

Church of God, The Eternal

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The Fundamentals of Belief #4 Fundamental 2; Jesus Christ—God, Man, Creator

**Edited Sermon Transcript
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This afternoon, brethren, we are going to continue on the series of the Fundamentals of Belief of Church of God, The Eternal. We have completed fundamental number one, concerning God. In this sermon this afternoon, we are hopefully going to complete fundamental number two, in its entirety. The only reason I have a chance of accomplishing that is because fundamental number two is about Jesus Christ—who Jesus Christ is. Actually, in being able to complete fundamental number one in three sermons, I already had to go ahead and speak a lot about Jesus Christ. There is no way to talk about God, the family of God, the divinity of that which we call God, without including God of the second part and that being that we know who became Jesus Christ. Therefore, I have already laid a lot of the groundwork to talk about His role in that family. So some of this in the second fundamental supports and augments that and we will try to add some of those pieces.

Here is fundamental number two. It reads as follows:

We believe Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah, the Christ, the divine Son of the living God, begotten of the Holy Spirit, born in the human flesh of the virgin Mary, and that He is true God and true man, that God created all things by Jesus Christ, and without Him was not anything made that was made.

That is our fundamental of belief. As I have said at the beginning of the series, these first twenty of our fundamentals are word for word exactly, the original fundamentals that Mr. Armstrong wrote for the Radio Church of God.

So let's take the first part of this fundamental number two; "We believe Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah, the Christ." Well, for the substantiation of that, let's first ask the question, what is the Messiah? What does that mean? What does it mean to us? The word "Messiah" is actually a transliteration of the Hebrew word meaning, "the anointed one." It means, "the anointed one." It is the very same word that was translated in to Greek as *Christos*. What we find is that the Greek word which became that which we understand as "Christ," is the very same word meaning "the anointed one," as the word "Messiah" that is found in the Old Testament. So

when we speak of the Messiah we are simultaneously speaking of the Christ. It does mean "the anointed one," that highly-venerated Being that was given a responsibility, a purpose and a mission in the saving of man.

John 1:40–41: Let's begin there. Here we find some of these terms used and defined.

One of the two which heard John speak, [meaning John the Baptist] and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, [Here is what Andrew is telling his brother Peter] We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.

So here is confirmation in the New Testament, in the epistle of John, that the term "Messiah" is equivalent, in every respect, to the word Christ. John 4:24–26:

God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. The woman saith unto him, I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ: [Even this woman recognized that in using the term "Messiah," she was simultaneously speaking of the concept, Christ, the anointed one.] when he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he.

What we find, and the substantiation of our fundamental of belief, is that Christ Himself, Jesus, called Himself, "the Messiah, the Christ." He claimed to be that very Being fulfilling those prophecies. Was He telling the truth or was He just another faker that came on the scene, taking on the title and claiming to be the Messiah? Was He, in reality, the very legitimate fulfillment of those prophecies?

Notice it in John 5:38–46, another assertion from Christ, of who He was as He contended with those that rejected Him and who accused Him. Yet, He claimed, absolutely, to be that Messiah.

And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not. Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. [What a paradox].

And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life. I receive not honour from men. But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you. I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not; if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive. How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only? Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses in whom ye trust.

These who thought they were so righteous; they were God's people, they had the birthright. To them were given the promises and they felt very competent in their righteousness before God and yet, they stood and defied the very Son of God who came as a fulfillment. They accused him.

Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses in whom ye trust. For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me.

Jesus claimed, absolutely, to be the Christ and they sought to kill him for it. The very names of Jesus actually speak to His identity as the Messiah. Let's notice it. First, we find that the very name Jesus, which the angel instructed His mother to name Him, does mean, "Savior." He is also given another name, Immanuel, which means, "God with us."

Let's notice it in Matthew 1:21–23: "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS."

So Mary and Joseph didn't get to select just any name for their son. They were given precisely the name they were to call him by. "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." Why the name Jesus—because it means Savior? That's precisely what His name means.

Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

He was called Jesus, but He also fulfilled the very Old Testament prophecy (and we are going to read this a little bit later) that the Messiah would be called Immanuel—Immanuel, interpreted "God with us." Whoever fulfilled the role of that Messiah was God. It was the literal change of a Being who was in the divinity of the family of God, who came as flesh and walked with men as a flesh and blood human being and yet, at the very same time He was God. His name Immanuel means "God with us."

If Jesus was that prophesied Messiah, there is one thing that is absolutely for sure: He must have fulfilled at least twenty-eight specific Old Testament prophecies on the very final day of His life. Did you realize that? Twenty-eight Old Testament prophecies fulfilled in one day. On the very final day of His life and obviously, we do not have time to go through all of those, but we are going to look at just three of them. There are three that are very easy to demonstrate. Was Jesus the Messiah? That is the question that is part of our fundamental of belief. John 19:23–24:

Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also his coat: now the coat was without seam,

woven from the top throughout. They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith . . .

This refers directly to one of those messianic prophecies from the Old Testament.

. . . that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did.

Let's look at two more and then we will go back and look at those Old Testament prophecies. John 19:32–36. What else did it say Jesus did that was a fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies proving that He was the Messiah?

Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs: But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe. For these things were done [Why?] that the scripture should be fulfilled . . .

What was that quote then, from that Messianic prophecy?

. . . A bone of him shall not be broken. And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced.

So within this section in John 19 we find two Old Testament prophecies that Jesus fulfilled. First, that He would die by being pierced in the side and secondly, that His bones would not be broken. Now, many, many people die and don't have their legs broken. That would not have been miraculous at all except for the fact that dying under Roman crucifixion, it was absolutely guaranteed that you were going to have your legs broken. So the very fact that He endured that very form of death at the hands of Roman law and yet did not have His legs broken was the very proof that there was a miraculous fulfillment of one of those prophecies.

Let's turn and look, Numbers 9:12. This is a reference in teaching the Israelites how to observe the Passover because of the fact that the Passover was going to represent and look forward to the very fulfillment of the Messiah, whoever that Being was going to be. This is where we find that which was quoted in John.

They shall leave none of it unto the morning, nor break any bone of it: according to all the ordinances of the passover they shall keep it.

The very prophecy that whoever filled the Messiah's role, when He came, would be represented by that Passover lamb, made the Israelites actually part of that prophecy in how they were instructed to carry out their eating of the Passover. Making sure that not a bone of any of those lambs that were used to represent that Messiah was broken in the course of their service.

Psalms 22:13–18. One of the very famous prophecies of the Messiah:

They gaped upon me with their mouths, as a ravening and a roaring lion. I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels. My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death. For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet. I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me. They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.

These are the prophecies, hundreds of years before the appearance of Jesus Christ, which foretold exactly the specific details of things that the Messiah would fulfill, things that would occur. Did Jesus Christ fulfill those? Did He prove by the very miraculous fulfillment of these things by the hand of God that He was the Messiah? You better believe it.

"We believe Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah, the Christ." Many sermons could be preached on that subject alone, but my intent is to try and keep this as an overview because I want to be able to get through the summary of all of the fundamentals of belief, all twenty-six of them within a reasonable number of sermons. This thing could go on for two or three years if I continue to take two or three sermons on each topic. So I want to be able to hit the high points enough that these sermons will be available as an overview for those who really want to understand the foundation of what we believe.

"We believe Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah, the Christ, the divine Son of the living God." Matthew 3:16–17:

And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

This voice representing the Father specifically said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Was Jesus the Son of God? If we believe what is recorded in the gospels, we certainly believe it is true. Matthew 17:5—another example:

While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: hear ye him.

God the Father provided a miraculous manifestation to confirm the very authority of the Being that claimed to be the Messiah. He said, He is my son.

