

- **Acts 20:28**—“Take heed therefore to yourselves, and to all the flock, wherein the Holy Spirit has set you as overseers, to shepherd **the assembly of God, which he has purchased** [or ‘acquired for Himself’] **with his own blood.**”

As our blessed Lord Jesus is **both God and Man in His Person**, Scripture can, therefore, speak of the atoning blood of God. But this, of course, refers to human blood, His infinitely precious blood, not to some sort of “divine” blood. (*For we must never confound the two natures; rather, that which is true of either nature is always true of, and attributable to, His one undivided Person.*) **And as such, the assembly is His; it is God the Son’s church.** Yet, because of the fundamental truth of the Trinity of the Godhead, the assembly is **also God the Father’s and God the Holy Spirit’s.**

Compare:

“And Simon Peter answering said, **Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answering said to him,** Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona, for flesh and blood has not revealed it to thee, but **my Father** who is in the heavens. And I also, I say unto thee that thou art Peter, and **on this rock** [upon the rock of Himself, upon the truth of His Person as the eternal Son] **I will build my assembly** [it is **His** assembly, **the assembly of God the Son**], and hades’ gates shall not prevail against it. . . From that time Jesus began to shew to his disciples that he must go away to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, **and be killed, and the third day be raised.**” (Matt. 16:16-18, 21)

“But if I delay, in order that thou mayest know how one ought to conduct oneself in **God’s house**, which is **the assembly of the living God**, the pillar and base of the truth. And confessedly the mystery of piety is great: **God** [or, ‘Who,’ ‘He who,’ the relative pronoun *contextually* referring back to none other than God (referred to *twice*: ‘God,’ the ‘living God’) in the Person of God the Son, who] **has been manifested in flesh**, has been justified in the Spirit, has appeared to angels, has been preached among the nations, has been believed on in the world, has been received up in glory.” (1 Tim. 3:15-16)

“He Who shed His blood for us was God. If the Saviour here was not God, His purchase would have only a creature’s value, **and must be wholly insufficient** to acquire on God’s part the assembly as it was, yea, as it is. Being a divine Person, His gaining it to Himself by blood has an infinite and eternal efficacy.” (WK)

“**Thus, if Jesus had not been a man, man had derived no such benefit as the gospel proclaims. If He had not been God, the benefit could only have been human, earthly, and temporal. To give such a boon as Christianity offers, He must be both God and man in the same person. Again, if He had not died as man, there could have been no Christian redemption by blood. If He who died had not been Divine, the value of blood-shedding had been only that of a creature, and limited. To be infinite, not in person only, but in His sacrifice for us, He must be, as Scripture declares He was, both God and man. . . .** It is worthy of God to save the lost, but it is only worthy of Him to save holily and righteously at all cost to Himself, at infinite cost, yet to save freely of grace, and therefore by faith of His testimony that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. **In every other scheme love is lost, or righteousness is compromised, or guilty man is flattered. The cross of Christ alone satisfies and harmonises all truth, meeting every want of man and every attribute of God. . . . It [the divine-human Person of Christ] is the keystone of Christianity.** Without it not only is its salvation a myth but its morality is a cheat. For all is built on the capital truth that God in Divine love humbled Himself to become man and die for sinners, that He might save and bless the believer to the uttermost, not by Christ only, but with Him.” (WK)

The following comments on the unique expression of “*the Lord and Father*” found in James 3:9 are fitting as to the unique expression “*the assembly of God which He has purchased with His own blood*” found here in Acts 20:28:

“There seems no sufficient ground then for doubting that ‘the Lord’ in the usual acceptance of the term is here combined with ‘the Father’ [in James 3:9] as objects united in our praise [of one Divine Person, namely the Father—literally, ‘the Lord and Father’]. **That it is unusual, all admit; but so it is in many a phrase of holy writ, that our narrowness of thought may be corrected and enlarged out of the fulness of divine truth.** On the other hand no one should stumble at predicating ‘Lord’ of the Father, if such were the aim of the inspiring Spirit here. For though . . . He [Jesus] is in distinctive office one sole Lord, as the Father is simply in His nature one sole God (1 Cor. 8:6), it does not follow

that 'Lord' may not be applied to the other Persons in the Godhead. Thus in 2 Cor. 3 it is predicated of the Spirit in the last clause of the last verse." (WK)

Now compare the following passages where the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, **is explicitly called very "God,"** as in Acts 20:28 (and note that these are only *a few examples* setting forth His absolute Deity; they do not include, e.g., **all of those many NT scriptures** wherein He is shown to be *equal and one* with the Father in the unity of the divine nature, or "*Lord*" in the unmistakable and inescapable sense of "*Jehovah*" or declared to be the Self-Existent, Ever Existing One, the "*I AM*"; nor do they include **all of those many OT scriptures** which declare the coming Messiah as *Jehovah Himself*, and/or which speak exclusively of *the true God, Jehovah*, and which the NT repeatedly and methodically applies, throughout, to the Son as *Jehovah, Jehovah-Messiah* (Exod. 3:13-15; Deut. 10:17; 1 Kings 8:39; Neh. 9:6-7; Ps. 8:1-2; 34:8; 45:6; 68:18; 97:7; 102:25-27; 136:3; Isa. 6:1-10; 7:14; 8:8, 10, 13-14; 9:6-7; 28:16; 40:3, 10, 28; 43:10-11; 44:6, 24; 45:11-12; 45:22-23; 48:12-13; Jer. 17:10; Joel 2:32; Mic. 5:1b-5a; Zech. 11:12-13; 12:10; 13:7; Mal. 3:1; etc., etc.):

