

An Humble
INQUIRY
INTO THE
SCRIPTURE-ACCOUNT
OF
JESUS CHRIST:
OR, A
SHORT ARGUMENT
Concerning
His **Deity** and **Glozy,**
According to the
G O S P E L.

I Cor. viii. 5. *To us there is but One God, and he is the Father, of whom are all things; and One Lord, viz. Jesus Christ, through whom are all things.*

Auguf. cont. Maxim. l. 3. c. 14.

*Nec ego Nicanaw Synodum tibi, nec tu Ariminensim mihi debes, ob-
jicere. Scripturarum Authoritatibus, &c.*

*Thou shalt not urge me with the Council of Arimintum, nor I thee with the
Council of Nice, but let us decide the Cause by Scripture Authority*

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*To us there is but one God, namely the
Father, of whom are all things; and one
Lord, namely Jesus Christ, through whom
are all things.*

1 Corinthians 8:6

*You shall not try to persuade me with the
Council of Ariminum, nor I you with the
Council of Nicaea; but let us decide the
question by Scripture authority.¹*

Augustine, *Answer to Maximinus the
Arian*, 2.14.3

¹ In a recent translation the full passage is: "I should not, however, introduce the Council of Nicaea to prejudice the case in my favor, nor should you introduce the Council of Ariminum that way. I am not bound by the authority of Ariminum, and you are not bound by that of Nicaea. By the authority of the scriptures that are not the property of anyone, but the common witnesses for both of us, let position do battle with position, case with case, reason with reason." Augustine, *Answer to Maximinus*, 282 (2.14.3). Augustine is referring to the councils of catholic bishops at Nicaea in 325 and at Ariminum in 359. On these councils see Hanson, *The Search*, chapters 6, 12.

CHAPTER I: God and Jesus

I.1 *How the Word “God” is Used in Scripture*

THAT THE BLESSED JESUS HAS THE TITLE of “God” ascribed sometimes to him in the holy Scriptures is not denied by Arians or Socinians.² But it remains to be examined in what sense that title as given to him is intended. Nor is this an unreasonable or needless inquiry,

² Emyln here employs somewhat standard if misleading names for two types of belief among unitarian Christians. (Compare: Irons et. al., *The Son of God*.) Both hold that the one true God is the Father alone, while the “Arians” believe and the “Socinians” deny that Jesus existed before his human life. “Arians” are so called because of the broad similarity of their views to the so-called “Arians” of the fourth century (catholic Christians who opposed the Nicene creed), and “Socinians” are so-called because of unitarian reformer Fausto Paolo Sozzini (a.k.a. Faustus Socinus, 1539–1604), on whose Christology the man Jesus began to exist at the time of his miraculous conception. The labels mislead because most who currently hold such views are not at all followers of either ancient “Arians” or of Socinus; rather, their views are based on their understanding of Scripture.

since it is beyond all reasonable denial that the title of “God” is given in very different senses in the Scripture.

Sometimes it signifies the most high, perfect, and infinite being, who is of himself alone, and owes neither his being nor authority, nor anything to another; and this is what is most commonly intended when we speak of “God” in ordinary discourse, and in prayer and praise; we mean “God” in the highest sense.

At other times it has a lower sense and is made a title for persons who are invested with subordinate authority and power from that supreme being. Thus, angels are styled “gods.”³ “Thou hast made him a little lower than the gods,” as it is in the margin;⁴ so also, magistrates are “gods.”⁵ And sometimes in the singular number, one person is called “god,” as Moses is twice so-called, a “god” to Aaron, and afterwards a “god” to Pharaoh.⁶ And thus the devil is called “the god of this world,” i.e., the prince and mighty ruler of it, though by unjust usurpation and God’s permission.⁷

³ Psalm 97:7.

⁴ Psalm 8:5. Most English translations don’t use the word “gods” in this verse. Thus the NRSV: “Yet you have made them a little lower than God, and crowned them with glory and honor.” But the word translated as “God” is the Hebrew *elohim*, which is plural in form, and can mean “God” or “gods”—usually the context clarifies which is meant, although this verse is an exception. Thus, the NRSV footnote says “Or *than the divine beings or angels*”—or equivalently, “gods,” as in the margin of the translation Emlyn is looking at.

⁵ Exodus 22:28; Psalm 82:1; John 10:34–35.

⁶ Exodus 4:16, 7:1.

⁷ 2 Corinthians 4:4.

Now, as he who alone is “God” in the former sense is infinitely above all these, so we find him distinguished from all others who are called “god” by the title “a God of gods,”⁸ or the chief of all gods, with whom none of those gods may be compared.⁹ So Philo describes him to be not only the “God of

⁸ Deuteronomy 10:17; Joshua 22:22.

⁹ Third century theologian Origen (c. 185–c. 254) addressed complaints that he taught two gods by distinguishing between different sorts of deity and corresponding uses of the word “god”: “Many people who wish to be pious are troubled because they are afraid that they may proclaim two gods and, for this reason, they fall into false and impious beliefs. They either deny that the individual nature of the Son is other than that of the Father by confessing him to be God whom they refer to as ‘Son’ in name at least, or they deny the divinity of the Son and make his individual nature and essence as an individual to be different from the Father. Their problem can be resolved in this way. We must say to them that at one time “God” (with the article [Greek: *ho theos*]) is true God, wherefore also the Savior says in his prayer to the Father, ‘That they may know you the only true God.’ [John 17:3] On the other hand, everything besides the true God, which is made a god by participation in his divinity, would more properly not be said to be ‘the god,’ but ‘a god.’ To be sure, his ‘firstborn of every creature’ [Colossians 1:15], inasmuch as he was the first to be with God and has drawn divinity into himself, is more honored than the other gods beside him (of whom God is god as it is said, ‘The God of gods, the Lord has spoken, and he has called the earth.’ [Psalm 50:1, LXX] It was by his ministry that they became gods, for he drew from God that they might be deified, sharing ungrudgingly also with them according to his goodness. The God [Greek: *ho theos*], therefore, is the true God. The others are gods formed according to him as images of the prototype.” Origen, *Commentary*, 98–99, translation modified (2.16–18). Writing in the first half of the first century CE, Jewish theologian Philo of Alexandria (fl. 30s CE) contrasts God with the visible stars in the sky, widely regarded by ancient people as deities: “We must, therefore, look on all those bodies in the heaven, which

men” but the “God of gods” also.¹⁰ This is the highest and most glorious title given to him in the Old Testament, when it is designed to make a most magnificent mention of his peerless greatness and glory.¹¹ I take that title to be equivalent to these which are so often used in the New Testament: “the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,” “the God of our Lord Jesus, the Father of Glory.”¹² For since Jesus Christ is the chief of all subordinate powers, “the prince of the kings of the earth,”¹³ and far above the greatest angels,¹⁴ “the Lord of Lords, and King of Kings,”¹⁵ he who is called “the God of our Lord Jesus Christ,”¹⁶ is therein, in effect said to be “the God of gods” or above all gods.

the outward sense regards as gods, not as independent rulers, since they are assigned the work of lieutenants, being by their intrinsic nature responsible to a higher power, but by reason of their virtue not actually called to render in an account of their doings. So that, transcending all visible essence by means of our reason, let us press forward to the honour of that everlasting and invisible Being who can be comprehended and appreciated by the mind alone; who is not only the God of all gods, whether appreciable only by the intellect or visible to the outward senses, but is also the creator of them all. And if any one gives up the service due to the everlasting and uncreated God, transferring it to any more modern and created being, let him be set down as mad and as liable to the charge of the greatest impiety.” Philo, *The Special Laws* I, 535 (1.19-20).

¹⁰ Philo, *The Decalogue*, 521 (10.41).

¹¹ Psalm 86:8, 135:5.

¹² Ephesians 1:3, 17.

¹³ Revelation 1:5.

¹⁴ Ephesians 1:21.

¹⁵ Revelation 17:14.

¹⁶ Ephesians 1:17.

Now the question to be resolved is, in which of these two senses is Christ said to be “god” in the holy Scriptures? Just the title “god” determines nothing in this case because it belongs both to the supreme and to subordinate beings in power and authority. The question is whether Jesus Christ is “the God of gods,” or above all gods.

He is indeed the “Lord of lords,” but that indicates an inferior description, compared with that of “God of gods,” as appears in 1 Corinthians 8:5, though it be included in the superior, so that he who is above all gods is also over all lords, but not vice versa.¹⁷ In short, does Jesus Christ have any god over him who has greater authority and greater ability than himself or not? This will decide the matter, for if he should have a god above him, then he is not the absolutely supreme god, though in relation to created beings he may be a “god” (or ruler) over all.¹⁸

¹⁷ *W*: For this purpose are the words of that eminent philosopher Sir Isaac Newton in his *Optics* (pp. 314–5, Latin edition): “The word ‘deity’ implies exercise of dominion over subordinate beings, and though the word ‘god’ most frequently signifies ‘lord,’ yet every lord is not a god. The exercise of dominion in a spiritual being constitutes a god; if that dominion be real, that being is a real god; if it be fictitious, a false god; if it be supreme, the supreme god.” He might have added: if subordinate, a subordinate god.

¹⁸ *W*: Is not he alone “the one God,” who knows “no superior,” no cause of his existence, whom the Son himself teaches us to esteem “the only true God,” and confesses to be “greater than himself,” even “his God”? Eusebius, *On Ecclesiastical Theology*, 173–76 (1.11). See also Irenaeus, who frequently distinguishes the Father by this description: “the god over whom there is no other god.” Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, 419 (3.6.4).

I.2 *Jesus on Himself as Distinct from and Subordinate to God*

Nor can we more clearly prove this point than by showing first that Jesus Christ explicitly speaks of another “God” than himself. Secondly, that he considers this “God” to be above or over himself. Thirdly, that he lacks those supereminent and infinite perfections which belong only to the Lord God of gods. I shall discuss these in a manner suited to ordinary abilities, for I think it inappropriate to speak or write of important doctrines (which the common people must *believe* and must so far understand) in such a manner as leaves them wholly unintelligible.

First, our Lord Jesus Christ expressly speaks of another “God” distinct from himself; several times we find him saying “my God” of another: “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”¹⁹ Surely he didn’t mean to say, “Myself, myself, why have you forsaken me?” This “God” Jesus was addressing, then, was distinct from himself, as he declares in other places: “He shall know my doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.”²⁰ So John 8:42, where it is to be noted that he does not distinguish him from himself as “the Father,” but rather as “God”;²¹ and therefore, in all

¹⁹ Matthew 27:46. Compare: John 20:17.

²⁰ John 7:17.

²¹ “Jesus said to them, ‘If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and now I am here. I did not come on my own, but he

reasonable interpretation, he cannot be supposed to be that self-same god from whom he distinguishes and to whom he opposes himself. How manifestly are the one God and the one Lord distinguished in 1 Corinthians 8:6?²² And that there may be no good reason to say with Placaeus²³ that the “God and the Lord,” or the cause from which all things are and the cause by or through which they are, are just two things said of the same one god, we may see them more clearly distinguished in Ephesians 4:5–6.²⁴ Here, since other things are put between the one Lord and one God, namely “one faith, one baptism,” evidently these were *not* intended as two descriptions of the same being. I think that no one who impartially considers the scriptural records can doubt whether God and his Christ are two distinct beings.²⁵

sent me.’” John 8:42.

²² “Hence, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that ‘no idol in the world really exists,’ and that ‘there is no God but one.’ Indeed, even though there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as in fact there are many gods and many lords—yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.” 1 Corinthians 8:4–6.

²³ French Reformed theologian Joshua (or Josué) De La Place (Latinized as “Placaeus”) (d. 1655).

²⁴ “There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.” (Ephesians 4:4–6)

²⁵ By “beings” here Emlyn means individual realities; hence in his 1702 version he writes “two distinct things.”

Secondly, our Lord Jesus holds not only that another than himself is God, but also that this one is above or over himself, which is plainly indicated also by his apostles. Jesus himself loudly proclaims his subjection to the Father in many instances; in general he declares his Father to be greater than him.²⁶ He says that he came not in his own but in his Father's name or authority,²⁷ that he sought not his own but God's glory, and that he made not his own will but rather God's his rule.²⁸ And in such a posture of subjection "he came down from heaven" into this earth,²⁹ so that it should seem that this nature which pre-existed did not possess the supreme will, even before it was incarnate.³⁰ Again, he acknowledges his

²⁶ John 14:28; 10:29.

²⁷ John 5:43.

²⁸ John 5:30.

²⁹ John 6:38.

