

A Review of “Unchurching” a book authored by Richard Jacobson

This review by Richard C. Schadle August 2019

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Preface

What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life— and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us— what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. These things we write, so that our joy may be made complete. This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. (1 John 1:1-7)¹

For many years now my wife and I have been seeking to join with like-minded believers in fellowship to worship God together. We live in a city (Grand Rapids Michigan) that has almost as many traditional Church buildings as it does shopping areas and places to eat. We live within walking distance of at least ten church buildings what have congregations and services weekly. We have, however found no place where we can join as members and the closest place, we have found for fellowship is a 45-minute drive

¹ New American Standard Bible: 1995 update. (1995). (Ge 4:4). La Habra, CA: The Lockman Foundation.

away. Surely, you may say, there is something wrong with you! What do you expect perfection? Are you super ‘holy’ or something? Neither my wife nor myself expect perfection, we are like all who are saved, sinners saved by God’s grace. We expect what we find in all the churches founded in the New Testament: lots and lots of imperfect people just like ourselves. We do however have the blueprint that the Bible lays out for what fellowship is. It’s stated for example in the passage quoted above. Fellowship can only take place where the Lord Jesus Christ, as the Bible reveals him to us, is central. There will be much that we cannot agree upon, there will be personal problems and conflicts, different options upon many points of doctrine and practice. This is the pattern that the New Testament reveals to us: we will not find perfection in this life on earth. If, however there is a deep and true desire for the truth, a will to make what the Bible teaches central, to give all the Glory to God in His sovereignty then fellowship can and will take place. Without God’s word, and God’s word alone used to reveal the Lord Jesus Christ in all His heavenly glory there can be no true fellowship.

In our quest of fellowship, we recently joined with a small group of what I believed were people committed to what the Bible teaches. Before our first meeting the leader of this group sent out an email with links to several cartoon video’s by Richard Jacobson. I was surprised as this person has a background as a scholarly Baptist elder who has a deep love for the First London Reformed Baptist Confession of 1644. I had never heard of Jacobson before but when I found that he depicted both God and Jesus in cartoon caricature I was horrified. “God is a consuming fire:”^{2, 3} is he not? Can **any** true God-fearing Christian think that this treatment of God is acceptable? This leader also spoke of Frank Viola and the “Organic Church”. In the days and weeks after this I wrote two book reviews on two of Viola’s books. This review, which follows is on Jacobson’s book.

My initial purpose was simply to understand what the “Organic Church” teaching was about. I care deeply for this Baptist elder and for other members of this small group and I desired to help them in any way I could. I therefore looked deeply into this teaching. They have chosen to continue on the bypath, following people like Jacobson and Viola. My purpose here is to continue to expose this movement for what it is: A false teaching whose sole purpose is to lead people away from the truth as it is in Jesus.

The error in Viola’s books is obvious. He makes little or no pretense to teach what the Bible teaches. Jacobson’s book is a different matter entirely. It’s reminds me very much of what Satan said to Eve: “Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. **And he said to the woman, “Indeed, has God said, ‘You shall not eat from any tree of the garden?’”**⁴ Jacobson’s use of Scripture is extensive, detailed and at times correct. Just like Satan, he uses the Words of God to lead us astray. Because of the vast difference between Viola’s methods and Jacobson’s this review will be a little different in nature to the previous two. Because of copyright laws I have keep my quotations from the book brief and for the express purpose of reviewing

² Hebrews 12:29

³ All Bible references are in the NASB cited above **except** for those that are part of cited quotations. I have removed the verse numbers and verse links for the purpose of this review. Any emphases are mine.

⁴ Genesis 3:1

this book. My aim is to highlight those areas where he obviously contradicts the Bible and seeks to lead his readers astray. In order to oppose what is false I have made a diligent effort to explain as briefly as possible what the truth is. I fear that many in this day are used to being feed milk not meat and therefore will find this review heavy going in places. I trust and pray however that many will make the effort to understand. I strongly encourage you to buy the book or get it from a library. Decide for yourself what is true and may the Holy Spirit guide us all by God's grace into the truth.

Access to God

I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel; which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed! As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, he is to be accursed! For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ. (Galatians 1:6-10)

To me, it comes as no surprise that Jacobson's book opens with a quotation from a philosopher and not a quotation from the Bible. Later he quotes from others like Socrates. I say "to me" because, as I mentioned in the preface above, I have previously written two book reviews on the Organic Church movement. These were on two books by Frank Viola. Viola's stock and trade is to hand pick quotations from very many sources. Almost anyone who says something that supports his teaching is pressed into service. Jacobson follows this pattern. As I show in this review neither Jacobson or Viola have biblical support for what they teach. They rely instead on people like the philosopher Dallas Willard who Jacobson uses to introduce Part One of his book. Willard's quote is about "community" here is what Willard said:

The aim of God in history is the creation of an all-inclusive community of loving persons with God himself at the very heart of this community as its prime Sustainer and most glorious Inhabitant.⁵

As we shall see "Community" is what the Organic Church movement (and Jacobson's book) is all about. Willard's quote aptly sums this up. I will examine the subject of community later in this review.

⁵ Taken from 'Brainy Quote' at https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/dallas_willard_581404

Immediately after this quotation Jacobson makes a sweeping statement. In the first sentence of Part one he says:

Before the birth of the church, **believers** had limited access to God. They had to go to a special place (known as a temple) and enlist the aid of a special person (known as a priest) in order to worship their God. **And even then, they couldn't actually get close to him.** The priest had to serve as a mediator between the people and their God.⁶

Why open the book in this way? Is there any truth in this statement? If this is false can we trust anything else he tells us? Jacobson would have us believe that Christians (he calls them believers) in the Old Testament had virtually no real access to God. Well than:

What of Able:

Abel, on his part also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions. And the **LORD had regard for Abel and for his offering; (Genesis 4:4)**

What of Enoch:

Enoch lived sixty-five years, and became the father of Methuselah. Then **Enoch walked with God three hundred years** after he became the father of Methuselah, and he had other sons and daughters. So all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years. **Enoch walked with God;** and he was not, for God took him.

