

## Refuting Oneness Pentecostalism

One of the major violations against a right view of the triune God made by Oneness Pentecostals is that they would have to consider God mutable or changeable in character and identity to fit their doctrine of God. God has been the same in all ways for all time, including His existence in three distinct persons (**Psa. 102:25-27, Mal. 3:6, John 17:5, John 17:4**). If one asserts that God has changed, then He either was not as perfect as He is now, or is now not as perfect as He was. If God is now the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, then He must have always been Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

As far as baptism is concerned, a Oneness Pentecostal will typically enjoy referring to the passage in I Peter 3:18-22 about the baptism that “now saves us,” believing that it supports the idea that baptism is a requirement for salvation. My question to one who holds to baptism as a requirement for salvation based on this passage would be, “Did Noah find favor with God before or after his “salvation” by the ark?” The obvious answer is “beforehand,” because in reality the ark did not give him salvation, at least not in a spiritual-eternal sense, but was merely a temporal representation of his trust in God’s promise. If one would try to assert that Noah did not receive spiritual salvation until after this physical baptism, then Noah did an outrageous amount of work and obedience toward God without even having been redeemed to Him yet. Genesis 7:1 sinks the ship (no pun intended) on that position, because God refers to Noah as righteous before he even enters the ark. So essentially he was justified and saved in a spiritual sense, and this inner reality eventually manifested in a physical testimony. Throughout the Bible, there is not one single verse that explicitly mentions both justification and baptism together, yet there are a number of verses mentioning faith and justification together. For more information on a Biblical perspective of baptism and further analysis of I Peter 3:18-22, see my article on “Biblical Baptism” located at [www.truthfreesus.com/evangelism.php](http://www.truthfreesus.com/evangelism.php).

Romans chapter 4 clearly lays out the transcendence of justification by faith throughout redemptive history and mentions nothing about baptism or speaking in tongues. This passage will be key to helping a Oneness Pentecostal come to realize the true scriptural teaching of justification by faith. In the first four verses, Paul demonstrates the problem with self righteousness – it is contrary to the righteousness of God. The next three verses assert that justification is entirely apart from any work or obedience toward God, even the performance of covenant signs. Paul then specifically gives as an example, the fact that Abraham was justified by faith before he was circumcised, and that this justification by faith is available to both Jews and Gentiles alike. The 21<sup>st</sup> verse is especially effective in highlighting that the focus in justification by faith is on believing that God is able to perform what He has promised, as opposed to us needing to perform in order to be justified.