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THE
DOCTRINE

OF THE
TRINITY,

As it is contained in the
SCRIPTURES,

EXPLAINED and CONFIRMED:

Its Consistency with the Principles of
NATURAL REASON cleared;

And OBJECTIONS to the contrary answered :

And the SUPREME DEITY of the SON and
HOLY GHOST, and their EQUALITY
with the FATHER in all *divine Perfections*
and *Glory*, proved.

With a full ANSWER to the Chief *Objections* against the
PROPER GODHEAD of these two Persons.

In Several SERMONS, preached at an Evening-
Lecture, at *Nottingham*.

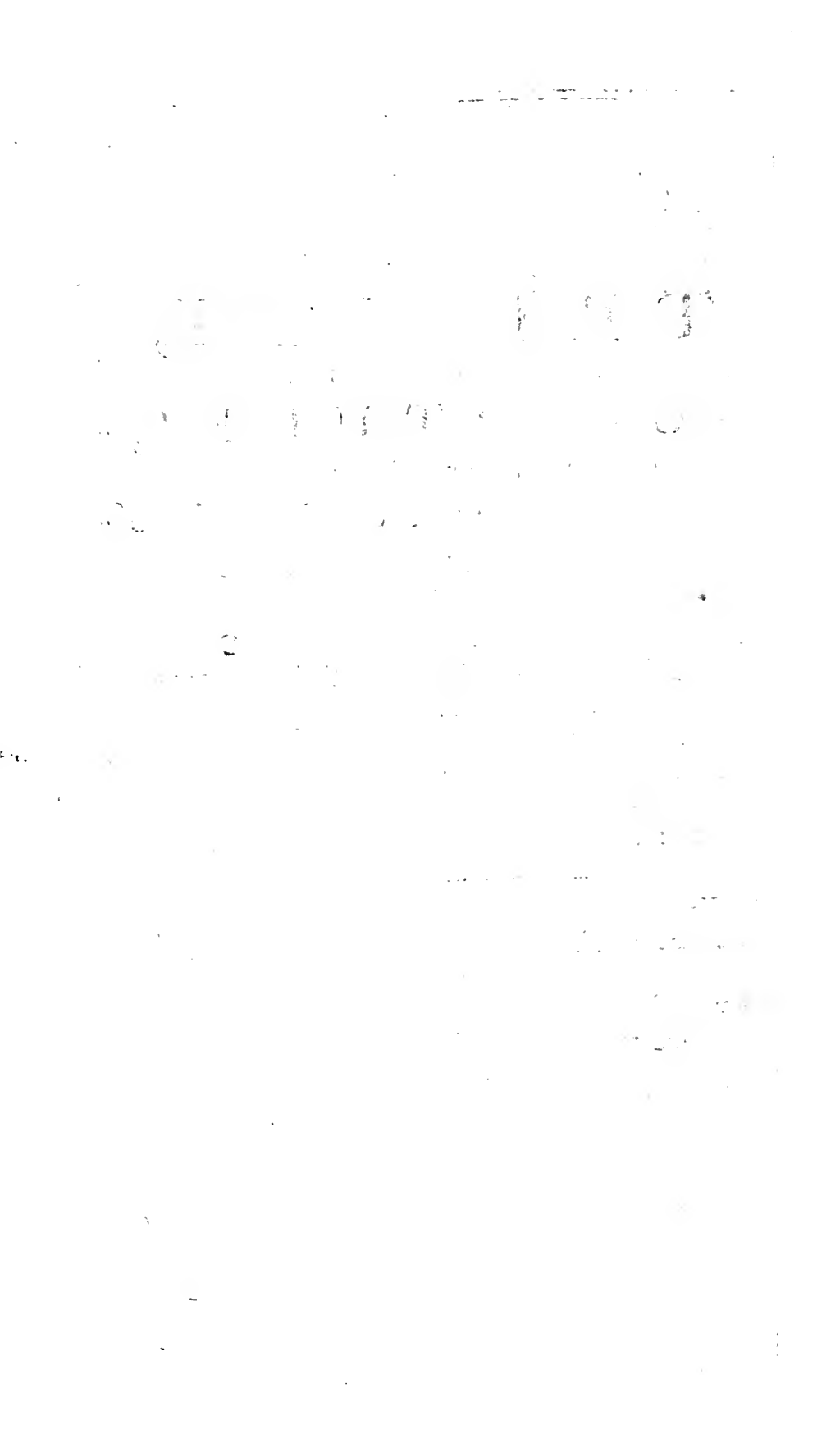
By JAMES SLOSS, M. A.

To which are Annexed,
Several LETTERS wrote to the AUTHOR, re-
lating to the same Subject, with his Answers.

Ὁ ὁφθαλμὸς τὸ ἐνοῶσαι καὶ τοῖς τρισὶ περιλάμπουσι; οὐ φθαίνει
τὰ τρία διαλεῖν καὶ εἰς τὸ ἓν συναφέρειται. Greg. Naz.

L O N D O N :

Printed by H. WOODFALL for the AUTHOR:
And Sold by JOHN OSWALD, at the *Rose and Crown*;
JOSEPH DAVIDSON, at the *Golden Lion*; both in the
Poultry: ALEXANDER CRUDEN, Her Majesty's Bookfeller,
under the *Royal Exchange*: And Mr. DAVIDSON, and
Mr. TRAIL, Bookfellers in *Edinburgh*. MDCCXXXVI.





T O

Sir Richard Ellys, Bart.

S I R,



S the visible Decay of practical Godliness, and the natural Consequence thereof, the abounding of Errors of all sorts, and particularly the Growth of Heresies of the grossest kind, even such as sap the Foundations of our Holy Religion; are matter of the deepest Sorrow to all who have a hearty Concern for the Redeem-

IV DEDICATION.

er's Kingdom and Glory; they must needs then be much more so to You, on whom it hath pleased the Sovereign God to bestow uncommon Measures of his Grace, by which you have a higher Resentment of the Dishonour done to our Blessed Redeemer, by the abounding Contradiction of Sinners, against him and his Doctrines; on which account, any Attempt made in opposition to growing Error and Impiety, cannot be disagreeable to you. And as God in his Providence has raised you to an exalted Rank in the World, and enriched you with a large share of Learning, you thereby come both to know, in a more comprehensive manner, the lamentable State of Religion in the World, and the fatal Tendency of those Errors that so much abound: So that the miserable Scene opens it self wider to your pious Mind than it does to many others, and affects it more deeply. But your thorough Acquaintance with the Christian Scheme, furnishes support

D E D I C A T I O N. V

support under those melancholy Views: You know that the Redeemer lives, and that all Power is given to him in Heaven and Earth, for the support of his Interest and the Defence of his Church; against which, the gates of Hell shall never prevail; of all that the Father hath given to him, he will lose none, this Foundation of God standeth sure.

S I R, The following Sermons are formed upon such Principles, as, so far as I know, do not give them any title to the Protection of many, of your Rank and Quality; but I hope they will be found to have some Right to claim Your's: And as you have so just a way of Thinking, that you reckon it no Diminution to your Honour to profess the Doctrines of the Gospel, so much despised at this time by many *Noble* and *Learned*, which has been their usual Fate in all Ages; so those who have a sincere Love to these Doctrines, esteem it both their Honour and Advantage,

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vantage, to have One of your *Piety*, *Quality*, and *Learning*, to countenance them; and I reckon it particularly an Honour to my self, that you permit me to inscribe these Discourses to you.

THAT God may preserve you long in Life and Health, for an Ornament and Blessing to his Church, and pour down upon you all temporal and eternal Blessings, is the fervent Prayer of,

Sir,

Your very much Obliged,

Most Obedient,

and Humble Servant,

J A. S L O S S.



THE
P R E F A C E.

SO many having wrote, to so good purpose, both in our own and other Languages formerly, and especially of late, upon this Subject of the Holy Trinity; it may appear strange that any thing further should be offered to the World, on that head. But the Doctrine of the Trinity enters so deeply into all the Articles of the Christian Faith, that while there is any thing new to be said upon them, that copious Subject will never be exhausted. And even, tho' there was nothing to be offered which had not been said before, in some Age or other, or in one shape or another; yet the Exigence of the Christian Church, on some particular occasions, when Errors of most pernicious consequence are industriously propagated, may loudly demand, that those who are set for the defence of the Gospel, should appear in behalf of the Doctrines of Christ, when they are attacked in any Corner, by those who wish not well to the Interest of Zion; tho' they have no other Furniture than those Weapons, again rubb'd up, and brought to a new edge, which

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have been used with success against the Adversary. And if the crooked Serpent traces the same crooked Paths, by which he has sought to carry on his Interest in former Ages, lying in wait to deceive, it is fit that his Devices should be discovered by the same Methods, by which his Subtilty, thro' the divine Blessing, to the Edification of the Church, has already been happily baffled.

It has been the usual Method which Satan has taken to corrupt the Church, to insinuate his Poison gradually and by slow steps, to procure a certain Conquest. He does not at first force upon a Person, who has had the benefit of a religious Education, the disbelief of the most essential and fundamental Articles of Christianity; if he did, he would run the hazard of being baffled in his design: in that case, so much of Satan would discover it self at once, that the Person would be scared, and would with abhorrence reject his Proposals, and refuse to attend to such daring and bare-faced Suggestions. He knows that the Nature of Man is not quite so debauched and corrupted, that it can digest the most glaring and wicked Heresies, before it be, in some measure, prepared to swallow them, by being for some time accustomed to the habitual Belief of lesser Errors.

If one takes a view of the lamentable State of the Protestant Churches, at this time in Europe, and considers how they have passed from one degree of Corruption in Doctrine to another, till at length many have arrived to that pitch, that they have cast off Christianity altogether, and turned pro-
fessed

fessed Deists; he can't but think, that it is a matter of the greatest consequence, both to Churches and particular Persons, to get a stop put to the first out-breaking of Errors, tho' but of a smaller sort; for if these get but once footing in a Man's mind, they will soon make way for Errors of a more dangerous nature; and frequently it happens, that the same Arguments that induce and lead Men into Errors of a lesser Nature, when they are carried their full length, and urged as far as their supposed force will go, inevitably draw them into Errors of the very grossest kind, tho' at first view, their dangerous Consequences did not appear. We have a very plain Instance of this, in the denial of the Doctrine of the free Grace of God, in the eternal Election of some Sinners to everlasting Life, and to the effectual means which are necessary, in order to lead them to it; and the Doctrine of his sovereign Justice, in leaving other Sinners finally to perish under the Sin and Corruption they have brought upon themselves, without bestowing upon them that efficacious Grace, by which alone they can be brought out of the state of Misery, that all Men are in by Nature.