What of David:

Just look at the Psalms of David! What does God say in this regard?

After He had removed him, He raised up David to be their king, concerning whom He also testified and said, 'I HAVE FOUND DAVID the son of Jesse, A MAN AFTER MY HEART, who will do all My will.' (Acts 13:22)

What about Hebrews 11 and the myriad of other believers who worshiped God in the same way we do today? They looked forward and saw Christ. They were saved by the Lord Jesus Christ in the exact same way Believers are saved today: Looking to the Cross of Christ.

Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. For by it the men of old gained approval. ... All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. (Hebrews 11:1,13)

⁶ Jacobson, Richard. Unchurched: Christianity Without Churchianity (p. 17). Unchurched Books. Kindle Edition. Highlighting is mine.

And all these, having gained approval through their faith, did not receive what was promised, because God had provided something better for us, so that apart from us they would not be made perfect. Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. (Hebrews 11:39 to 12:2)

We learn from Hebrews chapter 11 that there is only one way, and there was always only one way, to draw near to God: By faith in Christ Jesus. What was true of all the old testament saints is just as true of believers today. There has always been one Church, one body of Christ. All believers, who have been reconciled to God through Christ.

The tabernacle, the priests, the animal sacrifices were all part of the Law, given to the people of Israel, **as a nation**, not as a way of salvation and certainly not to individual believers as the **only** way to draw near to God. The Lord Jesus Christ was and is the **only way** for believers to draw near to God. Believers than had free access to God by looking forward to the cross of Christ. We now have free access to God by looking back at the Cross of Christ. It is the same cross, the same sacrifice for sin, the same salvation. The Apostle Paul, especially in the Book of Romans, has a lot to tell us about Law and Grace. This is summarized in one verse: “For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace” (Romans 6:14)

If the reader still has any doubts look at Psalm 40, the whole Psalm is important but for sake of space I will quote just three verses:

Sacrifice and meal offering You have not desired; My ears You have opened; Burnt offering and sin offering You have not required. Then I said, “Behold, I come; In the scroll of the book it is I written of me. I delight to do Your will, O my God; Your Law is within my heart.”
(Psalm 40:6-8)

This is of course a messianic Psalm and as such refers to the Lord Jesus Christ. It is nonetheless the very words of King David and as such also refer to him. God opened the eyes of his understanding to behold the New Covenant way of salvation in Christ. He had full and free access to God by the Holy Spirit within him. As I said before they looked forward while we look backwards but we look to the same Savior. As seen in this passage, as well as others, God never intended the temple and offerings to be the way of salvation for Israel.

Reader beware, Jacobson, at the beginning of his book says, in effect, that all believes in the Old Testament were under Law not grace. Let’s look at his words again:

Before the birth of the church, **believers** had limited access to God. They had to go to a special place (known as a temple) and enlist the aid of a special person (known as a priest) in order to worship their God. And even then, they couldn't actually get close to him. The priest had to serve as a mediator between the people and their God.⁷

What he said is not true of "believers". **It is true of those in Israel who rejected Christ**, the majority of that nation.

Why then did he start with such a grossly misleading statement? His desire is that we equate that state of affairs (being under law not grace) to what he wants us to believe about the established church today. This can be clearly seen on page 19 of the Kindle edition of his book. Here is how I understand what he is doing. He has led us to believe a lie about the Old Testament believers. Now, based on that false misconception he wants us to believe a second misconception. That is, that the established church, Baptist, Presbyterian, Dutch Reformed or whatever, **is to believers** what he says the Old Testament Law system was. The Priest of the Old Testament Tabernacle is what pastors and elders are today and so forth. He goes even further and rejects all forms of leadership. He seeks to establish that all believers are equal, men as well as women.

Before we leave the quotation above one other fact is important. His words above start with "Before the birth of the church". So, to Jacobson there was no church in the Old Testament. King David for example was not part of the church, the body of Christ!

This brings us to an important topic. Jacobson has his own agenda and purposes. I do not know if he holds to the teaching called Dispensationalism. That question is a side issue and cannot be dealt with in this review. I hope at a later time to review the subject of Dispensationalism in depth but for now we must pass this by. It is important, however to understand that many people who profess Jesus name and say they believe what the Bible teaches, believe that the Church did not come into being till Acts chapter 2 (or some other time in the New Testament era). For example, one important Bible edition has these comments on Psalm 5:8-10: "David was not a Christian: he was a Jewish man who lived under the Law of Moses."⁸ This does not appear to be what Jacobson means. **Jacobson specially refers to believers.**

Clearly, he has defined a specialized meaning for the word "church". He asks questions about how the church came into being and what is it for. **His answer is crystal clear: he defines the church as "a community"**.⁹ This is why he used the quotation from Dallas Willard. As I intimated above this is at the heart and soul of the book under review and of the Organic Church movement as a whole. This will be examined in more detail below but first we must look at what the Bible actually teaches about access to God and what His Church is.

⁷ Jacobson, p. 17

⁸ The Hebrew – Greek Key Word Bible by Spiros Zodhiates 2008

⁹ Ibid. p. 20-22

After such a display of disregard for the truth in such obvious matters as those discussed about we must take care to examine what follows.

The Church: What the Bible teaches

Simon Peter answered, “**You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.**” And Jesus said to him, “Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. “I also say to you that you are Peter, and **upon this rock I will build My church**; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.
(Matthew 16:16-18)

The substance of the quotation above is this: The Lord Jesus Christ is the Son of the living God and upon Him the Church will be built.

