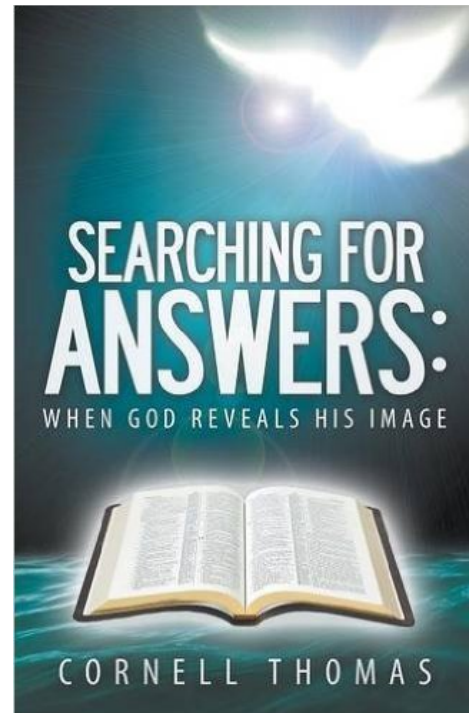


Book Review:
*Searching for Answers:
When God Reveals His Image*
by Cornell Thomas



Cornell Thomas begins his characterization of the Biblical doctrine of the Trinity with a quote from a chosen representative:

"God is one and God is three, and there is nothing like it in all creation. We cannot understand it but only accept it." (Preface.)

He then goes on to say,

"This book has been written to reveal how the Bible defines the Trinity of God and the deity of Christ." (Preface)

This review has been written to consider if either of these statements are true according to the Bible.

But before we engage in this book review, let us first consider what is the Biblical doctrine of the Trinity. For two thousand years now the Christian church has upheld the doctrine of the Trinity as the means to explain essential attributes of the nature of God. Now some of the most crucial attributes of God's nature, according to the scriptures, are outlined as follows:

1. There is Only One God

- Deut 4:35; 6:4; Isaiah 43:10; 44:6-8; 45:5-6; 46:8-9 Eph 4:4-6; Mark 12:29; 1 Cor 8:4,6

2. The Father is God

- Malachi 2:10; Isa 63:16; 64:8; John 17:1-3; Eph 3:14,15; Rev 2:26-29; 3:5-6; 3:21-22

3. Jesus Christ is God

- Isa 9:6; John 1:1-3; 17:1-5; 20:28; Acts 20:28; Titus 2:13; 1 John 5:20

4. The Holy Spirit is God

- John 3:5, 16:7-11; Acts 5:3-4,9; Eph 1:13, 4:30, 5:18; 1 Cor 6:19, 12:13

5. The Unity of the Trinity

- Gen 1:1-3 (John 1:1-5); Isa 48:16; 59:19-21; 63:7-10; Matt 28:18-20; John 14:16-17,26; Rom 8:9; 2 Cor 13:14; 1 Pet 1:2

6. The Plurality of Persons in One God

- Gen 1:26,27; 11:7; Isa 6:8; Matt 28:18-20; John 14:16-17,26

7. Personhood according to Scripture

- Just as the Father is *another* personal witness to Jesus (John 5:32,37), so the Holy Spirit is *another* personal comforter (John 14:16-17,26) and witness (John 15:26).
- The Holy Spirit is a distinct person: Acts 5:3-4,9; Acts 15:28; Eph 4:30.
- So, according to the scriptures, a "person" is a self-aware subject who relates to the other two as "another." The earliest acknowledgement of this revealed principle was recorded by Tertullian who was a disciple of Polycarp, who was a disciple of John.

8. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit act as One God

- Matt 28:18-20; Eph 3:14-19; 1 Cor 6:11; 2 Cor 13:14; Rom 1:1-4; Eph 1:17; 2:22; Rev 2:26-29; 3:5-6; 3:12-23; 3:21-22.
 - "Through him [Jesus] we both have access in one Spirit to the Father." (Eph 2:18, ESV)

9. The Relationship of the Trinity to the Creation

- Only God is the creator: Gen 1:1-3; Isaiah 45:12,18-22; John 1:1-3,14
- The Father is the creator: Deut 32:6; Isa 64:8; Mal 2:10
- Jesus is the creator: John 1:1-3,14; Col 1:15-17 (Note: All "things" were created *by, through, and for* him. That exhausts all possibilities.)
- The Holy Spirit is the creator: Gen 1:2; Psalm 33:6; Psalm 104:30.