That which hath led some Men into this Error, so contrary to the express Declarations of Scripture is, they imagine it is contrary to the natural Notion that Reason suggests to us, of the Goodness and Equity of the divine Nature, thus to be a Respector of Persons, and to put such a difference amongst his Creatures, which have all an equal Claim to his Favour; never considering
that

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that the whole Race of Mankind have forfeited their Happiness, and rendered themselves obnoxious to God's vindictive Justice; so that it is of his free Grace that he restores any to his Favour: and that he extends, in Sovereignty, his Mercy to this Man, and not to another, is owing to the free determination of his own good Pleasure, having a Right to do with his own what he pleases. Now the Argument, by which such Men are induced to deny the Doctrine of Election, will, with equal force, conclude for the Deists, against all revealed Religion; and according to their way of reasoning, it is impossible that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament can be a Revelation from God, of the Method of Man's Salvation, because it is not made to all Mankind. For if it be essential to the Goodness and Equity of the divine Nature, for God to have an equal Regard to all his Creatures, so that he is tied up by those Perfections, that he can't bestow, in his Sovereignty and free Grace, peculiar and distinguishing Favours on whom he pleases to pitch his Love, as the Argument supposeth; then he must either not make any Revelation at all, which is necessary to the Salvation of Men, or else that Revelation must be made to every Individual of the human Race. And since it is plain, that the Method of Salvation, revealed in the Scriptures, is not made known to every Individual, it must follow, by a necessary Consequence, that it can't be a Revelation from God, because his Perfections, as is supposed, oblige him to make it known equally

to all. So that we see those, who deny the Doctrine of Election, upon this Principle, That it is inconsistent with that Goodness, Equity, and Justice, which is essential to the divine Nature, whereby he regards equally all his Creatures, are obliged, from the same Principle, to deny, that the Scriptures are a divine Revelation; or at least, that the Revelation made in them is necessary to be known in order to Salvation. Nay, whether the Revelation, made in the Scriptures, be supposed to be necessary to Salvation or not, such is the Absurdity of the Principle those go upon, who deny the Doctrine of Election, because it makes a Difference among those who have an equal Claim to the divine Favour, that they must own it to be inconsistent with the Goodness and Justice of God, to make any such Revelation to any Part of Mankind, whereby their Condition is made better than others of the human Race, to whom that Revelation is not made known: which throws the greatest Reflection upon the whole Conduct of the divine Providence, in all those Instances of it, whereby the Condition of any of God's reasonable Creatures is made better than the State of others, and cuts off entirely the Sovereignty of the supreme Being, by which he dispenses his Favours to his Creatures at pleasure, without trespassing upon the Equity and Righteousness of his Nature, since none of them have any Claim to the least Favour above another, by any thing in themselves, which they are possessed of independently of him, who alone maketh any to differ from another.

Since then the same Arguments made use of by some Protestants, against the Doctrine of the free Grace of God, in the eternal Election of a part of the apostate Race of Adam, hold with equal force against all divine Revelation, and consequently against all Christianity; they would do well to consider; how far they may have contributed to the prevailing Deism of this present time, in furnishing the Adversaries of divine Revelation, who know very well how to improve any Advantage against the Truth, with Arguments against Christianity in general; tho', perhaps, they meant only to aim a Blow to those of their Brethren, contemptuously called Calvinists. But seeing this Part of their Scheme stands as firm as Christianity itself, and nothing can be urged against it, but what will shake the Authority of all supernatural Revelation, they may be easy in the Case, knowing from what Quarter the Opposition made against them chiefly comes, and whither it tends; that it flows from a Spirit of Deism, and has a direct Tendency towards it. Tho' I'm far from imputing Deism to all who deny the Doctrine of Election, because perhaps they may not see the Consequence of the Principles they go upon; yet I'm sorry, that any who have a Zeal for other Doctrines of Christianity, which are more fundamental, should be found to oppose this by such Arguments, which, if they have any Force in them to refute it, will equally overthrow the Whole of Christianity. And indeed we can never expect to see Deism decline in a Protestant Country,

while

while those Principles are maintained by Protestants themselves, which have so great a Tendency to support it : but would they return again to their ancient Protestant Doctrines, and the Principles upon which alone they can be maintained, would they assent to them as Articles of Faith, and sincere Belief, as well as Articles of Peace and Unity, and live and practise accordingly ; then would Religion flourish, and Atheism, Deism, Arianism, and every other ism sink apace.

There is another Error that does not a little prevail with some who call themselves Protestants, which is big with all manner of Errors, and opens a door for the very grossest Delusions ; and that is, That let Men believe what they will, provided they be sincere, and not conscious of the Truth of the contrary of what they profess to believe, tho' what they believe should be never so contrary to what is revealed, either by a natural or supernatural Revelation, yet they do not contract any Guilt thereby. This is a Tenet so grossly absurd, that if a Person could but arrive at that pitch of Debauchery of his natural Reason, and that height of Depravation of the Faculties and Powers of his Mind, by a continual Meditation on those things that have been offered by Atheists against the Existence of the Deity, and turning his Thoughts entirely off every Argument, by which his Being has been proved ; according to this Principle, such a blasphemous Wretch would be most innocent, in denying the Existence of the supreme Being : yea, the higher that his Atheism arises, and
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the more that he could conquer and stifle the Evidence for the Being of a God, and the less Scruples that attended his Infidelity and Disbelief of a Deity, so much the more innocent should he be. And the very thing that does indeed aggravate his Guilt, and raises it to the highest Pitch, viz. That his inward Sentiments really agree with his atheistical Profession, is by this Principle pleaded not only as an Extenuation of his Guilt, but even as that which makes it cease to be any Crime at all: so that the more strenuous the Person is in his Profession of Atheism, and the more firmly he is persuaded of, or rather hardened in his atheistical Principles, so much the more innocent should he become in the sight of God; which is an Absurdity so glaring, that it is impossible the Principle, of which it is a just and necessary Consequent, can be true.

Sincerity, in a Man's professing that which is agreeable to the real Sentiments of his Mind, is certainly a very laudable thing; but it can never take away the Guilt of a Man's not conforming the Sentiments of his Mind to the objective revealed Truth of things, when he lies under an Obligation to know, and acknowledge that Truth. There may indeed be some Truths, revealed to some reasonable Beings, either in a natural or supernatural Way, which were never designed to be brought within the Knowledge of Men, and the Acknowledgment of them consequently never required. These they may be innocently ignorant of, and without being guilty, may neither know nor acknowledge; tho' they
can't

can't without guilt suffer themselves to be persuaded of the contrary Falshood, because every Man is obliged to suspend his Assent, where he has not sufficient Evidence to lay a Foundation for his Persuasion of the Truth or Falshood of what is affirmed or denied concerning any thing; otherwise he abuses his reasonable Powers, which can't be done in any degree without guilt. But there are other Truths, which relate to the Nature and Will of the Deity, which are brought within the compass of the Knowledge of Man, by a natural or supernatural Revelation made to him, which every Man lies under an Obligation to know, and acknowledge as far as that Revelation is made to him, and as far as Man, in the State in which God did at first create him, was capable of knowing such Truths. And if he mistakes, and entertains Sentiments inconsistent with, or contrary to the objective Truth, revealed either by a natural or supernatural Revelation, his Ignorance of such Truths, or the Mistake and Error of his Mind concerning them, is culpable, even tho' in his present Situation, it be altogether invincible, provided that that Invincibility be the Fruit and Consequent of any personal Fault of his own, or the Effect of the Fault of any other Person, which can in justice be imputed to and charged upon him.

This will appear to be very plain from the end of making a Revelation to Men, either in a natural or supernatural Way, and the purpose the Author of their Being had in view in endowing them with Powers, whereby they are capable
of

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of understanding such a Revelation, which can be nothing else, than that Men should think concerning the Deity in such a manner as he reveals himself to them, and act according to the divine Will, as that is discovered either by the Light of Nature, or by divine supernatural Revelation: and when Men fail in either of these, they come short of the purpose of the Manifestation of the divine Nature and Will made unto them, and of the end for which they were endowed with rational Faculties, and consequently cannot in so doing be innocent. So that not only the external Practice of the Life, but the inward Practice of the Soul (if the Expression may be admitted as just) is subject to the divine Law; not only our Bodies and outward Man, but our Spirits also are the Lord's, and they must be employed in his Service, and all their Powers must be exerted to his Honour; not only is he to be served with the Will and Affections those executive Powers of the Mind, by which its Determinations are put in practice in the Life, but also the determining and judging Powers themselves must be conform to the Revelations of Heaven; and we lie under Obligations to act and determine according to the Representations of things made therein. Now if this Power of the Mind errs and fails in its Duty, by determining and judging contrary to what the divine Being has laid before it by Revelation, either natural or supernatural, as a Rule to walk by, Guilt in that case doubtless is contracted, and the natural and just Order of things disturbed. Nay, when
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these superiour Faculties of the Mind and Understanding, or when the apprehending and judging Powers conceive and determine otherwise than according to the Representations made by Revelation, and what is asserted or denied thereby, in this a greater Degree of Guilt is contracted, than when the Will and Affections are disorderly, because these are but Rebels of an inferiour kind; and the supreme Legislator justly resents the Rebellion of the superiour Powers of the Mind, in a higher degree, because they are Ringleaders, and their Disorder is of more fatal Consequence to his Government in general, and is likewise the Cause of the Irregularity both of the Will and Affections, and external Practice of the Life: and consequently the Error or Disorder of the Judgment, is of a more heinous Nature in the sight of God, than that of the Will and Affections, or in some respect, than even that of the Irregularity of the external Practice of the Life; tho' this may be more directly and immediately prejudicial to our Neighbour than the other. Yet, in as much as the Error of the Judgment is the Cause, and influences the Irregularity of the external Life, it must on that account be more heinous; for it virtually contains in it all that evil that the external irregular Practice has in it, as the Cause does the Effect: nor does the external Action of an irregular Practice carry any Evil in it, but so far as it stands related to, and is the Expression of that irregular Judgment and Sentence past in the Mind of the Person committing the Action:

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for every irregular Practice of the Life is the Fruit of, and flows from some erroneous Sentence and irregular Decree, and practical Judgment first past in the Understanding, by which it is executed and compleated.

Thus we see, that an Error in Judgment is criminal, and carries Guilt in it, as being a want of Conformity to, and a Transgression of that Law of the Creator, revealed either in a natural or supernatural way, to which that Power of the Mind is subjected, and from the binding Force of which it cannot possibly be exempted. Nor is it to any purpose to say here, that the Error and Mistake of the Judgment may be involuntary, and for that reason free from Guilt, because the Mind never judges involuntarily, it always passes Sentence willingly, concerning the Truth or Falshood of any Proposition, and never exerts that Act without the concurrence of the Will, whatever the means may have been by which that Consent of the Will was procured. When the Mind judges right, and according to the rule to which that Power of the Soul is subject, then the Consent of the Will, to pass such a Judgment, is, or at least ought to be, procured by the force of Evidence; but when the Judgment is erroneous, and a Sentence is past in the Mind, contrary to the Rule in that case, the Consent of the Will has been procured by Prejudice, or hurried by Passion and some criminal Attachment or other. It is also as little to the purpose to say, that the Error of the Judgment may be invincible, and on that account not criminal; because

cause

The P R E F A C E. xix

cause the Invincibility of it cannot excuse from Guilt, when it arises from any Fault, which is justly imputable to the Person judging, in that case he is answerable both for the Fault imputed, and all the Consequences of it; of which this is one, That he is brought thereby to such Circumstances, that he cannot exercise his judging Power according to the Rule prescribed to it, and according to which he is under an Obligation to regulate that Faculty: for it is most absurd to say, that a Man's incapacitating himself to perform his Duty, by any Fault, which may justly be imputed to him, can dissolve his Obligation to perform it: And, on the other hand, where the Error of the Judgment is not the Fruit and Consequent of some Fault, which may be justly imputed to the Person in that case, it is impossible, it can happen that that Error can be invincible, because that would reflect on the divine Perfections; that a Person should be suffered to fall into such Circumstances, without any Fault, which can justly be imputed to him, whereby he becomes incapable of answering an Obligation to a Law to which he is subject, or conforming to a Rule prescribed to him by the Judge of all the Earth, who can't but do justly, as the Standard and Measure of the Sentiments of his Mind. So that whether the Error be invincible or not, it carries Guilt in it; if it is invincible to the Person in his present Circumstance, it carries Guilt in it, because the Invincibility of it is the Fruit and Consequent of

a Fault justly imputed; if it be not invincible, then, by Concession, it is criminal.