Let’s look at a second passage, it the one I quoted at the start of this review:

What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life—and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us— what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. These things we write, so that our joy may be made complete. (1 John 1-4)

Fellowship with God is based on Christ becoming a man. His birth, life, death and resurrection and all that we can learn from that. Fellowship is not based on the inner workings of the Godhead but upon the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. John goes on in the rest of his letter to elaborate this in great detail. Some of the subjects he reviews are: The Holiness of God, Christ being our advocate and our obedience to Him, our turning away from worldly desires and pleasures to turn to God and personal holiness, practical teaching on how to love one another, testing teaching to know what is true and false etc. Salvation in Christ must lead to holiness of life and soundness doctrine. Without these two essential ingredients there is no true Church and no true fellowship.

Why did the Apostle Paul write the letter of 1 Timothy and what is the foundation of his teaching? It’s no secret, Paul tells us plainly:

I am writing these things to you, hoping to come to you before long; but in case I am delayed, I write so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth. By common confession,

great is the mystery of godliness: He who was revealed in the flesh, Was vindicated in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Proclaimed among the nations, Believed on in the world, Taken up in glory. (1 Timothy 3:14-16)

He is setting in order how the Church should be organized. Much of this letter deals with leadership in the Church. Paul's clear and definitive teaching about elders and deacons is a major focus of attack by Jacobson and the Organic Church movement as a whole. Yet to Paul leadership forms a major part of what the Church, based on the ministry of the Lord Jesus, is all about.

The Lord Jesus, as He is clearly revealed in the Bible is focal point of all revelation: not the supposed "community of God". Jesus opened a way through His life, death and resurrection for God to not only forgive our sin and wicked rebellion but that through him we actually become righteous before God with his very own righteousness. Salvation, not community is the focal point of all the Bible.

Look at Hebrews 1:1-3

God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

What then is the Church? That is as the Bible, not man reveals it to be. The answer I believe is found in the Gospel of Matthew (and its parallels). These are the very words of Our Lord Jesus Christ, his final words to His chosen apostles.

And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." (Matthew 28:18-20)

First of all, the Church is formed on the basis of the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. The commission to build this Church was given to the apostles and clearly those who in the future would be set aside for this specific purpose by Christ Himself. How else could our Lord say "even to the end of the age."? The Lord chose twelve men specifically to be leaders. Not only so but it is an obvious fact that both during Christ's lifetime and in the lifetime of these apostles there was a distinction of leadership. Some were leaders among even that small group. Only three were chosen, for example to be close to Christ in the garden of Gethsemane. Those specifically chosen in Christ

commission where to “make disciples” by “teaching” what Jesus taught; by example and precept. The church was to be made up of baptized believers. Water baptism which was a symbol or sign of their repentance from their former sinful way of life to a life of holiness and sanctification. Within this group of saved believers some were and are still set aside to positions of leadership so that the teachings of Christ and His apostles might be kept pure and protected from evil and dangerous deceivers.

In this regard the size of those who assemble in the name of the Lord Jesus is immaterial. It matters not if its two, two thousand, all the saints alive at one time or all the saints in heaven at the end of time. The important thing is that the Lord Jesus Christ, as he is clearly revealed in the Holy Bible, must be at the heart and soul of all things. There is a great deal of truth in that old hymn: “Trust and Obey for there is no other way to be happy in Jesus but to Trust and Obey”. We make Christ real in the holiness and purity of our lives, in obedience and trust, in service to others not in some mystical séance like experience. Such an mystical experience is however, exactly what Jacobson is advocating.

Paul in his great letter to the Ephesian Church sums all this up in a truly majestic way:

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace which He lavished on us. In all wisdom and insight He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth. In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things dafter the counsel of His will, to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory. In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God’s own possession, to the praise of His glory. For this reason I too, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which exists among you and your love for all the saints, do not cease giving thanks for you, while making mention of you in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,

and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them. (Ephesians 1:3 – 2:10)

Among the many things that Paul, through the Holy Spirit teaches us in these verses are the following: 1. The Lord Jesus Christ is the sum and sustenance of our salvation and God's glory. 2. Not only was each and every member of the true Church predestinated to salvation, they were also predestinated to sanctification; to leading a holy life. We were dead now we are alive. Our lives though the power of the Holy Spirit will reflect the radical change that God has made in our hearts. 3. Our salvation, from start to finish is all of God's free grace and in all and every way possible it is to give glory to God and to Him alone. We do not add anything to God; we reveal, though our holy lives, God's grace and goodness. 4. We are enriched beyond thought or measure by being taken into God's family though all that Christ has done. It is the church that is enriched by God not God by the church.

The Godhead: our example?

For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," declares the LORD. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways And My thoughts than your thoughts. (Isaiah 55:8-9)

In the plainest possible language God, Himself, warns us that He is fundamentally different from mankind. As shown in this review Jacobson is either not aware of this passage or else feels free to ignore it.

As I said before the concept of “Community” is central to Jacobson, this book and the “Organic Church” movement as a whole. It is the fundamental foundation upon which all else is built. People are to leave all other teaching behind, form small groups (a community) and manifest Jesus in their midst. The purpose of the first section of the book under review was to cause the reader to reject the ‘established church” (whatever that was to the reader). The purpose of this section and much of what follows is to lay the foundation for what is to replace that which was cast away.

In the next section, under the heading, “The Community of God” Jacobson immediately starts discussing the topic of the Trinity. Rather than looking to the Lord Jesus as our example, as we saw above, he turns to the inner life of God Himself: How the Trinity functions. This is why I quoted the passage from Isaiah at the head of this section. Understanding what this means is of vital importance if we are to evaluate this book correctly. For this reason, I give the following definition of the term Trinity.

