. God has caused us to come into existence. For a discussion of Greek philosophy and creation *ex nihilo* see John Zizoulas, *Communion & Otherness*, 15-19, and especially notes 3,4 and 5 on page 15.

Jesus gives us a back story. In the Old Testament—when the Ancient Israelites left Egypt they came into an area infested with snakes. Many people were bitten and some died.<sup>2</sup> God told Moses to make a brass snake and put it on a pole. He told the people that anyone who was bitten could come and look at the snake on the pole, and they would live.

This is our clue to what it means to believe. It was not enough for someone to believe the statement about a snake on a pole, and they would be healed. They literally had to go look at the snake on the pole—and then—and only then—were they healed. Believing is something with do in our lives—not in our heads. We believe with our feet—not our heads.

In English the word to believe has come to mean the acceptance of statements: I believe these statements. And the statements I believe are then called my beliefs. These statements are my beliefs; they are what I believe.

And that's all John 3:16 means to most people. They believe the verse. They believe the statement. They accept as true one single verse out of the whole Bible, and they think they are a Christian and have eternal life.

But in the original Greek the word *believe* is the word *faith*.

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever *faiths* in him—is *faithing* in him—shall not perish but have eternal life.”

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<sup>2</sup> Numbers 21: 4-9

To *believe* is not simply to intellectually accept or agree with a statement. It is to believe in a person. I know my wife. I know who she is as a person. I trust her to be who she is. I demonstrate that I believe in her, that I trust her, by the way I live.

To believe in God is not simply to believe in his existence, the demons do that much. James 2: 19 says, “You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble.”

It was not enough for a person bitten by a snake to stay in his tent and say he believed that if they looked at the snake on the pole they would be healed. It wasn't what those who had been bitten by the snakes said they believed that mattered. It was what they did. Their behavior showed what they believed when they got up, went and stood before the snake on the pole.

It is not enough intellectually to believe a statement. Believing is existential. It is experiential. Believing is done not with our heads—believing is done with our lives. “Our relationship with God is an active response to the Divine Summons—not a passive contemplation of the Divine.”<sup>3</sup>

We demonstrate we believe in God, that we trust in God, by the way we live. But for many people who think of themselves as Christians, there is a disconnect between the statements they accept as true and the way they live.

## ***REVELATION***

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<sup>3</sup> Norman Russell, *Fellow Workers with God* (SVS Press, 2009), 152.

We only know God because God comes to us. In the Garden of Eden God came looking for Adam and Eve.<sup>4</sup> Adam, where are you? Eve, what have you done? God is looking for us. Jesus told the woman at the well that the Father is searching for true worshippers.<sup>5</sup>

God is not hiding from us. He is looking for us. He came to Moses in the burning bush.<sup>6</sup> Moses did not know who God was. He asked who he was—what is your name? God replied—I am *o ov* — *ho On*.<sup>7</sup> My name is Is. I am Is. I am Existence. In our Vesper Service, the priest says, “*Christ our God, the existing, o ov, is blessed, always, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.*”<sup>8</sup>

In the Divine Liturgy, in the Prayer of the Anaphora, the priest prays, “*O thou who dost truly exist*” in the Red Service Book<sup>9</sup> and “*O Existing One*” in the Liturgikon.<sup>10</sup> In each case it is *o ov*—*O ON*—that is being translated.

God is. He is Is. He is Is-ness. He is Existence. He is Being. He is the Source of all Existence. He is the reason there is something instead of nothing. “In him we live, and move, and have our being.”<sup>11</sup> God is also personal.

God is incomprehensible—undefinable—and ineffable. God is outside of our understanding. We cannot “wrap our minds around” him. God is mystery. He can be worshipped—but he cannot

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<sup>4</sup> Genesis 3:8-9

<sup>5</sup> John 4:23

<sup>6</sup> Exodus 3:1-15

<sup>7</sup> The small O is short as in *hot*. The capital O is long as in *own*. Thus—*ha Own*.

