

WHO DO WE WORSHIP? (Oneness/Jesus-only Worship Songs)

By Karl Kemp; July 2007; expanded and finished in November 2007; slightly revised in September 2009; slightly revised in August 2011

I need to mention three of my papers/articles that are relevant to this paper: “The Name *Yahweh* and God the Father and God the Son: The Name *Yahweh* and a Listing of Some of the Large Number of Passages in the Hebrew Old Testament Where We Can See God the Son Along with God the Father” (published in September, 2009 and significantly expanded in August 2011; 9 pages); “Who Do We Pray To?” (published in July 2011, 33 pages); and “More on the Trinity: Some Key Passages from the New Testament Where We See the Full Deity and Preexistence of God the Son with God the Father and Some Key Bible Passages Used to Teach a Oneness View of God” (published in September 2011, 33 pages).

An important preliminary statement. The motivation behind this discussion is the desire that we (all true Christians) would come to believe the balanced truth of what the Bible teaches about God and to worship Him in *truth* (which includes living in the truth, righteousness, and holiness of God [cf. Eph. 4:24]), with some emphasis on the words of the worship songs we sing. I am not writing this article to attack Jesus-only/oneness Christians (I believe that many of them are true Christians—God is the Judge!); I want to be a blessing to them, but I do believe (along with orthodox Christianity from the beginning) that the oneness view of God is wrong and that it is one of the most serious doctrinal errors that needs to be dealt with in the body of Christ.

I believe I am obligated to God (the triune God) and to the body of Christ (which embraces all true Christians) to say what I am saying in this article. I want to be faithful to God and to be a blessing to the body of Christ. One of the primary points I want to make in this article is that I don’t believe it is at all reasonable or proper for Christians who believe in the triune God (with three distinct Persons in the Godhead) to sing “worship” songs that deny the existence of the Person of God the Father (and the Trinity and the Person of God the Holy Spirit). ((I’ll comment further on this as we continue, but I should explain what I mean by “worship” songs that deny the existence of the Person of God the Father (and the Trinity and the Person of God the Holy Spirit). Oneness Christians in our day typically believe that the God they worship manifests Himself as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. In that sense they are not denying the existence of the Father. But they don’t believe in the three distinct Persons of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit (they don’t believe in the Trinity), and they believe that Jesus is the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. When they worship Jesus in a song, they are not thinking of the Person of God the Son, like we should, according to the use of the name Jesus in the Bible. The name Jesus is never used for God the Father, or God the Holy Spirit, or the Trinity in the Bible. When we worship Jesus (or pray to Him), using the name the way the Bible uses the name, we are just worshipping God the Son. In that sense, the existence of the Person of God the Father (and the Trinity and the Person of God the Holy Spirit) is being denied. Oneness Christians typically speak of Jesus being the One Person we will worship in the eternal state.)) But this is being done on a

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regular basis by many Christians. I want to encourage my brothers and sisters in Christ to prayerfully check out the words of the worship songs they are using. And it doesn't make any difference whether the songs were written by oneness Christians who deny the Trinity or Christians who say they believe in the Trinity.

Is it really a big deal if we use "worship" songs that deny the existence of the distinct Person of God the Father? I believe it is a very big deal. The primary issue for me is that I believe we are insulting God the Father, and I can't imagine that God (the triune God) considers this to be acceptable worship. I know God is generous with His people, but Christians who believe in the Trinity singing songs that deny the Person of God the Father? If the words of a "worship" song contain serious error, the songs should be rejected. Nothing can begin to compensate for error, including a superb melody, a catchy tune, a great musical composition and excellent performance of that composition, or the fact that people are significantly stirred by that song. Furthermore, it is a significant fact that Christians are often strongly influenced by the words of the songs they sing, even if they don't stop to think about the meaning of the words. The words of songs can get embedded in our hearts and minds and have more influence over us than verses of the Bible.

I am not writing this article to criticize the writers of these songs. And I am not writing this article to criticize Christians who have been singing some "worship" songs that are inappropriate. I realize that many Christians don't stop to think much about the words of the songs they are singing, and sometimes the problems aren't obvious. But this doesn't mean that this problem isn't serious, and ignorance isn't a sufficient excuse. I also admit that I may be misunderstanding the words of some of the songs that I mention in this article. I want to be corrected where I am wrong, and I'll apologize.

It is super-important for us to believe the balanced truth of what the Bible teaches on every topic, but some topics are more important than others, and what the Bible teaches about God is certainly one of the most important topics. All of us Christians need to humble ourselves before God and seek Him for the balanced truth of what the Bible teaches. It's unbelievable how many different opinions we have on essentially every topic, and (amazingly) just about everybody knows that somehow they and their group already have the balanced truth, even if nobody else does. (Much theology has been done in the flesh, which includes pride, and there is a strong demonic input.) We desperately need the balanced truth! Every error damages the body of Christ—some errors cause great damage—and robs God of glory, glory we owe Him. Things wrong in the body of Christ also make it more difficult for people to come to know God and His truth and salvation through the church.

It's a great blessing to learn that we have been believing and/or doing something wrong. At least then we have an opportunity to make the necessary corrections, which will work for the glory of God and for our great good. We certainly don't want to learn after this life is over that we were believing and/or doing things wrong.

We worship the triune God of the Bible, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. (There is one God, three distinct Persons, but not three totally separate, totally independent Persons/Beings—not three Gods. It is very important to see that the Old

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Testament passages that speak of the fact that there is only *one* God¹ (see, for example, Deut. 4:39; 6:4; Isa. 44:6-8; and 45:20-22) were written to refute the pagan idea that literally permeated the ancient world that there were many gods (polytheism), not to deny the Trinity, which was not clearly revealed in the Old Testament, but has been clearly revealed through the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and the New Testament. We are to worship God from our hearts (in faith, which includes obedience) all the time, as we live for Him (by His grace), having been born again and saved through new-covenant salvation. But there are times of special worship too, when we worship Him corporately (or as individuals) with prayer, thanksgiving, singing, etc.

The Jesus-only/oneness viewpoint, which is widespread in our day (even among people who say they believe in the triune God), denies the existence of three distinct Persons in the Godhead. They believe there is just one Person, who reveals/manifests Himself as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. They believe that when they worship Jesus they are worshipping God, the *one* Person of God, and that *Jesus* is the name of that *one* Person who manifests Himself as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. One obvious problem with this viewpoint is that the existence of the distinct Person of God the Father (and God the Holy Spirit) is effectively being denied. But Jesus (and the Bible in general) taught us to first and foremost worship the Person of God the Father, to pray to Him, etc.—see below.