10. God's Love in the Trinity

- "Father.., you loved me before the foundation of the world." (John 17:24, ESV). See also: Eph 1:4,5; 1 Peter 1:18-20; John 17:5 with Isaiah 42:8.
- "God *is* love." (1 John 4:8, ESV) That is to say, God *is by nature* love.
 - Such eternal love requires an interpersonal relationship even before the creation of the world.

11. What the Trinity Is Not

- Christians are NOT saying that there are three gods that are one God. And we are NOT saying that there are three persons that are one person.

Christians say what the Bible reveals:

In the Trinity there are not three individuals, but *only* three personal, self-distinctions within the one divine essence. Again, a person is a self-aware subject who relates to the other two as "another."

12. Objections to The Trinity

A. The word "Trinity" is not in the Bible.

Answer: it is also true that the words "omniscience" and "omnipresent" are not in the Bible, although the word "omnipotent" is (Rev 19:6, KJV). Yet the Bible clearly teaches that God is "all knowing," "everywhere present," and "all powerful." Such terms as *omniscience*, *omnipresence*, *omnipotence*, and the *Trinity* summarize unifying Biblical principles.

B. The Bible teaches monotheism, but the doctrine of the Trinity teaches polytheism.

Answer: The doctrine of the Trinity is un-ambiguously monotheistic. Again, we are NOT saying that there are three gods that are one God. We are clearly saying that there are only three personal self-distinctions within the one divine essence.

In fact, throughout history, the Christian Church has insisted on the vital importance of the doctrine of the Trinity:

a. Nicene Creed (325 AD): "...And I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of Life; who proceeds from the Father [and the Son]; who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified..."

b. The Athanasian Creed (381-428 AD): "We worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in unity, neither confounding the persons, nor dividing the substance."

c. The Westminster Confession of Faith (1647 AD): "In the unity of the Godhead there be three persons, of one substance, power, and eternity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost."

d. Modern Statement: There is but one God; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit is each God; and the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit is each a distinct person.

C. The Trinity is impossible to understand.

Answer: While no one can claim that they fully *comprehend* the nature of God, because of God's self-revelation we may *apprehend* his essential nature. And only when we discern that nature may we grow to be like him. We are commanded to, "Grow in the grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18, ESV). So just as a newborn baby does not comprehend the love of the parents, he may genuinely apprehend that love and rest in peace. Since God is a good parent, he knows how to communicate his love.

D. Now according to the claim in the book preface, "God is one and God is three, and there is nothing like it in all creation. We cannot understand it but only accept it."

Answer: To this we should respond as did Jesus with a first-principles view of the "things" of creation, "Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning..." (Matthew 19:4-6, ESV). The fact is *from the beginning* God created the universe as a trinity of trinities!

"In the beginning [time] God created the heavens [space] and the earth [matter]." (Genesis 1:1, ESV)

1. Time: past, present, and future—one time.
2. Space: height, width, and depth—one space.
3. Matter: gas, liquid, and solid—one matter.

So for those who claim they can't imagine how there can be three in one, we can explain that it is actually impossible to imagine anything that is not three in one—beginning with the creation.

And the assertion that we "cannot understand it but only accept it" does not lead to Biblical faith. According to the scriptures:

"The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law." (Deuteronomy 29:29, ESV)

Though scripture reminds us of the limits of human understanding, it never permits blind faith but stresses our responsibility to seek and understand the “things that are revealed” lest we be judged for willful ignorance.

Fortunately, there are many excellent resources for more in-depth study of the doctrine of the Trinity. One of the more accessible, Biblical, and relevant to this review is as follows:

- *The Biblical Basis of the Doctrine of the Trinity, An Outline Study*, by Robert M. Bowman, Jr., Christian Research Institute. (See also the expanded study: *Why You Should Believe in the Trinity: An Answer to Jehovah's Witnesses*, by Robert M. Bowman, Jr., 1989.)

13. The Trinity throughout History

From the beginning of the church there were challenges to the Biblical doctrine of the Trinity however it has stood the tests of time. Early challenges from modalism, polytheism, and unitary monotheism now have modern counterparts in: Islam, Unitarianism, Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormonism, Christian Science, and Oneness Pentecostalism.

Biblical Christianity has consistently and successfully rejected all these theological "innovations" for the entire history of the church. However, that said, there is now reason to believe that the modern Evangelical shift to non-denominationalism, entails a neglect of the historical creeds, and therefore such essential Biblical doctrines as the Trinity.