³⁰ As what many call an "Arian" (see note 1) Emlyn believes that Jesus pre-existed his human career; hence, his reference to the "nature" (i.e. being) which existed before Jesus' human life. In his biographical note Emlyn's son explains that Emlyn and his friend, Protestant minister William Manning, "were both of an inquisitive temper" and were drawn into thinking about the Trinity by reading some of the literature from the famous controversy among Anglicans from 1689 to 1698. (On this see Dixon, *Nice and Hot*, chapters 4–5.) After much thought, "Mr. Manning took the Socinian way, and strove hard to bring Mr. Emlyn into that way of thinking, but Mr. Emlyn never could be brought to doubt either of the pre-existence of our Saviour, as the Logos, or that God created the material world by him. Upon these points they had many friendly debates . . . but the Socinian interpretation appeared to our author [i.e. Emlyn] so forced and unnatural that he could by no means give in to it." Emlyn, "Memoirs," xiii–xiv, modernized.

dependence upon his God and Father, even concerning those things which some suppose belong to him as God, namely the power of working miracles, of raising the dead, and of executing universal judgment—about all of which he says, “Of my own self I can do nothing.”³¹ In like manner his apostles declare his subjection to another, not only as his Father, but as his God, which is emphatically expressed, in calling the most blessed God “the God of our Lord Jesus,” after his humiliation was over.³² Again, Paul says that the “head of Christ is God.”³³ They declare Christ’s headship over the universe, and the very foundations of his claim to honor and service, to be due to the gracious gift of God, *echarisato auto* [“granted him”]³⁴ and yet these are some of the highest glories of Jesus Christ.

Let me only add to this topic that great text, so full of irresistible evidence for the inferiority of the Son to his Father (or to God), 1 Corinthians 15:24–29,³⁵ where the apostle says several relevant things.

³¹ John 5: 19–20, 26–27, 30.

³² Ephesians 1:17.

³³ 1 Corinthians 11:3.

³⁴ Philippians 2:9.

³⁵ “Then comes the end, when he [Jesus] hands over the kingdom to God the Father, after he has destroyed every ruler and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. For ‘God has put all things in subjection under his feet.’ [Psalm 8:6] But when it says, ‘All things are put in subjection,’ it is plain that this does not include the one who put all things in subjection under him. When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to the one who put all things in

First, he says that all things are to be put under Christ's feet—all enemies and powers are to be subdued to him—but he adds that it is clear that God must be excluded from these things that are under him because it is he who put all under Christ. And why is it, that it is so clear, that *someone else* must be supposed to be the great author of this triumph of Christ? Why might it not be done by himself independently, if he is the supreme God? (Then there need have been no exclusion of any one from the “all things” under him.) But the apostle knew that Jesus Christ must triumph by a power derived from God, to whom that power was to be ascribed in the highest sense. To one who had such thoughts, it was clear that there must be one excluded from the “all things” under him, because one who enables Christ to subdue all things (who makes him a god over all), must be above him.³⁶

Second, he says that the Son shall deliver up his kingdom to God, that is, to the Father, *not* to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, as some suppose, but to the Father only, since it was the

subjection under him, so that God may be all in all. Otherwise, what will those people do who receive baptism on behalf of the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why are people baptized on their behalf?” 1 Corinthians 15:24–29.

³⁶ Emlyn may be referring here to Romans 9:5, in which some translations have Paul calling Jesus “God over all.” (e.g. NIV, ESV) If so, then Emlyn’s point would be that based on the passages discussed in this section, Paul could only mean that Christ is a god (i.e. rightful religious ruler over all other created beings) *under* God, so that the Son and the Father are *not* “god/God” in the same sense of the word. On whether or not this text calls Jesus “God” see Harris, *Jesus as God*, 143–72 (pro) and Schoenheit et. al., *One God*, 473–75, 606. (con).

Father who gave him all power in heaven and earth, and who made him King in Zion.³⁷ Christ will surrender all into God's hands, in testimony of his having done all in subordination to him, and having acted and ruled in dependence on him who shall have a satisfactory account of all given to him in the end. This is a glory unique to the Father as supreme.

Third, he says, then the Son himself shall be subject to him who put all things under him—to God his Father—so that “God may be all in all.” That is, his subjection shall be then manifested by an open and solemn acknowledgement of it, when he shall recognize the supremacy of the Father in that public act of surrender, so that though formerly (i.e. in the present state) all judgment and rule was committed to the Son, yet then it shall be otherwise, and God will more immediately appear in the government of the future state, which shall not be so much shared, probably between him and the Redeemer, as the present administration appears to be. This then will be the resolution of all our disputes: God all in all, and the Son himself subject under him. Can anything be more expressive of an inequality between God and Christ?

But it will be said by some, that the “Son” means the Son of Man, or Christ *as man*, while *as God*, he shall not be subjected to the Father.

Response: as there is no indication of any such distinction between the supposed two natures of the Son here, so there is enough in the words to show that they are spoken of him

³⁷ Matthew 28:18; Psalm 110:1–2; Ephesians 1:22; Hebrews 2:8.

under his highest capacity and description, so that Monsieur Claude³⁸ maintains it to be true of the Son of God as to his (supposed) divine nature. But though there is no need to suppose such a nature (which I think the text plainly contradicts) yet he proves why these words do speak of Christ under his highest description, the name of “Son.” For first, as he says, it does not say the “Son of Man,” but “the Son” absolutely, which he thinks in Scripture often means more than the “Son of Man.” Undoubtedly, it implies all that comes under that title and even more, since it is said, “even the Son himself,” with great emphasis, as if it should say that as great and glorious as he is, with all his grandeur and power, he himself shall be subject. Secondly, his subjection being contrasted with his reign, both must be understood of the same subject. Surely, the delivering up of the kingdom can only be done by the same to which it was committed, and by which it was managed. Now I grant that Christ could give up his kingdom only in his human nature, but then it is because it is as a man delegated and inhabited by God that he directs and manages this kingdom, and if this to be allowed (as I think it must) that the man Christ is sufficient, by help from God, to manage his universal spiritual kingdom, I see no reason to oppose those unitarians who think him to be a sufficient savior and prince even though he isn’t the only supreme God. Nor can any, with reason, attempt to prove him to be such from his works and office as king of his church, since it is

³⁸ French Protestant minister Jean Claude (1619–87).

implied that as such he must do homage to God the Father in “delivering up his kingdom to him.” And this very expression, “to God the Father,” makes it plain, that there is no God the Son in the same sense, or in the same supreme essence with the Father, because if there were then he ought not to be excluded from his glory of having such open homage paid to him, which is here given to the Father only. And since the apostle speaks of the same God (whom he explains to be the Father) throughout this discourse, and says he shall be “all in all,” how clearly does he show him to be far beyond all that are not God the Father, whatever other descriptions apply to them? So then, Jesus Christ, in his highest capacity, being inferior to the Father, how can he be the same god to whom he is subject, or of the same rank and dignity?

Thus it appears that Christ is “God” insofar as he is under a *superior* god, who has set him over all. This fits with the scriptural explication of the deity of the blessed Jesus—that he is invested with a God-like authority and power from the supreme God his Father. Thus, when he was accused by the fault-finding Jews of assuming the title “the Son of God” (which they would perversely stretch, as though it implied an equality with God) he explains in what sense he justified it, namely “as one whom the Father has sanctified,” i.e. called to a greater office, and honored with a higher commission than those magistrates, on whom the Scripture so freely bestows the title of “gods.”³⁹ So when he is called “God,” it is explained

³⁹ John 10:35–36. For an analysis of the argument here see Tuggy, “Jesus’s

in what sense or what sort of "God" he is.⁴⁰ It is to be understood that by saying *his* god (implying that he had a god over him) had "anointed him with oil," etc., that is, had invested him with royal power and dignity (as kings were installed in their office among the Jews by anointing with oil) which is an explication of his deity or dominion. And he is said to be "above his fellows," not, to be sure, above the Father and Holy Spirit (which are supposed by those who understand Jesus' deity to be the supreme deity to be his fellows as God) but above all other subordinate powers. This is one simple, scriptural explanation of his being called "God," for these things are spoken *to* him and *of* him under the title of "God"—"O God, your throne," etc.⁴¹ I think people should be well assured on what grounds they go before they assign *other* reasons for this title being given to him which are so different from the scriptural explanation. Let it be enough for us that God has "made him both Lord and Christ," that he has "exalted him to be a Prince and a Savior."⁴²

Our adversaries will gain nothing by prooftexts in which the title of "God" is given to Christ,⁴³ since that may be, and

argument."

⁴⁰ "But of the Son he says, 'Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, and the righteous scepter is the scepter of your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions.'" Hebrews 1:8-9

⁴¹ Hebrews 1:8.

⁴² Acts 2:36; 5:31.

⁴³ An important recent study of the word *theos* being used to refer to

yet it will not prove him to be the supreme and independent God, but only one who is inhabited and commissioned and enabled by him who is so. As to that place which is corruptly rendered in our translation, "he thought it no robbery to be equal with God,"⁴⁴ it is confessed by our adversaries themselves, that it should be read thus: that he did not assume, or arrogate, or snatch at an equality with God, or covet to appear in the likeness of God.⁴⁵ The words are never known to be used in any other sense, as is shown by Dr. Tillotson in his discourses against the Socinians,⁴⁶ also by Dr. Whitby in his exposition on that text, and others.⁴⁷ So that this rather denies than asserts Christ's equality to God, though he was "in the form of God," as that has to do with the outward resemblance of him in his mighty power and works, etc.,

Jesus in the New Testament is Harris, *Jesus as God*.

⁴⁴ Philippians 2:6.

⁴⁵ *W*: One reason why I think what we render "to be equal with God" may be translated "to be like to God" is that the word *isos* ["equal to"] admits degrees of comparison, *isoteros*, *isotatos* ["more equal to," "most equal to"]. Now a strict arithmetical equality does not admit degrees, and no things can be more or less *equal*, than what are exactly so. But things may be more or less *alike*, and though things that are alike may be equal, they are not hereby proved or said to be so. See Dr. Whitby's discussion; he gives several examples where the word *isos* ["equal to"] is so used (Whitby, *A Paraphrase*, 338).

⁴⁶ Tillotson, *Sermon* 54, 396. The sermons of Anglican Archbishop John Tillotson (1630–94) were widely ready in Emyln's day.

⁴⁷ Daniel Whitby (1638–1726) was an Arminian Anglican priest and theologian who by the end of his life came to hold a unitarian view of God, on which see Whitby, *The Last Thoughts*.

which is the constant meaning of the word “form” in the New Testament.

But because some think perfections are ascribed to Christ in Scripture which will prove him to be God in the highest sense, I proceed to show next that our blessed Lord Jesus disavows those infinite perfections which belong only to the supreme God of gods. And it is most certain that if he lacks *any* of these perfections that are essential to the Deity, he is not “God” in the primary sense. And if we can find him disavowing the one, he cannot lay claim to the other, for to deny himself to have all the divine perfections, or to deny himself to be the infinite God, is the same thing.

CHAPTER 2: The Human Jesus

2.1 *How Jesus Denies Having Divine Attributes*

ONE GREAT AND UNIQUE PERFECTION of the Deity is absolute, underived omnipotence. He who cannot work all miracles and do whatever he chooses *on his own*, without help from another, can never be the supreme being, or God, because he appears to be a defective being, comparatively, since he needs help and can receive additional strength from someone else.

Now it is most evident that our Lord Jesus (whatever power he had) confesses again and again, that he did not have infinite power on his own: "Of myself I can do nothing."⁴⁸ He had been speaking of great miracles, namely, raising the dead, and carrying out all judgment, but all along he takes care that we should know that his sufficiency for these things was from

⁴⁸ John 5:30.

God the Father. In the beginning of the discourse, he says, "The Son can do nothing but what he sees the Father do."⁴⁹ And in the middle, "The Father has given to the Son to have life in himself."⁵⁰ And as if he could never too much impress this great truth on our minds, he adds towards the conclusion, "I can do nothing of myself" (Greek: *ap' emautou*),⁵¹ or, from nothing that is myself do I draw this power and authority. Surely this is *not* the voice of God, but of a man! For the Most High can receive from no one;⁵² he cannot be made more mighty or wise, etc., because no addition can be made to absolute perfection. And since power in God is an essential perfection, it follows that if it is derived, then so is the essence or being itself, which is blasphemy against the Most High, for it is to un-god him, to number him among dependent, derivative beings. But the supreme God indeed is only he who is the First Cause and absolute source of all.

Furthermore, our Lord speaks of himself here in contrast to his Father, who he says gave him all power. Now if he had such an eternal divine Word united more nearly to him than the Father, surely he would have admitted his power to be from that Word or divine Son. How can it be that he ascribes nothing to that, since this Word is supposed to be equal in power to the Father himself, and more nearly allied to Jesus

⁴⁹ John 5:19.

⁵⁰ John 5:26.

⁵¹ John 5:30.

⁵² "Who has ever given to God, that God should repay them?" Romans 11:35 (NIV).

Christ as the operating agent in him? He says instead that “My Father in me does the works,”⁵³ by which it is clear there was no divine agent in and with him except the Father, who alone has all power of himself and needs no assistance.