We are far from divine order when the existence of the Person of God the Father (and the Person of God the Holy Spirit) is being denied, and to a lesser extent we are out of divine order when God the Father is being ignored, which often happens in our day when, for example, most of the prayers are directed to Jesus and most of the worship songs are directed to Him too. For example, I was watching the Praise the Lord program on TBN (Trinity Broadcasting Network) recently, and every prayer and praise song that evening was directed to Jesus. I am quite sure that the Lord Jesus Christ would be the first one to tell us that this is out of order. When we worship Jesus (using the name *Jesus* the way the New Testament uses this name, and we must use the name the way the New Testament uses the name), we are worshipping God the Son, not the triune God, or God the Father, or God the Holy Spirit. The name *Jesus* is never used in the New Testament for the triune God, or God the Father, or God the Holy Spirit.²

We learn from the New Testament that our prayers are typically to be directed to God the Father, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ (cf. Matt. 6:5-15; Luke 11:1-4; John 14:6; 15:16; and 16:23-28).³ In the same way, our worship should first and foremost be directed to God the Father, the One who sent His unique Son to save us. (See, for example John 4:21-24 and Rev. 4:8-11 [with Rev. 4:2, 3, and 5:1, 6, 7⁴]). The Lord Jesus Christ, who is at the right hand of God the Father (see, for example, Acts 7:55, 56), is fully deity with God the Father in His Person (as is God the Holy Spirit), and He is to be

¹ The one God was (and is) the God of creation, the God of the Bible, the God of Abraham, the God of Moses, the God of the people of Israel, etc.

² The name *Jesus* is used 904 times in the New Testament of the NASB, 1995 edition, and there are 7 more uses where His name is used with an apostrophe, *Jesus'*.

³ See my paper titled, "Who Do We Pray To?"

⁴ To help confirm that the words "Who was and who is and who is to come" of Rev. 4:8 refer to God the Father, see Rev. 1:4, 5 (God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are all mentioned in these verses; they are often mentioned together in the New Testament). And especially note that the Lord Jesus Christ (God the Son) comes and takes the scroll from the hand of God the Father (who is pictured sitting on the throne in heaven in Rev. 4:3, 10, 11; and 5:1) in Rev. 5:7.

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worshiped with the Father (see, for example, Rev. 5:13, 14). However, God the Son is subordinate (I didn't say inferior) to God the Father in His role in the Trinity,⁵ and we should never ignore the Father. This doesn't mean that it is inappropriate for Christians to sing worship songs that are directed to the Lord Jesus Christ, but at such times we must be aware of the fact that He is at the right hand of the Father, and He would be the first One to exhort us to never ignore God the Father when we come to the throne of God to worship.

The Scriptures have a lot to say regarding the three distinct Persons of the Godhead, but I am not going to get into those details in this article (except for what I said above). In a reference section later in this article, I refer the reader to three places where I discussed this topic to some extent in my papers and to three books that I have recently read that deal with this topic. Also, there are many other articles and books available that effectively deal with this topic. At the beginning of this paper I mentioned three of my more recent papers that are very relevant to this topic.

Something is surely out of divine order if most of the worship songs are directed to the Lord Jesus Christ. But, as I mentioned, we have a much more serious problem with some of the "worship" songs being used by many Christian in our day. (I'm speaking of Christians who say they believe in the triune God, and in many cases they actually do believe in the triune God.) For one thing, many worship songs being used were written by Jesus-only/oneness Christians who believe that Jesus alone is God.⁶ It is not surprising, of course, that some of the songs they write worship the one Person of Jesus and make it clear that there are no other Persons in the Godhead, thereby denying the existence of God the Father (and God the Holy Spirit) as a Person distinct from the Lord Jesus Christ, which is a serious problem. For example, you hear words like: Jesus – You are the only One; You are the One we worship: There is no one beside(s) You, You are the One on the throne; You (and You alone) are our God and our King; You (and You alone) are the Mighty God; You (and You alone) are Yahweh (Jehovah); You are Abba Father; etc.

I'll give some specific examples of such songs as we continue. Apparently many such songs were written by Christians who believe (at least they think they believe) in the Trinity. Regardless of who wrote the songs, we should not be singing songs that deny (or seem to deny) the existence of the Person of God the Father (and the Trinity, and the Person of God the Holy Spirit).

When I recently entered "oneness worship songs" and similar entries on Google, I found a relevant article titled "Jesus-only Beliefs Spread to Mainline Churches" by Fern Holm, posted April 10, 2007.⁷ I'll quote a few sentences from this article. "The non-

⁵ See footnote 8 under my discussion of John 1:1 in my paper titled *A Verse-by-Verse Study of John 1:1-18 and Colossians 1:15-3:17*. An abbreviated version of the paper is on my internet site (karlkempeachingministries.com). I believe the fact that God the Son (and God the Spirit) are eternally subordinate to God the Father in their roles (not in their Persons) is important information that helps us understand the Trinity. For one thing, this information helps us guard against the idea of three Gods. See my three more recent papers that I mentioned at the beginning of this paper.

⁶ I'll document this point as we continue.

⁷ In the original version of this paper I gave the web address to Fern Holm's article in this footnote. Now, after communicating with Fern rather extensively through e-mails, I must caution the reader that Fern goes too far in subordinating the Son of God to the Father. She even denies that God the Son is called God in

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denominational/charismatic/‘community’ churches seem to be the most obvious in their prayers to Jesus in Jesus’ name, worship songs that acknowledge Jesus as their God, etc., but as you’ll see in the quotes given below, traditional denominations are ‘morphing’ into Jesus-only churches as well.” She is speaking (at least for the most part) of the fact that mainline churches are sometimes using contemporary worship music, very much including some Jesus-only/oneness worship songs.

I’ll quote the paragraph from her article that was the most important to me. She was quoting from an article titled “Charismatic Music Permeating the Churches” that is posted on the internet “Updated July 12, 2006 (first published May 30, 1997) (David Cloud, Fundamental Baptist Information Service...)” “Many of the most popular ‘praise songs’ today were composed by men and women involved with the Oneness Pentecostal movement, which denies the Trinity and which baptizes only in the name of Jesus. A recent article in *Charisma* magazine (June 1997) noted that ‘most popular praise anthems sung in charismatic and evangelical churches today were composed by Oneness believers.’ ” For the record, the *Charisma* article said, “Many of the most popular praise anthems....”

I had read that *Charisma* article (titled, “The Other Pentecostals,” which was written by J. Lee Grady) back in 1997, but I had forgotten about it. This topic wasn’t very relevant to me back then, but now that I can see that we have a serious problem, I was quite motivated to get a copy of that article—I have been saying for a *long* time that many of our worship songs must have been written by Jesus-only/oneness Christians. I obtained a copy of the article from *Charisma* (for a fee), but I have since found the article posted on the internet: www.rickross.com/reference/upci/upci2.html. I’ll include a few excerpts from the *Charisma* article that I found to be quite informative later in this article, when we discuss the last song that is discussed in this article.