14. The Image of God in Man

The purpose for the image of God in man is to reveal the nature of God to the world (Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15). Therefore God has given a small measure of his communicable attributes as follows:

- Free will
- Intellect and creativity
- Moral character and responsibility
- Loving relationship

"For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (2 Cor 4:6, ESV) (Hebrews 1:3)

What God has not given are his un-communicable attributes as follows:

- Omniscience—all knowing
- Omnipresence—everywhere present
- Omnipotence—all powerful
- Immutability—unchanging

Clearly, the Bible does not teach that God is so great that he is unknowable. That is the teaching of Islam which claims that he is so completely "other" that man *cannot* know him. Instead the Bible teaches that God can be known because of his special and general revelation including the Word of God understood by the image of God in man empowered by the Holy Spirit.

"And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true; and we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life" (1 John 5:20, ESV).

See also: The *Trinity*, an article in *The Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics*, by Norman Geisler, 1999.

Review: *Searching for Answers: When God Reveals His Image*, by Cornell Thomas.

The following are quotes from this book in order to compare the author's ideas to Biblical doctrines in general and the Trinity in particular.

- On p.11, Thomas shares about some visitors "at the edge of the lawn" with questions he could not answer and who claimed they were, "members of a Christian church." These were almost certainly Jehovah's Witnesses. Only much later in the book (p.131) does he finally provide an inferential admission to this fact.
- On p.13 there is no acknowledgement that Orthodox Christianity has always had answers for the question, "How can three be one?" (See the brief review of the Trinity above.)
- On p.15 Thomas asserts that, "If the holy Trinity existed and if Jesus was the only true God, it should be clearly stated in the Bible."

To summarize the details given above, the Bible is exceptionally clear about the central claims for the Trinity:

- 1) There is only one God
 - 2) The Father is God
 - 3) Son is God
 - 4) The Holy Spirit is God
 - 5) In the Trinity there are not three individuals, but *only* three personal, self-distinctions within the one divine essence.
- On p.21 Thomas shared about a prayer, "I do not know what your image and likeness is.' This new insight altered my focus from trying to learn about the Holy Trinity and the deity of Christ to gaining a better understanding of the image in which man was created." Again, Thomas makes no serious attempt to share what Biblical Christianity has always maintained on this point.
 - On pp.23-27 Thomas drops the names of various Christian leaders: Thomas Aquinas, John Calvin, and John Schultz. He does not, however provide evidence that he has learned any significant insights about the Trinity, the image of God, or any other doctrines from any of these leaders.
 - On p.27 Thomas quotes Eliphaz in Job 4:15-17 in order to justify his own idea "that a spirit has an image and a form." However what he does not seem to recognize is that God judged Eliphaz for what he said, "My anger burns against you and against your two friends, for you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has" (Job 42:7, ESV).
 - On p.27 Thomas begins sharing about various "revelations" for which he earlier claimed one must "have total faith in the information I receive" (p.20). The revelations first come through dreams (pp.34, 37, 109). Through these dreams he gets a series of Bible verses that he strings together as the means to decode his chosen "mystery" related to the nature of "the image of God."

Now this particular form of "revelation" is generally known as *automatic writing*.

As described in Wikipedia:

"Automatic writing or psychography is an alleged psychic ability allowing a person to produce written words without consciously writing. The words are claimed to arise from a subconscious, spiritual or supernatural source."

http://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Automatic_writing

For example on p.39 Thomas claimed, "I received scripture references that showed..." And then, "After placing these references together, I could clearly see..."

In this case the context of the verses and key words emphasized are irrelevant. What matters is that he has decoded a mystery that supposedly no other Christians have ever seen before. As he finally concluded, "Could so many Christian thinkers have missed this over the centuries?" (pp.48, 117). The implicit and explicit answer was, "Yes," since he repeatedly justifies this method by citing the verse "God cannot lie" (Titus 1:2) (p.19).

However Thomas also claims the Bible exhibits, "inconsistency in the various Bible translations" (p.46). He initially makes this claim about the words "heart," "mind," "spirit," and "soul." However, he later expands his judgement to other Biblical concepts (p.117).

So at this stage I have to ask a question of Cornell Thomas. "Are you a scholar of the Hebrew and Greek languages? What qualifications do you have to make such judgments?"