Another infinite perfection that must be in the Deity is supreme, absolute goodness. All nations have consented to this by the light of nature, that the Greek *to agathon* (The Good) and the Latin *optimus maximus* (Best and Greatest), are the main titles of the Supreme. As the orator says, he is one *quo nec melius, nec majus concipi potest* (“than whom nothing better, nothing greater can be conceived”)⁵⁴—the fullest, and highest of all that are called “good”—for indeed all other goodness is derived from him.

But the Lord Jesus explicitly disavows this description “good”: “Jesus said to him, ‘Why do you call me good? There is none good but one, that is God.’”⁵⁵ Here it is most evident that he distinguishes himself from God as not the same with him and denies of himself what he affirms of God. And as to that divine perfection of supreme, infinite goodness, he challenges the man for presuming to say words which seemed to attribute it to him, and leads him off to another who alone is “good” in a higher sense.⁵⁶

⁵³ John 14:10.

⁵⁴ Emlyn here seems to paraphrase a point made by Roman rhetorician Marcus Tullius Cicero (106–43 BCE); see Cicero, *Nature*, 54 (2.18).

⁵⁵ Mark 10:18; Matthew 19:17; Luke 18:19.

⁵⁶ *W*: Origen, *Against Celsus*, 72 (5.11); *On First Principles*, 65 (1.2.13).

CHAPTER 2: THE HUMAN JESUS

It's astonishing to see what violence is done to the sacred text by those who maintain the equality of Jesus Christ to God his Father. How strange it is to suppose that our Lord's meaning is: "I know, man, you do not understand me to be God, as I am. Why, then, do you give me the title belonging to him only?" There is not one word in the context which suggests this. Christ never challenges the poor man with this, that he thought *too lowly* of Jesus (as they suppose), but quite to the contrary, that he thought or spoke *too highly* of him. And truly, if the man's error was thinking too lowly of Christ, while his words otherwise were fairly enough applied to him, I cannot think our Lord would have rebuked him in that manner. For instead of keeping him still on the right subject and correcting his wrong conceptions about it, he seems clearly to carry him off to another from himself, as *not* the right subject, without correcting his thoughts *of Christ* at all. And for what purpose could Christ rebuke him in such a way that he never tells him what his mistake was, but rather tempts him to run astray into another mistake?

But rather than thinking too lowly of Christ, it'd make more sense (if anyone back then actually thought this) that the man thought Jesus to be God. For if he thought Jesus to be the *supreme* good, that is to think of him as God. (If he only meant that Jesus was a less-than-supreme good, how could Christ rebuke him for it, since that would reflect no fault or error? And of course, those who say Christ's receiving worship while

on earth proves his deity⁵⁷ can't explain why this man should give or why Christ should receive worship, as we see in Mark 10:17, unless he thought Christ was God.) But whatever the man thought, he said what Jesus Christ thought was only properly said about God and which was too much to be said about himself, as the obvious sense of his words declares.

Let me add, that if our Lord Jesus on purpose left the matter unclear, not willing to reveal who he was at that time, then it is strange that the evangelists, who many years afterward relate the matter, when it was necessary for people to believe (as it is supposed) that Christ was supreme God, should not clarify the matter by inserting some cautious clause, such as that Christ said this to test the man, or because he knew the man denied his deity, or the like, for sometimes on lesser occasions they give such cautions.⁵⁸ But even though three of the evangelists relate this discourse, they all do it the same way, and not one of them gives us the slightest hint to direct us to the secret way of interpretation, but leaves us liable to a most fatal mistake (even recommended to us by this report) *if* Jesus Christ were indeed the supreme Good in as high a sense as God his Father, which he apparently denies here, and by that denies himself to be the most high God.

I will only add one perfection more, namely, absolute omniscience, or unlimited knowledge of all things, past,

⁵⁷ For Emlyn's view on the worship of Christ, see Emlyn's section 3.2 below, pp. 90-97.

⁵⁸ John 6:6; John 21:23.

present, and to come. “His understanding is infinite.”⁵⁹
 “Known to God are all his works from the beginning.”⁶⁰

Now it's clear that our Lord Jesus Christ lacked this infinite knowledge, particularly about future things, such as the day of judgment. He says, “Of that day knows no man, no, not the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only.”⁶¹ Here, the Son professes his knowledge to be limited and inferior to the Father's, and this limited one is “the Son” of the Father (i.e. of God), the Son who is above angels when it comes to knowledge, the “Son” in the highest sense.⁶² Now, how is it possible that the Son should be infinite, and yet have only a finite understanding?⁶³ Or can he be equal in

⁵⁹ Psalm 147:5. Compare: Isaiah 41:23.

⁶⁰ “Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.” Acts 15:18 (KJV). The verse is shorter in recent translations because they are based on recent critical editions of the Greek, e.g. “known from long ago.” (NRSV)

⁶¹ Mark 13:32. See also Matthew 24:36.

⁶² Emyln here is heading off the traditional dodge of saying that Jesus was limited in knowledge “as human” but infinite in knowledge “as divine.”

⁶³ Sollom Emyln inserts a marginal comment here referring to Irenaeus's *Against Heresies*, written around 180 CE. There, like many other early authors, Irenaeus shows that he accepts Jesus' claim of ignorance at face value. In the context, Irenaeus is defending his claim that the Son's “generation” by the Father is “altogether indescribable,” so that neither he nor anyone else can say how it is or by what means the Father does this. Irenaeus writes that “even the Lord Jesus, the very Son of God, allowed that the Father alone knows the very day and hour of judgment, when He plainly declares, ‘But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, neither the Son, but the Father only.’ [Translators' note: Mark 13:32. The words

knowledge to the Father, and yet not know as much as the Father? To be sure, if he was not an infinite god when on the earth he cannot be such afterwards. Thus we have seen Christ himself with his own mouth disavowing infinite and underived power, goodness, and knowledge. He attributes these to the Father only, as to another who is distinct from himself, and from whom he derived each in a dependent and limited manner.

2.2 *Why "Two-Natures" Speculations Don't Help*

What can be said against these clear arguments? I imagine our opponents have only one move left for evading them, and that is a distinction which serves them in all cases: they say Jesus Christ says these things about himself "as man only," while he had another nature "as God," which he reserved and excepted out of the case, so that when he says "I cannot do this myself," or "I am not to be called the chief good," or "I do not know this," etc., according to them, the meaning is: "I don't have these perfections *in my human nature*, nonetheless I know

'neither the angels which are in heaven,' are here omitted, probably because, as usual, the writer quotes from memory.] If then, the Son was not ashamed, to ascribe the knowledge of that day to the Father only, but declared what was true regarding the matter, neither let us be ashamed to reserve for God those greater questions which may occur to us." Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, 401 (2.28.6).

and can do all unassisted, and am the chief good *in my divine nature*, which also is more properly myself.”⁶⁴

I intend now to expose the futility of this tricky move by showing how absurd it is to suppose that this distinction of two natures removes the force of such expressions from Christ’s own mouth which in their natural and ordinary appearance proclaim his inferiority to God, even the Father. And I shall dwell more on this because it’s the most popular and common evasion, and comes in at every turn, when all other relief fails.

It’s reasonable for us to ask what hint of such a distinction of two natures they can point us to in any of these discourses of Christ. Should we devise or imagine for him such a strange and seemingly deceitful way of speaking simply to uphold our own precarious opinion? But I have several remarks to make about this common answer.

⁶⁴ Emlyn here makes an astute point about traditional “two natures” christological speculations. It looks like they must say that the Son of God is personally identical to (i.e. is the same self as) “the divine nature,” a.k.a. the Word of John 1:1. In contrast, they can’t say that he’s the same self as “the human nature,” the body-soul composite or the man, since they want to say that the Son existed a long time before this composite, human-divine thing or this only human thing existed. Hence his comment that for a two-natures theory, it is the divine nature which is “more properly” Jesus. It is unclear, though, why one should suppose that an eternal divine nature who has “assumed” (mysteriously united to) a human type of body and a human type of soul (or even a man) amounts to a real human being. For this and other difficulties with two natures speculations see Tuggy, “Clarifying Catholic Christologies,” Tuggy, “podcast 165,” and Tuggy, “podcast 166.”

My first objection is that our blessed Lord Jesus Christ, if he was the supreme God in any nature of his own, he could not have said, it seems to me, consistently with truth and sincerity (which he always maintained strictly), that he could *not* do or did *not* know something which all this while he himself *could* do or *did* know very well—as surely as if he were the supreme God, he could and did. This would be to make him say what is most false and to equivocate in the most deceitful manner. Even if we should suppose he consisted of two infinitely distant natures, and so had two capacities of knowing and acting, yet since he includes them both, it follows that when he denies something of himself in absolute terms, without any limitation in the words or other obvious circumstances, he plainly implies a denial of its belonging to any part of his person, or any nature in it. Although we may affirm a thing of a person which belongs only to a part of him, as I may properly say a man is wounded or hurt, though it only be in one part, suppose, an arm—yet I cannot rightly deny a thing of him which belongs only to one part, because it belongs not to another. I can't say a man is not wounded because although one arm is shot or wounded yet the other is unharmed. For instance, I have two organs of sight, two eyes. Now suppose I converse with a man with one eye shut and the other open. If being asked whether I saw him, I should dare to say that I didn't see him (without any qualification) meaning (to myself) that I didn't see him with the eye which was shut although I saw him well enough with the eye which was open, I fear I would be criticized as a liar and deceiver,

notwithstanding such a mental reservation as some would attribute to the holy Jesus. For knowledge is the eye of the person; Jesus Christ is supposed to have two of these knowing capacities, the one weak, the other strong and piercing, discerning all things. Now as such a one, the disciples come to him and ask him when the end of the world and time of his coming shall be.⁶⁵ He answers them by giving them some general account of the matter, but says that he didn't know the particular day and hour, nor did any know them except the Father, meaning (say my opponents) that it wasn't included in his human knowledge, although he knew it well enough with his divine nature, at the same time that he said absolutely and without qualification that the Son doesn't know it.

If Jesus Christ had a divine knowledge and nature, no doubt his disciples (who, if anyone, must have believed it) would have directed their question to that divine capacity of his rather than to the imperfect human capacity, and yet in answer to their question he says he didn't know the day, which would not be counted as sincere or truthful in ordinary people. But surely we mustn't think Jesus Christ was dishonest in this way, for in his mouth was no guile.⁶⁶ Let us not impute it to him.

⁶⁵ Matthew 24:3.

⁶⁶ "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to

That you may see this is good reasoning, hear how some of the other side admit it when out of the heat of this controversy. See Dr. Stillingfleet's sermon on Matthew 10:16⁶⁷ on the equivocation of Catholic priests whose common answer, when questioned about what they have known by hearing confession, is that they *don't* know it. And they think it vindicates them from the charge of lying to say that in confession the priest knows matters "as God,⁶⁸ not as man," and therefore he denies knowing them, meaning "as man."⁶⁹ But, says the Doctor, this is absurd, because to say he does not know is as much as to say that he does not *in any way* know.⁷⁰ Now if this is a good answer against the Catholics, as no doubt it is, then it surely is so in the present case.

him that judgeth righteously: Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." 1 Peter 2:21–24 (KJV).

⁶⁷ Stillingfleet, *Fifty Sermons*, 253–73. Edward Stillingfleet (1635–99) was an Arminian Anglican bishop of Worcester who was famous as a prolific controversial writer.

⁶⁸ That is, as God's representative. See Stillingfleet, *Fifty Sermons*, 268.

⁶⁹ In late medieval and early modern Roman Catholicism, many scholars argued that it was permissible to say something one knew to be false, for instance, a priest denying knowledge of something he heard in confession, so long as one had a "mental reservation," a modifying phrase in one's mind which when added to what was actually said would make it a true statement. This was widely criticized, especially in Protestant countries. But in 1679 a Pope condemned this teaching as "scandalous and pernicious in practice" (Innocent XI, *A Decree*, Preface, 7) and in recent times it plays no part in Catholic moral teaching.

⁷⁰ Stillingfleet, *Fifty Sermons*, 265.

Therefore, when Christ says he doesn't know the day of judgment, it is as much as to say that he does not *in any way* know it, and consequently it is a useless trick to say that his ignorance was "as man only." We must beware lest we make the holy Jesus as liable to the charge of equivocation as are the Catholic priests, and lest we make the Jesuits think they have a good claim to that name⁷¹ because in their practice of lying they are imitating Jesus' example—a great advantage, they imagine, of this "mental reservation" interpretation of his denying knowing the day or hour.

As a further evidence that Jesus Christ intended no such distinction of two natures, as is supposed, it's to be observed that he doesn't distinguish between the Son of Man and the eternal Word (as some would) but between the Son and his Father; the Son doesn't know, but only the Father.⁷² Thus it is clear that he had no thought of including any person or nature of his own among those excluded by his phrase "only the Father." For whatever was not the Father, he says was ignorant of that day. Now it's certain that in no nature was the Son the Father, and consequently where no one but the Father knows, no one who is not the Father can be intended. And since our Lord was making an exception in the case, he would not have forgotten to except the eternal Word too, if there had been such a divine agent in himself, equal to the Father and

⁷¹ That is, The Society of Jesus (the full name of the Jesuit religious order).