Fern Holm gave two “examples of Jesus-only worship songs, used widely among denominational and non-denominational churches.” One of the two songs was “Here I am to Worship.” (I’ll quote that song and comment on it later in this study. I’ll also quote and comment on several other songs, but there are *very many* more such songs around the body of Christ.) I’ll quote the other song: “ ‘And I surrender to your ways’ ‘It’s all about you, Jesus. And all this is for you. For your glory and your fame. It’s not about me, as if you should do things my way. YOU ALONE ARE GOD, and I surrender to your ways.’ PASSION - I Could Sing of Your Love Forever (disc 1).”

Whatever the beliefs and intentions of the songwriter(s), I agree with Fern Holm that the words of this song, especially the words “You alone are God,” which are addressed to Jesus in this song (chorus), seem to clearly communicate the idea that Jesus is the only One to worship (which effectively eliminates the Persons of God the Father and the Holy Spirit). Surely this song will influence many Christians in that erroneous direction. The songwriter(s) may think that they are worshipping the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit when they worship Jesus, but (as we discuss in this article) Jesus is the name of God the Son, and the idea that God exists in one Person is wrong.

John 1:1; 20:28; and Heb. 1:8, for example. She said, for example (in an e-mail to me dated February 5, 08), that what John 1:1 says about Jesus is that He is “the *vice-regent* – the *representative* – of God...the same kind of usage as in Exodus 7:1, KJV: ‘And the LORD said unto Moses, See, I have made *thee* a god (a representative of God) to Pharaoh,’ which is similar to Acts 2:36 – ‘God hath *made* that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both *Lord* and *Christ*.’”

Some References that Deal with the Triune God of the Bible – the Trinity

See the three relevant papers that I mentioned at the beginning of this paper. See the discussions of John 1:1-18 and of Colossians 1:15-19 in my paper titled, *A Verse-by-Verse Study of John 1:1-18 and Colossians 1:15-3:17: The Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Doctrine of the Trinity are Discussed in this Paper and Holiness and Victory Over Sin are Discussed Throughout this Study of Colossians 1:15-3:17*. (The paper was published in November 2004.) An abbreviated version of the paper is posted on my internet site (karlkempteachingministries.com).

See the discussion of Isaiah 9:1-7 in my paper titled, *Verse-by-Verse Studies of Selected Eschatological Prophecies from the Book of Isaiah*. (The paper was published in August 2000.) An abbreviated version of the paper is posted on my internet site.

In the process of writing this article I purchased and read three relevant books:

The most important book (of the three) to understand the Jesus-only/oneness viewpoint and the Trinitarian answer to that viewpoint is *Oneness Pentecostals & the Trinity* by Gregory A. Boyd (published by Baker Book House Company in 1992, 234 pages). Boyd speaks of his “fifteen years of studying this movement, including four years from the inside...(page 202).” On page 21 he informs us that his “involvement with Oneness Pentecostalism began when [he] was, at the age of sixteen, converted into a United Pentecostal Church.” He went on to earn a Ph. D. at Princeton Theological Seminary. I don’t agree with everything Boyd says in the book, but I believe he thoroughly and effectively demonstrates that the Jesus-only/oneness viewpoint of God is wrong, seriously wrong.

I also read *The Forgotten Trinity* by James R. White (published by Bethany House Publishers in 1998, 224 pages). This book is a helpful presentation and defense of the scriptural doctrine of the Trinity. One issue where I disagree with White is that he (in agreement with many) doesn’t see a subordinate role of the Son to the Father. (See footnote 5 of this article.)

I’ll include a few excerpts from the last chapter of White’s book, which is titled, “Does it really matter? Christian Devotion and the Trinity.” “True Christian worship is founded upon Christian truth. We have to have knowledge of our God to worship Him correctly. ... You know the longing in your heart to honor and glorify God, and you know instinctively that God is not honored by falsehood. You long for His Word so that you can grow in His grace and truth. ... I love the Trinity. I honor the Father, the Son, and the Spirit. ... Do you love the Trinity? I hope and pray that our journey through the Scriptures has solidified your faith in this divine truth and given you great boldness and courage to share that faith with others. But most of all I hope and pray it has helped you to fulfill the greatest commandment of all: to love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. Truly I hope that you can join with me in singing, ‘Praise God from Whom all blessings flow! Praise Him all creatures here below! Praise Him above ye heavenly host! Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost! Amen!’ ”

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And I read *Christianity without the Cross: A History of Salvation in Oneness Pentecostalism* by Thomas A. Fudge (published by Universal Publishers in 2003, 394 pages.) “Grounded in primary source research this...book examines the doctrine of salvation in Oneness Pentecostalism (United Pentecostal Church) from its origins through its several developmental stages” (quoted from the back cover of the book). This lengthy book, which is packed with details, deals with other issues more than it deals with the Jesus-only/oneness doctrine. The author is not saying that oneness Pentecostals deny the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation with the title of his book, but he is concerned about the great emphasis many of them put on other things, like how we are baptized.

Discussion of “Here I am to Worship” and Several Other “Worship” Songs:

First we will consider the words of the song, “Here I am to Worship,” written by Tim Hughes, which was referred to in the article by Fern Holm. I’ll quote the first two verses

and the chorus of the song⁸:

Light of the world You stepped down into darkness
Opened my eyes, Let me see
Beauty that made this heart adore you
Hope of a life spent with you

Here I am to worship Here I am to bow down
Here I am to say that You’re my God
You’re altogether lovely Altogether worthy
Altogether wonderful to me

King of all days So highly exalted
Glorious in heaven above Humbly you came to
the earth you created All for love’s sake became poor

I agree with Fern Holm that this song should be categorized as a “Jesus-only/oneness” song (whatever the intention of the songwriter). Jesus is the only One worshiped in this song, and it is (at a minimum) strongly inferred (it seems to me) that God the Father (and God the Holy Spirit) doesn’t exist as a distinct Person in the Godhead. It seems to me that this popular song will influence many Christians in that direction, whether Tim Hughes actually believes that God the Father exists as a distinct Person in the Godhead, or not.

When the songwriter (and the worshipers using this song) comes before the throne of God to bow down and to worship and says to Jesus, “You’re my God” (What about God the Father on the throne?; He is the One who sent His Son to save us, etc.) and refers to Jesus as the One who created the earth (What about God the Father⁹), it is strongly

⁸ I took these lyrics, and some of the other lyrics included in this section, from the internet site: www.stlyrics.com/songs/t/timhughes22168.html and www.stlyrics.com/songs/m/mattredman20504.html.