"In the beginning was the Word [not 'came into being' in the beginning, but ever 'was' in the beginning, and thus had no beginning], and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and [to be even more emphatic and absolute] without him not one thing [no exceptions: not a single thing!] came into being which has come into being [that is, not one created thing exists apart from the eternal Word bringing it into existence!]." (John 1:1-3)

"Then he says to Thomas, Bring thy finger here and see my hands; and bring thy hand and put it into my side; and be not unbelieving, but believing. ***Thomas answered and said to him, My Lord and my God. Jesus says to him, Because thou hast seen me thou hast believed: blessed they who have not seen and have believed.***" (John 20:27-29)

"And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call **his name Jesus, for he himself shall save his people** from their sins. Now all this came to pass that that might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord, through the prophet, saying, Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call **his name Emmanuel**, which is, being interpreted, ***'God with us.'***" (Matt. 1:21-23)

"Who are Israelites; whose is the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the law-giving, and the service, and the promises; whose are the fathers; and of whom, **as according to flesh, is *the Christ who is* [literally, '*the one being*'] ***over all God* blessed for ever. Amen.**" (Rom. 9:4-5)**

"For let this mind be in you which was also in ***Christ Jesus; who, subsisting in the form of God***, did not esteem it an object of rapine [*as something to be snatched at or seized to His own advantage or enrichment*] to be on an ***equality with God***; but emptied himself, in taking the **form of a servant**, in being come in the likeness of men; and having been found in figure as a man, humbled himself in becoming obedient even unto death, and that the death of the cross. Wherefore also God highly exalted him, and granted him a name, that which is ***above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow***, of heavenly and earthly and infernal beings, ***and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord*** [*that He is supreme Lord: Jehovah, Jehovah-Jesus*] to God the Father's glory." (Phil. 2:5-11)

"Awaiting the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of ***our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ***; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all lawlessness, and purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous for good works." (Tit. 2:13-14)

"But as to the Son [the Father says in Ps. 45:6], Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever, and a sceptre of uprightness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. . . . And [as to the Son, the Father says in Ps. 102:25-27], Thou in the beginning, Lord [Jehovah, the Self-Existent, Uncreated, Ever Existing, Eternal One, who caused the 'beginning' of all things to begin], hast founded the earth, and works of thy hands are the heavens. They shall perish, but thou continuest still; and they all shall grow old as a garment, and as a covering shalt thou roll them up, and they shall be changed; but thou art the Same [another Divine title of the only true God, Jehovah, meaning 'the self-existent one who does not change,' in contrast to all creatures who are such as are indeed changeable], and thy years shall not fail." (Heb. 1:8, 10-12)

“For every house is built by someone; but **he [Christ, the Son] who has built all things is God [as demonstrated in Heb. 1].**” (Heb. 3:4)

“Simon Peter, bondman and apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have received like precious faith with us through the righteousness of **our God and Saviour Jesus Christ.**” (2 Pet. 1:1)

“But if I delay, in order that thou mayest know how one ought to conduct oneself in **God's house**, which is **the assembly of the living God**, the pillar and base of the truth. And confessedly the mystery of piety is great: **God [or, ‘Who,’ ‘He who,’ the relative pronoun contextually referring back to none other than God (referred to twice: ‘God,’ the ‘living God’) in the Person of God the Son, who] has been manifested in flesh**, has been justified in the Spirit, has appeared to angels, has been preached among the nations, has been believed on in the world, has been received up in glory.” (1 Tim. 3:15-16)

“**And the life has been manifested**, and we have seen, and bear witness, and report to you **the eternal life [the eternal Son], which was with the Father, and has been manifested to us . . .** And we know that **the Son of God has come**, and has given us an understanding that we should know him that is true; and **we are in him that is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.** Children, **keep yourselves from idols.**” (1 John 1:2; 5:20-21)

“**For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given**; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name is called **Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God****, **Father of eternity [or, ‘Father of the age,’ of the coming age, the Millennial Kingdom age]**, **Prince of Peace**. Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with judgment and with righteousness, from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of Jehovah of hosts will perform this.” (Isa. 9:6-7)

[**‘Mighty God,’ as in Isa. 10:21; 42:13; Jer. 32:18; Neh. 9:32; Deut. 10:17—a Divine Title of Jehovah: El Gibbor, God the Mighty, the Hebrew word Gibbor (‘Mighty’) meaning Masterful Hero, Warrior, Champion; and is thus distinct from and in no sense a comparative to the selfsame Jehovah’s other Divine Title: El Shaddai, God the Almighty, the Hebrew word Shaddai (‘Almighty’) meaning All-Powerful, All-Sufficient—which Divine Title intrinsically belongs likewise to the Omnipotent Jehovah-Jesus, the First and the Last, He who is the Alpha and the Omega, the Lord God Almighty (Rev. 1:8 with 22:12-13; 1:17 and 2:8).]