

Mike Vinson's 'false Christ'

Just recently I received an email that said as follows –

Dear Cecil,

I am writing to you for some advice. I am greatly concerned about my brother and his friends who have been Christians for a good few years now. Lately they have been reading a lot about Mike Vinson. They now very much believe the teachings of this man I myself am only saved 20 months now so am still learning a lot about false prophets and Heresy. I find your web site so helpful in my discernment of such things. However having searched the Internet for info on this man, I can find very little that speaks against him and his teachings. As you will understand the urgency I feel in telling my brother how wrong he is about this mans teaching, I would appreciate if you could look into this matter for me.

I know you are extremely busy but I'm scared my brother and his friends will get in too deep regarding this man and may influence others into his thinking. I know it will not be enough to just tell my brother this teaching is wrong! If I'm to stand a chance of convincing him I'll need your help with getting together appropriate scripture and articles.

Thank you so much for your help and I look forward to your reply.

Regards....

This was my reply to the inquirer –

Dear...

Thank you for your email. Mike Vinson was a new name to me but after visiting his website and also watching some video of him speaking I would firstly say that you are quite right to have concerns about the teachings of this man. I will not attempt to expose every error of this man but rather I will focus on one error in particular that shows that Mike Vinson has a totally false understanding of the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. His 'Jesus' is "another Jesus" the kind that the Apostle Paul warned against in 2nd Corinthians 11:3-4.

Concerning the Person of Christ Mike Vinson teaches that God the Father CREATED the Lord Jesus Christ. In his article on 'The Trinity' Mike Vinson wrote the following –

Applying the Romans 1:10 pinciple (I think Mr Vinson actually meant Romans 1:20 – a verse/principle quoted earlier in his article) **we could say that in the beginning God (The Father has no beginning) the Father created Christ aand through Christ created the rest of creation. AAAnd how does this fit with scripture? Very well indeed.**

In another article entitled 'Is Jesus God?' he wrote the following –

One of the very first papers I posted was 'Is God A Trinity?' In it I point out that Christ Himself admits that He is "the beginning of the creation of God" (Revelation 3:14). God the Father of course has no 'beginning'.

On the 'Welcome' page of his website Mike Vinson writes –

The only way to know Christ is to know Him as "He who Is, Was and Will Be". It is for this reason that Christ, through His own Revelation, reiterates this truth on 11 separate occasion – Revelation 1:4 John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come: and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne;

If Mr Vinson were to look at some more verses in the same **Revelation 1** chapter and follow through on them he would learn that **the Lord Jesus Christ is GOD**. In **verse 8** of **Revelation 1** **“the Almighty”** says to John **“I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty”**. The Greek word translated as **“the Almighty”** is *pantokrator* and in Vine’s Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words it says this about that Greek word – *‘almighty or ruler of all...is used of GOD only’*.

“The Almighty” refers to Himself as **“who is and who was and who is to come”** – this is clearly the Lord Jesus Christ and He is declaring Himself to be **“the Almighty” GOD**. To reinforce that this verse refers to the Lord Jesus we could move ahead to **Revelation 22** and the one who is speaking in **verses 12-16** identifies Himself as the Lord Jesus in **verse 16**. In **verse 13** the Lord Jesus refers to Himself as **“Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end”** thus clearly identifying Himself as **“the Almighty” GOD of Revelation 1:8**.

Should anyone doubt that **“the Almighty” GOD** who refers to Himself as **“Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end”** is the Lord Jesus, in the same **verse 13** of **Revelation 22** the speaker also refers to Himself as **“the first and the last”**.

Can we positively identify who **“the first and the last is”**? Well, if we go back to **Revelation 1** we read in **verses 17-18** **“And when I [John] saw him I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last. I am he that liveth and was dead and behold I am alive for evermore”**. The speaker in these verses is clearly the Lord Jesus Christ who identifies Himself as **“the first and the last”** who is also the **“Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end”** of **Revelation 22: 12-16** and who is also the speaker in **Revelation 1:8** who declares Himself to be **“the Almighty”** which as we saw earlier is the translation of a Greek word that according to Vine’s Dictionary *‘is used of GOD only’*.

From other passages it is clear that the Lord Jesus Christ declared Himself to be God – in **John 8:58** He said, **“Before Abraham was I am”** – please remember God’s revelation of Himself in such terminology to Moses in Exodus 3:14 – the listeners in **John 8** certainly remembered for in **verse 59** we read **“Then they took up stones to cast at him”**.

Commenting on these 2 verses Pastor John MacArthur writes ‘Here Jesus declared Himself to be Yahweh i.e. The Lord of the Old Testament...the eternally pre-existent God who revealed Himself in the Old Testament to the Jews...The Jews understood Jesus’ claim and followed Leviticus 24:16 which indicates that any man who falsely claims to be God should be stoned’.