⁹ God the Father created the earth and every being/thing else that was ever created (cf., e.g., Gen. 1:1-2:4; Eph. 3:9 [When this verse is read in context with Eph. 3:8-12, it is clear that the apostle Paul is speaking of God the Father when he says, “God who created all things”]; and Rev. 4:11 [I’ll quote Rev. 4:11 (NASB, 1995), “Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power, for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed and were created.” On page 3 of this article, I demonstrated that the words of Rev. 4:11 are spoken to God the Father.]. We also learn from John 1:3, 10; Col. 1:16 that God the Son was also active in creation in that God the Father created *through* Him.

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inferred that God the Father doesn't exist as a distinct Person, whether that was the intention of Tim Hughes, or not. In this song Jesus (or, more accurately, God the Son) is the One "who stepped down into darkness," and the words "You're my God" are spoken to Jesus. Furthermore, Jesus is the One who "became poor" (cf. 2 Cor. 8:9). Tim confirmed to me in an e-mail that this song was directed to Jesus (see below).

It is quite significant that the words of some other songs that were written by Tim Hughes on this same album ("Here I am to Worship") worship the Lord Jesus Christ in a way that even more strongly infers that God the Father (and God the Holy Spirit) doesn't exist as a distinct Person in the Godhead than does the song "Here I am to Worship." (We'll consider the words of two of these songs as we continue.) That fact makes it all the more probable that the existence of the Person of God the Father is also being denied in the song, "Here I am to Worship." Even if Tim didn't intend to communicate the idea that God the Father doesn't exist as a distinct Person (and that would be difficult for me to imagine when I consider the words of these songs), it is clear that many Christians using these songs are being rather strongly influenced in that erroneous direction.

I learned on the internet that Tim Hughes is a popular worship leader from England. His father is an Anglican pastor. I'll include a relevant excerpt from *Today's Christian*, July/August 2006. " 'During that time I [Tim Hughes] had been thinking and meditating on the cross,' he says. 'I began to concentrate on Philippians 2—about Christ's humility and how He became obedient to the point of death on a cross. I was challenged with the wonder of His sacrifice for us.' ... 'I began to ask, How are we going to respond to Christ's great sacrifice on the cross? Do we bow down? Do we scream out? Sometimes we don't know how to respond, even though we desperately want to.' The answer finally came to him in words that spoke matter-of-factly about the act of worship itself: 'Here I am to worship. Here I am to bow down. Here I am to say that You're My God.' " The article went on to say that "Tim, who now travels around the world with the Soul Survivor ministry, recorded this song on his 2001 debut album, and it went on to win a 2003 Dove Award." The article also mentioned that "Tim wrote 'Here I Am to Worship' while a student at Sheffield University, where he worked with a young-adult ministry called Soul Survivor."

I sent an e-mail to Soul Survivor asking them if they believe there are three distinct Persons in the Godhead. I haven't received an answer. The roots of Soul Survivor were in St. Andrews Anglican Church, Chorleywood. Mike Pilavachi, who was a youth worker at that church, and Matt Redman, who was a young musician who led worship there, started Soul Survivor in 1993.

I didn't have Tim Hughes e-mail address, but I sent an e-mail to him indirectly through Soul Survivor and Matt Redman, briefly asking him about his view of God and who this song is addressed to. Tim replied (June 19, 2007), "I believe in one God who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. However when writing ["Here I am to worship"], it is directed to the person of Jesus, the one who stepped down into darkness and humbled himself on a cross (Phil. 2). In response to this amazing sacrifice we worship. Also the bridge section, 'I'll never know how much it cost...' is sung to the person of Jesus." Notice that Tim didn't say that he believes in one God, three (distinct) Persons," but he did mention "the person of Jesus, the one who stepped down into the darkness...." I'm not sure what Tim

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believes. I sent him an e-mail asking for more information and making my concerns known, but I haven't received a reply.¹⁰

As far as this article is concerned, it doesn't make much difference what Tim believes. What really matters is what his song(s) communicate (teach) about the existence of the Person of God the Father; who we are to worship, etc. It seems clear to me that some of Tim's songs strongly communicate the idea that God the Father doesn't exist as a distinct Person and that we are covering all the bases (so to speak) when we worship Jesus. Some of Tim's songs will surely influence many Christians in that direction. There can be no doubting the fact that this is what millions of Christians believe in our day, and the trend is growing. And there can be no doubting the fact that Jesus-only/oneness "worship" songs are strongly promoting this erroneous trend.

Now we'll consider another song written by Tim on this same album; the song is titled "Jesus, You Alone." This song seems to even more strongly communicate the idea that God the Father doesn't exist as a distinct Person than the song "Here I am to Worship." It doesn't seem possible that Tim could seriously believe in the distinct Person of God the

¹⁰ I'll reproduce the e-mail I sent to Tim Hughes. I'll include a few comments in brackets.

"Hi Tim,

I very much appreciate your humility and your response. I very much want to please God and to be a blessing to you and to the body of Christ, and I know that you want to please God and be a blessing to the body of Christ. Please let me ask a follow up question or two. Please help me understand.

You said you believe in 'one God who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,' but do you really believe in three distinct Persons of the Godhead? And do you really believe what the New Testament so often says about God the Father as a Person distinct from the Lord Jesus Christ (there are many hundreds of such verses, but for example, John 4:21-33; 14:6-21, 23-31; 16:23-33; and 17:1-26)?

If you believe the Lord Jesus is at the Father's right hand, how can you ignore (or deny) the existence of God the Father in your song, 'Jesus You Alone' with the words 'Jesus, You alone shall be my first love'; 'To Your throne I'll bring devotion...' (God the Father is on the throne and Jesus is at His right hand, as many verses demonstrate); and 'You alone will be my passion, Jesus...'? [When I first asked Tim my question(s), I only knew of his one song, "Here I am to worship." Regarding that song, I could have asked Tim how he can come to worship and bow down before Jesus (at the right hand of God the Father on His throne) and say to Jesus, "You're my God," while ignoring (or denying the existence of) God the Father. And I could have asked many similar questions regarding the few songs of Tim that I know about. I only include three examples of Tim's songs in this article, but I could have included more songs from the same album.] I'm very sure that the Lord Jesus Christ would be the first One to say that first and foremost God the Father must be worshipped. I realize, by the way, that millions of Christians in our day ascribe to the oneness/Jesus-only view of God, but I don't see how.

The fact that your songs are so popular makes it very important for you to not leave the very strong impression that there is only one Person in the Godhead, and all the more so if you really believe there are three distinct Persons. I'm very sure that you want to do the will of God.