⁷² "But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father." Mark 13:32.

distinct from him. For it's a known rule that an exception from a general assertion confirms that general assertion in other instances not excepted.⁷³

Will they say that "the Father" here means all three Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit? What?! Can "the Father," as opposed to "the Son," mean both the Father and the Son? What woeful work will this make with Scripture, to suppose that things opposed to each other are included in each other because of the very titles by which they are opposed? They may as well say that in the baptismal formula,⁷⁴ by "the Father" is meant "Father, Son, and Spirit," though he be distinguished from the other two. And I should despair of ever understanding the Scriptures above all books that were written at this rate of interpretation. There is no doubt, therefore, that "the Father," as opposed to "the Son," excludes all that is the Son. Thus, there can be no Son of God who knew of that day which only the Father knew of, and consequently no Son that is God equal to the Father.

Moreover, that interpretation must be unreasonable, which if admitted would make even the clearest statements uncertain and utterly meaningless, as this interpretation of

⁷³ Emlyn's point is put abstractly here, but an example makes his point clear. If you say, "All the apples in the basket except these two are rotten," you are asserting rottenness of all the other apples in the basket, all of them beyond these two exceptions. Thus, when Jesus says that *only* the Father knows the day and hour, he is asserting that anyone other than the Father fails to know the day and hour.

⁷⁴ Matthew 28:19.

Christ's words would do. I ask the patrons of this opinion: in what words could Jesus Christ have straightforwardly denied himself to be God Most High, if he had a mind to do it, more clearly and fully than these, in which he says that he didn't know all things, as the Father did, nor could do all things, etc? I would like them to show me what words of that sort he could have used, which the same way of interpretation as they use here will not evade and make meaningless. For had he said, or sworn in plain words, saying, "I tell you I am not the supreme God, and none but my Father has that glory," they would for the same reason still have said that this was to be understood of him "as man only." If this method of interpretation were to be allowed then no words professing himself not to be God could be a proof of it. I may therefore safely say this much, that the blessed Jesus has declared himself *not* to be the supreme God, or equal to the Father, as clearly as words can speak or briefly express, and that this declaration made by him already can be evaded only at the cost of making it impossible for him to say such a thing using any words whatever. Let anyone test this to see if it holds true; surely, it must be an absurd way of interpretation, which leaves a man no opportunity or power of speaking his meaning clearly, so as to be understood.

Again, this way of interpretation, which the advocates of the opinion I oppose need so badly to uphold their cause, clearly overthrows it again, and may be turned against them. For if it be reasonable and true to deny of Christ absolutely what belongs to him in one nature, because there is another

nature in which it doesn't belong to him, then since to be the chief God belongs to him (according to our adversaries) only in one nature and not in respect of the other (or human) nature, it follows that it may as rightly be said that "Jesus Christ is not God, nor to be worshiped or trusted as such," even that "he did not exist before the virgin Mary," according to them, and the like. And we could say this without adding any limitation or restriction, any more than our Lord Jesus does in the place mentioned.⁷⁵

What would they say to one who should speak or preach that Jesus is not God, that he cannot do all things, nor is he equal to the Father, etc.? Would they not concede that such a person was a denier of the deity of Christ, otherwise he would never say such things? For the same reason, when Jesus Christ himself says that he cannot of himself do all things, nor knows all things, making no verbal qualifications, we may conclude that he also denies that he is the supreme God—otherwise, if it is an accurate way of speaking for him, it can't be inaccurate for us to imitate him by simply denying him to be what he is not in one of his natures, i.e. that he is not God, without adding more.

Moreover, by following this way of speaking which they attribute to Christ, a man may be taught to say his creed backwards, and yet make a true profession of his faith, by denying of Jesus Christ, in absolute expressions, whatever may be denied of one of his natures. Thus, since the Apostles'

⁷⁵ Mark 13:32.

Creed⁷⁶ mentions nothing to be believed concerning Christ except what belongs to his human nature (which would be strange, if there were any required doctrines relating to his supreme deity, which must be most important), one may venture to deny them all, with this secret, unexpressed qualification, namely, meaning it of the divine nature (to which they don't belong). In this way one may say, "I believe that Jesus Christ was *not* conceived by the Holy Spirit or born of the virgin Mary; I believe that he never was crucified under Pontius Pilate, nor was he ever dead or buried. I believe that he never rose nor ascended, nor will he return visibly again." For his divine nature (which it's supposed that he had) was not capable of these things. And since they say that his personhood is divine, there seems all the more reason to be bolder in denying without qualification of the person what does not belong to the divine nature whose the personhood is, than in denying of the person what only doesn't belong to the human nature, as this interpretation makes Christ to do.

⁷⁶ The so-called Apostles' Creed reached its final form sometime in the Middle Ages, but it is similar to many short creeds of the first three Christian centuries. It reads, "I believe in God the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth; And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried. He descended to hell, on the third day rose again from the dead, ascended to heaven, sits at the right hand of God the Father almighty, thence He will come to judge the living and the dead; I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body [*carnis*], and the life everlasting. Amen." "*Textus Receptus*," 24-25.

Finally, it seems significant to me, in opposition to this way of interpretation, that the evangelists never take any occasion (when they had so many) to add any warning against taking Christ's words in their obvious sense, when he says that he did not know the hour, and the like. If, as is said, our Lord didn't intend to reveal his divinity (although I still don't see why he should deny it in this way), nevertheless his apostles, who wrote so many years after and intended to reveal all important truths most clearly, would not fail to have guided the reader by removing such obvious objections against the supreme deity of Christ, and by saying that he said this only in respect of his human nature, that he didn't know all things, etc. But there is not one warning given, as often we find they gave about lesser matters.⁷⁷ No doubt it was because they wanted Jesus' words to be understood at face value, not thinking of any such secret qualification in Christ's mind, of a divine nature in his person which is an implied exception, when he had denied such perfections of his person without qualification.

⁷⁷ For example: "Jesus answered them, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.' The Jews then said, 'This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days?' [Warning:] But he was speaking of the temple of his body." John 2:19-22. And, "After saying this, he [i.e. Jesus] told them, 'Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there to awaken him.' The disciples said to him, 'Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will be all right.' [Warning:] Jesus, however, had been speaking about his death, but they thought that he was referring merely to sleep." John 11:11-13.

Thus it remains good that Jesus Christ denies infinite perfections to belong to him as they belong to the Father, and therefore that he is not the same infinite God with him, if we can believe his own words. But before I conclude this argument, I shall endeavor to answer what our opposers offer on the contrary side. They say there is abundant evidence from *other* Scriptures that Jesus Christ has those perfections in him which I have showed in the aforementioned places he denies of himself. These they weigh against the other, and since both sides cannot be proved, we will have to determine which ought to yield. In particular, they say that omniscience is ascribed to Jesus Christ, the sort of knowledge which only the supreme God has. And since this indeed is that infinite perfection for which they seem to have the most plausible prooftexts, therefore I choose to focus on this in particular. I think I have proven the negative claim already from his own mouth, that he did *not* know all things, nor can anything of equal evidence and force be produced in favor of the affirmative claim, as will appear upon careful examination.

CHAPTER 3: Answering Objections

3.1 *Answering Scriptural Objections about Christ's Knowledge*

THE INSTANCES USUALLY ALLEGED to prove the infinite omniscience of Jesus Christ are either such as speak of his knowing “all things” in general or of his knowing human thoughts and hearts in particular.

For one thing, it's objected that the disciples ascribe to him the knowledge of all things, saying “You know all things.”⁷⁸ I answer that those expressions are words of admiration from disciples who are not yet inspired, so they are intended only to express a very great and comprehensive knowledge, far from infinite divine omniscience, as appears from three considerations.

First, consider Christ's own words: he did not know what the Father knew, namely, the particular time of the day of judgment.⁷⁹

⁷⁸ John 16:30; John 21:17.

⁷⁹ Matthew 24:36; Mark 13:32.

Third, it's evident that they never intended more by attributing "all knowledge" to him, from their own words in one of the texts mentioned, where the disciples tell us how much they inferred from his great knowledge (which they describe and extol by saying "You know all things")—not that he *was* God, but rather that he *was one sent by* God. "By this we believe that you came forth from God," not that you yourself are that God.⁸⁴ By these generous expressions they only intend to attribute to him what a created being is capable of by divine assistance. Therefore, it does violence to their words to infer from them that Jesus Christ is God when they themselves, who best knew their own meaning, infer no such thing.

And yet if it were granted that our Lord Jesus knows all things, i.e. which actually are, yet if he knows not all future things too, which he himself denies, he falls short of infinite omniscience. For all I know, a finite being may have a knowledge commensurate to this poor earth, which is but "a dust of the balance,"⁸⁵ and yet not know all God's secret purposes or the seasons which the Father keeps in his own hand.⁸⁶

⁸⁴ "Now we know that you know all things, and do not need to have anyone question you; by this we believe that you came from God." John 16:30.

⁸⁵ "Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing." Isaiah 40:15 (KJV).

⁸⁶ Acts 1:7.

For another thing, it's objected that the knowledge of the heart is ascribed to Christ.⁸⁷ And this, they say, is what belongs to God alone, as Solomon judges,⁸⁸ and God claims it as his eminent glory.⁸⁹ Yet Jesus Christ says, "I am he who searches the heart."⁹⁰ Therefore, they say, surely he must be that God "who only knows the hearts of all the children of men."⁹¹ I take this to be the strongest instance that can be produced from the sacred text for proving that any infinite divine perfections belong to the Lord Jesus Christ, and it shall be seriously considered.

In answer to this, I shall show two things: first, in what sense searching and knowing the heart is made unique to God and incommunicable to others by those texts, and second, even though it is unique to God in some sense, these acts may, in another sense, be rightly attributed to another and performed by someone who is not the Most High God.

As to the former, although Solomon says "You only, Lord, know the hearts of all men," yet what if I say that it's no

⁸⁷ John 2:25, Matthew 9:9, but especially Revelation 2:23: "And all the churches will know that I am the one who searches minds and hearts, and I will give to each of you as your works deserve."

⁸⁸ "then hear in heaven your dwelling place, forgive, act, and render to all whose hearts you know—according to all their ways, for only you know what is in every human heart." 1 Kings 8:39.

⁸⁹ "I the Lord test the mind and search the heart, to give to all according to their ways, according to the fruit of their doings." Jeremiah 17:10.

⁹⁰ Revelation 2:23.

⁹¹ 1 Kings 8:39.

wonder that Solomon should not know of any other to whom that excellency was communicated, since this mystery of the unsearchable riches and fulness of Christ,⁹² and of God's being manifest in his flesh,⁹³ and his high exaltation of him,⁹⁴ was hidden in the ages past and only manifested in the times of the gospel?⁹⁵ For it's in these latter times that our Lord Jesus has obtained his great authority and dignity for which he has received appropriate abilities.

Yet I add that such expressions in Scripture appropriating some perfections to God imply only that God has no equal in that respect, or that there is a highest sense only in which such perfections are unique to God and incommunicable to all others, although still in a lower sense something of those perfections may be given by him to others.

⁹² “the mystery that has been hidden throughout the ages and generations but has now been revealed to his saints. To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.” Colossians 1:26–27.

⁹³ “And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.” 1 Timothy 3:16 (KJV). Emyln evidently understands the first claim here to be that God was manifested *in Jesus'* flesh. Modern translations, which are based on a more accurate Greek text say “He [i.e. Christ] was manifest in the flesh.” That the “he” referred to is Jesus, not God, is shown by the final clause, that he was taken up into glory—a reference to Jesus' post-resurrection ascension. (Acts 1:9–11)

⁹⁴ Luke 22:69; Acts 2:33; Acts 5:31; Philippians 2:9; Ephesians 1:20; 1 Peter 3:22; Revelation 5:12.

⁹⁵ Hebrews 1:1–2.

And this shall be seen in a multitude of instances to be no implausible hypothesis, but rather in accordance with common and clear scriptural statements. Thus, it's said that only God is wise,⁹⁶ that only God has immortality,⁹⁷ and that only God is holy.⁹⁸ Yet there are wise and holy human beings, and immortal holy angels and spirits. But the meaning of those appropriate expressions is that the blessed God is wise and holy and immortal in a more excellent way and in a higher sense than all others—a sense in which others *can't* be wise, holy, and immortal.