I have endeavoured to draw the following Sermons into as narrow a compass as was consistent with comprehending all the Points debated between the Trinitarians and Anti-trinitarians; and, as far as I know, I have not concealed any one material Objection, and in one place or other, I hope I have laid down such Principles, and such Proof of them, that any Person, of a tolerable Capacity, may be able to draw a satisfying Answer to Objections that are less material. I have also had in my view all along to bring the Controversy as much as I could down to the Capacity of those who have not had the Advantage of a liberal Education; for tho' formerly the Arian Heresy chiefly got footing among Men of some Letters, which might perhaps be the Reason why the generality of Writers on this Subject have manag'd the Controversy in such a manner, as could not so well be taken in by the Unlearned, yet now since the Poison of that Error has diffused itself into the Vulgar, there seems to be a necessity to offer something, as an Antidote, that may be within the reach of their Capacity. For which reason, I have not at all entered into that Controversy, concerning the Opinion of the Fathers on this Head, as that which does not affect the main matter; for as I take it, the Question is not what the Opinion of the Fathers was in this Matter, whether they were right or wrong, their Judgment is no Rule to Christians. The
Hinge

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Hinge of the Controversy seems to be this; Whether the Doctrine of the Trinity is revealed in the Scriptures, or if there is any thing in it, contrary to, or inconsistent with, the Principles of sound Reason, Reason justly so called. Tho' it must be owned, those who have vindicated the Fathers from the injurious Aspersions and unjust Calumnies thrown upon them, by such who impute Arianism to them, have doubtless, done a singular piece of service to the Church of Christ; such as, Bishop Bull, Dr. Waterland, Dr. Taylor, and others, who may be consulted by those, who desire Satisfaction in this Matter.

I am very sensible, that in order to be understood by those of weaker Capacity, I have sometimes repeated the Thought, and thrown it into different Words, and perhaps, have too much used the same Words in different Places, which may be nauseous to some of a politer Taste, who could have reached the Sense at a far less expence of Words; but if this contributes to make clear what is said in these Places, where the Argument is more abstruse, and beyond the reach of an ordinary Capacity, I have gain'd my end, and shall willingly undergo the blame of making a sacrifice of Ornament, to Perspicuity and Usefulness.

Where I have differed in some particular Things, which do not affect so much the main Controversy, from Men of great Merit, who have treated on this Subject, and to whose Labours I have been much obliged, and for whom I have the greatest Veneration, whether Foreigners

or

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or our own Countrymen; and where I have attempted to take off Objections another way, I have endeavoured to give the reason for it, which I shall submit to the Judgment of others, whether this sets the Subject in a clearer Light, and helps farther to stop the mouth of the Adversary; hoping their Candour will excuse such Failings, as they will readily discern in the following Discourses, which were honestly meant for the benefit of Souls; as the setting up of the Lecture, in which they were preached, also was, by those Gentlemen who encouraged it; they being deeply impressed with a Sense of prevailing Error in the Place, and particularly of the growth of Arianism, in a very uncommon manner.

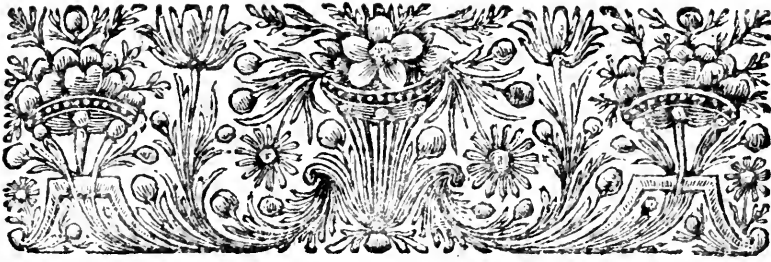
It has been loudly talked by some, and very industriously spread by the Arians here, that the Gentleman who wrote the Letters and my self, had mutually agreed not to publish them: but this is a Falshood of a piece with many others, forged by that Party, with a view to supersede the Usefulness of the following Sheets. 'Tis true, I have been drawn to appear in this publick manner, very much against my Inclination; and particularly, I had no design of publishing the Letters and Answers, if I had not been obliged to it by the Treatment I met with from the Arians; that so the World may judge, whether or not it is clearly proved, as they give it out, that that Text 1 John v. 7. is not of authentick Authority; and I, the more readily agreed to their being published, because there are several things in
them,

them, that serve to cast a light on the Subject of my Discourses.

I need make no Apology for not printing the Gentleman's Name, who was the Author of the Letters, since I should have reckoned my self bound in Honour to do so, not having his express Allowance for it, notwithstanding it was desired, tho' what has fallen out in the divine Providence, since the Letters passed betwixt us, had not occurred. I have not, as far as I know, varied in a Sentence, or even a Word, from the original Letters; and that the Letters which were sent me are the same with those which are printed, I am ready to prove from the Originals themselves, to any who entertains the least doubt of it; nor have I corrected so much as one Word of the Answers, tho' they were not originally designed for the Press, and perhaps in some places might admit of it.







THE
DOCTRINE
OF THE
TRINITY.

SERMON I.

I JOHN 5. 7.

For there are three that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost : and these three are one.

THE DOCTRINE of the HOLY TRINITY is of that consequence in the Christian Scheme, and so closely connected with the most essential and necessary Principles of our holy Religion, and they have all such an absolute dependance up-

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on it, that every Attempt to destroy it, is a home stroke at Revealed Religion, and a sapping the very foundations of Christianity. And therefore the Enemies of our holy Religion have, in all ages, used their utmost efforts against it; and this doctrine in particular has been the special Butt of Satan's malice: from the very first ages of Christianity, his Instruments and Emissaries have bent all their force to this very day against it. But the more it has been impugned and denied by the Adversaries of the Truth, so much the more zealously have the Lovers of it stood up in its defence; so that in spite of all the malice of Satan, and his cunning craftiness, who has always been lying in wait to deceive, this Doctrine, through the good hand of God upon his Church, has survived all the impious efforts of its enemies, and maintained its place, as an essential Article of faith, in the Creeds of all true Christians, from the first ages of the Church to this very day; and will do so to the end of time, wherever Christianity, in any tolerable measure of purity, obtains.

The Opposers of this sacred and important Doctrine have assaulted it by various methods, according as they imagined they would be most effectual to bring it into contempt; sometimes they have represented it as absurd, inconceivable, and unintelligible; sometimes as inconsistent and contradictory to common Sense, and the Reason of mankind; from all which injurious imputations we shall have occasion,
God

S E R M O N I. 3

God willing, to vindicate it in the subsequent discourses. But their audacious and virulent malice against this doctrine, discovers itself in nothing more, than in vitiating and denying the authentic Authority of those Texts of Scripture, wherein this doctrine is most plainly and clearly contained. An eminent instance whereof, we have in this Text before us; the authentic authority whereof has, within these two Ages last past, been controverted by the *Arian* party, though in all the preceeding Ages, since the apostolical Times, it had always been owned as authentic Scripture by the Christian Church, and not so much as questioned even by the *Arians* themselves; notwithstanding it had been omitted and left out of some *Greek* Manuscripts, partly by the careless neglect of some Transcribers, and partly by the malicious design of others, who stood not well affected to the Doctrine contained in it.

Therefore seeing I have made choice of this Text, as the Subject of some following Discourses; and because the *Arians* at this day deny its authentic Authority as canonical Scripture; I shall offer some things to evince its canonical Authority, and answer the Objections they make against its being a genuine Text.

1. Let it be observed, that 'tis but of late that this Text came to be questioned, or arraigned as spurious; there is no evidence that ever it was controverted, as to its being genuine, before *Erasmus* opposed it, in the begin-

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ning of the sixteenth Century; who having perused many Copies, which had not this verse in them, began to question its being authentic; and accordingly, left it out of his two first Editions of the New Testament: but upon farther enquiry, he came to be convinced of his mistake, and upon conviction of his error, from an ancient Manuscript which was then in *Britain*, and which had this verse, he corrected his mistake, and did justice to this Text, and printed it in his third Edition, in the year fifteen hundred and twenty-two.

2. Though it be but of late that this Text has been questioned, yet there is not the least shadow of reason to say, as some of the *Arians* do, that it was but of late thrust into the New Testament. If this Text had never appeared as a part of the Canon of Scripture, before it began to be questioned, there would be more likelihood of a fraud, and there would be more danger of a mistake in this case. But if we look back to the several Ages that have intervened, between this and the very next Age to the Apostles, we shall find proofs of its being owned as part of the holy Canon, and that without ever being questioned, as to its authenticity, till the age before the last; which, one would think, should check the assurance of those, who at this day have the face to call it spurious. Therefore for farther satisfaction in this matter, I shall trace the several Ages between this and the Apostles, and shew how this Text in particular has been owned as authentic,

thentic, by the whole Christian Church, both *Greek* and *Latin*, and cited as authentic by particular persons, and that without ever being questioned, even by those who would not have failed to do it, if it had not been generally owned to be genuine Scripture.

In the Age the very next to the Apostles, or not much above an hundred years after this Epistle was wrote by St. *John*, we find *Tertulian* using the very words, as near as a Translation will bear, of this Text; and plainly teaches the doctrine contained in it, in his book against *Praxeas*, where he has these words, ‘ * The
‘ connexion of the Father in the Son, and of the
‘ Son in the Comforter, makes three joining to-
‘ gether, the one of which is from the other,
‘ WHICH THREE ARE ONE THING.’ Which is an exact translation of the latter clause of this verse.

And in the next century, his disciple St. *Cyprian*, in his Book concerning the Unity of the Church, professedly cites this Text, where he a little before speaking of St. *John*, has these words; ‘ † And again it is written, of the Fa-
‘ ther, Son, and Spirit, THESE THREE ARE
‘ ONE.’ Where there can be nothing more plain, when he says, ‘It is written,’ than that he meant, that this is inserted in so many words in the holy Scripture; and since these words are no where else written than in this Text, it necessarily follows, that this was the Text cited by him, and consequently, that it was then owned for canonical Scripture.

In

* Tertul. contra Prax. cap. 25.

† Cyp. de uni. Eccl. cap. 4. ad finem.

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In the fifth century it is cited by *Eucherius* of *Lions* in these words : ‘ * As to the Trinity, we read in St. *John’s* Epistle, *there are three that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and there are three that bear witness in Earth, the Spirit, the Water, and the Blood.*’ In the same century it was also cited as canonical Scripture by *Vigilius* Bishop of *Tapsus*, who has the whole verse, as it lies before us. But, which was most remarkable in this century, this Text was cited by *Eugenius* Bishop of *Carthage*, in that celebrated Confession of Faith which he presented to *Hunneric*, the *Arian* King of the *Vandals*, in the name of all the Bishops and Confessors in *Africa, Mauritania, Sardinia, and Corsica* †.