<sup>8</sup> Red Service Book, 42.

<sup>9</sup> Red Service Book, 134.

<sup>10</sup> Liturgikon, 279.

<sup>11</sup> Acts 17:28

be understood. Everything we know about God—God has revealed to us. God reveals himself to us.

### ***THE ONLY ACCEPTABLE RESPONSE TO REVELATION***

On Easter Sunday the Myrrh-bearing Women went to the tomb for a funeral. Their lives were dramatically interrupted by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Resurrection does not fit inside any human category. It is impossible to comprehend the Resurrection.

Thomas was not there that Sunday. He scoffed when the others told them that Christ had been raised from the dead. He demanded external—empirical—proof before he would believe. One week later Thomas was present when the Risen Christ materialized in the middle of the room. In the face of the revelation—in the presence of the Risen God—Thomas gave the only acceptable response. He fell to his knees—My Lord and my God. It was by worshipping Christ as God that Thomas demonstrated with his life that he believed. Thomas is not the patron saint of doubters. Thomas is the patron saint of believers!

Worship is the only true response to revelation. It is not theology—it is not dogma—nor is it Bible Study—the only true response to revelation is worship. Worship is our act of belief. It is not to a snake on a pole—but before the God who hung on a Cross that we come. The invisible God stands before us—and we fall to our knees in worship. We behold the presence of God—and we stand in awe. We do not explain him. We do not analyze him. We do not define him. We worship.

Jesus told the woman at the well that the Father sought true worshippers to be his worshippers. God is not recruiting us to be academics or theologians. He is looking for true worshippers to worship him. He is looking for those whose only response is to fall on their knees and say, My Lord and my God.

### ***GOD IS TRINITY***

Look at our worship. The worship service of the Orthodox Church is known as the Divine Liturgy. The Divine Liturgy is filled with the worship of Trinity—Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The worship begins when the priest proclaims, “Blessed is the kingdom of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.”—to which the worshippers in attendance all say “Amen.” We sing the Thrice-Holy Hymn to the Trinity: “Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. Glory be to the Father, and Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Both now and ever and unto ages of ages, Amen.”

At the end of the service we declare: “We have seen the true light, we have received the heavenly Spirit; we have found the true faith, worshipping the undivided Trinity: for He has saved us.”

### ***TRINITY***

God is Trinity. God has always been Trinity. God has always been Father—Son—Holy Spirit—One God—Amen. God has always chosen to be Father, Son and Holy Spirit. There never was a time when the Son was not. The Son is the Second Person of the Trinity—the Holy Spirit is the Third Person. The Second Person of the Trinity in becoming man revealed that God was Trinity—Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

### ***BIBLICAL EVENTS***

When Jesus was baptized, the Spirit of God descended upon him and there was a voice declaring, “This is my Son in whom I am well pleased.”<sup>12</sup>

At the Transfiguration of Christ there was a voice that said, “This is my Son, listen to Him.”<sup>13</sup>

The Prologue to the Gospel of John begins, “In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God.”<sup>14</sup> The Word of God is co-eternal with God. John then tells us, “The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.”<sup>15</sup> Jesus Christ is the Word—the Second Person of the Trinity—who became man.

### ***THE SON REVEALS THE FATHER***

John 3:16 tells us that God so loved the world he gave his only begotten Son. All of these verses speak of the Son. It is in meeting the Son that we know there is a Father. I am Father Deacon Ezra—that’s who I am in the church. But you do not know whether I am a biological father. But if you meet someone who says—I’m Fr. Deacon Ezra’s son—I’m Fr. Deacon Ezra’s daughter—then you know I am a biological father. It is the offspring that reveals one is a father or a mother.