TRINITY Theological term used to define God as an undivided unity expressed in the threefold nature of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. As a distinctive Christian doctrine, the Trinity is considered as a divine mystery beyond human comprehension to be reflected upon only through scriptural revelation. The Trinity is a biblical concept that expresses the dynamic character of God, not a Greek idea pressed into Scripture from philosophical or religious speculation. While the term “trinity” does not appear in Scripture, the trinitarian structure appears throughout the NT to affirm that God Himself is manifested through Jesus Christ by means of the Spirit.

A proper biblical view of the Trinity balances the concepts of unity and distinctiveness. Two errors that appear in the history of the consideration of the doctrine are tritheism and unitarianism. In tritheism error is made in emphasizing the distinctiveness of the Godhead to the point that the Trinity is seen as three separate Gods, or a Christian polytheism. On the other hand, unitarianism excludes the concept of distinctiveness while focusing solely on the aspect of God the Father. In this way Christ and the Holy Spirit are placed in lower categories and made less than divine. Both errors compromise the effectiveness and contribution of the activity of God in redemptive history.¹⁰

¹⁰ Henry, J. M. (2003). Trinity. In C. Brand, C. Draper, A. England, S. Bond, E. R. Clendenen, & T. C. Butler (Eds.), *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (p. 1625). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers.

After a very thorough examination of this topic from Bible references this same source summarizes this doctrine as follows:

Perhaps four statements can summarize and clarify this study.

1. God is One. The God of the OT is the same God of the NT. His offer of salvation in the OT receives a fuller revelation in the NT in a way that is not different but more complete. The doctrine of the Trinity does not abandon the monotheistic faith of Israel.

2. God has three distinct ways of being in the redemptive event, yet He remains an undivided unity. That God the Father imparts Himself to mankind through Son and Spirit without ceasing to be Himself is at the very heart of the Christian faith. A compromise in either the absolute sameness of the Godhead or the true diversity reduces the reality of salvation.

3. The primary way of grasping the concept of the Trinity is through the threefold participation in salvation. The approach of the NT is not to discuss the essence of the Godhead, but the particular aspects of the revelatory event that includes the definitive presence of the Father in the person of Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit.

4. The doctrine of the Trinity is an absolute mystery. It is primarily known, not through speculation, but through experiencing the act of grace through personal faith. See God; Holy Spirit; Jesus Christ.¹¹

I like how this source summed up this majestic subject: “**The doctrine of the Trinity is an absolute mystery.**” Scripture itself agrees with this conclusion.

Job 11:7-12:

Can you discover the depths of God? Can you discover the limits of the Almighty? “They are high as the heavens, what can you do? Deeper than Sheol, what can you know? “Its measure is longer than the earth and broader than the sea. “If He passes by or shuts up, or calls an assembly, who can restrain Him? “For He knows false men, And He sees iniquity without investigating. “An idiot will become intelligent when the foal of a wild donkey is born a man.

Ecclesiastes 8:16, 17:

When I gave my heart to know wisdom and to see the task which has been done on the earth (even though one should never sleep day or night), and I saw every work of God, I concluded that man cannot discover the work which has been done under the sun. Even though man should seek

¹¹ Ibid. page 1627

laboriously, he will not discover; and though the wise man should say, “I know,” he cannot discover.

This of course does not mean that the true Christian, filled with the Holy Spirit can know nothing at all about God. Even the most primitive heathen on earth knows something about God from what can be observed in what men call nature.¹² The Bible was given to mankind by God in order that men might know God and the way of salvation that he has provided through Christ Jesus the Lord. There is however, only one way to gain any real understanding of the majesty of God. We must approach this subject in godly fear. I ask you please to just stop for a moment and think about the universe, the power for example in one single black hole. The billions of stars and the vast power that holds all we know of existence together. God is the King of King and Lord of Lords, majestic in holiness. I am speaking now, especially to those who are saved, or who at least profess to love and honor God. Would you go up to queen Elizabeth, if you could, and say “Hey Old Lady how you doing?” How much more honor does the God of Gods deserve?

The Bible says “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.”¹³ It also says “Transgression speaks to the ungodly within his heart; There is no fear of God before his eyes. For it flatters him in his own eyes concerning the discovery of his iniquity and the hatred of it.”¹⁴

If we have the “fear of the Lord” we gain understanding and all that true wisdom brings. Without the “fear of the Lord” our wicked sinful hearts can only grow more wicked, evil leading to greater evil.¹⁵

What then is the “fear of the Lord” and why am I bringing up this topic now?

As an example, the fear of God is related to some extent to the feelings a small child has to its Father. That is if the child is in an ideal family. In an atmosphere of love and trust the child grows to respect, admire and depend upon its father. The child learns how little it knows yet how much its farther knows. They learn that indeed “Father knows best” even when the child must be disciplined for its own good. This has nothing to do with fear of punishment or vindictiveness. I does, however, however a great deal to do with respect and humility. Something of this can be seen in many of the Ten Commandments. For example, it was absolutely forbidden to make any type of image of God whatsoever. Christians are no longer under law, we are now, in the New Covenant under grace **but** God is the same God, he does not and cannot change. Look what the New Testament says:

For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a terrifying expectation of judgment and THE FURY OF A FIRE WHICH WILL

¹² Romans 1:18-22

¹³ Proverbs 9:10,11

¹⁴ Psalm 36:1,2

¹⁵ Romans 1:18ff

CONSUME THE ADVERSARIES. Anyone who has set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.

How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace?

For we know Him who said, “VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY.” And again, “THE LORD WILL JUDGE HIS PEOPLE.” **It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God. (Hebrews 10:26-31)**

If we do not treat the subject of God, as He is in His very nature with deep respect and care we are in grave danger of hell its self. In other words if we have no fear of God we cannot be saved.