If you don't believe in the three distinct Persons of the Godhead, please tell me. I have been a Bible teacher for about forty years (on a rather small scale), and I plan to share the information you're sharing with me. Thanks for your help. If I can help you, please let me know.

In Jesus' Mighty Name,

Karl Kemp"

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Father on His throne (at whose right hand Jesus is) and write the words of this song and use them to lead Christians to come before God's throne to worship only Jesus. (Anyway, I'm not writing this article to criticize Tim or anybody else. He knows what he believes and who he worships.) I'll quote the words of this song:

Jesus, You alone shall be my first love, my first love. [What about God the Father?] The secret place and the highest praise shall be Yours, shall be Yours. [What about God the Father?]

To Your throne [Jesus is with God the Father on His throne (cf., e.g., Heb. 12:2; Rev. 3:21; 22:1, 3). We cannot rightly come to this throne to worship Jesus and deny the existence of (or ignore) the Person of God the Father.] I'll bring devotion, may it be the sweetest sound. Lord this heart is reaching for you now.

So I'll set my sights upon You, Set my life upon Your praise [What about God the Father?], Never looking to another way. You alone will be my passion, Jesus, You will be my song. You will find me longing after You. [What about God the Father?]

Day and night I lift my eyes to seek You, to seek You. Hungry for a glimpse of You in glory, in glory. [What about God the Father?]

I'll also include some of the words from another of Tim's songs on this same album, "I'll Always Love You" (and there are other songs on this album that communicate the same idea):

I just want to love I just want to sing to the One above [which is Jesus as the following words confirm; He is "the One above," but what about the Person of God the Father?]. . .

I'll always love You I'll always sing to You, Jesus I long to worship You in Spirit and truth [These last words are doubly problematic in that Jesus spoke of "(worshipping) the Father in spirit [Spirit] and truth" in John 4:23, 24, but Tim is using these words of worshipping Jesus in this song.] . . .

I assume Tim Hughes, who is very influential in the area of Christian worship (writing songs; leading worship; teaching classes to worship leaders, etc.), is a sincere, humble, Christian who wants above all things to please God, but it seems clear to me that some of his songs are furthering the trend toward the Jesus-only/oneness viewpoint of God. So too for Matt Redman (I mentioned Matt above); I'll quote three of his songs as we continue.

Many Christians in our day, and I'm sure that includes quite a few songwriters, don't stop to think much about such all-important details as the existence of the three Persons of the Trinity. Such details are pretty much irrelevant to many Christians in our day, but I am convinced that they are making a serious mistake. Christianity can only stand on the truth of God; we must know and live the truth of God's Word. There is no gospel of

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salvation apart from the truth of God's revelation to us in His written Word. The name *Jesus*, for example, is only an empty shell that can be used (and often is used) by many people who deny most of what the Bible teaches. The demons use that name too. That name is empty unless it is understood and accepted in faith in context with all the Bible teaches about that glorious Person/name.

I'll also quote three of Matt Redman's songs that seem to deny the existence of the Person of God the Father (and God the Holy Spirit), whatever Matt's beliefs and intentions as he wrote these songs. (I suppose Matt is as influential as Tim Hughes, if not more so.) Even if Matt didn't intend to deny the existence of the distinct Person of God the Father, these songs will surely have the effect of enhancing the viewpoint that Jesus alone is our God. I sent Matt an e-mail asking him if he believes in God the Father as a distinct Person in the Godhead. I mentioned that it seems to me that these three songs deny the existence of God the Father, and that if I understand his song, he even calls Jesus "Father" in the song "Salvation" and speaks of His "Father's Heart" in "O Sacred King." I didn't get a response from Matt.

First I'll quote the words of "O Sacred King" (1st Version):

O Sacred King, O Holy King
How can I honour You rightly,
Honour that's fit for Your name.
O Sacred Friend, O Holy Friend,
I don't take what You did lightly
Friendship instead of disgrace.

For it's the mystery of the universe You're the God of holiness [The last words of this song confirm that Jesus is the One being addressed. What about God the Father?] Yet You welcome souls like me
And with the blessing of Your Father's heart [To call Jesus "the God of holiness" and to refer to His "Father's heart" seems to deny the existence of the Person of God the Father (and God the Spirit).]
You discipline the ones You love
There's kindness in Your majesty

Jesus, those who recognize Your power
Know just how wonderful You are
When You draw near.

Now I'll quote the words of "Salvation":

Salvation spring up from the ground
Lord rend the heavens and come down
Seek the lost and heal the lame
Jesus bring glory to your name
Let all the prodigals run home
All of creation waits and groans
Lord we've heard of your great fame
Father [It seems that Matt is calling Jesus "Father" here, which serves as a strong confirmation of the fact that the existence of the Person of God the Father is being denied in this song.]
cause all to shout your name

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Stir up our hearts oh lord, Open our spirits to know who you are Put a cry in us so deep inside that we cannot find the words we need We just weep and cry out to you

Now I'll quote the words of "Shout to the Lord":

Jesus, it's all about You [What about the Person of God the Father? The Lord Jesus Christ (and the Bible in general) directed our attention to God the Father.]

My Jesus, my Savior Lord there is none like You [What about the Person of God the Father?]

All of my days I want to praise The wonders of Your mighty love [What about the mighty love of God the Father?]

My comfort, my shelter Tower of refuge and strength Let every breath, all that I am Never cease to worship You [What about the Person of God the Father?]

Shout to the Lord, all the earth, let us sing Power and majesty, praise to the King Mountains will bow down and the seas will roar At the sound of Your name I sing for joy at the works of Your hands [What about the Person of God the Father, the One behind all creation (see above)?] Forever I'll love You, forever I'll stand Nothing compares to the promise I have in You

Now let's consider the song, "Dwelling Places" by Miriam Webster (1999). I'll quote part of the article on her in Wikipedia: "Miriam Webster is an Australian gospel singer-songwriter. ... She has...toured Australia, New Zealand and the United States, and released several albums.... She has been serving with the Hillsong Church in Sydney, Australia since 1996 and featuring on numerous Hillsong Music praise-and-worship albums since 1997."

I'll quote part of what Hillsong Church says under "What We Believe": "We believe in one eternal God who is the Creator of all things. He exists in three Persons: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit." This sounds good, but it seems that somehow the song "Dwelling Places" fell through the cracks. It seems that this song presents Jesus as God, with no one beside Him (but Jesus is at the right hand of God the Father), thereby seemingly denying the existence of the Person of God the Father (which is so common in so many songs in our day).