It is my offspring that reveal that I am a father. It is Jesus as the Son that reveals there is a Father. This is what Jesus meant when he said—No one comes to the Father except through

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<sup>12</sup> Mark 1: 10-11

<sup>13</sup> Mark 9:7

<sup>14</sup> John 1:1-2

<sup>15</sup> John 1:14

me.<sup>16</sup> No one comes to know God is Father unless they meet the Son. “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father but through me.”<sup>17</sup>

When our son, Jakob, was in high school, he always brought a house full of buddies with him. They were always in our home. They were in our home so much that they called Kathy—Momma Ham. No one off the street would call Kathy—Momma. But these guys—because they knew Jakob began to call Jakob’s mom—Momma. This is what Jesus meant—no one has access to God as Father except by having a relationship with the Son.

### ***OUR TASK***

It is not our task to say where God is not. God is God. He is everywhere he chooses to be. It is our task to say where he is. We know this—God is not playing Hide-and-Seek with us. He is looking for us—Adam, where are you? “But an hour is coming and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be his worshippers.”<sup>18</sup> God is findable because he wants to be found. There may be many roads that lead to God—it is not our place to say where God is not. But once found—God reveals himself as Trinity—Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The only way to know that there is a Father is to know the Son.

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<sup>16</sup> John 14:6

<sup>17</sup> John 14:6

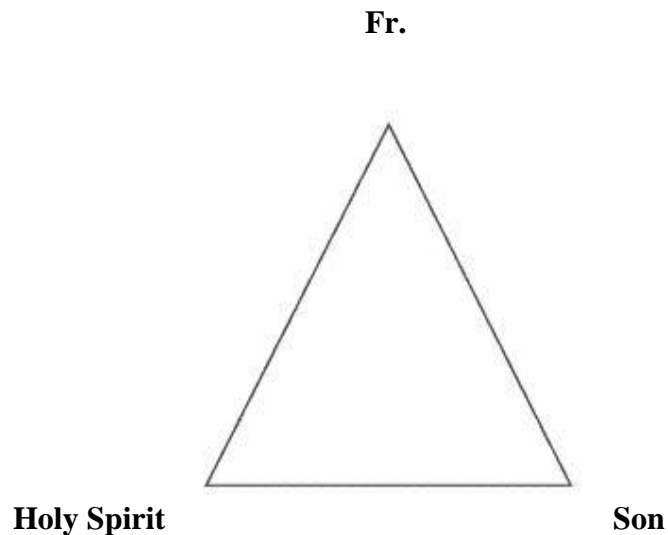
<sup>18</sup> John 4:23



The Father is seeking true worshippers—those who will worship Trinity—Father, Son and Holy Spirit: One God.<sup>19</sup> We proclaim in our worship—we have found the true faith, worshipping the undivided Trinity.

### ***BROKEN TRINITY OF THE WEST***

The West has a Broken Trinity—the term Trinity is used—but it is a Broken Trinity they refer to. The Eastern Church speaks of an undivided Trinity—where Father, Son and Holy Spirit are part of single whole. We can think metaphorically of the three corners of a triangle—each corner exists as a full and equal member of the whole.



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<sup>19</sup> John 4: 23

A divided—broken—Trinity occurs when we break one of the angles and pull the triangle apart into a straight line.

- **Fr**
- |
- **Son**
- |
- **Holy Spirit**

A Broken Trinity results in the question of power—who is on top?<sup>20</sup> Some churches emphasize the Father. They talk about and pray to God the Father. Others emphasize the Son. They talk about and pray to Jesus. Still others place their emphasis on the Holy Spirit. They talk about and pray to the Holy Spirit.

When most people in the West speak of God they do not mean Trinity. Historians have observed “the West always started with the one God and then moved to the Trinity, whereas the East followed the opposite course.”<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> In the Unbroken Trinity *monarchia* along with hierarchy and authority are “born out of relationship [the relationship of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit with each other] and not [born] out of power.” Zizioulas, *Being as Communion* (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1997), 224.

<sup>21</sup> John D. Zizioulas, *Communion & Otherness*, (New York: T&T Clark, 2006), 34.