We find a similar ‘divine’ claim by the Lord Jesus in **John 10:30** when He said, **“I and my Father are one”**. Again the Jews wanted to stone Him for blasphemy [see **verse 31**]. The Lord then asks if they want to stone Him because of **“works”** that He has done [see **verse 32**] but this is their answer in **verse 33** **“For a good work we stone thee not, but for blasphemy and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God”**.

In **John 1:1** we read **“and the Word was God”** and later we read in **verse 14** **“and the Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us”** – **“the Word”** who is **“God”** according to **John 1:1** appeared in **“flesh”** according to **verse 14** and that **“Word in flesh”** is of course the incarnate Lord Jesus Christ. **He is GOD**.

In **John 20:28** Thomas, in the presence of the risen Lord Jesus Christ, addressed Him as **“My Lord and my God”** literally ‘The Lord of me and the God of me’ – did the Lord Jesus rebuke Thomas for addressing Him in such ‘divine’ terms – No! – He told Thomas that those who, unlike Thomas, would not see Him but who would also believe Him to be ‘their Lord and their God’ would be **“blessed”** [**verse 29**].

The Lord Jesus Christ is GOD just as He claimed to be whilst here on earth and as God He is **“from everlasting to everlasting”** [**Psalm 90:2**] and that means **He was not created**.

Mike Vinson believes that **Revelation 3:14** teaches that the Lord Jesus Christ was created. Is that what that verse means? Turning once more to Vine's Expository Dictionary we find this about the Greek word translated as "beginning" – *'the origin, the active cause'*. The Greek word is *arche* and that would be the root of an English word like 'architect' – the one who plans and oversees a project but is not actually a part of the project.

The same Greek word *arche* appears in **Revelation 21:6** where John writes, "And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning (*arche*) and the end" and this speaker goes on to say in **verse 7**, "He that overcometh shall inherit all things and I WILL BE HIS GOD and he shall be my son". The term "the beginning" is one that God uses of Himself and GOD is not created.

Commenting on **Revelation 3:14** Pastor John MacArthur writes 'This corrects a heresy apparently present in Laodicea as in Colosse that Christ was a created being (see Colossians 1:15-20). Instead He is the "beginning" (literally 'beginner, originator, initiator') of creation (see John 1:3) and the "firstborn of creation" that is the most pre-eminent, supreme person ever born (see Colossians 1:15). As a man He had a beginning [*conception/incarnation*] but as God He was the beginning (*initiator of creation*). This heresy concerning the person of Christ had produced an unregenerate church in Laodicea'.

In his book 'Why you should believe in the Trinity' Robert Bowman Jnr, when responding to Jehovah's Witnesses claims that because of Revelation 3:14 Christ was created, writes on pages 65-67 'The use of the word "beginning" as a description of Christ is said by JWs to indicate that he was created. If one considers the range of possible meanings of the Greek word *arche* translated "beginning" it must be admitted that the word might bear this meaning. However that is not the only or even a likely meaning. The main argument presented by the JWs is that John (author of Revelation) always uses *arche* with the common meaning of "beginning". However if by "beginning" one understands "first thing" this is not so. In fact it has this meaning only once in John's writings (John 2:11). Elsewhere in John's Gospel and Epistles it always refers to a beginning point in time (John 1:1&2; 6:64; 8:25&44; 15:27; 16:4; 1 John 1:1; 2:7, 13, 14 & 24; 3:8&11; 2 John 5&6) not the first thing in a series. In the book of Revelation in fact *arche* is used only three other times and ALWAYS of God as "the beginning and the end"...Yet witnesses will rightly deny that God is a first thing in a series of other things. Thus it is at least possible, if not probable that Revelation 3:14 does not use "beginning" in the sense of 'first thing'. We must therefore consider two alternate interpretations both of which are consistent with the Trinity. First it might be that in Revelation 3:14 *arche* means 'ruler' or 'first over' creation...in Colossians 1:18 the only other place where Christ is called *arche* where it is usually translated "beginning", the meaning 'ruler' is practically certain...it is possible that 'ruler' is the correct meaning of *arche* in Revelation 3:14. However it is not certain, as it is also possible that *arche* means 'source' or 'first cause'. The Greek word *arche* could, in first century Greek, bear the meaning of 'first cause' or 'origin' or 'source' when used in relation to the universe or creation...in the book of Revelation *arche* appears to be used with this meaning in all three of the other occurrences of the word in that book. In these three verses God is called "the beginning and the end"...The best interpretation of this expression would seem to be that God is the beginner and the consummator of creation – that he is its first cause and its final goal. It is therefore reasonable to think that the same usage is found in 3:14...In short *arche* in Revelation 3:14 could mean either 'ruler' or 'first cause'. **The meaning of 'first thing created' is the least likely interpretation if context and the use of *arche* in the New Testament with reference to persons are taken into consideration. Certainly Revelation 3:14 cannot be used to prove that Christ is created'.**

One final point about the Person of Christ. Mike Vinson wrote –

Christ was not "made to be sin" by being nailed to the cross. Rather He was "made to be sin" by being "shapen in iniquity and conceived in sin"...Christ, just like all of us was born into 'a body of death'.