Now is it to be supposed, that so many Pastors and Confessors would cite a Text as canonical Scripture, in so solemn a manner, and that too before an *Arian* Prince, if the Text had not been authentic, even to the conviction of the *Arians* themselves? Might they not easily have expected that the fraud, if there had been any, would have easily been discovered? Could they ever have imagined, that a Text which grieved the *Arians* so much, would not be denied by them, if it had been spurious? And indeed, there is not the least shadow of reason to doubt, but that *Arian* Prince would have made use of such a handle, furnished him against the Trinitarian Bishops, whom he hated so much, and against whom he

* Lib. form. Spi. intell’. cap. 11. sec. 3, 4.

† Bib. patr. printed at Paris, 1664. Gennadius cap. 97.

he improved all advantages, if they had really rendered themselves so obnoxious to him, as to cite a Text in defence of their Tenets, in so solemn and public a manner, which was not genuine and authentic Scripture, and reputed to be so universally.

But so far were the *Arians* from denying the Authenticness of this Text, or any other cited in their Confession, presented by the *Trinitarians*, that they were both enraged and silenced by the force of their Proofs, which they adduced in their Confession: their very silence and not objecting against that Text, as being spurious, at a time when their Adversaries laid so much stress upon it, in support of their Opinion, is an undeniable Evidence, that that Text, at that time, was universally held for genuine Scripture, and that by the *Arians* themselves. And in the close of their Confession, they appeal to the whole catholic Church, that this their Confession was the received Doctrine of the universal Church; and that herein they held no peculiar Opinion of their own: ‘ This, say they, is our Faith, bot-
 ‘ tomed upon the Evangelical and Apostolical
 ‘ Writings, and the agreement of all the
 ‘ catholic Churches which are in the world,
 ‘ in which, by the Grace of Almighty God,
 ‘ we trust and hope to continue, even to the
 ‘ end of this our earthly Pilgrimage.’

In the sixth Century, this Text was cited by *Fulgentius*, a Bishop in *Africa*; it is no less than three times to be found in his Works a-

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gainst the *Arians*; ‘* I, says he, and the Father are *One*, it becomes us to refer *One* to the *Nature*, and *are* to the Persons: So also there are three that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, and these three are *One*; let *Sabellius*, says he, hear *are*, let him hear *three*, and believe there are three Persons: Let *Arius* also hear *One*, and not say, the Son is of a different Nature.’

Fulgentius's Testimony in citing this Text, is of so much the greater weight to prove its Authenticness, if we consider that he was summoned by King *Thrasimund* to appear at *Carthage* to answer the objections which the *Arians* had drawn up against the Eternity of the Son of God, and his Equality with the Father. Now at such a juncture, and in these circumstances, the utmost Caution and Exactness was necessary, in pitching upon and choosing Texts of Scripture; and special care was necessary, that none should be cited, which were liable to be objected against, as not being authentic; yet in this very case, *Fulgentius* alleges this Text, as a Proof of the Son's Consubstantiality with the Father, in answer to *Pinta*, an *Arian* Bishop: now if this Text had not been notoriously known at that time to be genuine, *Pinta* had no more to do, than to object against it, as being spurious, and so would have expos'd both *Fulgentius's* Weakness, and the Weakness of his Cause. But *Pinta* does not object against it as such; if he had,

* Fulgen. de Trin. cap. 4. — Resp. ad objec. 10.

had, he would have much prejudiced the *Arian* Interest, and expos'd it, as a very desperate Cause, which stood in need of such a support, as to deny the authentic Authority of a Text of Scripture, which was owned universally by all Christians to be genuine.

In the seventh Century we have another Witness; if so be, as is generally thought by the Learned, that *Maximus* was the real Author of the Dispute at the Council of *Nice*, which bears the name of *Athanasius*, and is joined with his Works; that Work speaking of the Persons of the Trinity, cites this Text. And in the eighth Century, when *Charles* the Great restored the *Latin* Copies of the Bible, which had been miserably corrupted thro' the Fault of Transcribers, and compared them with great exactness with the *Greek* Copies, and corrected them by the assistance of many learned Men, skill'd in that Language; I say, after that correction, this Text was still kept in the Bible; which is another Proof, that it is of authentic Authority: For 'tis by no means to be supposed, that such a Body of Men would have inserted a Text of this Importance, if they had not found it in the *Greek* Manuscripts, which they consulted; or if it had not been generally acknowledged by the Church at that time, as a part of inspired Scripture.

In the tenth Century, *Dupin* gives an account, that because Errors were ready to creep into the Copies of the Bible, Authors endeavoured

voured to correct them; and particularly we have an account of two of these Manuscripts, which were call'd Corrections of the Text of the Bible, extant in the Library of the *Sorbon* at this day. That learned body of Men, the Doctors of the *Sorbon*, carefully revised the Bible, and compared the several ancient Manuscripts together, whereof there were a great many extant at that time, being before the Invention of Printing was known in *Europe*; now after these Doctors, the most learned Body of Men then in *Europe*, had corrected their Copies, by comparing them with the *Greek* Manuscripts, they kept in this Text by common consent; a Testimony from such is very considerable.

Thus, we see, this Text has been owned by the Church, as authentic Scripture, for above a thousand years; which is a sufficient reason for us to hold it for canonical, altho' the subsequent Ages had rejected it as spurious, which in the mean time they did not, nor did they so much as question its Authenticness, till the Age before the last, when it was done by *Servetus* and *Socinus*, and some others of that Stamp; for as to *Erasmus*, tho' he was the first that question'd it, yet he cannot justly be ranked amongst the rest, since upon a more full inquiry, and better information, he was at length perswaded of its divine Authority, as I hinted above: and even since it begun to be questioned, it was never accounted spurious by any Men of Learning, except chiefly where
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their attachment to *Anti-trinitarian* Principles laid an absolute necessity upon them.

As to the six last Centuries, we need not be at the pains to prove, that this Text was counted canonical by the Church during that Period, any other ways than by observing, and which is acknowledged by the greatest enemies to this Text themselves, that almost all the Manuscripts, a very few excepted, that are no ancients than that Period, have this Text; which abundantly shews the Opinion of the Church concerning this Text during these six Centuries. But besides, we have the Testimony of other private Authors, who have cited it as canonical, during that Period; particularly *Peter Lombard*, commonly call'd Master of the Sentences, makes mention of this as a Text about which there was no doubt, who, in the close of his first Book of Sentences, has these words; ' That the Father and the Son are one, not by Confusion of Persons, but by Unity of Nature.' St. *John* has taught us in his canonical Epistle, saying, *there are three who bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are One.* This was in the twelfth Century. And in the thirteenth Century, *Durandus*, Bishop of *Mende*, brought this Text into his *Rationale*, but plac'd it after the eighth Verse, mentioning the three Witnesses on Earth, before the three Witnesses in Heaven; which was a thing not uncommon in other parts of the New Testament, to place one Verse before

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fore another, which should be put after: for after the like manner, the thirtieth and thirty first Verses of the twenty first Chapter of St. *Matthew* are transposed in some Copies, without any Impeachment of their Authentichness. And in this age also, lived *Thomas Aquinas*, who wrote a Commentary on this first Epistle of St. *John*, and explain'd this Verse among the rest, without contesting its being authentic; and in the Lateran Council, which was held in this same Age, where there were above a thousand Bishops, this Text was cited, as decisive on the head of the Trinity. Moreover, in the fourteenth Century, *Nicolas de Lyra*, that learned Professor of Divinity at *Paris*, wrote a Commentary on the Holy Scriptures, where he explains this Text without any Insinuation of its being a spurious Addition to the sacred Text.

Thus, I have briefly summed up the Evidence which we have, that this Text is genuine and canonical Scripture; that it was universally owned in all Ages by the Christian Church, from the times of the Apostles. And if it had not been wrote in the original Copy by St. *John*, 'tis absolutely impossible to account for it, how it came to slip into the Text, without the Authors of the Fraud being convicted of the Forgery: Let us but reflect upon it, how impossible it would be in the present Age to add a Verse to the now established Canon, without discovering the Cheat and Weakness of the Impostor: If any Man should at
this

this day attempt to foist into the Scripture a Text, that was never received as canonical Scripture by the Church, in the time when the Canon was established by inspired Men, and as such handed down from age to age, would not the whole Christian Church be able to convict the Impostor, that this was the first time that such particular Text was pretended and given out to be genuine; and therefore not to be received as such. Now it would have been just as easy in any former Age to refute any, who would have imposed upon the Christian Church their own new and spurious Additions for authentic Scripture, because it could easily be proved, that it was the first time they appeared as part of the Canon; the Copies being dispersed into so many different hands, and in so many different Countries, and being translated into so many different Languages, every Person who had a Copy by him, would be a Witness against the Impostor; and it would be as hard, in these Circumstances, to impose upon the World, as it was impossible for one Man to be Master of all the Copies then extant in the World, or to get all who had them to conspire at once to impose upon Mankind.

And here we have reason to adore the divine Providence, which not only has watched over the whole Canon of the Scripture, and handed it down to us pure and intire, and furnished us with such means, whereby we are capable by an honest, sincere and impartial Use of them

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to discover and distinguish what is genuine Scripture, and what is spurious and counterfeit. And particularly what reason have we to bless divine Goodness, which has so ordered things to fall out, that we have handed down to us so clear and full Evidence concerning the authentic Authority of this Text in particular, which is so full and clear concerning the Trinity of Persons, and the Unity of the divine Essence, and which is so much opposed by the Adversaries of the Truth? What reason have we to adore his Name, that he has so over-rul'd things, in his holy Providence, concerning this Text in particular, that there is scarce one Age between this and the Apostles, but we have clear Evidence and uncontestable Testimony of the authentic Authority thereof? As if the Lord foreseeing the malice of Satan and his Instruments against this fundamental Doctrine of the Trinity, would on purpose provide against that future Opposition, which he in his infinite Wisdom foresaw was to be made both to that Doctrine and this Text, as a shining Proof of it; that so he might cut off from the *Anti-trinitarians* all real cause and just ground of Objections; tho' he has not thought fit to take away those sham Pretences, which their Corruption makes a handle of, to confirm them in their obstinate opposition to the Truth.

But moreover, altho' the Evidence for Proof of the authentic Authority of this Text were not so glaring, yet if any one does but impartially

tially and without prejudice consider the Connexion of this seventh Verse with the eighth immediately following, he will easily see, that if the seventh Verse were left out, and altogether omitted, it would quite spoil the Coherence of the Context; and leave a blank, which any eye, that has but a small measure of discerning, will easily be sensible of: For let any man but take the pains to read the eighth Verse immediately after the sixth, and he will sensibly perceive something wanting; and the comparison of the three Witnesses in Heaven with those of the Earth, which the eighth Verse supposeth, is quite lost; but if the seventh Verse be kept in, the words run plain and smooth, and the sense easy.