John 1:1–2: These are the scriptures that we went through, fairly exhaustively, in the first three sermons. Let's look at some of them again. "In the beginning was the Word." We learned that is the *Logos*, which means "the Spokesman"—the Being within the divinity, within the family of God, within the Kingdom of God, which speaks for God. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God," Yes, He was God of the second part and He was with the Being originally known as God of the first part. ". . . and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God." Verse 4: "In him was life;" Was He divine? Was this Being who became Jesus Christ, who fulfilled the commission of the Messiah, who was the Son of God, was He divine? "In him was life; and the life was the light of men." Dropping down to verse 14:

And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

He had glory all right. This was a Being who was divine, who had shared that divinity with the one who became the Father, from the beginning. He must have been divine. You see, Jesus Christ had to have been the divine Son or else we have no hope. Did you realize that? He must have been divine because a mere human being could not have fulfilled the mission of the Messiah. He had to be God, He had to be divine, else His sacrifice would not have been sufficient to atone for the sins of all mankind.

This is where I have to be careful not to get ahead of myself because we are going to talk a lot in later fundamentals down the line, about the purpose and the role of Jesus Christ as the Messiah and how that relates to us. This fundamental number two relates specifically to establishing the authority of Jesus Christ: who He was, how He fit within the divinity, His relationship with the Father, and that He was the literal fulfillment of that Messiah that was promised. We can't avoid speaking about some of the fulfillment of the whys and wherefores in order to establish that. However, we are going to have very detailed sermons in later fundamentals where we will talk, very specifically, about the commission of Christ, what Christ's sacrifice actually means to us and how it fits into the overall plan of salvation. We will just have to be patient on that.

He had to be God, or else His sacrifice would not have been sufficient to atone for the sins of all mankind and we will talk about that in detail. Mr. Armstrong always explained it this way. When you recognize that if a man, a single human being, had been theoretically capable of living

a perfect life in the flesh; who had committed no sin, was guilty of nothing, yet, was willing to pay the death penalty—by dying, he could have only transferred the penalty to save one other human being. As a human being, our worth is only that of one other human being. So, if a human being, any other human being, could have lived perfectly in the flesh, died and paid a death penalty, it could have only been the penalty paid for one other human being that could be saved. What about all the other billions of people upon this Earth?

Why does Jesus Christ have to be divine? Why was it required? Why is it absolutely a necessity, in our beliefs, that He is God and that He was divine? Only the divine God, the Creator, has a life that is worth more than the totality of all human beings that have ever lived or will ever live on this Earth. It is only if He was divine that we all have an opportunity to come under His shed blood; to use His sacrifice, as He lived perfectly in the flesh and committed no sin and yet, was willing to die and pay the penalty. Only if He is divine is that payment worth the totality of all of our death penalties that we have incurred upon ourselves. If He was just human, if He was just flesh, His sacrifice would not have been sufficient for all of us. That is one of the reasons; that is one of the proofs that He was a divine Being.

The Arian controversy in the third century A.D. debated this very issue of the divinity of Jesus. It began, at least the name was attributed because Arias was the first one recorded, who spoke of this idea that Jesus Christ couldn't really have been divine. He couldn't have been on the same plain or form as the Father because you see, if the Father was the one who beget the Son, the Son had to be in a different classification. He could not have been in the same form, with the same eternity and divinity as God if He had been begotten by this Being called "The Father." Therefore, He couldn't be on the same plain or in the same category as the Father. He couldn't have been divine, He had to have been somewhere in a middle ground.

This is what became known as the Arian Controversy that ran for decades and decades and hundreds of years. You had a division then that occurred within the third century A.D. over this very issue. Many, because they had already apostatized hundreds of years before, lost the knowledge of the truth of what Christ really was to begin with. It would have been simply handled and resolved had they understood that they have no savior if He was not divine, as God is divine. What was interesting, as I did just a little bit of research and looked at some of the commentaries and the encyclopedias on this issue of the Arian Controversy, was what quickly jumped out at me.