I'll quote the song and make several comments in brackets¹¹:

Lovely are Your dwelling places [I assume that these words build on Psalm 84:1, which speaks of the loveliness of the dwelling places of Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel, which centers in the Person of God the Father, but Miriam is addressing this song to the Lord Jesus Christ, which becomes clear as the song continues.]

¹¹ I took the words from www.higherpraise.com/lyrics1/7_Dwelling_Places.htm

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Thirsty I come after You. Jesus, my joy, my reward, Your love's restoring my soul. Now I'm Yours, and You are mine. And from my heart a song will rise.

Chorus: I love You, I love You, I love You. I love You, I love You, I love You. I love You, I love You, I love You. And my heart will follow wholly after You.

Jesus, there is none beside You Righteous Ruler of the earth, Nations will come and bow down. Name over all names [Based on Phil. 2: 9, 10 we can say that Jesus' name is above all names in heaven, on the earth, and under the earth, but we *must* understand that God the Father is the One who bestowed on Jesus the name which is above all names (see Phil. 2:9-11) and that God the Father did not bestow (and I don't believe He could have bestowed) on Jesus a name above His (the Father's) name. God the Son is subordinate to God the Father in His role.¹²], I sing You praises, And all that I can say to you is

I sent an e-mail to Miriam (through Hillsong Church) asking her (or anybody else at Hillsong who could answer the question for her) what she meant by saying that there is no one beside Jesus. I'll quote part of my e-mail here. "I was happy to see that Hillsong believes that God exists in three Persons, and it seems clear that you don't believe Jesus is the name of the three Persons ... The song is clearly addressed to the Lord Jesus Christ, but what does it mean when you say, "Jesus, there is none beside You"? Doesn't that deny the existence of God the Father? If not, why not? (I suppose you could say that there is none beside Him on the earth, but that isn't saying very much.) Thanks for your help! God's will be done in your life and at Hillsong."

My e-mail was passed on "to one of the senior lecturers at ... Hillsong International Leadership College, Amanda Ferguson." I'll quote her e-mail and then make a few comments in response. I will also make one brief comment in a bracket in her e-mail. I very much appreciate the fact that Hillsong and Amanda responded to my question. I am impressed with their Christian integrity. It should be understood (I suppose) that Amanda was answering an e-mail question, not giving the definitive last word that Hillsong has to say regarding my question.

"Your question has been passed on to me to answer and I will endeavour to do so. I am a lecturer at Hillsong International Leadership College and am also one of the people responsible for checking the lyrics of the songs that are written. [I'm impressed with the fact that they have people responsible to check the lyrics of their songs.] If you are interested in learning more about our views on Songwriting I recommend my book 'Songs of Heaven' that I wrote a couple of years ago and that contains the thoughts of a number of our songwriters.

In response to your question on Dwelling Places and especially the line 'Jesus there is none beside You'. I think it is important to remember that a worship song is not trying to

¹² See, for example, 1 Cor. 15:27, 28. See footnote #5 for more information of the subordinate role of God the Son to God the Father.

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communicate the whole picture of theological truth. That is not its purpose. The important thing is that the part of truth that it does include is accurate [my emphasis].

Looking at Miriam's lyrics it is clear that she has chosen to focus on Jesus, the 2nd person of the Trinity, throughout and as such it is appropriate for that line to do the same. I think it is clear that 'Jesus' is understood to include the whole of the Godhead [my emphasis] and that there is no implication that the God the Father and God the Holy Spirit are in any way denigrated.

As you will be aware it is possible to read verses in the Bible that focus on the divinity of God the Father without mentioning the Son or Holy Spirit and yet we do not think that the deity of either is being undermined. The number of worship songs either contemporary or traditional that mention Father, Son and Holy Spirit in the one song is relatively few and that is fine because their purpose is not doctrinal education but as a vessel for worship.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

Amanda Ferguson”

I'll quote the key part of the e-mail I sent to Amanda in response to what she said. "... I have one primary problem with your response. It may be accepted by many in our day (I really don't know if it is accepted by many who say they believe in the three distinct Persons of the Trinity; it may be; but it certainly is accepted by millions of oneness Christians who deny the existence of the three distinct Persons of the Trinity), but I don't believe it is in line with the Bible (or historic Christianity) to say that "Jesus is understood to include the whole of the Godhead...." The name *Jesus* in the Bible is strictly reserved for the God-man (the One born of the virgin Mary). And since the name *Jesus* does not include God the Father (or the Holy Spirit) the words of the song we are discussing seem to perpetuate the Jesus-only worship that is so widespread in our day (whatever the intention of Miriam).

Please believe that I am not trying to stir up trouble or major on minors. I sincerely want to serve God as a teacher in the Body of Christ, and I want to be a blessing to Hillsong Church and every true Christian. I believe we have a very serious problem in our day with tending to deny the existence of the Person of God the Father, the One who sent His Son to save us. I'm not suggesting you have that problem at Hillsong. I don't know hardly anything about Hillsong, but I believe the words of this song help perpetuate a seriously erroneous trend evident in many worship songs in our day. I am not suggesting it is wrong to have worship songs directed to the Person of Jesus Christ, not at all, or that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit have to be mentioned in every song. But I don't believe we should say things like, 'Jesus there is none beside You,' and especially not in a day when Jesus-only worship is so widespread.

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God bless you and your work! May God's will be fully accomplished at Hillsong! In Jesus' name!"

I'll quote the two primary sentences from Amanda's brief response. "Hillsong Church does not and never has subscribed to Oneness theology and we are fully Trinitarian in our doctrine. I am convinced that this is true of Miriam's theology too but, if you feel that this song is unclear then you need to act according to your conscience and not use it in worship." Miriam may well solidly believe in the three Persons of the Godhead, but I still have to say that the words "Jesus, there is none beside You" lend themselves to perpetuate the erroneous idea of Jesus-only worship, whatever Miriam believes or wanted to communicate with the words of this song.

Now we will consider two songs from worship DVDs produced by Christ for the Nations. I'll reproduce an e-mail (two pages long) that I sent to Dennis Lindsay (November 5, 2007), who is the President and CEO of Christ for the Nations. The e-mail documents the problem I have with these two songs. It has only been two weeks (now it has been more than three years), but I have not received a response to this e-mail.

"Dear Dennis Lindsay,

I'm directing these questions to you Dennis (or to a person you might designate). I hope you will respond to this e-mail. I'm not attacking anyone. I truly want to be a blessing to you, to Christ for the Nations, and to the body of Christ throughout the earth. I want to promote unity in the one church, but unity in the truth.

I have been a Bible teacher in the greater St. Louis area for about forty years. I received an MA degree in Biblical Studies from Covenant Theological Seminary in St. Louis in 1972. I was at a Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship meeting in St Louis in the 60s that your father attended, and I read a book that he wrote on the end times. I don't know much about Christ for the Nations, but I'm confident that much good fruit comes from that ministry, very much including your emphasis on missions and worship.