- On p.54-55, Thomas first quotes Psalm 143:4, "Therefore my spirit is overwhelmed within me; my heart within me is distressed." He then asserts that this unquestionable case of synonymous parallelism "cannot be absolutely synonymous." This somehow triggers a desire for Thomas to study psychology. So he cites ideas from several secular sources with a focus on the atheist Sigmund Freud. From this he claims the "superego" is synonymous with the spirit of man and the "id" is synonymous with the flesh.
- On p.69, after numerous pseudo-psychological rabbit trails, Thomas finally concludes, "God, thank you. My eyes are starting to see the real person You created and not this false self I had always aligned my heart with."
- On p.72, Thomas calls on the authority of yet another of Job's counsellors (Elihu, Job 34:12-16). As noted before, God said, "You have not spoken of me what is right!" (Job 42:7, ESV).
- On p.126 Thomas introduces his major theological "innovation" by using Hebrews 4:12 to argue that God divided his own soul and spirit by "emptying itself" to become "another self" (p.127-128). This "insight" is justified by an imaginary experiment.

"I decided to imagine myself as a spirit. I counted from one to ten as loud as I could within my mind, creating words within my soul, visualizing the words that were manifesting themselves within me proceeding forth and becoming a physical body sitting next to me. While imagining this, there were two beings sitting side by side—a spiritual being and a physical being."

Not only is this idea illogical, it's heretical. God does not spawn "new selves." God is immutable—he never changes (Mal 3:6; Ps 102:25-27; Heb 6:17; Jas 1:17). Therefore according to Heb 13:8, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever."

The church has always affirmed that God did not "spawn a new self," since Christ always existed even "before the world existed" (John 17:5 ESV). So according to scripture, at the incarnation the divine Christ took on the nature of a man (John 1:1-3,14,15; Philippians 2:5-8).

According to Thomas' reasoning on p.128, "Not only would Jesus be the exact physical image of God, Jesus would be the firstborn over all creation because He would be the first in all creation to be physically born from God." The fact is Thomas' theological "innovations" are really not new at all. They have too much in common with heresies long rejected by the church.

- On p.129, Thomas says he "continued to see two separate beings." He argues that "'Jesus said, 'I and the Father are one' (John 10:30). How can they be two, and yet one?'"

Once again there is no acknowledgement of the long-standing credal response of the Christian church that may be summarized as follows:

In the trinity there not three individuals, but only three personal self-distinctions within the one divine essence.

And that:

A person is a self-aware subject who relates to the other two as "another."

- Only on p.131 does Thomas finally share enough information for us to discern that it was the Jehovah's Witnesses who raised the questions that started his "journey." For him the deal-breaker seems to have been the overworked JW riddle: "How could Jesus be God and be tempted at all points as we are, when God cannot be tempted?"

The Biblical answer: Jesus Christ had two natures. Jesus not only possessed the nature of God, but also the nature of man. He was tempted just as any human would be as illustrated by the temptation in the wilderness (Luke 4:1-13). Clearly Jesus suffered real hunger and could have reached out—like Adam—to grasp divine prerogatives, but as a sinless man he chose to obey the will of God. Again, Paul summarizes:

"Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being

found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!" (Philippians 2:5-8, NIV, 1984)

- Again, on p131-132, after quoting John 17:3 without acknowledging the context, Thomas claims, "Jesus clearly separates Himself from God." He is arguing that they are "clearly separate" individuals. However in John 17:1-5, Jesus clearly says the Son has been given "authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you [the Father] have given him" (John 17:2 ESV). He then asks, "Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed" (John 17:5 ESV). These attributes belong to God alone as explained in all of scripture including Isaiah 42:8; 43:10; 48:11. Thomas also ignores the larger scriptural context which includes the clearly Trinitarian passages in John 14:16-17 and John 16:7-15. Jesus finally explained the implications of his relationship with his Father, "And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent" (John 17:3, ESV). Here we can summarize the message of verses 1-5 as follows: *Eternal life comes when you know the only true God through Jesus Christ who his Father has sent.*
- On p.134 Thomas strings together another set of verses and then concludes, "Jesus and God were not identical mentally." Once again he is arguing that they are "clearly separate" individuals. The fact is, the scriptures reveal that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are distinct persons and Jesus had two natures—divine and human.
- On p.141-142, a very long series of verses are strung together—without any regard to the context—to select key words as an attempt to confirm his utterly non-Biblical theology.
- On p.142, Thomas explained that he had "asked church leaders and friends about Jesus coming in the likeness of sinful flesh, and every response was, "The term likeness does not mean the same as." He rejects this constructive feedback because, "God had shown me..."
- On p.144, Thomas once again misinterprets the meaning of Hebrews 4:12 to actually claim that, "the Word of God divided the soul and spirit of God."
- Finally, after acknowledging his *theological innovations* were rejected by "many fellow Christians" (p.144) Thomas strings together yet another long set of verses to accuse them of being the ones who, "suppress the truth in unrighteousness" (p.145-149).
- On p.159, Thomas claims that "many denominations and cults teach that Jesus could not be God," thereby confounding these fundamentally different categories. A "denomination" affirms the essential doctrines of the Christian faith while a "cult" denies them.
- But on p.159, all of this was justified because, "the Holy Spirit revealed to me a truth..."