Now the consideration of the necessity of keeping in this Verse, to preserve the sense intire, together with the uninterrupted Testimony of the catholic Church, the Pillar and Ground of the Truth, and the faithful Repository of these sacred treasures of the Scriptures; I say, this, together with their concurring testimony, is as rational and satisfactory Evidence, that this Text is of divine Authority, as any that can be had in the like Case; and as full and clear as the Nature of the thing will bear; and such as would easily be admitted in any other case of the like nature, where men's Passions are not strongly engaged to bias them, and blind their eyes. And if we narrowly examine into this affair, we shall find, that at the bottom it is not want
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of evidence of the divine Authority of this Text, more than any other Portion of the sacred Canon, that makes the Opposers thereof to deny it to be authentic, but their attachment to a set of Principles, with which it is absolutely inconsistent. This Text is so clear and full concerning the Trinity of Persons, and the Unity of the Divine Essence, that of all other Texts, it is the greatest eye-sore to those of the *Arian* and Anti-trinitarian way; they are sorely nettled by it, and they cannot find so much as any colour of an interpretation to draw it into a consistency with their Tenets, for any sham Interpretation would satisfy them; there is a knot here that they can by no means loose, and therefore they are for cutting of it, by denying it to be canonical Scripture; since they can find no tolerable sense to put upon it, consistent with their Opinions.

Now for our greater satisfaction in this matter, and for the greater conviction of those who deny the authentic Authority of this Text, I shall answer those Objections made against its being genuine. And,

1. They object against its authentic Authority, because, say they, it is not to be found in many ancient *Greek* Copies, and those which have it, do not agree in placing it; some place it before the eighth verse, and others after it, nor do they agree in the manner of reading it; thus, they say, the Text is in various shapes, so they conclude it cannot be genuine.

To which I answer, That 'tis no argument at all, that this Text is not genuine, because 'tis wanting in some Copies ; for if it was universally received by the Church as canonical Scripture, and owned to be so from age to age, without contradiction, or without any proof of its being spurious, such a negative Argument as that, is not at all conclusive, to prove it not to be authentic ; if it were, we must cast off a great part of the Scripture ; for there are few Passages of Scripture, but what in some Copies or other, through the fault of uncareful Transcribers, have either had something or other wanting, or have had a various and different Reading ; but then it has always been easy to correct what was omitted in any one particular Copy, by the generality of others, which agreed in the right Reading, with respect to that particular thing, which happened to be neglected in that other particular Copy, through the over-sight and carelessness of the Transcriber.

The Providence of God has so far taken care of his Church, that these Scriptures, which were design'd for the universal Canon to the Church in all Ages, should be preserved ; so that neither any part of the universal Canon should be entirely lost, nor so corrupted, that the Church should be at a loss to know the genuine Sense and Mind of the Spirit, as to any Article of Faith, concerning the Salvation of Sinners : Though one particular Copy might be defective, or redundant in one particular Passage, and another in another, yet the ca-

tholic Church, the *true* catholic Church of Christ, was never left without sufficient Means, whereby it might be able to discern what was canonical Scripture, and what not: and this the great Prophet of the Church was obliged in all Ages to take care of, in consequence of that part of his Mediatorial Office, his being a Prophet to his Church and People.

And though the Care of the Mediator, as a Prophet, was not to extend so far, as to secure every particular Transcriber of a Copy of the Scriptures from erring, yet he hath so far superintended the Affairs of his Church, and over-ruled Matters concerning her, that there are still abundance of Copies extant in the Church which are entire, and capable of restoring the Text, when in any one particular Copy it happened, by careless Omission, or by the wicked Design of Heretics, to be corrupted: which was the case with respect to this particular Text; in some Copies it was left out, by the neglect of Transcribers; and in others, 'tis more than probable, that it was purposely left out by the Anti-trinitarians, because it flatly contradicted their received Principles. Nor is this charged upon them without ground; for *Socrates* the *Greek* Historian, above a thousand years ago, expressly tells us, that the Orthodox complained against the *Arians*, for corrupting and vitiating the Text of St. *John's* Epistles; but there are no Records of any History, which say that the *Arians*, or any other Heretics, ever had the face to charge the

the Orthodox with adding this Text to the sacred Canon: though some of the modern *Arians* say, that the Orthodox foisted in this Verse into the Text; but with great disadvantage, since none of their Ancestors in opinion vouch them in it, who had better opportunities to discover the Fraud, if there had been any, than they can possibly have at this day: it must therefore be look'd upon as a mere Calumny cast upon them; and will be so reckoned by all, who impartially weigh the Case.

Besides, to what purpose should they forge this Text, even tho' they had an opportunity to do it, without being detected? which, as I hinted above, they could not do; the same Doctrine laid down in this Verse, is taught in many other Passages of Scripture: so that the most they could propose from it, was an additional Proof, which wise Men would not choose to purchase at so dear a rate, as the expence of their Reputation. But the Case is different with the *Arians*; their *All* is at stake; and if this Text stands in the Bible, they are utterly ruined, and their Cause for ever lost; and therefore they may justly be presumed to be under a greater Temptation to attempt something that was more daring, to save themselves from utter Ruin; and their Case is the more suspicious, to say no worse, because ancient History tells us, that they have been actually nibbling that way, and vitiating particularly St. *John's* Epistles, which of all the

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Portions of divine Revelation, make most against them.

2dly, Another Objection they make against the authentic Authority of this Text, is, that the Fathers have many of them omitted to cite it upon occasions, when it might have been serviceable to refute Heretics; say they, their very silence about it, and not producing it against their Adversaries, is Proof enough, that they did not look upon it as part of canonical Scripture.

To this I answer, that indeed if we had no positive Proof of the authentic Authority of this Text, such a negative Proof as that might be of some weight to make us doubt about it; but the bare Omission of it by some Fathers in some Disputes, where it might have helped their Cause, is by no means of such weight, as to preponderate and outweigh that positive Proof, which we have before alledged and produced; that it has been acknowledged for genuine Scripture, by the true Catholic Church in all Ages, from the Apostles down to this very day; and cited by many against the *Arians*.

Besides, the Adversaries of this Text are not able to prove, that those very Fathers, who, they alledge, have omitted the Citation of this Text, did truly omit it in all their Works: for altho' 'tis not cited in some of their Works that are now extant, and have escaped the Ruins of time; yet that will not prove, that they have not cited this Text in their other Works,

Works, which are now lost. Some of the Writings of the *Greek* Fathers, especially those who lived in the first Ages, are lost without all possibility of recovery ; if these had been preserved, and this Text omitted in them, their Argument would have had more probability in it; tho' even in that Case, not enough to outweigh the positive Proof on the other side. But as their Argument stands, it must needs be exceeding defective ; for *Eusebius* particularly tells us, that *Clement* of *Alexandria* wrote a Commentary on this Epistle of *St. John*, and other Catholic Epistles which are lost. Now, if all these Writings of the Fathers had survived the Ruins of time, 'tis highly probable, that we should have met with this Text cited in them ; at least the contrary cannot be proved ; which they must do, before their Argument can have any weight : from whence it follows, that the simple Omission of this Text, and its not being cited by some of the Fathers in some of their Works, is no Argument against its being genuine ; since, for ought we know, they might have cited it in others, which are lost. Moreover, 'tis observable, that some of the Fathers, in treating on the Trinity, have omitted to take any notice of the Baptismal Charge, given to the Apostles, in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost ; tho' doubtless it was most pertinent to do so in that Case ; yet no Man from hence, no not the *Arians* themselves, did ever conclude, that that Baptismal Charge was not genuine Scrip-

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ture; and why, for the same reason, they should conclude this Text not to be genuine Scripture, lieth on them to account for.

3dly, They object, that this Text is not to be found in any *Greek* Manuscripts that are now extant; and on that account they conclude, that it is not genuine Scripture.

To which I answer, that this is a very false and inconclusive way of Reasoning; for altho' there were no *Greek* Manuscripts extant in this Age, which contained this Text in them, which in the mean time is not Fact; yet nevertheless it would not from hence follow, that this Text is not genuine; for altho' all the *Greek* Manuscripts that are now extant, were buried in the Ruins of time, as certainly they will all at length be, if the World continues to be of any long standing; yet this would not shake the divine Authority of the correct printed Copies, which we have at present; since they were faithfully transcribed, and taken from authentic Manuscripts, when they were extant. The original Copies of the holy Scriptures are all lost in the Ruins of time, which were written by the sacred Penmen; and 'tis impossible it could be otherwise in so long a time, nor was it necessary they should be preserved; yet that did not shake the divine Authority of those Copies, which were faithfully transcribed from them, altho' the Originals themselves were lost: much less does it shake the divine Authority of the printed Copies, which we now have, altho' these authentic

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Manuscripts, from which our present printed Copies were taken, were all lost, since they were transcribed, and faithfully taken from them, when they were in Being.

But by the by 'tis not Fact, that there are no *Greek* Manuscripts extant at this day, which have this Text; for, besides those Manuscripts which have this Text, which are in other Nations, and which they, who have travelled to foreign Parts, of credible testimony, have seen, 'tis well known there is one no farther off than within his Majesty's Dominions, which has this Text, an antient Copy of great Authority.

Thus I have laid before you the Evidence, that we have for the authentic Authority of this Text, and answered the Objections of those who oppose it; and shew'd, that it has been, by the care of divine Providence, handed down to us from age to age, as authentic Scripture; so that we have all the rational evidence, that can be expected in an Affair of this nature, that it is canonical Scripture; and enough to lay a foundation for our Faith in it, as a part of the Word of God. But I would have it carefully observed, that these rational Arguments by which this Text, or any other Portion of Scripture, is proved to be of a divine Original, are not enough to work in us a saving Belief of them, such as shall be of saving benefit to our Souls, unless the powerful Operation of divine Grace, and the Demonstration

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tion of the Spirit concur, and co-operate with them.

And therefore, let us earnestly address ourselves to the Throne of God's Grace, that he would give us the saving Knowledge of his Name; that he would exert his Almighty Power, and open our Eyes, that we may see the Wonders of his holy Law; that he would reveal his Arm, and effectually work in our Souls the Work of Faith with Power; that by his Grace we may be helped to believe this and all other Parts of divine Revelation, not only in a scientific and speculative, but in a saving and practical way, to the eternal Benefit of our immortal Souls.

Having thus established the authentic Authority of this Text, I should proceed to explain the Doctrine and Truths contained in it; but this I shall leave, till it please God to give another opportunity.

To his Name be Praise.





S E R M O N . II.

I JOHN 5. 7.

For there are three that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost : and these three are one.

IN a former Discourse from these Words, I endeavoured to lay before you the Evidence, which we have for the authentic Authority of this Text; and answered the Objections which are made by those who oppose it. And I shew'd largely, how this Text has been, by the care of divine Providence, handed down to us, from age to age, as authentic Scripture, without the least Proof of its being spurious; so that we have all the rational Evidence, that it is canonical Scripture, which the nature of the thing will bear; and such as is sufficient to lay a foundation for our Faith in it, as a Part of the Word of God. And,

Therefore, having thus established its Authority, as a Part of the sacred Canon, I proceed to explain the important and infallible Truths contained in it, as such. And in general, these Words contain these two Things.