I read the account of Constantine. It was in the counsel of Nicea, in 325 A.D. where Constantine attempted to reconcile and put this issue to bed. A division was occurring between the different bishops and elders within the church and it basically seemed to split along the lines of the western empire, and the eastern empire, which were those who backed Arias and his concept in the eastern part of the kingdom of the Roman empire. So Constantine pulled together these hundreds of representatives—all of the church, the elites within the church, the bishops and

the elders—and he pulled them all into this meeting. What was the attempt? What was his goal? It was to create compromise in order to get everyone back on the same page. What was it that Constantine said to them? It was, "Don't let these issues, these insignificant, unimportant issues, like the divinity of Christ, separate us. Let's everyone put those debated issues aside. Let's come together and focus on those things we have in common. Let's not make a big deal out of those things that divide us. Let's not hold on to those things that we disagree on. Let's be willing to compromise on those things and come together for the good of the common unity of the church and for the nation." Where have I heard that before? It could have knocked me out of my chair when I read it? The very same spirit, brethren, which we have faced, even within the last year to year and a half.

Where is truth? Where is divine revelation? Where is belief in the immutable purpose of God and of a doctrine that is pure and uncorrupted? No, everything is subject to political maneuvering. Let's get together as human beings and compromise. Let's come to the table and find common ground. Where is God in such compromise? That's not the way that God works. Truth is truth and it will always be truth.

So these men, who were all a part of the council of Nicea in 325 A.D. were all deceived. For all of their efforts to come to the table, they didn't resolve anything either. They put some band-aids on it, but they all went away believing what they believed before. Then, if you read the history, you will find that a number of them that were willing, for political advantage at certain times, were excommunicated from the church because of taking the ideas of Arias, eventually came back in to favor. Based upon what king came in and what king went out and what persuasion he was, then one side or the other would come into favor. This, they called a church that was supposed to represent the unity of the mind of God and Jesus Christ. Hardly.

Well, it doesn't represent the unity of the church today either, brethren. Such exercises will never be godly. Colossians 2:8–9. Here is what it reminded me of: "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of . . ." Of God? Are we talking about God, here? Do we care what God thinks? No. ". . . after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwelleth . . ." This is Christ we are talking about and what do we find? "For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the [divinity] bodily."

What is our substantiation for believing that Christ was the divine Son of the living God? Colossians 2:9: "For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the [divinity] bodily." We better believe it does. He was God in the flesh.

What else is a part of fundamental number two? "We believe Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah, the Christ, the divine Son of the living God, begotten of the Holy Spirit, born in the human flesh of the virgin Mary"— *begotten* of the Holy Spirit, born in the human flesh of the virgin Mary. Let's turn to that original Isaiah prophecy. Isaiah 7:14 that we heard referenced

earlier. "Therefore the Lord himself . . ." The Lord, the *YHVH*. ". . . the [Eternal] himself shall give you a sign." Not the Eternal's agent, not even someone that would come in His name. It says, "the [*YHVH*] himself shall give you a sign." And what was that sign? "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel." That was going to be the sign of the Messiah. So how was that fulfilled? Matthew 1:18:

Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child [And what was the source of that begettal?] of the Holy [Spirit].

That's why we believe that He was begotten of the Holy Spirit and born in the human flesh of the virgin Mary. She was found with child of the Holy Spirit. It wasn't a conception between flesh and flesh; it was divine.

Galatians 4:4: "But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, . . ."—meaning He was subject to every physical law, every spiritual law, that we are subject to. ". . . made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." There again, we look forward to the purpose of that very birth and what it was He was coming to accomplish. "God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law." Hebrews 2:9:

But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

And then dropping down to verse 14: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood . . ." Are we not all partakers of flesh and blood? Do we not have mortal bodies subject to all of the physical laws on this Earth? Do we not feel pain when we fall and are injured? Do we not suffer and are we not subject to death? "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same . . ." What about those that claim Christ wasn't really flesh. You see, you have both extremes. Either those that try to claim that Christ was not God or you have those that claim that He was divine and that He really never was in the flesh like we are. That too, brethren, would have prevented him from ever fulfilling the role of the Messiah.

If He was not flesh as we are flesh then we do not have a Savior. The fascinating thing about the entire plan of God, Jesus Christ, and how His role fits into it, is that He absolutely had to be both God and at the same time be flesh and blood. Have you ever thought about that? As much as He had to be God in order for His life to have been worth the sum total of all human lives for that sacrifice, He also had to be flesh and blood. He could not have qualified as our Savior if He did not partake of the fullness of the very test and the trials that we encounter. The

only way to fulfill that is to live in the very body, under the same law, the laws of flesh that we are subject to. If He was not wholly flesh and blood as we are, then we have no Savior.