Unlike all humanity that has been born since God created Adam and Eve and who have entered this world by natural procreation through the union of a man and a woman, the Lord Jesus Christ was conceived as a result of the Holy Spirit overshadowing a virgin called Mary [see Luke 1:35] and so the Lord Jesus was not born in the 'natural' lineage of Adam. Because of this He was not a 'fallen son' of Adam and was not subject to Adam's legacy namely "death" – **"as in Adam ALL die" [1st Corinthians 15:22]** and **"as by one man (Adam) sin entered into the world and death by sin and so death passed upon all men (in the lineage of Adam) for all have sinned" [Romans 5:12].**

The Lord Jesus had to **"become obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" [Philippians 2:8]**. Every individual from Adam [except for Enoch and Elijah who were taken from this earth by God before experiencing death] has because of 'the fall' eventually died physically – human beings don't have to do anything or 'obey' anything for death to finally overcome them – the truth is as quoted earlier **"in Adam all die"**. However, the sinless Christ who was not **"in Adam"** would never have died physically if He had not willingly and in obedience to His Father's will [see Matthew 26:39 and Acts 2:23] allowed Himself to be crucified on the cross

Pastor John MacArthur commenting on Romans 5:12 writes – 'Adam passed to all his descendants the inherent sinful nature he possessed because of his first disobedience. That nature is present from the moment of conception (Psalm 51:5 – the **"shapen in iniquity and conceived in sin"** that Mike Vinson quoted above) making it impossible for man to live in a way that pleases God'.

By nature those who are **"in Adam"** and who have been **"shapen in iniquity and conceived in sin"** CANNOT please God [see Romans 8:8] yet twice we read of God the Father declaring from heaven concerning the Lord Jesus Christ **"This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased" [Matthew 3:17 and Matthew 17:5]**. Why was Christ able to naturally **"please"** God the Father? Because He was not as Mike Vinson claims **"shapen in iniquity and conceived in sin"** but rather He was **"holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners"**[Hebrews 7:26].

Mike Vinson referred to Christ **"being nailed to the cross"**. On that cross He was a 'sacrificial lamb' bearing away the sins of His people [see John 1:36; Matthew 1:21; Hebrews 9:26; 1st Peter 1:18-19]. This last reference from 1st Peter speaks of the sacrifice of Christ in these terms **"as of a lamb without blemish and without spot"** – if Christ had been **"shapen in iniquity and conceived in sin"** He would not have been **"without blemish and without spot"** and so His sacrifice on behalf of His people would not have been acceptable to God the Father but His glorious resurrection from the grave demonstrates that it was acceptable to His Father and affirms the truth of 2nd Peter 3:18 where we read **"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just (sinless) for the unjust (sinners) that he might bring us to God"**.

It most certainly was on **"the cross"** that Christ was **"made to be sin"** for His people for it was there that **"he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows"** it was there that He was **"smitten of God...wounded for our transgressions...bruised for our iniquities"** it was there that **"the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all"** and it was there that **"it pleased the Lord to bruise him"** [Isaiah 53:3-11]. It was there on the cross that He was **"forsaken"** by His Father [see Matthew 27:46] and that will be the eternal fate of all those who die in their sins and outside of Christ [despite a view to the contrary by Mr Vinson who subscribes to a heresy known as 'Universal Reconciliation'].

The reality and purpose of the substitutionary sufferings of the sinless Christ for His people are captured perfectly in 2nd Corinthians 5:21 **"For he (God the Father) hath made him (this refers to the Father's judgemental treatment of Christ on the cross) who knew no sin (the sinless Christ) to be sin for us (to suffer as a substitute the punishment rightly due to His people for their sin) that we might be made (this is how the Father now looks upon those sinners for whom Christ died) the righteousness of God in him"** (those **"in Christ"** and no longer **"in Adam"** are now clothed in and accepted because of the perfect righteousness of Christ – see Romans 3:21-22 and Ephesians 1:6).

God's verdict on the teaching of Mike Vinson concerning the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ is clearly spelt out in **Galatians 1:9** "**If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received let him be accursed**".

Cecil Andrews – 'Take Heed' Ministries – 16th July 2008