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- I. That in the divine Essence, there are three Persons all on the same level of Equality, in the same divine Character, all of them *equally* bearing witness in Heaven; *There are three who bear record in Heaven.*
- II. That notwithstanding there is a Trinity of Persons, in the divine Nature, yet nevertheless the Substance is by no means thereby multiplied; but it continues still to be *One.*

The Trinity of Persons subsists in the divine Nature, in such a manner as is consistent with the Unity of its Essence; so that these two do not interfere with, nor destroy one another: they are three, and yet but one; but then it is in different respects. To maintain that they are three, and yet but one, and that too in the same respect, would indeed be a flat Contradiction; but there is no such thing asserted by us. We maintain, that in the divine Nature, there are three, and that these three are at the same time but one; but then we say, they are not three in that respect in which they are one; nor are they one in the same respect in which they are three; for they are three in respect of their Personality, and they are one in respect of their Essence and Substance, which things stand and consist with the greatest Harmony together, and are at the greatest distance from a Contradiction; tho' our Adversaries would
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fain palm a Contradiction upon us ; but there is no more a Contradiction in the Trinitarian Doctrine, than there is an Inconsistency in this Text, which I have before prov'd to be a Part of divine Revelation ; and therefore can contain nothing but infallible Truth.

The first thing, I said, was contain'd in these Words was this ; in the divine Essence there are three Persons all on the same level of Equality ; and in the same divine Character, all of them equally bearing witness in Heaven ; *There are three who bear record in Heaven.* These three cannot possibly be understood of any created Persons of what order soever, whether human, angelical, or superangelical ; both because of their Number, that they are said to be three, which would be very flat in the Apostle to say of any created Being, either human or angelical, that there were three of them in Heaven, since there are of both kinds Numbers vastly superior to that. And as to superangelical Beings, such as the Son and Holy Ghost are supposed to be by Anti-trinitarians, it can't possibly be meant of them ; for even according to themselves, there are but two of that Order of Witnesses in Heaven.

Besides, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, are Terms which in the Scripture-Style, especially in the Style of this Apostle, denote the three sacred Divine Persons, and are not applied to any Creatures ; and that they are said to be three, necessarily implies a Distinction of the Persons in the Deity, notwithstanding the
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the absolute Unity of the divine Essence, "There are three who bear record in Heaven." Now that they are said to bear record in Heaven, is an Argument of their proper Personality; and that they are not merely three Names, as some would have them, who go upon the *Sabellian* Scheme: for bearing witness is an Action peculiar to a Person; and altho' the three Witnesses on Earth are said to bear witness also, tho' they are not Persons properly, but Things; yet they are represented as Persons, and witnessing is ascribed unto them in a metaphorical Sense, because it cannot be ascribed to them in a proper Sense; for they are not Subjects capable of witnessing, in a proper Sense, being Things and not Persons. But 'tis not so with the three Witnesses in Heaven; Witnessing belongs to them in a proper Sense, and they are in the strictest and most proper Sense capable of it: and therefore, when 'tis said, they bear witness, it is an Argument of their Personality, because they are Subjects capable of that Action of bearing witness, and that in a proper and not metaphorical Sense only; as by the manner of their witnessing will more fully appear afterwards.

'Tis true, when we say, that the Father, Son and Holy Ghost are three Persons in a proper Sense, in opposition to three mere Names, as the *Sabellians* understand them; yet we do not mean that they are Persons strictly in that Sense of the word Person, as it is applied to Men; for in that Sense of the word,

word, it would be inconsistent with the Unity of the Essence, and three distinct Persons in the sense in which the word is applied to Men, would make three distinct Beings; for three distinct Persons among Men make three distinct Beings, but it is not so in the Holy Trinity; the word Person is applied to each of the sacred Three, in such a sense as is consistent with the absolute Unity of their Essence; and yet at the same time the word Person, as it is applied to the Persons of the Trinity, is attributed to them in such a sense as includes in it more than merely three Names; and it is expressive of that Perfection of the divine Nature, whereby it subsists three different ways, in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; each of which possessing the divine Essence after his peculiar manner, thereby becomes a distinct Person.

Now these three, whom we call Persons in a proper sense, though not altogether in the sense in which men are called so, for the reason above given; I say, they here are said *to bear record*; the word in the original signifies *Testifiers*, or *Witness-bearers*. And in order to understand the Apostle's meaning, when he applies Witness-bearing to these sacred Three, let us observe, that the Apostle is pressing those to whom he writes, to embrace the Christian Religion, and endeavouring to settle those more firmly in the Christian Faith, to whom his Epistle should reach: and that he might establish them the more fixedly upon a sure foundation, he represents to them, that the Christian

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ftian Doctrine was not a cunningly devised Fa-
ble ; and that he would not prefs them to em-
brace a Religion, as come from God, unless it
had fuitable marks of its being divine about it.
And therefore, in order to their better establish-
ment in the Christian Faith, he informs them,
that it had all the Credentials that could be ra-
tionally expected to attend a Religion that had
truly God for its author, and that the evidence
of its Divinity was fo fully attested and borne
witness unto, that there was no room left for
doubting of its coming from God, for it was
witnessed to by three infallible Witnesses in
Heaven, and as many on the Earth; in Heaven
by the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost ;
all these three infallible Witnesses, says the Apo-
stle, have given their Testimony to the Truth of
Christianity, who could neither themselves be
deceived, nor could they deceive others ; and
therefore their Testimony may be depended
upon, for 'tis the Testimony of the Three, the
infallible Three, who bear record in Heaven.

As to the other three Witnesses, though
they give also great Evidence to the Truth of
Christianity, I mean the three Witnesses on
Earth, the Water, the Blood, and the Spirit ;
I shall not enter on the Explication of them,
to shew particularly how they bear witness to
the Truth of Christianity ; these belong to the
next verse, and my business is with the Wit-
nesses in Heaven more especially, as furnishing
subject matter for my following Discourses.
Only as to these Witnesses on Earth, the WA-

TER, the first of them, the Emblem and Instrument of Purity, denotes the Purity and Sanctity of the Doctrines of Jesus Christ, and this witnesseth and bears testimony to the Truth of the Christian Religion, that it was from Heaven, because its Doctrines had such a stamp of Heaven upon them, and the Founder of it was of so holy and immaculate a Life; and the initiating Ordinance of Baptism with Water, laid such an Obligation on the Professors of Christianity, who were marked with that Badge, to Purity and Holiness of Life, becoming the Followers of that holy Leader whose Name they took on them by Baptism with Water, and becoming the Expectants of heavenly Bliss, which was to consist in the perfection of Holiness. Thus did the Water bear witness to the Truth of Christianity, on account of the Obligation it laid on those who were sprinkled with it, to Holiness in the profession of Doctrine and practice of Life.

The second Witness on Earth is BLOOD, by which we may understand the Sufferings of Christ, and that Blood which he shed on the Cross, by which he sealed the Truth of his Doctrine, and bore testimony to it in his death.

And the third Witness is called the SPIRIT; by which we may understand the Miracles wrought by our Saviour and his Apostles, by which the Truth of Christianity was plainly demonstrated, and plainly proved to be from Heaven, since the Publishers of it brought such
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fair Credentials of a divine Mission, as the supernatural Gifts of the Spirit were, with which they were endowed. But enough as to the Witnesses on Earth; my chief concern is with the Witnesses in Heaven.

The first thing that presents itself to us is their Number, *There are THREE that bear record in Heaven.* And this points out to us the real Distinction of the Persons of the holy Trinity, that they are three in number, and each one distinct from the other in point of Personality, how close soever the Unity between them is, with respect to their Essence: there being *Three*, intimates to us also the Fulness of the Evidence, for besides the Authority of the Witnesses, and the Sufficiency of the Credibility of their Testimony, on account of their Veracity, the sufficiency also of their Number adds to the fulness of the Evidence, being the most that was required, according to the standing Maxim among God's ancient People the *Jews*, *That in the mouth of two or three Witnesses every word should be established.* In this case, says the Apostle, there are Three Witnesses bearing testimony to this Truth, that the Christian Religion is from Heaven, and that the great Founder thereof was truly the Son of God; the Father bears witness to it, and the Word likewise bears witness thereto; *and although he bears witness of himself, yet his testimony is true:* nor is there any Absurdity, that the Word, as he is God, and the second Person of the blessed Trinity, should bear witness

ness of himself, as he is Mediator, and the Saviour of the World, and the promised Messiah.

Now as to the FATHER, the first of these Witnesses in Heaven, he bore witness to the Truth of the Christian Religion, by testifying of Jesus by a Voice from Heaven, declaring him to be his Son, and that upon several occasions; the first was at his Baptism, when he was baptized by *John at Jordan**, then *the Heavens were opened, and there came a Voice thence, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.* And again at his Transfiguration, when he was overshadowed with a Cloud, *There came a Voice, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him.* And at another time, after he had raised *Lazarus* from the dead, then he sent up a request to Heaven, *Father, says he, glorify thy Name, and there came a Voice from Heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and I will glorify it again †.* He was then shortly to take possession of Glory at the right hand of the Father; so that from the Testimony of the first Witness, the Testimony of God the Father, the Truth of Christianity appears; we must either disbelieve him, or else we must believe in Jesus, receive and own him as the proper Son of God in the highest sense, and believe the Doctrine which he came to publish to the World.

The second Witness in Heaven named here, is the WORD; this is the common Name by

* Matt. iii. 16.

† John xii. 25.

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which the second Person of the holy Trinity is called in the style of this Apostle St. *John*: he is called by this Name by him in the beginning of his Gospel, *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God*; and he repeats it again in the fourteenth verse of that same first chapter of his Gospel, saying, *The Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us*. He calls him also by the same Name in the beginning of this Epistle, says he, *We declare unto you that which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the Word of Life*. And the same Apostle mentions it again in the Book of *Revelations* *, where he says, *He was clothed with a Vesture dipp'd in Blood, and his Name is called the Word of God*. So that we may be abundantly satisfied who it is that the Apostle means by this second Witness, whom he calls the Word, even the second Person of the blessed Trinity.

Now this second Person of the Trinity, who was by this Apostle declared to be divine, in the entrance of his Gospel, who had a Subsistence in the beginning of all things, or before any thing was, this WORD bore record, or witness, that Jesus was the Son of God; that is, Christ as God, bore record of himself as incarnate, by his personal appearing after his going to Heaven, and ascending to the Throne of Glory there, and that on several occasions;
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* Chap. xix. ver. 13.

first at the Martyrdom of *Stephen* *; then he shewed himself in sensible Majesty, standing at the right hand of God, and that in the Splendor of all the divine Glory. Again, he appeared to *St. Paul* at his Conversion, as he was upon the Road to *Damascus* †, and told him plainly, that he was that very Jesus whom he was persecuting, as a Blasphemer, for affirming himself to be that which *Paul* then saw him in fact to be, the eternal Lord of Glory. Again, He, as the eternal Word, bears witness of himself as the incarnate Word, by appearing to this same *St. John*, the Author of this Epistle, when he was in the Isle *Patmos*; there he heard this eternal Word speak behind him, with a Voice as loud as a Trumpet, saying, *I am before and after all things*. The Apostle on this occasion describes him particularly, and intimates to us, that the sight he had of him was so glorious, that he was not able to bear it, but when he saw him, he fell at his feet as dead; and afterwards he relates a variety of Visions which he had of his peculiar Glory. All these are irrefragable Proofs which the WORD gave of the true Divinity of incarnate Jesus.

The third Witness here mentioned, is the HOLY GHOST. Now he bears witness to the same thing which had been witnessed to by the other two, declaring Jesus to be the Son of God, and his Doctrine to be from Heaven; this he witnessed to and attested, by his descending upon him immediately after his Baptism,

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* Acts vii. 55, 56.