I'm not an expert on Christian worship songs, but I have been noticing for a long time that a high percentage of worship songs being written in our day worship only Jesus. I'm sure it is appropriate to have songs that worship only Jesus, but He taught us to worship the Father first and foremost, even as He taught us to (typically) pray to the Father in His name. We Christians desperately need the balanced truth of what the Bible teaches. And we need to worship the God of truth in the Spirit and *in the truth*. The more we do things right, according to His Word, the more He will be glorified, and the more He can use us and bless us.

The primary thing that is bothering me as I do this study are the songs that seem to deny God the Father as a Person distinct from God the Son. That's easy to do if the songwriter thinks that there is only one Person, whether we call Him Father, Son, Holy Spirit, or Jesus.

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I realize that many Christians (millions of Christians) think that the Father and the Son (and the Holy Spirit) are the same Person (oneness), but that certainly goes against what the early Christian church believed, and much more important, it goes against what the Bible teaches. I'm speaking of the balanced truth of what the Bible teaches in its entirety. I realize that there are a few verses that fit the idea of oneness.¹³

Does Christ for the Nations believe in the three (distinct) Persons of the Trinity. I have always assumed that Christ for the Nations does believe in the Trinity, but now I'm not so sure. For one thing, under the 'Core Values' of the 'Mission Statement' on your web site it doesn't mention God the Father or the Trinity, but it does mention 'exalting the Person and work of Jesus Christ.'

I recently listened to the DVD 'Overtaken' (a worship CD published by Christ for the Nations in 2005). I want to make a comment regarding the song 'Love Song' on that DVD and ask you to respond. (Words and music by Rick Pino; © 2005 Rick Pino; the insert with the DVD informs us that Rick was a student at Christ for the Nations at that time.) I'll quote the words of verse 1. 'Who compares to your beauty? Who else holds all the splendor? Who else knows all the mysteries? Jesus the King of heaven.'

I have to assume that the writer of these words doesn't believe in the existence of God the Father as a Person distinct from the Lord Jesus Christ. When I listened to 'Song Stories' in the 'Bonus Material' on the DVD, I found further strong evidence that the writer equates the Person of God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ in that He said, 'Love Song came out of my love for the Father. I love Him so I wrote a love song to Him.' But the song is clearly addressed to 'Jesus the King of heaven.' I'm not saying this to attack Rick Pino; not at all. Maybe I am misunderstanding him somehow (but I doubt it), but it wouldn't be all that surprising if he equates the Person of God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ in that millions of Christians hold that viewpoint. Perhaps that is a common viewpoint, or the dominant viewpoint, around Christ for the Nations. Is it?

And lastly, I'll comment on one of the songs on the popular Christ for the Nations 2004 worship DVD titled 'Glorious' and ask for your response. I'll quote the words of the song titled 'Revelation Song.' (Words and Music by Jennie Lee Riddle © 2004; the insert with the DVD mentions that Jennie Lee Riddle is 'Admin., CFN [Christ for the Nations] Music/ASCAP.')

'Worthy is the Lamb – Who was slain – Holy, holy is He – Sing a new

¹³ Many Christians have made the serious mistake of clinging to a few verses that seem to prove their viewpoint and closing their minds (from that time on) to what the rest of the Bible has to say on the topic. I'll use an experience I had with a local leader of the Jehovah's Witnesses for an illustration (even though the Jehovah's Witness can't be considered part of the Christian church in that, for one thing, they deny the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ; they don't consider themselves to be part of the Christian church anyway in that they believe they are the only ones who are saved.) This leader was totally convinced that if he listed ten verses that speak of God and Jesus, he was proving that Jesus is not God. He eventually got up and left my house (with some indignation) when I didn't agree with his point and tried to show him what the rest of the Bible has to say on the topic. His mind was closed; he wasn't interested in anything I had to say. It's true that God the Father is the One typically called God in the Bible, but if we open our minds and consider everything the Bible has to say on the topic, we learn of God the Son (the One who became the God-man through the virgin birth) who is deity with (and always existed with) God the Father (and the Holy Spirit).

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song – to Him who sits on Heaven’s mercy seat – Holy, holy, holy – Is the Lord God Almighty – Who was and is – And is to come – With all creation I sing – Praise to the King of kings – You are my everything – And I will adore You – Clothed in rainbows of living color – Flashes of lightning – Rolls of thunder – Blessing and honor – Strength and glory – And power be to You – The only wise King – Filled with wonder – Awestruck wonder – at the mention of Your Name – Jesus, Your Name is power – Breath and living water – Such a marvelous mystery.’

This song is clearly addressed to Jesus, and the words of this song seem to strongly suggest that when Jesus is being worshipped the one Person of God is being worshipped. One primary problem (from my point of view) is that the words of Revelation chapter 4 that are used in this song refer to God the Father, not the Lord Jesus Christ. The words ‘Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come’ are taken from Rev. 4:8. It is clear though that these words refer to God the Father. He is the One sitting on the throne in Rev. 4:2-5:7. The fact that the Lamb, the Lord Jesus Christ, comes and takes the scroll from the right hand of God the Father, the One seated on the throne, in Rev. 5:7 demonstrates that God the Father (not the Lord Jesus Christ) is the One seated on the throne here.

I should add that in Rev. 1:4 the words ‘from Him who is and who was and who is to come’ also refer to God the Father. Notice that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit (the Trinity) are mentioned in Rev. 1:4, 5¹⁴; it is common to mention the three Persons of the Godhead together in the New Testament. I should also mention that the words of the song about being ‘clothed in rainbows of living color’ and the words ‘Flashes of lightning Rolls of thunder’ undoubtedly build on the words of Rev. 4:3 (“and there *was* a rainbow around the throne”) and the words of Rev. 4:5 (“And from the throne proceed flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder”); both verses speak of the throne on which God the Father is seated in Rev 4:2-5:7.

Thanks for considering this e-mail. May God’s good and holy will be fully accomplished in you and at Christ for the Nations! In Jesus’ Name!”

For one last example, let’s discuss the words of the popular chorus of the worship song, “In the presence of Jehovah.” Many worship songs clearly deny the Trinity with words like *Jesus, You alone are God*, but the oneness view of God is not so obvious in the words of this chorus.

In the presence of Jehovah
God-Almighty, Prince of Peace
Troubles ended (vanish), hearts are mended
In the Presence of The King

¹⁴ There is widespread agreement that the “seven Spirits who are before the throne” of Rev. 1:5 refer to the Holy Spirit, with *seven* being the number of divine perfection that is often used in the book of Revelation. Also see Rev. 4:5; 5:6.