I can understand how people can have difficulties either one way or another because how do we reconcile in our human minds; a Being that is simultaneously divine and is God and at the very same time He is flesh and blood? Isn't it hard to reconcile? That's what has given many, many people difficulties over many centuries. Hebrews 2:9:

But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. [Verse 14]:

Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same [not something that was sort of like it, not a little bit flesh or a semblance of flesh. No, He took part of the same] . . . that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;

Had He not been fully subject to the laws as we are, including the law of human nature within His very Being, subject to all of the temptations that we are subject to; had He not overcome a natural nature that was exactly like ours, He could not have been our Savior. Romans 1:3–4:

Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:

He was made flesh of the seed of David through that lineage. So yes, we have seen that we was begotten of the Holy Spirit. He was born in the human flesh of the virgin Mary.

What is the next part? ". . . and that he is true God." So much of this we have covered already in the past sermons and yet, let's look at just a few more scriptures. I tried to save enough, and not use them all in one section or the other, but when we are talking about this whole concept of the oneness of God, the family of God, the kingdom of God, that which is representative in the divinity of that family, we can't help but talk about Jesus Christ. So here are some additional scriptures concerning the proof that He is true God. Titus 2:10–13:

Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

Now how can anyone who wants to claim that the New Testament doesn't show that Christ was God, called God, that God was only used to define the Father and not the Son, that Christ

was called the Lord, but He wasn't called God; how can they account for the fact that here He is called God—"God our Savior"? Who was the Savior? Was it the Father who was the Savior? No. He sent His Son to be the sacrifice. And it calls Him God here.

. . . the doctrine of God our Savior in all things. For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in the present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of [Who?] the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ.

Who is it that is going to come as a conquering King of Kings and Lord of Lords? As we are going to see in a moment, it was Jesus Christ. That is who we are going to see. That is who is going to appear. ". . . the glorious appearing of the great God." Does that mean the Father is going to appear? No, the Father is not coming at that time; when this world is going to move into the next millennium, that seven thousandth, that seventh day represented by the last thousand years that will be the millennial rule under Jesus Christ. No, it is Jesus Christ who is coming to complete the mission and it will not all be turned back over to the Father until after the completion of that seven-thousandth year time.

Verse 13: "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God . . ." The great God is going to appear, but it is not going to be the Father. It is because Jesus Christ is God as much as the Father is God. ". . . the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;"

Genesis 2:16: Is He true God? Our fundamental of belief says, "We believe Jesus Christ is true God." Not partial God, not a demigod, not semi-god, not of the God form but yet not the fulfillment of the total divinity of God. No, we believe He is true God. "And the Lord God . . ."—*YHVH Elohiym*. Who are we speaking about? It is not the Father, it is not that Being that was God of the first part. It is the Being who became the Son, God of the second part who was called the *YHVH*—Lord *YHVH*, God. The word again most prevalent in the Old Testament translated "God." *Elohiym*; the uniplural noun referring to a family, the kingdom of God, the family of God. It was in Genesis 2:16, *YHVH*, *Elohiym*, the Spokesman, the *Logos*, the Word. "And [*YHVH Elohiym*] commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:" That's with whom man was dealing even from the very beginning in the Garden of Eden.

Isaiah 8:13–14: "Sanctify the Lord"—sanctify *YHVH*.

Sanctify the [Eternal] of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

Whoever this Being is, it is defined right here in Isaiah 8:13, that the one who would become the stone of stumbling and a rock of offense would be the *YHVH*, the *YHVH* of the Old Testament. Who is it then, that became the fulfillment? Who was called that "stone of stumbling and that rock of offense?"

Turn with me to 1 Peter 2:6–8. The Apostle Peter under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit defines for us specifically, who it was that fulfilled that very prophecy:

Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.