So when it's said that God knows the hearts of human beings it must be interpreted the same way, namely, that no one else can know the heart as God does, so universally, so immediately and independently. And yet, it's no contradiction to say that he enables another to do it in a great measure under him. Just as it would be a very weak argument

⁹⁶ “to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen.” Romans 16:27. The NRSV translators add a footnote: “Other ancient authorities lack ‘to whom.’ The verse then reads, ‘to the only wise God be the glory through Jesus Christ forever. Amen.’” Emyln here also cites 1 Timothy 1:17, “Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.” (KJV) Newer translations, being based on more recent critical editions of the Greek originals, omit “wise.”

⁹⁷ “It is he alone who has immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see; to him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen.” 1 Timothy 6:16.

⁹⁸ “Lord, who will not fear and glorify your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship before you, for your judgments have been revealed.” Revelation 15:4.

that an angel is God to point out that this angel is called “holy” and “wise,” etc., which are said to belong to God only—it would also be a very weak argument that Jesus Christ is the supreme God to point out that he knows the hearts of human beings,⁹⁹ which is said to belong to God only¹⁰⁰—unless they can show that Jesus Christ knows in that same excellent, independent manner and degree as his Father, and that he is no more beholden to the Father for ability and assistance than the Father is to his Son Jesus Christ. Similarly, I might argue from Isaiah that only God knows future events,¹⁰¹ and yet how often have the prophets foretold them by his inspiration?

It makes sense that holiness and wisdom sufficient for knowing the thoughts and hearts of human beings have been communicated to prophets and apostles. Was there not something of this, if not in the case of the prophet Elisha’s telling the secret counsels of the Syrian king,¹⁰² yet at least in the case of the spirit of discerning mentioned by Paul,¹⁰³ and in the case of Ananias and Sapphira?¹⁰⁴ I grant this was by divine assistance of the Spirit of God and by revelation.

⁹⁹ Mark 2:8; Luke 6:8; John 2:25.

¹⁰⁰ 1 Kings 8:39.

¹⁰¹ “remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, ‘My purpose shall stand, and I will fulfil my intention.’” Isaiah 46:9–10.

¹⁰² 2 Kings 6:8–12.

¹⁰³ 1 Corinthians 12:10.

¹⁰⁴ Acts 5:1–11.

Neither is our Lord Jesus Christ ashamed to admit that his knowledge is sometimes owing to revelation from God his Father. If any should ask how Jesus Christ comes to know all that he reveals in those seven letters to the seven churches,¹⁰⁵ the very first words of that book Revelation may be an answer: it was the revelation which God gave to Jesus Christ.¹⁰⁶ No wonder, then, that he says he knows their works, their hearts, and their approaching judgments and trials, when his own vast abilities are assisted by God's revelation.

But it will be said that his "searching the heart" implies it to be his own act. Answer: so it may very well be, for whatever a human knows, they know it by their own act. And why may not the mind search and yet be under the light of revelation and the influence of superior assistance? Ultimately, these words "searching the heart" are only an expression that denotes the accuracy of his knowledge, not the manner of attaining to it, for taken properly, as applied to God, it's dishonorable to say that God searches for things, since all things are naked and open to his view. And if they must be taken strictly and properly, as applied to Christ, then they don't belong to him in the same sense as they do to God, and so can be no argument for his being that God.

¹⁰⁵ Revelation 2-3.

¹⁰⁶ "The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place; he made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, who testified to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw." Revelation 1:1-2.

Further, there's no absurdity in attributing *this* knowledge of the heart to Jesus Christ, even though he is not the Most High God. That he knows things with some limitation as to the degree, and in dependence on his Father as to the manner, is clear from what has been said already. Therefore, the knowledge of human hearts that is attributed to him must be such as is consistent with his subordination to the Father's greater knowledge.

One may object: it's impossible for a *finite* being to have such universal knowledge of the hearts and ways of human beings as is ascribed to Jesus Christ and which as the head and ruler of the church and world he ought to have, and therefore he is infinite God.

Answer: I'm pretty sure it can never be proven that it exceeds a finite capacity to know the concerns of all on this earth, when an enlarged understanding is assisted in the highest manner by divine influence and revelation, because the object of this knowledge would be finite. I challenge anyone to show me how it can be impossible for a finite capacity to comprehend a finite object, as this world is, and would be, though it were ten thousand times greater than it is! I am convinced that this can never be shown to imply any contradiction, and that all such imaginations concerning it proceed mainly from too high a view of human beings and too low a view of the infinite God, as if the difference between these were so small that there could not be one made with a mental capacity so much above other humans that his alone equaled all of theirs put together, as if the supreme being

couldn't produce a creature who should be a thousand times greater than all this earth and its inhabitants but still be infinitely below himself. I suppose that if the sun were an intelligent creature who could diffuse his intellectual influences as he does his beams of light and could also see and understand with his beams and secret influences, it's easy to imagine what a penetrating and comprehensive knowledge he might have. But we may entertain much greater thoughts of the Sun of Righteousness, Jesus Christ.¹⁰⁷

I think that a strong argument to prove that Jesus Christ, as man, is capable of such deep and extensive knowledge may be drawn from the offices of dignity and power conferred on him by God. For God has given to him to be head over all things.¹⁰⁸ He has given or committed to him all judgement,¹⁰⁹ and this *as* the Son of Man.¹¹⁰ In short, his kingly office, by which he rules over all the world and takes special care of all his members, as it necessarily presupposes his knowledge of the whole condition of his church and every member of it as far as it is necessary for the carrying out of that mission, so I think it undeniably proves this large knowledge to be exercised by him *as man*, however he gains it.

¹⁰⁷ Malachi 4:2.

¹⁰⁸ "And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church." Ephesians 1:22.

¹⁰⁹ "The Father judges no one but has given all judgment to the Son," John 5:22.

¹¹⁰ "and he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man." John 5:27.

For since this position and power are given, they cannot be grounded in Christ's divine nature, for who can give to God any dignity or power, since God has all dignity and power originally in his own being? These must then be given to the man or human nature only. And if the *man* Christ Jesus carries out this kingly role and is invested with this kingly power, even with all power in heaven and earth,¹¹¹ then *as man* we cannot deny him to be suitably qualified for it with all requisite abilities, lest we criticize God for calling one to a job who is not fitted for it or we criticize Jesus for accepting a mission which he is not able to accomplish. Besides, unless his human nature can execute this power, it cannot be said to be given to it, for a power which can't be exerted or is impossible to exercise is neither given nor received, any more than a commission or grant to a stump or a tree to rule, not over the other trees (as in Jotham's parable),¹¹² but over a nation, or to command an army. It's no gift at all, if this were the case, that the man Christ Jesus were utterly incapable of the role and government vested in him.

If it be said that although the kingly role and delegated authority is committed to the human nature but is only carried out by the divine nature in Christ, I answer that it's most unreasonable to suppose that this trust is committed to the man Christ, who must finally hand it over,¹¹³ and yet the

¹¹¹ "And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.'" Matthew 28:18.

¹¹² Judges 9:1-21.

¹¹³ "Then comes the end, when he hands over the kingdom to God the

management of it belongs only to another being. How can he be commended for being faithful over the house of God, to him who appointed him,¹¹⁴ when it's not expected he should carry out his function?

I grant, indeed, that his kingly reign is carried out by the assistance of God, as he exerts his divine power and wisdom through the human nature of Christ and gives them in all fulness to him in whom they dwell.¹¹⁵ But to say that the man Christ does not exercise his kingly, universal power, but that his divine nature (supposing he has such) does solely and immediately execute the office given to him as man or mediator (for nothing can be given to God) is, in my mind, a huge absurdity. For it's to say that God rules over human beings in carrying out a delegated or subordinate authority, or that he acts under the authority and in the name of a creature, which is not properly said of the supreme God. It remains, therefore, that as Christ's universal kingdom and leadership are a gift from God (of which only the man Christ is the

Father, after he has destroyed every ruler and every authority and power." 1 Corinthians 15:24.

¹¹⁴ "Therefore, brothers and sisters, holy partners in a heavenly calling, consider that Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession, was faithful to the one who appointed him, just as Moses also 'was faithful in all God's house.' [Numbers 12:7] . . . Now Moses was faithful in all God's house as a servant, to testify to the things that would be spoken later. Christ, however, was faithful over God's house as a son, and we are his house if we hold firm the confidence and the pride that belong to hope." Hebrews 3:1-2, 5-6.

¹¹⁵ "For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily." Colossians 2:9.

receiver, committed as a mission to him), so he certainly lacks no ability to carry out that mission in the nature entrusted with it—I say, no ability, whether of power or knowledge, sufficient to render him a careful, vigorous, and in every way most effective head of his body and ruler of the world.¹¹⁶ To deny this is to rob him of his greatest glory.

Besides, what benefit or gift is it to the man Christ that the divine nature should execute a power which it always had and could exercise without any gift to him? What reward or addition would this be to him?

Another argument may be drawn from the comfortable ground of confidence in a Christian's prayers to God which the Scriptures lay down, namely, the sympathizing compassion of our Lord Jesus Christ towards his distressed servants arising from his own sufferings when on earth:

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who in every respect has been tested as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore approach the throne of grace with boldness.¹¹⁷

Christ's having been tried with sufferings makes him a more compassionate and earnest advocate for us, and this is our comfort.

Now it's certain that this compassion arising from his own experience of trouble can belong to none but his human

¹¹⁶ 1 Corinthians 12:12-31.

¹¹⁷ Hebrews 4:15-16a.

nature. The divine nature is compassionate, but not because it was tempted or grieved with misery. No, it was only the man Christ who suffered and consequently feels a sympathy from this with his distressed servants. And it's most certain that if he sympathizes with them in their troubles, he must then know them in that nature which only has a fellow-feeling with them. For none can sympathize with the miseries of others which he knows nothing about. So that they who deny that Christ's human nature is capable of knowing all our miseries in effect deny him to be such a compassionate advocate as the Scriptures represent him, and rob us of this strong ground of consolation and hope in our approaches to God which the author of Hebrews would have us to build on.

And this doctrine has been so far from appearing either impossible or absurd to the reason of humankind, that I might produce the consent of a very great number of learned men, even among those who oppose my other opinions. The Lutherans allow the man Christ a sort of universal knowledge, as well as universal presence, which they argue for.¹¹⁸ The Catholic theologians, both Thomists and Scotists, allow him universal knowledge, though they differ in their way of explaining it.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁸ That is, some Lutheran theologians assert that Christ, as man, is both omniscient and omnipresent, theorizing that Christ's divine nature somehow gives these divine properties to the human nature. For a clear exposition of such a theory as propounded by Johannes Brenz (1499–1570), see Cross, *Communicatio Idiomatum*, chapter 2.

¹¹⁹ These Catholic theologians are followers, respectively, of the ideas of

And there was a time in the sixth century when in the Christian church some were branded with the label “heresy” under the name of “Agnoetae,” who held that Christ was ignorant of some things, which I suppose must have been in relation to his human nature. For those persons believed him to have a divine nature, and it’s hard to imagine they could attribute ignorance to that.¹²⁰ But (to leave aside that matter, which is disputed), it is enough for my purpose, namely, to prove what sense the Christian church then had of Christ’s extensive knowledge *as man*, that those who wrote against those “heretics” explicitly deny any ignorance in Christ *as man*. For this we may produce two famous patriarchs of the

philosopher-theologians Thomas Aquinas (1225–74) and John Duns Scotus (c. 1265–1308). Aquinas argued that because of its union with the Word (the second divine Person of the Trinity) the human soul of Christ must know at least the truths about all past, present, and future events, but not all truths whatever (e.g. some about merely possible events), and so while that soul “knew all things,” it was less than omniscient. On this see Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, 768 (III, Q10, A2) and Adams, *What Sort*, 52–57. For the extremely complicated views of Scotus on the knowledge of Christ’s human soul, see Adams, *What Sort*, 78–85.

¹²⁰ Monophysite Christians rejected the two-nature Christology of the Council of Chalcedon, insisting instead that after the Incarnation Christ had only one nature, a divine one. Alexandrian deacon Themistius Calonymus, via a now lost controversial writing (c. 534), started a faction among them based on such passages as Mark 13:32, John 11:34, and Luke 2:52, by agreeing with them that Christ’s knowledge was limited. As Monophysites, they did believe in such a thing as Christ’s humanity, but were opposed to calling it a “nature,” and they would have located his limited knowledge there. On this see Grillmeier and Hainthaler, *Christ*, 362–66.

Christian church at that time, Eulogius of Alexandria¹²¹ and Gregory of Rome.¹²² Those “heretics” produced as evidence for their opinion Christ’s words that he knew not the time of the last judgment, as an instance of his ignorance. To this Eulogius says that he was not ignorant of it as man and much less was he ignorant of it as God. Gregory says, *In natura quidem humanitatis novisse, sed non ex natura humanitatis*. That is, “he knew it with the human nature, but that knowledge did not arise from the humanity,”¹²³ which is what I maintain as to the knowledge I attribute to him, but not extending it so far as all future events, which they did.