† Acts ix. 3; 4.

tism, and in a glorious manner remaining upon him, as the same St. *John* gives an account in his Gospel*. And again, he attested and bore witness to this, that Jesus was the Son of God, by his coming down in a visible form upon the Apostles, the Ministers and Servants of Jesus, whom he sent through the World to preach his Name, and publish his Doctrine, by which he gave a Sanction to the Christian Religion, and all its Doctrines. And therefore the Apostle, in his first Epistle to *Timothy* †, tells us, that God the Son, *who was manifest in the Flesh, was justified in the Spirit*; that it was proved of him by the Gifts of the Holy Ghost, bestowed so plentifully on his Followers and Disciples on the Day of *Pentecost*, that he was indeed, as he gave out himself to be, the Son of God, and that his Doctrine was from Heaven. And afterwards the Holy Ghost bore record of, and gave testimony to Jesus as the Son of God, by his descending on other Persons who believed in Jesus ‖. Whensoever the Apostles laid their hands on any Persons that believed in Jesus, and him to be the Son of God, and as such were by them baptized in his Name, the Holy Ghost fell upon them; which is a plain and irrefragable proof of his Divinity, for otherwise the Holy Ghost would not have been thus subservient to him, if he had not been what he gave out himself to be, God equal with the Father. If his Doctrine had not been from Heaven, the
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* Chap. i. ver. 32, 33. † Chap. iii. ver. 16. ‖ Acts viii. 15.

Holy Ghost would never have given his heavenly testimony and sanction to it in such a supernatural and miraculous manner. Thus we see how these three Witnesses bear record, and give their testimony to *incarnate Jesus*, that he was truly God, and that his Doctrine was divine.

And it is observable, that the nature of their Testimony is peculiar to the Deity, and shews, that these three Witnesses are of an Order superior to Creatures, and therefore they must be divine Persons; and accordingly they are called eminently the three Witnesses in Heaven, not only to distinguish them from the three Witnesses on Earth, mentioned in the following Verses; but also to distinguish them from Angels and Saints in Heaven, who are not three, but many thousands: tho' the Angels and glorified Saints, after their manner, and in a way peculiar to them, as Creatures of the highest rank, give their testimony to Jesus, as a divine Person, by singing Glory to the Lamb on the Throne, who lives for ever and ever; but they do it in a manner infinitely inferior to that, in which the eternal Three, who are particularized in the Text, do it; these do it in a manner peculiar to, and expressive of the Deity; the others do it in a manner answering their condition, as Creatures.

The last thing in the Words that remains to be explained is, that these three Witnesses are One, not one Witness, but one Being, one Substance, or Essence, as the word in the original

ginal plainly imports, according to the Idiom of the *Greek Language*: for the word translated *One*, is neither in the masculine, nor feminine, but in the neuter Gender; and signifies one Thing, one Being, one Nature and Essence. Nor is the Apostle's meaning, when he says, *they are One*, that they agree in one testimony, and bear record to the same thing: for tho' that be true, that the three Witnesses in Heaven witness one and the same thing; yet it is not the Truth delivered here; for the words will not bear it. The Apostle says plainly, *they are One*, and not that they agree in *One*, as he says of the three Witnesses on earth; when he would express their agreement in one testimony, and their bearing witness to the same thing. So that it is demonstratively plain, that the three Witnesses in Heaven are *One* in another sense, than the three Witnesses on Earth: the three Witnesses on Earth are *One* in the unity of their testimony; for it is expressly said of them, that they agree in one: but the three Witnesses in Heaven are *One* in the unity of their Nature, Substance and Essence; for it is expressly said of them, that *they are One*. And if the three Witnesses in Heaven were indeed no otherways *One*, than the three Witnesses on Earth, who are one in the agreement of their Testimony; and if the Apostle had had a design to express the same Unity with respect to these two sorts of Witnesses in Heaven and in Earth, to wit, a Unity only in their testimony; then there is no tolerable

rable satisfactory reason can be given, why he should vary the Phrase so remarkably in expressing the unity of the one, so distinctly from the unity of the other: Why should he say of the Witnesses in Heaven, that they *are one*, and of the Witnesses on Earth only that they *agree in one*, if he had truly design'd to express the same unity in both, to wit, a unity only of agreement in Testimony? This is so shocking to common Sense, and trespasses so far on the Rules of Criticism, and all the received Laws of Interpretation, that it cannot be admitted.

The Unity therefore expressed by the Apostle, with respect to the three Witnesses in Heaven, must be a Unity of Nature and Essence, when he says of them, that they are One; otherways he would never have made such a difference in his way of speaking of the earthly and heavenly Witnesses; if he had not design'd thereby to intimate to us, that the Unity of the one is very different from the Unity of the other, even as different, as the Expression is various, which he makes use of to signify and denote them; the one Expression, relating to the Witnesses in Heaven, signifying and denoting an unity of Essence; while the other Expression, relating to the Witnesses on Earth, signifies and denotes only an unity of Testimony, agreeing and witnessing the same thing. And it cannot possibly be understood and construed to signify an unity of Nature; as the other Expression relating to the three Witnesses in Heaven, cannot be so construed, as

to signify an unity only of Testimony; but denotes, by the native force of the Expression, an unity of Nature and Essence; for he says of them in so many words, *They are One.*

Since then the three Witnesses in Heaven are One in their Essence, it follows by a necessary consequence, that in the one divine Essence there must be three Persons, otherways there would not be three Witnesses, but only one; which is contrary to the scope of the Apostle, whose Aim is to shew, that our Faith relies on a triple Testimony of heavenly Witnesses: so that according to the Apostle's arguing, there must be three heavenly Witnesses. Now to make out that, we must either multiply the Essence, or the Persons in the Essence: one of these must be done, in order to make three Witnesses. Now it cannot be the first; for if the Essence be multiplied unto three, it would make three different Gods, which is contrary both to the Principles of Reason, and the Apostle's assertion here in the Text. It follows therefore, that the Persons in the divine Essence must be multiplied unto three, in order to constitute three heavenly Witnesses; and by this means we both preserve the unity of the divine Essence, and at the same time are furnished with three heavenly Witnesses, according to what is expressly deliver'd to us by the Apostle in this Text.

Moreover, it will further appear, that the Unity ascrib'd to the three Witnesses in Heaven, is an Unity of Essence and Nature, from
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this, that it is because each of these Witnesses in Heaven partake of the divine Essence, that therefore they come to be among the rank of heavenly Witnesses; if they did not partake of the divine Nature, they might indeed be heavenly Witnesses in that inferior manner, as I said, Angels are; but they could not be heavenly Witnesses in that superior sense, in which the three are Witnesses, without being strictly divine Persons, Partakers of the one divine infinite Essence. For the three are represented to us, as witnessing in Heaven, in an eminent and peculiar manner: and the Son, and the Spirit, their being classed in the same Order of Witnesses with the Father, and particularized in a special manner as distinct from all other Witnesses, such as Angels and Saints, who may be Witnesses in an inferior way, and being distinguished as three, who witness in a superior manner to all Creatures; and these three witnessing all in an equal manner, and are represented by the Apostle to be all on a level as divine Persons; I say, all this shews that the unity which the Apostle means, is an unity of Nature, an unity of Essence and Substance; and not an unity of Testimony only, or an unity of Consent: for if he had meant an unity of Consent in testimony only, there is no manner of reason, why he should particularize Three in Heaven, witnessing together with an unity of Consent in testimony; he might have said, that there are three thousand times three thousand who witness in Heaven

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ven in that sense; nay, the whole multitude of the heavenly Host witness together, with an unity of Consent in testimony. It would be very flat then in the Apostle to say, that there are three, who bear record in Heaven, and these three are One; if he meant only that they were One, in the unity of their Consent in testimony; since there are so many millions in Heaven, who bear record in that sense, and are One by an unity of Consent in testimony.

But to set this matter yet in a clearer light, and to shew farther, that the Unity here meant by the Apostle, may, nay must be understood of an unity of Nature and Essence; we have no more to do but to look back to the manner of their bearing record in Heaven, which plainly shews, that they were possess'd of the divine Nature; and if the Son and Holy Ghost had not been truly God and one with the Father in Essence, they had never been capable of giving their testimony, after the manner they did: the way, in which they bore record, had so much of Divinity about it, that it was plain, they were Witnesses of a superior Order to any Creatures, and consequently they were divine Persons, and of the same Essence with the Father; unless we can suppose, that there is some Medium, some middle sort of Being, which is neither truly and properly God, nor a Creature; which is an absurdity, which the *Semi-arians*, who are for refining a little upon gross *Arianism*, are drove into; an Absurdity

furdity so exceeding great, that nothing can outdo it; if it is not, that it should proceed from an Author who had acquitted himself so well, as a Philosopher, in other things.

But to return to our Argument; I say, the very manner in which the Son and Holy Ghost bear record and give their testimony, evidences them to be of one Essence, and Partakers of the same divine Nature with the Father. And here let us a little look back upon what has been said already on the Son and Holy Ghost, their witnessing and bearing record; and we shall easily see, that there is something in the manner of their witnessing, which bespeaks these Witnesses to be divine Persons; and therefore of one Essence with the Father: I mean, true and proper divine Persons, in the strictest sense of the word. For to allow them to be divine Persons, but with an inferior kind of Divinity, is mere trifling with words, and at the bottom is no more than to rank them among the Creatures; for there can be no manner of Medium between true Divinity and the Creature.

Now the Lord Jesus Christ as God, in bearing witness to himself, as Mediator, and Jesus incarnate, as I hinted before, *Acts* vii. 55, 56. at the Martyrdom of *Stephen*, shewed himself in sensible Majesty, standing at the right hand of God, and that in all the splendor of the divine Glory. Again, he appeared to *John* when he was in the Isle *Patmos*, there he heard this eternal Word speak behind him with a
Voice,

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Voice, as loud as a Trumpet, saying, *I am the First and the Last*; and there the Apostle intimates to us, that the sight, which he had of him, was so glorious, that he was not able to bear it; but when he saw him, he fell down at his feet, as dead. Now the manner of such Manifestations was such, as was peculiar to the Deity, and plainly discovered him to be properly a divine Person; and consequently of one Essence with the Father, unless we shall suppose that there are two divine Essences, which is a most glaring Absurdity.

The same also may be said of the manner of the witnessing of the Holy Ghost; it was also plainly such as proved him to be another divine Person, as appears by the instances of his bearing record before related, which I need not again repeat; and consequently these three Witnesses are one in Nature and Essence.

Thus I have finished the explication of the words in general; from whence these two Propositions do plainly arise, to wit, That in the divine Nature there are three Persons, absolutely equal in all divine Perfections and Glory; and that those three Persons are one God, one in their Nature and Essence: which Propositions I shall endeavour to explain and confirm, thro' divine assistance; and shall answer those Objections, that are made against them; where I shall have opportunity to touch on the chief things controverted betwixt us and the *Anti-trinitarians*.

Before I enter on these things, I shall offer some things concerning the Importance of the Doctrine of the Trinity in the Christian Scheme; and shall shew how the Belief or Disbelief of it affects the whole of our holy Religion, and is of the greatest concernment and importance to the Salvation of our Souls; that so we may be awakened to a more serious attention to these Truths, and may be excited more impartially to consider and weigh them, and with these observations I shall conclude my present Discourse.