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I assumed that this song was written by someone from a oneness perspective, or at least someone strongly influenced by the oneness perspective. I learned on the internet that this song was written by Geron and Becky Davis, published in 1985. After a little research I confirmed that Geron Davis comes from a oneness background. First I'll quote a sentence from the article "The Other Pentecostals,"¹⁵ "More recently, UPC [United Pentecostal Church] songwriter Geron Davis wrote "Holy Ground" and "In the Presence of Jehovah" [my emphasis]—worship songs that have broad popular appeal." And I'll include a few brief excerpts from the article on Lanny Wolfe in the Wikipedia internet encyclopedia:

"Though he [Lanny Wolfe] heavily influenced the greater world of gospel music during the 1970s and 1980s, it was through his work within his own particular religious denomination, the United Pentecostal Church, International, that this work was accomplished. While people throughout Christianity may be able to hum a Wolfe tune, most of his day-to-day career was spent as the Dean of the School of Music at a Pentecostal Bible school, Jackson College of Ministries." "He headed the music departments at the following Bible schools affiliated with the United Pentecostal Church, International: Christian Life College in Stockton, California from 1965 to 1966; Gateway College of Evangelism in St. Louis, Missouri from 1968 to 1974; and at Jackson College of Ministries in Jackson, Mississippi from 1974 to 1993."

"His influence remains in Pentecostal/Charismatic worship music since many worship leaders are well adept at finding or creating the same sound. Many Christian recording artists studied under his leadership within the UPCI, such as Geron Davis [my emphasis] ("Standing on Holy Ground"), Mark Carouthers ("Mercy Seat"), among others."

Some of the Lanny Wolfe's songs that are mentioned in this article are: "Surely the Presence (of the Lord is in this Place)"; "More than Wonderful"; "Someone is Praying for You"; "Only Jesus Can Satisfy Your Soul"; and "Greater is He that is in Me."

I also learned from the internet that the Davis' home church is Christ Church, Nashville. (They moved to Nashville in the mid 90s.) I don't know enough about that church to fully categorize them (many churches of our day incorporate ideas from several branches of Christianity), but their statement on the internet regarding what they believe mentions that they believe "in one God, revealed as Father, Son and Holy Spirit." That statement fits oneness doctrine perfectly; notice, for one thing, there is no mention of three Persons. They also say that they believe that water baptism "is scripturally administered 'in the name of Jesus.'" But, thankfully, they say that they "freely embrace those of contrary opinion." (United Pentecostals, and they aren't the only ones, teach that you can't be saved if you aren't baptized in Jesus' name.)¹⁶

¹⁵ The article "The Other Pentecostals," in the June 1997 issue of *Charisma*, was written by J. Lee Grady. After ordering this article from *Charisma*, I found the article on the internet: www.rickross.com/reference/upci/upci2.html.

¹⁶ The article mentioned in footnote 15 gives some interesting information that will help us understand Christ Church, Nashville. "Prominent leaders have broken ranks with the UPC [United Pentecostal Church] over the years, including...L. H. Hardwick of Christ Church in Nashville, Tenn. [L. H. Hardwick was a founding pastor of that church and has served the church as pastor for fifty years.] Last year, UPC pastor C. G. 'Jabo' Green of Houston was elected to lead a network of dissident UPC leaders who wanted more grace and less sectarianism. The organization represents 430 U.S. ministers. Green, 57, says even though most pastors in his network affirm the Oneness position on the Godhead, they don't require new members to be rebaptized in Jesus' name.... And they don't teach that other Christians aren't saved. 'I have no stones to

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From a oneness point of view, the one Person they are worshipping in this chorus is first called “Jehovah,” then “God-Almighty,” then “Prince of Peace” and then “The King.” The one Person of the Lord Jesus Christ is being worshiped, whether He is called “Jehovah,” “God-Almighty,” “Prince of Peace,” or “the King” (or Father, Son, or Holy Spirit, Abba Father, Savior, Alpha and Omega, etc.) It is not surprising that oneness Christians write from the point of view that they are worshipping one Person. This is what they believe!

We know who the “Prince of Peace” is in that Isaiah 9:6 informs us that this is a name/title of the promised Messiah, the One to be given to us (Isa. 9:6) by Yahweh (God the Father) to save His people, etc.¹⁷ (We know for sure, by the way, that “Jehovah” is not the correct spelling of the name. For one thing, Hebrew doesn’t have a “J.” Most scholars believe *Yahweh* is the correct spelling. We know for sure, based on the Hebrew Old Testament, that the four letters YHWH are correct.) In the Old Testament the name *Yahweh* is used more than 6,800 times. (We don’t find this very-often-used-name in many Bible translations, including the NASB, NIV, KJV, and NKJV, but we can know when this name was used in the Hebrew text in these translations, because they substitute the word LORD, with four capital letters, in place of the name *Yahweh*. The name is not used in the New Testament.) **FIRST AND FOREMOST THIS GLORIOUS NAME IS USED OF GOD THE FATHER THROUGHOUT THE OLD TESTAMENT.** (For many examples, see my article, “The Name *Yahweh* and God the Father and God the Son: The Name *Yahweh* and A Listing of Some of the Large Number of Passages in the Old Testament Where We Can See God the Son Along with God the Father. It seems clear that we cannot rightly exclude the Person of God the Father when we speak of being “in the presence of Jehovah” in a worship song.

I have observed that when some (or many) Christians see the word “LORD” (or “Lord”) in the Old Testament, they wrongly assume it refers to the Lord Jesus Christ, since (for one reason) the title *Lord* is often used of Him in the New Testament. This mistaken idea helps perpetuate Jesus-only worship (where God the Father isn’t being mentioned or, in some cases, His existence is effectively being denied), and all the more so in that a large number of Christian worship songs have been taken from, or based on, verses from the Old Testament, especially from the Psalms. A large number of psalms/songs/verses that were addressed to Yahweh in the Old Testament are used in songs addressed to the Lord Jesus Christ in our day.

If I am misunderstanding any of the songs I have included in this article, I want to be corrected. We need the truth! We need the balanced truth of what the Bible teaches! May God’s will be fully accomplished through this paper, and may His people (all of His people) be edified!

throw at the UPC,’ Green says, ‘But I can’t go along with the narrow-minded idea that everyone has to believe exactly like us to be saved.’ ”

¹⁷ See the discussion of Isaiah 9:1-7 in my paper titled, *Verse-by-Verse Studies of Selected Eschatological Prophecies from the Book of Isaiah*. (The paper was published in August 2000.) An abbreviated version of the paper is posted on my internet site. (Google to Karl Kemp Teaching.)

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