Secondly, why have I brought up the subject of the fear of God? In order to answer that question, we need to return to Jacobson and his book. The reader of this review may not be familiar with Richard Jacobson’s methods, the book being the only reference point. He has quite a presence on the internet, including YouTube and various websites. As I referred to in my preface, one of his main mediums for teaching are very poorly drawn cartoons! This includes animated and comic book style. As if there were not bad enough, it gets much worse. He portrays both God the Father and God the Son in this vulgar manner. This blatant disregard for any form of reverence to God carries through in the book under review. That is not to say that he does not quote scripture, he in fact cites many passages. In this section alone he fully quotes 24 texts of scripture. To go even further **some** of what he says is correct **as far it goes**. This is where the danger lies. The casual reader is lulled into a false sense of security by all the Scripture references. What then does Jacobson think of the Godhead as presented in this book? Let’s take a brief look at some of his conclusions. We will look at more later in this review. He denies that the members of the trinity are co-equal, that is equal with each other, for he says: “That’s not to say all members of the Godhead are equal in every way.”¹⁶ His is very unclear about the oneness of God for he talks about them appearing to act as a single person or at least having a single will. He talks about God’s complete unity but says we will never be able to understand it. In a very flippant manner, he discusses what he feels the inner life of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit consists of. On one hand he appears to say that we can learn little about the inner life of God but on the other hand we can learn so much of this secret life that it can become our master blueprint for “community”. Jacobson’s application is twofold. This can be found on page 24 of the Kindle version of the book. **In summary we are to believe that God is not only a spiritual community but that He is the perfect example of this.**

¹⁶ Jacobson, (p. 27). Unchurched Books. Kindle Edition.

In light of what we have learned above it is important to look at how Jacobson expands on his concept of the community of God. Under the title “The Image of God” he gives this statement:

God desired objects of affection. The decision to make mankind was born out of the entire community of God in order to extend the community of God. We know we were created for community because we were created in the image of God, who is the first and most perfect spiritual community.¹⁷

Jacobson does not prove that God is a community, he just asserts it based on the scriptures he quotes. The idea is that God is three persons therefore he is a community. Because he is the perfect community we must pattern or fellowship from his example. I cannot help but think of a magician. One thing, whatever it may be, disappears in a flash to be replaced with a totally different thing. This happens in an instant right before our very eyes. If we want to understand this book (and the Bible) its critical to examine this particular aspect in some detail. We will do so under two headings: 1. What is “community” 2. Briefly what is God in His essence and nature like; how far can we use his very nature when dealing with how we interact together. Remember Jacobson is not taking here about love, mercy, righteousness, holiness etc. nor about the Lord Jesus as he walked on earth. He is talking about God’s very essence, the inner working of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

First then what is a community: how is this defied in a dictionary? Here is how one of the most important dictionaries defines it:

Community

- 1: a unified body of individuals: as
 - a: STATE, COMMONWEALTH
 - b: the people with common interests living in a particular area broadly: the area itself 〈the problems of a large community〉
 - c: an interacting population of various kinds of individuals (as species) in a common location
 - d: a group of people with a common characteristic or interest living together within a larger society 〈a community of retired persons〉
 - e: a group linked by a common policy
 - f: a body of persons or nations having a common history or common social, economic, and political interests 〈the international community〉
 - g: a body of persons of common and especially professional interests scattered through a larger society 〈the academic community〉
- 2: society at large
- 3
 - a: joint ownership or participation 〈community of goods〉
 - b: common character: LIKENESS 〈community of interests〉

¹⁷ Ibid. page 31

c: social activity: FELLOWSHIP
 d: a social state or condition¹⁸

Let's also look at the etymology¹⁹ (where the word was derived from) of the word community. This word comes from the Latin 'communitatem' (fellowship community) the root being 'COMMON' The etymology of 'fellowship' is: partner, shareholder i.e. companionship.

Clearly the meaning and concept of 'community' deals with human beings and aspects of their relationship to one another. It's a "human" not "divine" reference point, telling us something about humanity. Referring to God as a community is applying human terms and a human condition to God. Man is the archetype here not God. This book reverses the Biblical order where a true fear of God is present.

Secondly then, as it is related to this one aspect only, what is the established orthodox understanding of the Godhead?²⁰ We looked at some aspects of the doctrine of God above. Our purpose here is to see if there is any plausible support for calling God a community. It may help us to first look at a simple illustration: water (H₂O). Water is always the same two elements Hydrogen and Oxygen yet it can be a liquid, a solid or vapor (steam). While we can and do perceive it as three it is really in essence only one. Yes, God is three, but He is three in one.

I am going to refer there to a book on Systematic Theology. Many readers of this review may not be familiar with the term "Systematic Theology" so let me briefly explain. A simple definition of theology is: 'the study of the nature of God and religious belief.' A book on 'Systematic Theology' sets out in a logical order (a system) what the Bible teaches about God and many of the other subjects in the Bible. There are various Systematic Theology's available today. I'm using one by Augustus H. Strong, an American who died in 1921. It's a large and detailed resource that is widely available to anyone who is interested in these subjects.

After a very long and detailed examination of the nature of God Strong concludes with these words:

The groping's of the heathen religions after a trinity in God, together with their inability to construct a consistent scheme of it, are evidence of a rational want in human nature which only the Christian doctrine is able to

¹⁸ Merriam-Webster, I. (2003). Merriam-Webster's collegiate dictionary. (Eleventh ed.). Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, Inc.