Who was Peter talking about? Peter was a disciple of Jesus Christ who was taught by Jesus Christ. He was teaching them that it was Christ who, very literally, fulfilled that prophecy. How can Christ be the "stone of stumbling and the rock of offense"? How can the *YHVH*, the God who was worshipped as the God of the Old Testament be the "stone of stumbling and the rock of offense" if they are not one-in-the-same Being? Was Jesus Christ that *YHVH*? Yes, He was. Was Jesus Christ true God? Yes, He was. Isaiah 40:3:

The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of [Who?]
Prepare you the way of the [Eternal, prepare you the way of the *YHVH*,] make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

Why? Because that God was going to do something, that God was going to go someplace, He was going to accomplish something. Here, we see the fulfillment of that very prophecy.

Turn with me to Matthew 3:1. Who was it that was that voice crying in the wilderness that prepared the way for the *YHVH*?

In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

So John the Baptist quoted that very Esaias prophecy and said that he was the one crying in the wilderness, fulfilling that preparatory role and who was it that was following John, the Baptist? Remember, we already read in Isaiah 8:13 that it was the *YHVH* Himself that was the "rock of offense." We also read in Isaiah 40 that the one crying in the wilderness was preparing

the way for that same *YHVH*. Yet, here John the Baptist says in Matthew 3 that he was fulfilling that role of crying in the wilderness and preparing the way for someone. We already know from the Isaiah 40 prophecy that it was the *YHVH*, do we not? So who was it that came on the scene? Who was it that John the Baptist, literally, was preparing that way for? Mark 1:14:

Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, [Who was it?] Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

He was the fulfillment. ". . . the kingdom of God is at hand." Do we remotely understand what is contained in that very statement of Jesus Christ? He came and He said, "the kingdom of God is at hand." He was announcing His authority as the *YHVH*, who was fulfilling those Messianic prophecies. John the Baptist came and spoke, prepared the way and finally when it was time for Jesus to begin to fulfill His prophesied ministry for three and one half years before His death, He said, "the kingdom of God is at hand."

What is the kingdom of God? Didn't we already read that it is the fulfillment of the very term *Elohiym*? That uniplural noun means "the family of God, The kingdom of God." Then Christ came on the scene and said, "The kingdom of God is at hand." Why? Because He was the *Logos*, He was the spokesman for that family. He came in the flesh and He said, "The kingdom of God is right here with you, before you, because I am the spokesman that comes directly from the divinity of that family. I represent the Father and I am here to tell you that you are in the presence of God—repent ye, and believe the gospel."

Who was the shepherd of God's people? That is another one of the titles of Jesus. Hebrews 13:20–21, let's notice it:

Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, [one of his names] through the blood of the everlasting covenant, Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Jesus, that Great Shepherd of the sheep. John 10 tells you very much. We don't have time to turn to it, but you can read that entire chapter. It will show you the relationship between Christ, the Shepherd, and His sheep. 1 Peter 2:24–25:

Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were

as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.

Christ was that great Shepherd. 1 Peter 5:2–4:

Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

Yes, that Chief Shepherd is going to appear. There is going to be an accounting and that very Being who was the God who the patriarchs worshipped and served, who divested Himself of His divinity and was born in the flesh, who was divine, who was the Son of God, and yet, who was a man, flesh and blood, who lived and died and became our Savior, He is the Great Shepherd and that Shepherd is going to come back.

Isaiah 2:2–3. Another prophecy that shows the fulfillment of that very Messiah and what He would accomplish. "And it shall come to pass . . ." Now when is this? When is this going to occur? Was this the very first coming of Jesus Christ or are we talking about a different time period here? "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains . . ." Now, what are we talking about here? That "mountain" refers to a kingdom. That "mountain" is a kingdom. It is expressive language that refers in the Bible to mountains representing nations, representing kingdoms.

. . . in the last days, that the mountain [or the kingdom] of His [and that's *YHVH*, the kingdom of the *YHVH*, His] house shall be established in the top of the mountains [or of all nations]. And shall be exalted above the hills; [all governments] and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of [*YHVH*], to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the [Eternal, that *YHVH*] from Jerusalem.