Unfortunately this “quite often has amounted to the West’s beginning with the one God and never actually arriving at the Trinity.”<sup>22</sup> The West has a Broken Trinity, which to the East, is no Trinity at all, as the following diagram illustrates.

**Broken Trinity of the West**

<b>Fr</b>	=	<b>God</b>
<b>Son</b>	=	<b>Son of God</b>
<b>Holy Spirit</b>	=	<b>Holy Spirit (the Holy It)</b>

In the West, most people have a Broken Trinity. In English the singular term **God** is the supreme deity of any religion—Judaism, Christianity, Islam, or paganism (if it has a supreme deity). The Western version of Christianity then has a God who has an offspring—the Son of God and a spirit of God—the Holy Spirit—who collectively are called Trinity.

The Broken Trinity is therefore composed of God, Son of God, and Holy Spirit. In actual practice in the West, the term God is reserved for—and identifies the supreme deity—while the terms Son of God and Holy Spirit identify something other than God himself.

For most in the West the term God does not include the Son and the Holy Spirit. The term **Trinity** is simply a label for the Western collection of God, Son of God, and Holy Spirit. Trinity is therefore not a statement about God, such as, God is Trinity or Trinity is God. Trinity is

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

merely a label for a collection containing God, Son of God, and Holy Spirit. This is what I mean by speaking of the West having a Broken Trinity.

This Broken Trinity is so pervasive—and we are so accustomed to it—that we don’t even see it when it is placed in front of us. Let me illustrate.

The following examples are taken from *The Confessions of a Non-Barbie* by Kinda Wilson.<sup>23</sup>

The book bills itself as “*A Real Girl’s Guide to Finding Beauty and Pursuing Happily Ever-After*.”

It is not a crazy, off-the-wall book. The book is representative of mainstream Protestant Christianity, at least in the southwest United States, if not the country as a whole. In her book she pictures the following conversation.

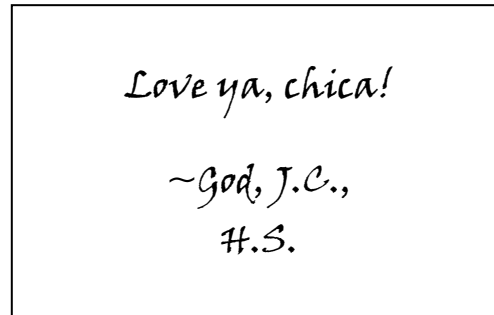
Jesus: About that Kinda girl, don’t You think it’s time she had a date?  
 God: It’s not time for her yet; there are still things she needs to do.  
 Jesus: I know, I know, but did You hear her last Friday night? She wrote four songs and seven poems.  
 God: She’s still depending on You, she’s doing okay—it’s good for her.  
 Jesus: Maybe, but I had to listen to all of the songs—and she can barely even play that guitar. It’s wearing Me out; I think maybe We should help her out a bit. ...hmmmm... You know I could put a pic up on match.com for her and she’d never know it was Me.....<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Kinda Wilson, *Confessions of a Non-Barbie: A Real Girl’s Guide to Finding Beauty and Pursuing Happily Ever-After* (Tulsa, OK: Harrison House Publishing, 2009).

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid*, 20.

Do you see the Broken Trinity in the above script? No? Perhaps the following example, also from Kinda Wilson's book, will help. It is the picture of a post-it note.<sup>25</sup>



In both examples from *The Confessions of a Non-Barbie*, the term **God** means the Father only. In these examples Jesus Christ is not God—he is only the Son of God. The Holy Spirit is also not God. Only the Father is God, and the term **God** is reserved exclusively for him. That is a broken Trinity. In other words, in these examples, the term **God** does not refer to Jesus or the Holy Spirit; it only refers to the Father.

A third example of the pervasiveness of a Broken Trinity in the United States comes from the literary world of popular culture. Elizabeth Gilbert is the author of the bestseller *Eat, Pray, Love*. In 2008 *Time* magazine named Gilbert “one of the hundred most influential people in the world.”<sup>26</sup> Over ten million copies of *Eat, Pray, Love* are in print. Her comments regarding God are not only generally representative of the common cultural use of the term God in the United

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 75.