¹⁹ For the etymology of any words in this review I am using The Barnhart Concise Dictionary of Etymology, HarperResource copywrite 1995

²⁰ This is a complex subject. After over 2000 years and endless controversies we are only being to gain some understanding of what God is like in His essence. There are many sound orthodox references on this subject as the vast majority of Christian teachers agree on the fundamental aspects. If you are interested please research these matters in greater detail for yourself.

supply. This power to satisfy the inmost needs of the believer is proof of its truth. We close our treatment with the words of Jeremy Taylor: “**He who goes about to speak of the mystery of the Trinity** and does it by words and names of man’s invention, talking of essence and existences, hypo-stases **and personalities**, priority in coequality, and unity in pluralities, may amuse himself and build a tabernacle in his head, and talk something — he knows not what; **but the renewed man**, that feels the power of the Father, to whom the Son is become wisdom, sanctification and redemption, in whose heart the love of the Spirit of God is shed abroad — this man, though he understands nothing of what is intelligible, yet he alone truly understands the Christian doctrine of the Trinity.”²¹

In other words, in spite of all the detailed teaching, scripture references, quotation that Strong gave in his discussion, understanding God is something that happens to a person in whom the Holy Spirit lives by salvation through Christ Jesus. **It cannot adequately be put into human words and terms.** This is one reason why the Lord Jesus Christ came to earth and dwelt among mankind: to show us what God is like.

Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of †his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: **Who is the image of the invisible God**, the firstborn of every creature: (Colossians 1:12-16)

We are look to Jesus, as he is clearly portrayed in the Gospels and in the whole of the Bible, not just to select passages nor to the inner working of the God head put into simple human terms.

As Strong and a multitude of Christians down through the ages realized we cannot understand the Bible and the person and work of the Lord Jesus by mysticism. Within the limits to which God has revealed Himself we must use all the lawful means available to us to understand His self-revelation to us. The point I am seeking to bring home in what was said above is that there are real and important limitations to what we can know and define in human terms. Jacobson ignores all this.

With this in mind here are some of the things Strong examined. This clearly show that Jacobson’s thesis if totally false.

IV. THIS TRI-PERSONALITY IS NOT TRI-THEISM; FOR, WHILE THERE ARE THREE PERSONS, THERE IS BUT ONE ESSENCE.

²¹ Strong’s Systematic Theology, SwordSearcher module Vol. 1 section 4.2 Chapter 2; My highlighting.

(a) **The term ‘person’ only approximately represents the truth.** Although this word more nearly than any other single word expresses the conception which the Scriptures give us of the relation between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, it is not itself used in this connection in Scripture and **we employ it in a qualified sense, not in the ordinary sense in which we apply the word ‘person’ to Peter, Paul, and John.**

The word ‘person’ is only the imperfect and inadequate expression of a fact that transcends our experience and comprehension. Bunyan: “My dark and cloudy words, they do but hold the truth, as cabinets encase the gold.” Three Gods, limiting each other, would deprive each other of Deity. While we show that the persons articulate the unity, it is equally important to remember that the persons are limited by the unity. With us personality implies entire separation from all others — distinct individuality. But in the one God there can be no such separation. The personal distinctions in him must be such as are consistent with essential unity. This is the merit of the statement in the Symbolum Quicumque (or Athanasian Creed, wrongly so called): “The Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Ghost is God; and yet there are not three Gods but one God. So likewise the Father is Lord, the Son is Lord, and the Holy Ghost is Lord; yet there are not three Lords but one Lord. For as we are compelled by Christian truth to acknowledge each person by himself to be God and Lord, so we are forbidden by the same truth to say that there are three Gods or three Lords.”²²

(b) The necessary qualification is that, while three persons among men have only a specific unity of nature or essence — that is, have the same species of nature or essence — the persons of the Godhead have a numerical unity of nature or essence — that is, have the same nature or essence. The undivided essence of the Godhead belongs equally to each of the persons; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, each possesses all the substance and all the attributes of Deity. The plurality of the Godhead is therefore not a plurality of essence, but a plurality of hypostatical, or personal, distinctions. God is not three and one, but three in one. **The one indivisible essence has three modes of subsistence.**

The Trinity is not simply a partnership, in which each member can sign the name of the firm; for this is unity of council and operation only, not of essence. God’s nature is not an abstract but an organic unity. ... See Dorner, System of Doctrine, 1:450-453 — “The one divine personality is so present in each of the distinctions, that these, which singly and by themselves would not be personal, yet **do participate in the one divine personality, each in its own manner. This one divine personality is the unity of the three modes of subsistence which**

²² Strong’s Systematic Theology, SwordSearcher module Vol. 1 section 4.2 Chapter 2

participate in itself. Neither is personal without the others. In each, in its manner, is the whole Godhead.²³

It is not only inadequate to state that God is the perfect community it is simply not true. The inner workings of the God head cannot be expressed in human terms like this.

God's Purpose

As we saw, Jacobson states that the human race was created “to extend the community of God.”²⁴ This statement would have no meaning at all if it were not grounded in what he taught in the previous parts of this book about what he calls ‘the community of God’. As shown above this term is a misuse and misconception of what the Bible teaches. Simply put this was NOT the reason God created mankind. If my statement is true the obvious question is: What does the Bible teach us about why God created mankind? To start with we have a dynamic picture of Heaven in the book of Revelation chapter 4. Part of what is revealed there is this:

And the four beasts had each of them six wings about *him*; and *they were* full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. And when those beasts **give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne**, who liveth for ever and ever, The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, **and worship him** that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, **to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.**
(Revelation 4:6-11)

Man was created in order to Glorify God for what He is, not to add anything to Him, as if that were possible. God cannot change, Malachi 3:6, Hebrews 13:8 etc.) God is Holy. The very essence of holiness is separateness. One source, in speaking about God's holiness says:

... What is prominent here, however, is not the purity that is in holiness, as the majesty that is in it, the severity that is in it. The psalmist is full of the “greatness” and the “terribleness” of the Divine Name, and this makes him say it is reverend, it is awe inspiring. It is one of the serious evils of our day, that the more august and solemnizing views of God seem to be lost. There is so little now of the “submission of holy awe.” Even in acts

²³ Ibid Strong

²⁴ Jacobson, p. 31

of homage and worship we have to fear the encroachments of an undue familiarity. Hebrews may let reverence pass into superstition when they refuse to pronounce the Divine name, but it is to run to the opposite and even more dangerous extreme when we, at the lightest provocation, take the holy Name upon our lips. Today we need to put deeper and more searching and more awe inspiring meaning than ever into the “great and terrible Name” of the All-holy One. It is not “holiness” as a Divine attribute, but “holiness” as making a Divine claim, which we have here to consider.²⁵

Holiness is just one of the attributes of God that come into play when we ponder why God made man. With this in mind the Scriptures must be our guide.