And I find some of the modern Protestant theologians who (when outside of this dispute) speak agreeably to this, and are far from thinking it idolatry to ascribe as much knowledge as I have to the man Christ. Thus, the reverend Mr.

¹²¹ Bishop of Alexandria (d. 608 CE).

¹²² Pope Gregory I, a.k.a. Saint Gregory the Great (d. 604 CE), remembered particularly for sending missionaries to the British Isles.

¹²³ In his letter to Eulogius, Gregory first repeats an answer endorsed by the influential North African bishop and theologian Augustine of Hippo (354–430 CE), that “the Almighty Son says He does not know the day . . . not because he himself does not know it, but because he does not permit it to be known at all.” Gregory I, *Letter*, 311. But then he ventures a second, “more subtle” answer: “that the only-begotten, incarnate and made perfect man for us, did indeed *in* his human nature know the day and the hour of the judgment, but nevertheless did not know this *from* his human nature. What he knew *in* it he did not on that account know *from* it, because God-made-man knew the day and the hour of the judgment by the power of his godhead.” Gregory I, *Letter*, 311–12.

Baxter,¹²⁴ in his notes on Ephesians 4:16¹²⁵ plainly implies that he thinks an angel might be made capable of ruling the universal church on earth by legislation, judgment, and governance. For having said that such descriptions wouldn't be apt to any power but divine, he corrects himself by adding "or angelical at least,"¹²⁶ and surely the man Christ's ability is far superior to angels, for he has them ministering to him and giving him reports of matters if there be any occasion, for he has seven principal spirits who are the "eyes of the Lamb sent forth through all the earth," as the same author interprets Revelation 5:6.

Again, the author of the little book called *The Future State*,¹²⁷ the same who wrote the *Good Samaritan*, a worthy clergyman of the Church of England, says many reasonable things about the large extent of Christ's human knowledge, such as that probably "he can as easily inspect the whole globe of the earth and the heavens that surround it as we can view a

¹²⁴ English Puritan theologian Richard Baxter (1615–91).

¹²⁵ "But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love." Ephesians 4:15–16.

¹²⁶ Baxter, *A Paraphrase*, note on Ephesians 4:16.

¹²⁷ *The Future State* has been attributed to George Jones or Edward Whitaker, or both. In 1640 an Anglican minister named Nehemiah Rodgers (1593–1660) published a book titled *The Good Samaritan*. It is not clear if Emlyn had this work in mind or another of the same title, or if he has mistaken the author's identity.

globe of an inch diameter.”¹²⁸ “That he intercedes as man. And can he intercede in a case which he doesn’t know?”¹²⁹ Limborch¹³⁰ says much the same in his *Institutes of Christian Theology*, book 5, chapter 18.¹³¹

Let me add the testimony of Dr. Thomas Goodwin,¹³² who was never, I suppose, criticized for being an idolater among the Dissenters.¹³³ Yet it’s hardly possible that I should attribute greater knowledge to the man Jesus Christ than he

¹²⁸ *The Future State*, 46–47.

¹²⁹ *The Future State*, 150.

¹³⁰ Dutch Arminian theologian Philipp van Limborch (1633–1712).

¹³¹ Limborch is answering those who would object to worshipping Christ not as God but as man or as mediator: “Thirdly, they object, ‘Cursed is the man who trusts in man.’ (Jeremiah 17:5) But Jesus Christ as mediator was *man*. Answer: What does this text have to do with the honor paid to Christ as mediator? In this text, people are rebuked who put their confidence merely in human assistance; ‘man’ therefore signifies frail and mortal man, as appears by what immediately follows, ‘and makes flesh his arm,’ that is, who trusts in the strength of men, who are merely perishable flesh. Such people indeed cast away their confidence in God, rely upon weak humanity, and therefore are threatened with a severe punishment. But our Lord Jesus Christ, who has been exalted into heaven, is not flesh but rather a quickening spirit, having dominion over all things, and is endowed by God the Father with omniscience and with power. Therefore, one who trusts in him does not rely on flesh, nor do they cast away their confidence in God, but they thereby obey and depend upon God alone.” Limborch, *Compleat System*, 543 (5.8.2), modernized; see also the original Latin: Limborch, *Institutiones*, 473 (5.18.12).

¹³² Thomas Goodwin (1600–80), English Puritan theologian and president of Magdalen College of Oxford University.

¹³³ This term refers to Protestants in the 1600s and 1700s who were not a part of the Church of England (i.e. not Anglicans).

does where he says that the human understanding of Christ takes in all occurrences which concern his church, and since Christ said, “All power in heaven and earth is given to me by my Father,”¹³⁴ he might as well say that “all knowledge in heaven and earth is given me,” that his vision pierces into every corner, that he knows the grief in every heart. He concludes with this remarkable thought, that as a spherical mirror represents the images of all that is in the room, so the enlarged human understanding of Christ takes in all things in heaven and earth at once.¹³⁵ It seems these men did *not* take it to be the

¹³⁴ Matthew 28:18.

¹³⁵ Emlyn paraphrases Goodwin here. A slightly modernized and fuller quotation from the passage is: “Now, therefore, to explicate the way how our miseries are let into [Christ’s] heart and come to stir up such kindly affections of pity and compassion in him. . . . The understanding and knowledge of that human nature has notice and cognizance of all the occurrences that befall his members here. And for this the text [Hebrews 2:14–18] is clear, for the apostle speaks this for our encouragement, that Christ is touched with the feeling of our infirmities—which could not be a relief to us unless it implied that he particularly and distinctly knew them, for if he knew some but not all, we should lack relief in all because we would not know which he knew and which he did not. And the apostle affirms this of his human nature . . . for he speaks of that nature which was tempted here below. And, therefore, the Lamb that was slain, and so the man Christ Jesus, is said to have ‘seven eyes’ as well as ‘seven horns,’ which seven eyes are ‘the seven spirits sent forth into all the earth.’ (Revelation 5:6) His eyes of providence, through his anointing with the Holy Spirit, are in all corners of the world, and view all the things that are done under the sun. In like manner he is there said to have seven horns for power, as seven eyes for knowledge, and both are defined to be seven, to show the perfection of both in their extent (reaching unto all things) so that, as all power in heaven and earth is committed unto him, as Son of man, as the

unique perfection of the divine nature to know our hearts, so no creature could partake of it by divine assistance and revelation.

Indeed, as to the manner of knowing human hearts, we cannot tell how the inhabitants of the other world have access to our minds or to each other's. But without a doubt, Jesus Christ, whose eyes are as a flame of fire,¹³⁶ has more penetrating vision, as well as more revelation from God and more capacity for receiving and treasuring it up, than all others.

In short, it's clear that Christ *as man* is the great administrator of God's providential kingdom. As man he must judge the whole world, which implies vast and universal knowledge.¹³⁷ Who then should dare to say that the *man* Christ Jesus lacks a knowledge which is, without exaggeration, as large as this narrow earth or as multitudinous as the sand by the seashore? I think it's beyond all reasonable doubt. And as

Scripture speaks, so all knowledge is given him of all things done heaven and earth, and this as Son of Man too: his knowledge and power being of equal extent. He is the sun, as well in respect of knowledge as of righteousness, and there is nothing hid from his sight and beams, which pierce the darkest corners of the hearts of the sons of men. He knows the griefs . . . and distresses of their hearts. Just as a looking-glass made into the form of a round globe and hung in the middle of a room takes in all the images of things done or that are therein at once, so does the enlarged understanding of Christ's human nature take in the affairs of this world which he is appointed to govern, especially the miseries of his members, and this at once." Goodwin, *The Heart*, 309–10, modernized.

¹³⁶ Revelation 1:14; Revelation 19:12.

¹³⁷ John 5:27; Acts 17:31.

this doctrine has appeared rational enough and has escaped all condemnation when stated by non-unitarians, so I hope this view will not be counted “heretical” when held by unitarians, as the non-unitarians never had to forfeit the glorious title of “orthodox” on account of this doctrine.

Thus it appears that all that’s said of Christ’s extensive knowledge in Scripture is far from proving him to be the supreme, infinite God; it is well explained in other ways. And the same is true for features attributed to him which some call “divine perfections.” These are no more truly infinite when attributed to him than is this knowledge just discussed. There are clear evidences of their being attributed to him in a limited and inferior sense in comparison with what they are in the most glorious “God over all gods.”¹³⁸ Therefore, there will need to be other arguments if the supreme deity of Christ is going to be established.

¹³⁸ “For you, O LORD, are most high over all the earth; you are exalted far above all gods.” Psalm 97:9; “For I know that the LORD is great; our Lord is above all gods.” Psalm 135:5; “O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever. O give thanks to the God of gods, for his steadfast love endures forever.” Psalm 136:1–2. The word “gods” in these passages is being used not for a true peer of God, an impossibility, but rather for unseen, powerful beings generally, of which God is the greatest.

3.2 *Answering Arguments from the Worship of Jesus*

No doubt I could maintain my cause just as well on the topic of divine worship, which is another way my opposers would try to establish the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ. But it's easy to show that there is no instance of supreme, divine worship given ultimately to Christ in Scripture, but on the contrary, all the honor it assigns to him is such as assumes him to be inferior to the Father and dependent on him, since it is wholly grounded upon what God his Father has graciously bestowed on him.

Thus, he requires baptism (if that's an act of immediate, proper worship) in his name because "all power in heaven and earth" was given to him.¹³⁹ Thus, we must honor the Son as truly as (not as greatly as) we honor the Father, because the Father has committed, or given, all judgment to him.¹⁴⁰ Thus, at "the name of Jesus every knee must bow, and every tongue confess him to be Lord," because as a reward for his obedience,

¹³⁹ "And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.'" Matthew 28:18-20.

¹⁴⁰ "The Father judges no one but has given all judgment to the Son, so that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. Anyone who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him." John 5:22-23.

the Father “has given him a name above every name.” And it’s added that all this honor is ultimately to the “glory of the Father.”¹⁴¹

Worship which is thus grounded upon derived and borrowed excellence is not *supremely* divine, and cannot be offered to the infinite, self-existent, independent deity without a great offense, because it’s not the most excellent.¹⁴² To praise an *independent* God for honor and power granted to him by another presupposes a falsehood and mixes together belittlements with praise.

Although there may be the same common, external acts or words (such as bowing the knee, and saying “glory and praise,” etc.) directed to both God and to the mediator, as also in some instances they are given to ordinary people, yet the mind of a rational worshiper will make a distinction in his inward intention, as no doubt those devout Jews did, who in the same act “bowed their heads, and worshiped both God and the King.”¹⁴³ But I shall not pursue this any further now.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴¹ “he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross. Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” Philippians 2:8–11.

¹⁴² “Cursed be the cheat who has a male in the flock and vows to give it, and yet sacrifices to the Lord what is blemished; for I am a great King, says the Lord of hosts, and my name is revered among the nations.” Malachi 1:14.

¹⁴³ 1 Chronicles 29:20.

¹⁴⁴ Emlyn says more about supreme vs. inferior worship in his *A*

Moreover, I judge that to assert Jesus Christ to be the supreme God destroys the gospel-doctrine of his mediation.¹⁴⁵ For if I must have one who is both supreme God and man to be my mediator with God, then when I speak to Jesus Christ as the supreme God, where is the godman that must be my mediator with him? To say he mediates for himself is the same as to say that I must go to him *without* a mediator, and turns the whole business of mediation into a metaphor, contrary both to the common way of things, and to the Scriptures. And I would like to know what is this idea of going to God without a mediator, if it is just that he mediates for himself? Who ever doubted the exercise of his own wisdom or mercy, that these, in a manner of speaking, argue within him? But undeniably the Scriptures speak of a mediator *outside* of God when they set forth Jesus Christ as such.

And who could this mediator be, if (as alleged) we go to Jesus Christ as the *ultimate* object of our supplication? If one says that only his human nature mediates, though as united to his divine nature, I object that this is still to make Christ the mediator for himself, for the human nature is not a godman, and if the man or human nature alone is capable of being a mediator, then it's not necessary that Jesus Christ should be more than a man inhabited by and related to God, in order to be able to play that role. Nor may it be said that its union with the divine nature gives an infinite efficacy to those acts of

Vindication and his *An Answer*.

¹⁴⁵ 1 Timothy 2:5.

which the human nature alone is the source. For unless by that union the human nature was turned into an infinite or divine nature, its acts can no more be considered properly and intrinsically infinite in this case than his body or human understanding are infinite because they are united to an infinite, divine nature.