So what was this "truth"? Starting on p. 161 he explains:

"When Jesus was born, He proceeded forth from the Holy Spirit, and the power of the Most High—God—was not in Jesus from birth."

Now apart from this being an obviously self-contradictory statement, Thomas has chosen to advance yet another heretical argument based on the relative silence of scripture about the early years of Christ. However, scripture is not silent about the time before Jesus' special empowerment by the Holy Spirit at his baptism. The Bible provides a clear example of his unprecedented wisdom and understanding even as a teenager in the temple.

"And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. And when his parents saw him, they were astonished. And his mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been searching for you in great distress." And he said to them, "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" (Luke 2:27-49, ESV)

Here we see that Jesus fully understood and spoke with divine authority about his relationship with his heavenly Father. This event also confirms the prophecy about the empowerment of Christ by the Holy Spirit,"

"And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD." (Isaiah 11:2, ESV)

Yet even earlier, at the birth of Jesus the angels declared, "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who *is* Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:19, ESV). And according to all the prophecies about the Christ, he was "anointed" with the Holy Spirit. (Psalm 45:7 (Hebrews 1:9); Isaiah 42:1; Isaiah 61:1 (Ephesians 1:17); Daniel 9:25,26; Acts 4:25-27);

So here we must recognize the scriptural warning about denial of the Christ:

"Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ [the anointed one]? This is the antichrist, he who denies the Father and the Son. No one who denies the Son has the Father. Whoever confesses the Son has the Father also." (1 John 2:22-23, ESV)

This warning is not limited to the time after his baptism since he has always been Christ the Lord (Luke 1:35; 2:19).

Finally, according to the apostle Peter:

"Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories" (1 Peter 1:10,11, ESV).

- On p.163 Thomas advanced that old legalistic claim that, "justification occurs when the sin nature is put under submission, as a man is submerged in water... Today, a person must accept Christ *and be baptized* in His name before justification can be accomplished (emphasis added)."
- On p.166 Thomas claims that Jesus "was The fullness of the Godhead bodily, he was not born the fullness of the Godhead spiritually." He seems to make this claim on the basis of the fact that in his human nature Jesus grew, learned, and made progress. Again, Thomas does not acknowledge that Jesus had both a human nature and a divine nature. Therefore the human nature of Jesus could learn and grow while his divine nature remained eternally unchanged. By the power of the Holy Spirit (Isaiah 11:1-2) Jesus had the wisdom and knowledge to ask his human parents, "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" (Luke 2:49)
- On pp.166-167 Thomas asserts that, "Jesus abolished the enmity in His flesh, allowing God and Himself to become one, creating one new man.... This created the Living Soul of God Almighty... Jesus, the Son of God, *became* the one true God (emphasis added).” Again, according to scripture the pre-existent Son of God had always existed as God:

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made... And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:1-3,14, ESV) (See also John 1:15-18)

"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever" (Heb 13:8, ESV).

- According to p.167 Thomas claims that, "Jesus (who was the Word of God) conquered sin on His own behalf without the power of the Most High or the Holy Spirit." As explained above, this assertion is Biblically unjustified and patently false. Jesus has always existed with the Holy Spirit (Isa 48:16).
- On p.168 Thomas says "When the Word of God divided the Soul and the Spirit of God and proceeded forth from the Holy Spirit and the power of the Most High, he became flesh. Jesus became His own person; He became the Son of God." As explained above, Jesus was before his birth, after his birth, and always the Son of God (Psalm 2:7; Proverbs 30:4; Luke 1:35; 2:19; Heb 1:2; 13:8). Here it should be noted that it incorrect to interpret Romans 1:4 as meaning Jesus only became the Son of God *after* his resurrection. The fact is, before his resurrection he was revealed to be "The Christ, the Son of the living God" (Mat 16:16; ESV), (See also Mat 26:63,64 and Luke 1:35). The power of his resurrection was the infallible proof of his eternal Sonship.
- On p.170, Thomas claims, "When Philip looked at Jesus, he was looking at the image of the Father physically. Not spiritually." In contrast to this confused definition of the relationship

between Christ and his Father, Jesus said, "God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth" (John 4:24, ESV).