There is no one like You among the gods, O Lord, Nor are there any works like Yours. **All nations whom You have made shall come and worship before You, O Lord, And they shall glorify Your name.** For You are great and do 1wondrous deeds; You alone care God. (Psalm 86:8-10)

Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways! For **WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, OR WHO BECAME HIS COUNSELOR? Or WHO HAS FIRST GIVEN TO HIM THAT IT MIGHT BE PAID BACK TO HIM AGAIN?** For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen. (Romans 11:33-36)

Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. (1 Corinthians 10:31)

Simply put we were created first and foremost to glorify God. We can add nothing to God nor can we take anything away from Him. He is now, always was and always will be perfect and entire. The technical term for this is “Immutability”. In other words, God cannot change in any way, for better or for worse because He is God. If He could change, He would cease to be God. Strong in his Systematic Theology has this to say on this point:

By this we mean that the nature, attributes, and will of God are exempt from all change. Reason teaches us that no change is possible in God, whether of increase or decrease, progress or deterioration, contraction or development. All change must be to better or to worse. But God is absolute perfection, and no change to better is possible. Change to worse

²⁵ Various. (n.d.). The Pulpit Comm. Job, Psalms, Prov. Lam, Song of Sol.

would be equally inconsistent with perfection. No cause for such change exists, either outside of God or in God himself.²⁶

There are many Scripture passages that reveal this truth. For example, Psalm 102:27, Malachi 3:6 and James 1:17. The Bible often uses anthropomorphic expressions, words that speak of God in human terms. This has misled many to think of God in human terms, again I would urge the reader to study these matters for her or himself.

It is only in and through the Lord Jesus Christ that we can have any fellowship with God.

God wants to share the glory that is His and His alone. With utter and absolute delight, those whom God has chosen to salvation will give Him glory for all eternity. There is no human analogy that can even begin to put this into words.

The following sheds some more light on this subject. It expresses better than I can articulate why God created man and what this means:

I proceed to show in what respects God's glory is man's chief end.

First, it is man's end,

1. It is the end which God aimed at when he made man, Prov.16:4, "The Lord hath made all things for himself," Rom.11:36, "For of him, and through him, and to him are all things." Every rational agent proposes to himself an end in working, and the most perfect the highest end. Now God is the most perfect Being, and his glory the noblest end. God is not actively glorified by all men, and therefore he surely did not design it; but he designed to have glory from them, either by them or on them; and so it will be. Happy they who glorify him by their actings, that they may not glorify him by their eternal sufferings

2. It is the end of man as God's work. Man was made fit for glorifying God, Eccl. 7:29. "God made man upright;" as a well-tuned instrument, or as a house conveniently built, though never inhabited. The very fabric of man's body, whereby he looks upward, while the breast look downward, is palpable evidence of this.

3. It is that which man should aim at, the mark to which he should direct all he does, 1 Cor. 10:31, the text. This is what we should continually have in our eye, the grand design we should be carrying on in the world, Psal. 16:8. "I have set the Lord always before me," says David.

Secondly, It is man's chief end, that which God chiefly aimed at, the chief end of man as God's work, and that which man should chiefly aim at. God made man for other ends, as to govern, use, and dispose of other creatures in the earth, sea, and air, wisely, soberly, and mercifully, Gen.

²⁶ Strong Vol 1 Section V. 2. Immutability

1:26. Man was fitted for these ends, and a man may propose them lawfully to himself, seeing God has set them before him; but still these are but subordinate ends to his glory.

There are some ends which men propose to themselves, which are simply unlawful, as to satisfy their revenge, their lust, their covetousness. These are not capable of subordination to the glory of God, who hates robbery for burnt-offering. But there are other ends which are indeed in themselves lawful, yet become sinful, if they be not set in their due place, that is, subordinate to the glory of God. Now, God's glory is made our chief end, when these three things concur.

1. When whatever end we have in our actions, the glory of God is still one of our ends in acting. We may eat and drink for the nourishment of our bodies; but this must not jostle out our respect to the glory of God. If the nourishment of our bodies be the only end of our eating and drinking, it is sinful, and out of the due order.

2. It must not only be our end, but it must be our main and principal end, that which we chiefly design. When God's glory is our chief end, all other ends that we propose to ourselves will be down-weighed by this; all other sheaves must bow to that sheaf: as a diligent servant designs to please both the master and his steward, but chiefly the master. But when, on the contrary, a man eats and drinks (for instance) more for the nourishment of his body than for God's glory, it is plain, that God's glory is not the chief end of the man in that action. Hence we read, 2Tim.3:4. of some that are "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God."

3. When it is the ultimate end, the last end, the top and perfection of what we design, beyond which we have no more view, and to which all other ends are made subservient, and as means to that end. Thus we should eat that our bodies may be refreshed; we should desire that our bodies may be refreshed, that we may be the more capable to serve and glorify God in our stations. Thus we are obliged to seek our own salvation, that God may be glorified; and not to seek God's glory only that we may be saved; for that is to make the glory of God a stepping-stone to our own safety.²⁷

Where to go from here

²⁷ http://www.the-highway.com/Boston_chiefend.html ("Of Man's Chief End and Happiness" by Thomas Boston.