But what fully proves that the human nature of Christ can never be an effectual mediator, according to them, even though it's personally united to the divine nature, is that they deny this human nature, being so united, to have knowledge of the secret mental prayers, the inward desires and distresses of all Christians, or to know anyone's heart. How then can he be a compassionate intercessor in cases that he knows nothing of? How can he sympathize with their sufferings which he doesn't know that they feel at all? What comfort is there in this understanding of Christ's mediation? The divine nature is precluded from it, because they direct us to address ourselves to that nature as the ultimate object of our supplication through a mediator, and the human nature, they say, can know nothing of our plight, nor does it know our hearts, whether we worship sincerely, or repent sincerely, or merely hypocritically, and so doesn't know how to represent or recommend us to God. What a sorry state do these theologians put us in! There is no mediator left to come between us and the supreme God, so we must deal with him immediately and alone, which they must admit is far from the gospel-doctrine or method. Thus is the Lord Jesus ejected from his role, on a pretense of giving him higher honor!

On the whole, as far as I can see, we're better off being content with the apostle Paul's clear and straightforward account of this matter (if its being so very intelligible doesn't count as an unpardonable objection against it), namely, that "there is but one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."¹⁴⁶ Be assured that the apostle Paul knew how to describe the mediator without leaving out the better half of him, or the more important nature. Our mediator, according to him, was only called a "man," although he is also by role a god, a ruler over all, made so by him who puts all things under him.

And indeed, as there are two principal, distinguishing doctrines of Christianity—the unity of the supreme God, and the one mediator between us and him—so the trinitarians have lost them both among their various factions. For as they are divided into two main factions (besides several subdivisions), both among Conformists and Dissenters,¹⁴⁷ one group holding *three* real persons (or infinite beings), the other only *one* (for they are not yet agreed whether they worship three infinite, supreme beings or only one), so between them both, these two great doctrines are undermined.¹⁴⁸ The "Realists," those who think the

¹⁴⁶ 1 Timothy 2:5 (KJV).

¹⁴⁷ That is, Anglicans and non-Anglican Protestants.

¹⁴⁸ Here Emlyn shows that he's read some of the controversial literature on "the Trinity" from the 1690s. One unitarian tract pointed out that some trinitarians think the "Persons" of the Trinity as three selves or intelligent agents, whereas others reduce these "Persons" to ways the one

“Persons” of the Trinity are persons, leave room for a mediator in the Trinity, but they destroy the unity of God, who is *one* infinite being. On the other hand, they who hold true to the divine unity, believing in one infinite being with three modes or properties or relations, do by clear implication leave no place for such a mediator as they would like to have, namely, one who is an infinite God, to be a mediator *with* the infinite God, when there is no *other* infinite being but him. Nor can he be thought to intercede with himself. To keep the gospel-faith whole and undefiled it’s necessary to sail between both of these rocks by believing God and his Christ to be two beings, so in this way there will be room for one to mediate for the other, and these two will not be two equal supreme beings, but rather one will be subordinate to the other, so in this way we may preserve the unity of the supreme God.

Therefore, let us seriously consider not what the church in these latter days has thought about Jesus Christ, but rather what his own apostles, when inspired, have thought about him. I think no one was more likely, or ever had a better opportunity to describe his Lord in the height of his glory than the apostle Peter on the day of Pentecost, that day of triumph, with the newly and visibly inspired apostles. Hear

divine self is. The tract calls the former “Real” trinitarians and the latter “Nominal” trinitarians. (Dixon, *Nice and Hot*, 131–32; Nye, *Discourse*) Trinitarians who dare to interpret the traditional language can still, for the most part, be divided into those who think the “Persons” of the Trinity to be three selves and those who think they involve only one. On this see Tuggy, “Trinity,” sections 1–2.

how magnificently he describes his glorious Lord Jesus in front of his murderers: "You men of Israel hear these words. Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved by God among you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did by him in your midst."¹⁴⁹ Again, "Let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made that same Jesus whom you have crucified both Lord and Christ."¹⁵⁰ We observe that the apostle was aiming at such a description of Christ as might strike the hearts of his murderers with the greatest horror about their crime, and therefore he could never omit the most impressive portion of his description, namely Christ's infinite deity, if he had really been such. What a terrifying argument that would have been, able to produce more conviction in his persecutors than all the rest, to tell them that they had shed the blood of the infinite God himself. What the apostle Peter says is certainly dull and weak in comparison with this, namely that he was a man approved by God. Did he not understand his mission, or was he trying to thwart it by such an omission? And yet, when he was far from being held back by any fear to confess Christ fully, he only describes Christ as a god by inhabitation and exaltation. Furthermore, if the deity of Christ were a fundamental teaching of the Christian faith, why is it that when poor, convicted souls, in anguish for their crimes, seek advice about how to be saved from them,¹⁵¹ the apostle should not acquaint them with this teaching, but

¹⁴⁹ Acts 2:22.

¹⁵⁰ Acts 2:36.

¹⁵¹ Acts 2:37.

instead directs them to believe in Jesus as described above? Did he direct wounded souls to an insufficient savior by not telling them that he was the infinite God? Yet they are baptized and added to the church and numbered among such as shall be saved.¹⁵² How can this be, if the supreme deity of Christ is a fundamental teaching of the Christian faith? Likewise, he later preaches that “God was with him.”¹⁵³ This was all.

3.3 Protestants’ Anti-Catholic Arguments Re-applied to Themselves

To conclude, God and Christ (i.e. one anointed) are two separate or different beings as much as Christ’s body and the communion bread are, and therefore many correct descriptions of one can’t also be applied to the other in a proper or literal sense, as all our writers against the Catholic

¹⁵² Acts 2:41.

¹⁵³ “Then Peter began to speak to them: ‘I truly understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.’” Acts 10:34–38.

doctrine of transubstantiation argue, and it's of equal force in the present case.¹⁵⁴

To be anointed implies having been raised up by an authority and having honor conferred upon one. It's in effect to say that the person is a creature, an inferior being. Therefore, to say that actually Christ is the most high God is to say the inferior is supreme, and the man is God, which cannot be true, except understood non-literally, as for example the bread "is" Christ's body, namely by being in some way related to it, etc. And truly, if the issue can be fixed here by making a personal union between God and Christ, I don't

¹⁵⁴ Early modern Protestant writers often used the Roman Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation as an example of a doctrine which Christians can't reasonably believe. According to this doctrine, based on a literal reading of passages such as Mark 14:22–25 and John 6:53–55, and formulated (or some would argue refined) in the high middle ages, when the priest in the Mass blesses the bread and the wine, their substances (underlying realities) turn, respectively, into the substance of Jesus' body and the substance of Jesus' blood, while their "accidents" (i.e. observable, non-essential features, such as weight, color, and taste) remain the same. This doctrine implies that when one eats and drinks (what appear to be) the bread and wine, one is actually consuming the entire body and blood of Jesus. Protestants object that our God-given senses (sight, touch, smell, taste) are telling us that the objects before us are merely a small, circular wafer and a portion of wine in a cup, not a man's whole body and all of a man's blood. It looks like we have more evidence that the items before us are mere bread and wine than we do to accept the Catholic teaching of transubstantiation. In response one famous Catholic writer doubled down, urging that "If we wish to proceed securely in all things, we must hold fast to the following principle: What seems to me white, I will believe black if the hierarchical Church so defines." Loyola, *The Spiritual Exercises*, 365.

see why a Catholic can't set up another such "union" between Christ's body and the bread in the eucharist, and then they may stoutly defend the claim that it's really the body of Christ.

But indeed nothing is more obvious than the unsteadiness of many Protestant writers when they write against the Catholics and then against the unitarians. How do they go both backwards and forwards? And when they have triumphantly and fully defeated the ineffective attacks and objections of the Catholics, they take up the Catholics' refuted arguments and redeploy them against the unitarians. And what they have maintained against the Catholics as good arguments (notwithstanding Catholic evasions), these same arguments they oppose when the unitarians turn them against themselves on the topic of the Trinity. These Protestant writers themselves resort to similar tricks and evasions as the Catholics.

Thus, when the Catholics object to the novelty of the Protestant religion and ask them where were their religion and church before Luther, the Protestants think this is a weak quibble, and can tell them their religion was in the Bible, and their church among the earliest Christians, even though it lay hidden during the centuries of widespread apostasy. And yet to the unitarians they make the same objection: "Where has any Christian church, for so many ages, held that Christ was not God?"

Against the Catholics the Protestants will prove that the ancient "fathers" did not hold the elements to be Christ's real body and blood, because they often call them the "images" of

them. But when the unitarians argue that Christ is not the supreme God because the Scriptures call him “the image of God”—and therefore he is not the God whose image only he is¹⁵⁵—now, according to these Protestants, the thing itself and its image must be the same thing.

Against the Catholics they prove that the apostle Peter was subject to the church and to the rest of the apostles (though not singly to each) because he was sent here and there by them.¹⁵⁶ This Baronius takes hold of and tells them that by the same reason they must grant the “Arians’” argument to be a good one, namely that the Father is greater than the Son because the Son is sent by him.¹⁵⁷ But when a unitarian argues in this way, now although the Father sends and the Son is sent by him, yet they shall both be equal, and this shall make no difference.

Against the Catholics the Protestants will boast that they don’t hoodwink the people in ignorance, but rather they invite them to inquire and examine matters, and the more the better, while it’s a ground of suspicion that the Catholics cheat

¹⁵⁵ “Of course the image and the one of whom he is the image are not to be thought of as one and the same thing, but as two beings [translators’ footnote: *ousiai*], two things, and two powers, corresponding to the number of their names.” Eusebius, *Against Marcellus*, 109 (1.41). See also 2 Corinthians 4:4, Colossians 1:15.

¹⁵⁶ Acts 8:14.

¹⁵⁷ Counter-Reformation era Roman Catholic cardinal and church historian Caesar Baronius (1538–1607), presumably in his 12-volume *Annales Ecclesiastici a Christo Nato ad Annum 1198* [*Ecclesiastical Annals from Christ’s Nativity to 1198*] (1588–1607).

people by keeping them from the light. But now when it comes to the unitarians, they do a one-eighty and warn people against reading and arguing. They are now for “implicit faith”¹⁵⁸ without examining into deep mysteries; they ask us to believe and not pry into them, though we only desire to examine whether the Scriptures actually reveal any such mysteries at all. The rest we will believe if we could see that. We desire no other freedom in interpreting Scripture than that which they so reasonably help themselves to in interpreting Christ’s words, “This is my body.”¹⁵⁹ Given Protestant standards, the unitarians think they can stand their ground and defend themselves in these matters as easily as the Protestants can against the Catholics.

As to the earliest Christian times, so many inquirers both among the Catholic and Reformed writers have given their

¹⁵⁸ “Implicit faith” is a term much criticized by early modern Protestant writers, though it has fallen out of use by Catholics in more recent times. Thomas Aquinas, realizing that ordinary people basically never think about and probably don’t grasp the meaning of a great many Church teachings, suggests that it is enough, at least in the case of secondary teachings, that such people believe *whatever it is* which is taught by Catholic scholars, insofar as it agrees with Scripture. This he calls “implicit faith” with regard to those teachings; put more clearly, such people don’t *believe* such teachings, but rather they are “ready to believe them” were they able to think about them. Perhaps surprisingly, given the extreme difficulty of Aquinas’s expositions of them, Aquinas is clear that “implicit” faith is not enough when it comes to Church teaching on Incarnation and Trinity. (Aquinas, *Summa*, 390–99, Second Part, Part II, Q2, A1–9.)

¹⁵⁹ Mark 14:22.

impartial testimony that they tended towards Arius's doctrine,¹⁶⁰ and have made such poor excuses for these "fathers," as if they didn't know or were not careful about their fundamental doctrines until these came to be debated in "ecumenical" councils, that I think I needn't say more. I would suggest only one thing: any honest person must grant that the earliest writers speak in different places with great (at least seeming) discord. Sometimes they plainly declare that Jesus Christ was inferior to and the servant of the Father before his incarnation, while at other times they give him high titles which suggest that he is equal with God. Yet it's far more reasonable to suppose that the higher expressions should be explained according to the lower, rather than the contrary, because in discoursing about and pleading for a beloved, admired object, as the Lord Jesus deserves to be, it's very easy and natural to wax eloquent and embark on lofty flights of praise which must be interpreted not with strict rigor, but rather in much lesser ways. This is how we interpret some of the Protestants' lofty tributes to the venerable mystery of the eucharist, as though with the Catholics they took the elements

¹⁶⁰ That is, a teaching about God and the Son like that of the Alexandrian presbyter Arius (d. 336 CE), so that the Father alone is the one true God, and the Son (or the Word of John 1) is a second and lesser being who was caused to exist by God (either eternally or a finite time ago). For a full account of Arius's views see Williams, *Arius*, 95–116. For many examples of this sort of subordinationism among theologians of the first three Christian centuries, see Lamson, *The Church*; Tuggy and Date, *Is Jesus*, 65–67, 76–80, 114–15, 123–26, 142–45, 153–56; Tuggy, "The Lost Early History."

to be Christ's real body. But on the contrary, no one is ever inclined to speak diminutively on such occasions; they could not have a thought to lessen their master's glory. Therefore, if the "fathers" ever describe him as *not* the supreme God, nor equal to him, we have all reason to think that they spoke the words of truth and sobriety, and what the exact matter required.