<sup>26</sup> Elizabeth Gilbert, *Committed: A Skeptic Makes Peace with Marriage* (New York: Viking, 2010), inside book jacket.

States, but given Gilbert’s influence, her comments have reinforced the concept of a Broken Trinity at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Gilbert first discusses God in the Third Bead in *Eat, Pray, Love*. She does so, she says, in order “to explain exactly what I mean when I say that word [God].”<sup>27</sup> Included in her comments, Gilbert says the following.

*Culturally, though not theologically, I’m a Christian. I was born a Protestant of the white Anglo-Saxon persuasion. And while I do love that great teacher of peace who was called Jesus, and while I do reserve the right to ask myself in certain trying situations what indeed He would do, I can’t swallow that one fixed rule of Christianity insisting that Christ is the only path to God. Strictly speaking, then, I cannot call myself a Christian.*<sup>28</sup>

Did you see the Broken Trinity?

Gilbert is speaking from the point of view of a Broken Trinity. Jesus never said he was the only way to God. He said he was the way to the Father. “No one comes to the *Father* except by me.”<sup>29</sup> He said no one comes to know God as Trinity—comes to know there is Father, Son and Holy Spirit except they meet the Son. As we discussed earlier, the fact there is a Son establishes the fatherhood of the Father.

But Gilbert—with a Broken Trinity—takes the words “no one comes to the **Father** except by me” and filters them through a Broken Trinity to mean “no one comes to **God** except by me.”

<sup>27</sup> Elizabeth Gilbert, *Eat, Pray, Love* (New York: Penguin Books, 2006), 13.

<sup>28</sup> Gilbert, *Eat, Pray, Love*, 14.

<sup>29</sup> John 14:6

She understands Father to mean God and interchanges the terms. This is a Broken Trinity. Instead of the term **God** referring to the whole—she uses the term **God** to mean only one of the three. For us, the terms **God** and **Trinity** *both* refer to the whole.

Remember—our task is not to say where God is not. Our task is to say where God is. God is God—and he is where he is. God is not hiding. He is findable. God is findable in many ways. But finding God is one thing. Coming to know that God is Father is dependent upon meeting the Son. Finding God is one thing. Knowing that he is Father, Son and Holy Spirit, One God, is quite another.

All three of these examples—the two from Kinda Wilson and the last from Elizabeth Gilbert illustrate quite clearly what I mean by a Broken Trinity. In a Broken Trinity the Trinity is not God—in a broken Trinity one Person of the Trinity is alone called God.

### ***UNDIVIDED TRINITY***

God is Trinity. In the undivided Trinity the fullness of the Whole is fully present in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. In breaking free of the Broken Trinity where the term **God** does not apply to the whole but to one—it is helpful to use the term **Trinity** for **God**. “In the beginning **Trinity** created the heavens and the earth.” “And **Trinity** said, ‘Let us make man in our own image.’”<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> I am aware of the difficulties in making the terms *God* and *Trinity* interchangeable. I am not addressing the relationship of the terms *God* and *Trinity*. I am addressing modern forms of Arianism and Nestorianism that in practice treat the Son as a “Son of God” who is lesser than God because the term God refers exclusively to the Father. For a discussion of the ontological issues see John D. Zizoulas, “The Father as Cause,” *Communion & Otherness* (London: T and T Clark, 2009), 113-154.

God is o ων — ho ON.<sup>31</sup> His name is IS. God is. He is Is. He is Is-ness. He is Existence. He is Being. He is the source of all existence. He is the reason there is something instead of nothing. “In him we live, and move, and have our being.”<sup>32</sup> He is Trinity. And he is personal.

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<sup>31</sup> The small o is short as in *hot*. The capital O is long as in *own*. Thus—ha Own.

<sup>32</sup> Acts 17:28