The book under review has four sections, the first of which is “Spiritual Community”. That section has eight subdivisions. So far in this review I have covered the first two of these subdivisions in the first section: “A Peculiar People” and “The Community of God”. There is a total of 39 subdivisions including the Introduction. Obviously, it is not possible to review this book in any greater detail.

I have chosen to concentrate of the beginning of the book for two reasons. First of all, that is where Jacobson lays his foundation. It’s the base upon which all else is built. If the foundation is faulty the structure cannot stand. (See Matthew 7:24-27). Secondly this detailed analysis reveals how Jacobson uses Scripture. His only concern is to make the Bible say what he wants it to say, truth as truth is of no concern. If the reader of this review is not convinced of these facts by this point, there is little or nothing I can add to help in this matter. For those however who are concerned, who see that there may be, at least some truth is what I say, I will give a very brief summary of the rest of the book and I will look at one more section in some detail.

The remainder of the book can be broken down into three parts. Part one seeks to destroy every and all form of leadership in the Church. Every distinction from Male to Female to elders and deacons are attacked in order to make ALL member of the Church equal. Part two seeks to relegate all forms of what is historically recognized as the Church to the rubbish pile. Any past association, in any form or denomination, must be thrown out. Part three deals with the standard teaching of the Organic Church Movement. Nothing is really unique in what Jacobson presents though his method of presentation is more polished than some. I cover much of this material in my previous two book reviews on books by Frank Viola and some basic information in my paper on John Zens and “Searching Together”. These can be found at my website under the “In Sympathy section ([Surrey Tabernacle Pulpit](#)) For the interested reader I will look at one final section from Jacobson’s book.

God or Man?

The reader who has reached this point of my review may wonder: Does Jacobson really portray God in human terms? Is Jacobson’s God truly more human than the divine? Surely, the reader may say: You have your facts wrong! With this in mind I give one last quotation from *Unchurched Christianly*. This is from the last division of part one.

It probably shouldn’t surprise us that coming together in complete unity creates the perfect conditions for God to show up in a uniquely powerful way. After all, complete unity is what he calls home; it is his natural habitat. And it is ours, as well. When we set aside all our competing agendas and our desires to control one another, and begin to remember how he originally created us to be—letting the lines between individuals

become blurred until we finally become one—it makes him homesick for the type of community he had with us before the Fall. It fills him with longing to be with his Bride.²⁸

Let's unpack what he is saying, part by part.

First of all, his God is clearly not sovereign, man is in the driver's seat. Something must happen before God can come in real power: man must take action first! We must follow the Organic Church's path to "complete unity" before God can be manifested in power. It's a sad fact, that in this day and age, most professing Christians have no or at best limited belief in the sovereignty of God. It is however also a fact that the Scriptures are not silent on this matter:

Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh; is anything too difficult for Me?" (Jeremiah 32:27)

Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, indeed everything that is in the heavens and the earth; Yours is the dominion, O LORD, and You exalt Yourself as head over all. "Both riches and honor come from You, and You rule over all, and in Your hand is power and might; and it lies in Your hand to make great and to strengthen everyone. (1 Chronicles 9:11-12)

I know that You can do all things, And that no purpose of Yours can be thwarted. (Job 42:2)

For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified. (Romans 8:29-30)

These are just a handful of passages taken from among many others that show that God is in absolute control. He is sovereign whether we believe He is or not! Yes, even the very nations of the earth are as a drop of water in a bucket to God who we are to fear and reverence. (Isaiah 40:15). Of course, unity among believers is important! That is obvious, but it's equally obvious that it is not something man alone controls, nor is God limited in any way whatsoever by our lack of unity. Just look at what our Lord said about raising up the very stones of the ground to cry out. (Luke 19:40).

Next, as I showed above, Jacobson continues to talk about the very King of Kings and Lord of Lords in the most outrageous and cavalier manner. God has a "home" and a "natural habitat"! Is he talking about an animal, like a lion or deer? Surely, he is not talking about the God of the Bible who inhabits eternity! Sadly, this is how he views God

²⁸ Jacobson, p. 56

in his heart because it is out of the heart that the mouth speaks. (Matthew 15:8) To reiterate: this is why I brought up the subject of the fear of God. Jacobson demonstrates no fear of God.

We are to let “the lines between individuals become blurred until we finally become one.” Such a statement can only come from the warped interpretation of Scripture that is used though out this book. I have examined this in part above and in the other book reviews referred to above.

A common expression we often use is that “We saved the best for last.” Well in this case the opposite is true. The worst has been saved for last. The god (lower case god) of this book gets “homesick”. As if that were not bad enough, he does so for that state of things that he never intended to be permanent. Jacobson’s god is “filled with longing” for something that is conditioned on man’s willingness to follow the Organic Church’s path to unity. This god, we are told longs for that state of affairs that existed when he first created Adam and Eve. He says this because he has gone into a great deal of detail to elaborate his interpretation of this period in history. As has been clearly shown God’s purpose of salvation centers in Christ Jesus the Lord, not upon Adam and Eve²⁹. Clearly Jacobson has created a god after his (mans) own image and not after the teaching of the Bible. His god is dependent upon his creatures and fashioned after the flesh.

I commend the reader of this review for their diligence and willingness to examine these subjects. I must leave you now to decide as those in the fellowship I mentioned in my preface had to decide. I hope and pray with all my desire that you are led by the Holy Spirit into the truth as it is in Jesus and not into the by-path of mysticism which is at the heart of the Organic Church movement.

²⁹ The topic of the first creation, like much else in this review is beyond that scope of this simple review. I would again encourage the reader to look into this for themselves.