- On p.173 he finally summarizes "I began to reflect on many of the different religions of the world and the beliefs they had about Jesus. Muslims believe Jesus is a prophet. Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons believe Jesus is not God but only the son of God. Baptist, Catholics, Oneness, Pentecostals, Lutherans, and Methodists believe Jesus is God. I can now understand why there is so much confusion. They are all true to a certain degree. The misunderstandings stem from not truly knowing the image of God when He created man and how the living soul is created in His image and likeness." So ultimately Thomas has not only denied the essential differences between the teachings of Biblical Christian denominations and non-Christian cults, but he has posed a confused set of heretical "revelations."
- Some of the most disturbing statements from Thomas' book are actually found on the back cover. Here some of the endorsements really must be addressed. The first is from Dennis Brooke, president of the Northwest Writers' Association:
 - "...a fascinating look at the nature of the Trinity and sin... reminiscent of Lee Strobel's landmark book, *A Case for Christ*."

What must be challenged is how such a glowing assessment is squared with the *Statement of Faith* of the Northwest Christian Writers Association. By signing this statement members profess to have, "...embraced the following doctrines that we believe are cornerstones of the Christian faith and life as revealed through the Holy Scriptures."

(<http://nwchristianwriters.org/StatementofFaith>). The first of the cornerstone doctrines is given as follows:

- "We believe in one God, existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, coequal and eternal (Gen. 1:26; John 1:1-3; 10:30; 14:16)."

As this review has shown, Cornell Thomas does not embrace this succinctly stated doctrine of the Trinity which captures the profession of all Christians over the last two millennia."

The other troubling endorsement was from Dr. Gregory Jantz founder of The Center for Counselling & Health Resources, Inc:

- "... one of the most fascinating books I've ever read. Will do wonders for the Christian world."

So here I won't offer further comment on what "wonders" this book might do for psychology, but by definition heresy can only do damage to the Christian world.

Now finally, in view of all the personal revelations shared by Cornell Thomas it seems reasonable to ask what might have been his motivation. Here there is no need to speculate since he explained that motivation himself. Again, back on p.21 Thomas shared a prayer:

“I do not know what your image and likeness is.’ This new insight altered my focus from trying to learn about the Holy Trinity and the deity of Christ to gaining a better understanding of the image in which man was created.”

So how could this new goal have led him to finally embrace secular psychology, derive heretical doctrines, and ultimately reject historical Christianity? Thomas later shared more about his motivation when discussing the Biblical teaching that man is spiritually dead before regeneration:

"I also thought my heart was desperately wicked, which compounded the situation. I had a tendency in my youth to take heed to and follow the bad thought because as a man thinks in his heart, so he is, and I was taught that *my heart is desperately wicked*. But in reality, I needed to understand that within our hearts we have the ability to refuse evil and chose the good, just as Jesus did (emphasis added)" (p.153).

So here Thomas rejects another clear scriptural principle:

"The *heart is deceitful* above all things, and *desperately wicked*: who can know it?" (Jeremiah 17:9, KJV).

Without recounting all the details, this line of reasoning finally led Thomas to claim, "I found no scriptural witness of the Spirit coming on Jesus before His baptism" (p.155). Now I have already cited some of the extensive scriptural evidence Thomas claimed to have sought, however this assertion was entailed in the earlier denial that Jesus was born Christ—anointed by the Holy Spirit. Thomas finally concluded that within his own heart he naturally had the ability to refuse evil and chose good "just as Jesus did." Yet Jesus warned that, "No one is good except God alone" (Mark 10:18, ESV). Even so, Thomas says that when he accepted Jesus' diagnosis of the human condition, the effect on him was negative. So it appears he finally sought "another Jesus" (2 Cor 11:4) to validate his desired experience—sinless without the Holy Spirit.

In sharp contrast, the apostle Paul summarized the Christian life as follows:

"You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him" (Romans 8:9).

So according to scripture it is only after the Spirit of God dwells in us, as revealed by the life of Christ, that we may refuse the flesh and chose the good will of God.

Here I offer a final appeal: If Cornell Thomas will simply accept this clear Trinitarian teaching, the grave errors of these personal revelations might be averted.

Searching for Answers: When God Reveals His Image, by Cornell Thomas, 2013, Innovo Publishing.