That very Being is going to be here ruling in power and authority. Who is that Being then, who fulfilled the role of the Messiah, who became the flesh representation of the family of God, the spokesman? Whoever it is, is the one that is going to return in power and glory as the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. Let's read it in Revelation 19:11–16. Let's see who that is:

And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name

written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.

Who does that tell you that this Being is who is coming back on a white horse? It is the Word, brethren. We saw that in John 1:1. "The Word was with God and the Word was God." Later in that chapter John defined Him as being the Lord and the Savior, Jesus Christ.

. . . and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

That is a Being, brethren, that absolutely, in every way, is true God.

Our fundamental of belief taken from the original Radio Church of God fundamentals also says, "He was true man." We have already seen and gone through evidence that the Christ, the one who was born as Jesus of Nazareth, who was born, begotten of the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary, was flesh and blood after that conception. It was the very moment in time when the Father-Son relationship in the divinity was established. Until that time their relationship was not that of Father and Son. That Being, who was God of the First Part, has always held the ultimate authority in that family.

There is always authority and order within every family. There is never democracy; there is never equal partnership. That is a concept that comes right out of the mind of Satan, the Devil. There is authority in every family and so it was even before the relationship of Father and Son within that divinity which was the kingdom of God, the family of God. Between those two Beings there was authority and there was order. From the very moment that conception occurred within the womb of a flesh and blood human mother, so began the relationship of a Son and a Father; a divine Father who loved His son and was willing to sacrifice Him, that He might expand His family to encompass the millions and the billions of those that He would save off the face of this Earth.

God of the second part, under the authority of that Father, who agreed in every way with that Being, submitted Himself to that very task and to that role to become that Messiah and He became true man. As much as He was true God, He also became true man. One scripture to further substantiate that is Hebrews 2:14–16:

Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood [Are we not all partakers of flesh and blood?] he also himself likewise took part of the same; that

through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham.

Abraham was flesh and blood. Abraham lived and Abraham died. Abraham went back to the dust. Abraham is yet in the grave awaiting his resurrection, the fulfillment, and the receipt of his promise. So Jesus Christ took on the very seed of Abraham and He also died. That we will get to.

The final part of this fundamental to close up this afternoon. Reading again:

We believe Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah, the Christ, the divine Son of the living God, begotten of the Holy Spirit, born in the human flesh of the virgin Mary, and that He is true God and true man, that God created all things by Jesus Christ, and without Him was not anything made that was made.

This, we also covered in large part in one of the first three sermons because fundamental number one also talks about God as being the Creator of all things. It was Jesus Christ, we proved, that was the very Being in the divinity, in the family of God, which was the instrument that brought all of these things into being. Let's notice just a couple of scriptures to further remind us of that and support that.

First, this quotation in the fundamentals is taken from John 1:3: "All things were made by him." Here we are talking about the *Logos*, the Spokesman, the Word. "All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made." That's why we believe that. That's why it is in our fundamentals of belief. It is documented right here in the first chapter of John. Notice also Ephesians 3:9:

And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:

Who was it that actually did the work? Who was that Being, accounted in Genesis chapter 1, who actually brought, in the very seven days of creation, all things into existence?

Hebrews 1:8–12. Our last scripture this afternoon:

But unto the Son he saith [here is somebody who is speaking to the Son, that Being we have already shown, that Divine Son, who was Jesus Christ, the Messiah. But unto the Son he saith—we are talking about Christ], Thy throne, O God, [another

reference to the divinity of Jesus Christ. Thy throne, O God] is forever and ever: a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands:"

This very Being, in Hebrews, who is called, "The Son," is also attested as the one who:

. . . laid the foundations of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.

This is the Jesus Christ that we believe in. This is the Being that we call "God," with the Father, who sits now on the right hand of His Father in the third heaven. This is what we fundamentally believe in the Church of God, the Eternal about Jesus Christ. We are going to find out in future sermons then, what His mission was, what the gospel of Jesus Christ was, what it was He actually came to accomplish and how He accomplished it in every way. That next time.