For my own part, I write this while being duly impressed by those great relations in which the blessed Jesus stands to me, whom I credit as my great teacher, whom I desire to admire and love as my gracious, endeared benefactor—beyond father or mother or friends, etc.—whom I revere as my Lord and ruler, and solemnly expect as my final, glorious judge, who is to come in his own and in his Father's glory, and through whom in the meantime I deal with God, as my only mediator and intercessor. Therefore, I earnestly profess that it's not without grievous and bitter displeasure that I should be employed in writing things which by so many well-meaning Christians will be misinterpreted to be derogatory to the honor of this great redeemer. But I know he loves nothing but truth in his cause, and will never be offended, I hope, with any who stand by his own words, namely, "The Father is greater than I."¹⁶¹ I think it a dangerous thing to say that God is *not* greater than he, or is *not* "the head of Christ,"¹⁶² for "'To whom then will you compare me, or who is my equal?' says

¹⁶¹ John 14:28.

¹⁶² 1 Corinthians 11:3.

the Holy One.”¹⁶³ I am persuaded that it’s truth I plead for and that supports me.

3.4 Conclusion: A Call for Temperance

However, I wish they who are adversaries to my position would learn at least the modesty of one of the earliest extant writers for Christianity after the apostles. I mean Justin Martyr, disputing with Trypho the Jew, and arguing for the honor of Jesus Christ, whom he calls “a deity by the will of the Father,” and one who “ministered to his will” before his Incarnation.¹⁶⁴ This person attempts to show that Jesus Christ did pre-exist of old, as a “god” (in his sense) and was later born of a virgin. But because, as he says, there were some who confessed him to be Christ and yet denied those points of his pre-existence and his miraculous birth from a virgin, Justin calmly says to his adversary,

If I shall not demonstrate these things, that he did pre-exist etc., and was born of a virgin, yet still the

¹⁶³ Isaiah 40:25.

¹⁶⁴ “Christ ministered to the will of the Father, yet he is a deity because he is the first-begotten of all creatures.” Justin, *Dialogue*, 125.3, editors’ translation. For Justin the existence of the Son depends on God’s will. Speaking of how God caused the Son to exist before the Genesis creation, Justin writes that “this power [i.e. the pre-human Son] was generated from the Father, by his power and will.” Justin, *Dialogue*, 194 (128.4); see also 195 (129.3), 93–94 (61.1).

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cause is not lost, as to his being the Christ of God. If I do not prove that he did pre-exist etc., it is just to say that I'm mistaken about this thing only. It doesn't follow that he is not the Christ. For whoever he is, it is fully proven that he is the Christ.¹⁶⁵

As for those Christians who denied the aforementioned things and held him to be only a man who was born in the ordinary way, Justin only says of them "with whom I do not agree."¹⁶⁶ He does not damn them who differed from him, nor will he say (in the ranting dialect of some in our age) that the Christian religion is undermined and that Christ is only an impostor and a broken reed to trust in unless he is the truly supreme God. To the contrary, still he was sure that he is the

¹⁶⁵ Emlyn paraphrases in his translation here. The whole passage in a recent translation is: "But since it has been proved beyond all doubt that he is the Christ of God, whatever that Christ eventually is to be, even if I fail to show that he pre-existed, and consented to become man with a body and feelings like our own, according to the will of the Father; only in this last regard could you rightly claim that I have been wrong. But you cannot deny that he is the Christ, even though [i.e. even *if*] he apparently is of human origin, and evidently became the Christ by the Father's choice." Justin, *Dialogue*, 73 (48.3).

¹⁶⁶ "For, my friends, there are some of your race [i.e. Jews, although some editors think this passage should be corrected to read "our," i.e. Christians] who acknowledge that he is the Christ, but claim that he has a merely human origin. I naturally disagree with such persons, nor would I agree with them even if the majority of those who share my opinions were to say so. For we have been told by Christ himself not to follow the teachings of men, but only those which have been announced by the holy prophets and taught by himself." Justin, *Dialogue*, 74 (48.4).

true Christ, whatever else he might be mistaken in. It's desperate wickedness to risk the reputation of the genuineness and holiness of the blessed Jesus because of a difficult and disputable opinion, to dare to say that if they are mistaken in their opinion (which I truly believe they are) then Jesus Christ is a liar and a deceiver, a fake savior, and the like. What is this but to expose Jesus to the scorn of unbelievers?

Thus, I see with sorrow that to this very day, even among professed Christians themselves, Christ crucified is to some a stumbling-block, and to others foolishness.¹⁶⁷ But even if he isn't as good and great as the God who appointed him to be a savior, it is still agreed that he's a "man approved by God by signs and wonders which God did through him,"¹⁶⁸ and by whom (as the instrument) God made the worlds,¹⁶⁹ and that

¹⁶⁷ 1 Corinthians 1:23.

¹⁶⁸ Acts 2:22.

¹⁶⁹ Emyln refers here to this famous passage, the opening of the letter to the Hebrews: "Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs." (Hebrews 1:1-4) Like the majority, Emyln thinks the creation mentioned here, of "worlds" or "ages" (Greek: *aiōnas*), is the one described in Genesis 1, so that God created the cosmos through the pre-human Jesus. Some unitarians Christians agree with Emyln, while others hold that it is Christ's "new creation" of this and the coming ages which is meant. Whichever side is correct, it remains that the Father only is "creator" in the sense of being the *ultimate* source of the

he is granted to be one in whom dwelt (so as it never dwelt before in prophets or any other) all the fulness of the divine nature,¹⁷⁰ and that he is one with the Father by unity of consent and will (as John Calvin¹⁷¹ interprets John 10:30), one in testimony with the Father and Spirit (as Theodore Beza¹⁷² and many others understand that in 1 John 5:7),¹⁷³ and that he is the most lively, visible image of God that the world ever saw, so that he who sees him does in great measure see the Father (as in a bright mirror¹⁷⁴), and that he is confessed and served as one far above angels and archangels,¹⁷⁵ and over all powers in heaven and earth,¹⁷⁶ a god or ruler, the great administrator of God's kingdom both on earth and in the invisible *hades*, as having the keys (or ministerial power) of death and hell.¹⁷⁷

cosmos. On this text and on the ambiguity of the idea of being involved in creation, see Tuggy and Date, *Is Jesus*, 71, 116–19, 145–48.

¹⁷⁰ Colossians 2:9.

¹⁷¹ French reformer for whom “Calvinism” is named, 1509–64.

¹⁷² French Reformed theologian and scholar, 1519–1605.

¹⁷³ The King James Version which Emlyn knew had this verse as “For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.” But all translations in recent times acknowledge that no ancient Greek manuscript reads this way, so they have something similar to the NRSV for 1 John 5:7: “There are three that testify”—and these are specified in the next verse: “the Spirit and the water and the blood, and these three agree.” On this discrepancy between the KJV and more recent translations see Wallace, “The Textual Problem.”

¹⁷⁴ John 14:9.

¹⁷⁵ Hebrews 1–2.

¹⁷⁶ Colossians 1:16.

¹⁷⁷ Revelation 1:18.

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Yet after all this, if he isn't the very supreme God himself, and moreover, to complete the absurdity, if he isn't the very same God whose Son and image he is, he shall be no mediator in their eyes. They do, on this supposition, openly disown him as their savior and confidence. They are ashamed to trust in him and seem rather to mock and criticize him as insufficient and insignificant than to believe in him.¹⁷⁸ These things are to

¹⁷⁸ The editor Sollom Emlyn here adds some examples in contemporary polemical trinitarian sermons: "it will be fitting for us to pity those who make a subordinate, dependent, deficient god and saviour the object of their hope and trust . . . But such a god as this is not to be found in all the Scriptures . . . We may safely leave it to those who can be content with such a god and consider it worth their while to contend for, trust in, serve, and worship so ignorant, defective, and imperfect a god as a created god must be, even though he had all the glory conferred upon him that he could possibly bear or be capable of. Such a god as this could at best have none but subordinate excellencies and perfections (though I think a subordinate omnipotence and a subordinate omnipotence sound a bit odd). He could be only a subordinate savior and help us to only a subordinate salvation." Calamy, *Thirteen Sermons*, 130, modernized. And, "While looking to an Arian savior may well enough create a chilling damp in our hearts, dispiriting us with fear, lest someone should 'pluck us out of his hands' [John 10:28], fill us with jealousy lest we go astray and be disappointed, and woefully cramp us in confiding in him. Nor can I, I confess, discern how the apostle Paul could, given the new [Arian] scheme, have cried out so freely at one time, 'I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that Day' [2 Timothy 1:12], and at another time, 'I am persuaded that neither death nor life nor angels nor principalities or powers nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord' [Romans 8:38-39], as he might and could and did given the old [trinitarian] scheme." Calamy, *Thirteen Sermons*, 360, modernized.

me a very grievous offence. I think it a great pity that so excellent a constitution as the gospel is, so lovely to contemplate, so fitting to receive our thankful admiration for the grace and wisdom it contains, should either be lost in the clouds of an artificial obscurity, or exposed to the derision of ungodly scoffers.

It's yet another grief to think what a fatal stop is hereby put to the progress of the gospel, whose rejection by Jews, Muslims, and pagans is undeniably motivated by the common doctrine of the Incarnation of God. One may read in le Comte's history of China how the heathens derided the Christians' doctrine of a mortal God,¹⁷⁹ and for that reason considered Christianity as mythical as their own religion. And Dr. Casaubon¹⁸⁰ in his book on credulity and incredulity says that he could prove by many instances out of history that this "doctrine has kept more people from embracing the Christian

¹⁷⁹ French author Louis le Comte (1655–1728) writes of a Chinese court scholar who'd been so humiliated by the superior mathematical abilities of some of the Catholic missionaries that he wanted to persuade the court "that the Christian religion contained much greater errors than those he was guilty of. In the midst of some meetings where the Emperor was present he behaved in such a manner as the Emperor could scarcely bear with him. He laid his hands across and cried out as loud as he could, 'See here, and look what these fellows adore, and what they would have us worship too: a man who was hanged, a person who was crucified! Let anyone judge hereby of their understanding and good sense!'" le Comte, *Memoirs*, 364, modernized.

¹⁸⁰ French-English classical scholar Meric Casaubon (1599–1671).

faith than any other thing” he knew of.¹⁸¹ Now though I grant that if it be the certain truth of God, this must be no argument against receiving it, yet surely it should make us very cautious and impartial in our inquiry about it, lest we bring on ourselves the woe denounced against them by whom offenses (that is, stumbling-blocks in the way of the gospel) do come.¹⁸²

In the meantime, in the midst of these troubles, it’s a great and sweet refreshment to wait and hope for an escape to

¹⁸¹ Casaubon writes that: “[There is] an objection against Christianity, the most considerable in point of credibility that ever was made or can be made, and which has kept more people from embracing the Christian faith than any other thing that I know, of which many examples might be given from history. The question is . . . how it could be that . . . the great Lord and Governor of the world could be contained in the womb of a virgin . . . [so that a scoffer might] deride Christianity by talking of the virgin Mary and her Baby God. . . . If it be said the matter might easily be resolved by distinguishing of two natures in one Person, that indeed may easily be said, however this conjunction or union of God (the God of all Eternity) and man born of a virgin at such a time etc. may not so easily be believed or made credible . . . the more we apprehend God’s greatness and omnipotence, which makes other miracles probable, the more this makes, or seems to make this union the more improbable and incredible . . . An incredible thing, if it suggests omnipotence, may be believed of God. The creation of the world from nothing . . . clearly suggests omnipotence. But if we say that God has assumed (or, clothed himself with) a body; that is to unclothe him of his divinity . . . to make him no god.” Casaubon, *Of Credulity*, 120–23, modernized.

¹⁸² “If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you were drowned in the depth of the sea. Woe to the world because of stumbling blocks! Occasions for stumbling are bound to come, but woe to the one by whom the stumbling block comes!” Matthew 18:6–7.

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mount Moriah,¹⁸³ the land of vision above where all these shades of gloomy night shall vanish away and an eternal day of clear light and peace shall shine on them “who love our Lord Jesus in sincerity,”¹⁸⁴ in whose glorious dignity I rejoice. Furthermore, I desire to boast and glory in this exalted and enthroned redeemer, for “worthy is the Lamb to receive glory, and honor, and blessing, and power.”¹⁸⁵ Amen! So be it!

Now to him who loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and has made us kings and priests to God, even the Father, to him be glory and dominion forever.¹⁸⁶ But this I confess to you, that according to the way, which they call “heresy,” I worship the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and the prophets.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸³ The mountain on which Solomon built the first Temple (2 Chronicles 3:1).

¹⁸⁴ Ephesians 6:24.

¹⁸⁵ Revelation 5:12.

¹⁸⁶ Revelation 1:5–6.

¹⁸⁷ Acts 24:14.