In the first place, this Doctrine of the holy Trinity, and especially the Belief or Denial of the true and proper Deity of the Son of God, or any other of the Persons of the holy Trinity, is of that consequence to Christians, that the very End of the divine Revelation is gained by them, or obstructed to them, according as they are determined in this Point. The great End why the Lord suffered any Creatures to fall, and permitted moral Evil to exist in the world, was the Illustration of the Perfections of the divine Nature, as subsisting in a Trinity of Persons; for the permission of that Event furnished an opportunity of displaying those Perfections of the Deity, as subsisting in a Trinity of Persons, which could not be display'd by the works of Creation alone; by the works of Creation the Perfections of the divine Nature, which were essential to and inseparable from the one undivided Substance of the God-head, considered abstractly without any respect had

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to the Trinity of divine Persons therein, were abundantly manifested. But the great God, having a mind to display not only those Perfections of the divine Nature, which are inseparable from the one undivided Essence of the Godhead; but also those which result from the Trinity of divine Persons, it was fit that he should suffer such an Event to fall out, as might give an opportunity of displaying those Perfections of his Nature, as subsisting in a Trinity of Persons. Now the Fall of Man opened a door for the manifestation of the one, as the Creation did of the other: And the Perfections of the Deity, are as richly discovered in the Redemption of Mankind, taught us by supernatural Revelation in the Scriptures; as those Perfections of the Deity which are essential to, and inseparable from the one undivided Substance of the Godhead, are displayed by the works of Creation: and as the essential Perfections of the Deity, which belong to the Nature of God, would have lain hid to eternity, if there had not been a discovery of them by Creation; so the Glory of the personal Perfections of the Deity, as subsisting in a Trinity of Persons, had never been known in the World, if they had not been discovered by supernatural Revelation in the Redemption of Mankind. So that we see, as the End of the Creation of the World, and the things therein, was for the illustration of the Perfections of the one only living and true God; (for, as the wise Man tells us, *God made all things for himself,*
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for the illustration of these essential Perfections of his nature, consider'd as one undivided Essence;) so also the End of the supernatural Revelation in the Scripture, concerning the Redemption of Mankind, was to illustrate the Perfections of the Deity, as subsisting in a Trinity of Persons. And therefore, as the End of the Creation would be quite defeated by denying the Existence of the Deity, and his essential Perfections, to manifest which, all things were made; so by denying the Trinity of Persons in the Unity of the divine Essence, the great End of a divine supernatural Revelation is frustrated; because the great End of that was to display the rich Love of God the Father, as the Contriver of the method of Salvation, who drew the great Plan of Grace in his eternal Purposes before the World was; and also the transcendent Love of God, the Son, in the execution of all the parts of his Offices, as Mediator and Redeemer of Mankind; and of God the Holy Ghost, whose part it is to apply this Redemption to the Souls of Sinners. Now if each of these three Persons, or any of them, be denied to have so much as a subsistence in the Deity; the Glory, which each of them claims in that method of Salvation, must needs be hid and lost; which was the design of the divine Revelation to manifest; and consequently the end of supernatural Revelation would be defeated: so that, we see, that the *Anti-trinitarians* do as much defeat the Design of a supernatural Revelation, by denying the Trinity;

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Trinity; as the Atheists do frustrate the End of natural Revelation in the Works of Creation and Providence, by denying the Deity, and the essential divine Perfections.

Moreover, in subordination to the former End of the divine supernatural Revelation, another End was to direct in the Object of divine Worship. Mankind after the Fall had degenerated so far from their native Rectitude, and original Righteousness, that they had quite missed the proper Object of religious Adoration, and paid divine Honours, which were due only to God the Creator, to Creatures, and that of the meanest rank. Now God of his infinite Mercy and Goodness to his Creatures, and for the Glory of his own Name, thought fit to bless Mankind with a well-attested Revelation from Heaven, to set them right in this point, and to settle the Object of religious Adoration upon its true bottom. And in order to do this, he gave Mankind more extensive Ideas of the Deity by that Revelation, and a more comprehensive Knowledge of him, than what had been attainable by the natural Revelation, by the Works of Creation and Providence. Whereas before they had from the natural Revelation the Knowledge of God, in the Unity of his Essence only; by the supernatural Revelation, he gave them the Knowledge of himself in the Trinity of the divine Persons; and in many Places is declared the Claim that these three Persons have equally to divine Honours,
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and of being the only and supreme Object of all religious Worship; and particularly it is in that Revelation declared of the second of these Persons, that Mankind are to pay the same Honour to him as to the Father, and that he thought it no robbery to be equal with him, and many other expressions, importing his true and proper Divinity, and Claim to the highest religious Worship: whereof more afterwards. Now if the Anti-trinitarian Scheme be true, and the *Arian* Hypothesis just, that Jesus Christ is not God, and that there are not three Persons in the Trinity, who are the proper Object of supreme divine Worship, then this supernatural divine Revelation misses its end prodigiously, in point of directing to the true Object of Worship; and it is so far from setting Mankind right in this matter, that of all things which ever happened in the world, it proves the most effectual means to lead Men from the Worship of the true God, and gives a sanction from Heaven to the greatest Idolatry, by commanding them to pay religious Adoration to whom it is not due; so that the *Arians* need not be at the pains to endeavour to overthrow particular Texts, their Principles lead them directly to cast off the whole divine Revelation, for their Scheme defeats it in the principal and chief Ends for which it was made to Mankind, both with respect to the illustration of the Perfections of the Deity, as subsisting in a Trinity of Persons; and also with respect to the setting Mankind right, as

to the proper Object of their Worship: from which it most plainly appears, of what importance this Controversy is, and how much it concerns all Christians to endeavour to be rightly determined in it, and well settled about it, since the whole divine Revelation stands or falls by it, and its chiefest ends and purposes are gained or lost to us, according as we determine in this matter.

The Importance of this Controversy, and that the belief or disbelief of the Trinity of Persons in the Unity of the divine Essence, is of the greatest concernment to our immortal Souls, will farther appear, if we consider the close Connexion there is between this Doctrine and the most essential Articles of our holy Religion, and the necessary Dependance they have upon it: insomuch, that by denying this Doctrine, we at the same time thereby cut off many of the most fundamental Articles of our holy Religion. It were easy to shew in a great many instances, how the most essential Articles of the Christian Faith are closely connected with this Doctrine, and have such a dependance upon it, that they stand and fall together; this, I say, might be shewed in a great many instances, but I shall only mention one in particular at present, and it is that of the way of the Justification of a Sinner in the sight of God, which is justly owned to be one of the most fundamental Articles of the Christian Faith.

Now the Doctrine of the Trinity of Persons in the Unity of the divine Essence, is so closely inter-

Interwoven with the Doctrine of Justification, and the one has so necessary a dependance on the other, that there is no denying the first, without being obliged to drop the last. For the Doctrine of Justification, if we take the notion of it as it is delivered in the Scriptures, and that too in a consistency with the most plain Principles of Reason, supposes particularly the second Person of the Trinity, the Mediator between God and Man, the Man Christ Jesus, to be a divine Person; and as to his divine Nature, God equal with the Father, and of the same Nature and Essence with him; otherwise he would not have been sufficiently qualified to undertake, and go through those Offices as Mediator, and to act that part as the Saviour and Redeemer of lost Sinners, which he is represented and supposed to do by the Doctrine of Justification. For according to the Scripture-Notion of Justification, we are justified in the sight of God, and our Iniquities pardoned, only on the account of the Righteousness of Christ, and we are accepted in the sight of God, not by virtue of any inherent Righteousness of our own, but solely on account of the perfect Righteousness of Christ the Mediator, imputed to us, and received by Faith. This is the true Notion of Justification, as it is represented by the Apostle, in the third Chapter to the *Romans* from the twenty-second Verse; and in many other Places of Scripture. Now according to that Doctrine, the Lord Jesus Christ is

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represented to have made a full Atonement to the Justice of God for Sinners, and to have paid a sufficient Ransom, such as was fully satisfactory to the highest Demands of the utmost Justice, and all this for the Sinner; which Atonement the Sinner receives by Faith, accepts, and depends upon for Life and Salvation. Now with what confidence can the Sinner depend upon, and trust to the Merits of Christ for Justification in the sight of God, and his being brought into favour with him for the sake of Christ, unless he has some Evidence that he is a sufficient Redeemer, *able to save to the uttermost all that come to God through him?* Unless he believes that he is God, and depends upon him as such, he can never be sure that his Iniquities are pardoned; nor can he ever be certain that Christ has had Merit enough to reconcile Sinners to God, and procure his Favour, and make Satisfaction to his Justice, unless he is persuaded on solid grounds that the Redeemer was and is a divine Person, and that in the most proper and strict sense.

How can the Sinner be able to answer that awful and important Question, *Wherewithal shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before him with Burnt-offerings, with Calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of Rams, or with ten thousand Rivers of Oil? Shall I give my First-born for my Transgressions, the Fruit of my Body for the Sin of my Soul?* These are pinching Questions to those who have a just sense of the

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the Demerit of Sin, that nothing short of an infinite Satisfaction can make Atonement for it. Now there is nothing, that can give the Conscience ease under a just sense of Sin, but this sole Consideration, that the Mediator, in whose hands they trust the concern of their Souls, is truly God; and tho' the divine Justice might and did insist upon an infinite Satisfaction, to repair the infinite Affront and Injury done to divine Majesty, by the violation of God's Law; yet this divine Person, who was one with the Father in Essence, and in whom they trust, was able to make that infinite Satisfaction, and therefore they are safe, and their Consciences easy and at rest in Christ. But on the supposition that he is not God, which is the *Arian* Scheme, they have nothing to which they can safely trust; for all that he could do, if he was not truly and strictly the supreme God, and of one Essence with the Father, must needs come short of a sufficient Atonement, and Sinners who trust in him, are yet left in their Sins; and the Debt, which on that supposition he was incapable of paying in their Name, is still left to them to be paid.

But some may say, tho' we don't believe that Jesus Christ is a divine Person, and of one Essence with the Father, and therefore capable of making an infinite Satisfaction; yet we believe that he made a sufficient Satisfaction, and we depend upon him as such, and therefore we are safe.

To such I would answer, That to believe that the Lord Jesus Christ was not a divine Person, and consequently that he made but a finite Satisfaction, and to trust to that for Salvation, is to depend upon a broken Reed; *Cursed is the Man that trusteth in Man, and maketh Flesh his Arm, and whose Heart departs from the Lord.* Those who trust to a finite Satisfaction, would do well to consider that their believing a finite Satisfaction to be a sufficient Satisfaction, will not make it so; and if no other be interposed betwixt them and the divine Wrath, they are in the greatest hazard of being consumed by it: such have the greatest reason to fear, that Christ the Redeemer will be no more to them, than what they depend upon him for; if they depend upon him for no more than as paying a finite Satisfaction, they have the greatest reason to fear, that they can reap no more than the Benefits which result from a finite Satisfaction, which, whether these be such as are sufficient for their Salvation, deserves their most serious consideration. Now in such a case, which do you think act on the wisest and safest part, we who depend and trust to an infinite Satisfaction, or they who depend only on a finite one? For if an infinite Satisfaction prove to be necessary, as most certainly it will, because God could not take up with a finite Satisfaction, to atone for the infinite Guilt there is in Sin; then those who trust only to a finite Satisfaction, seem to be in a dangerous condition: but on the other hand,

although it should fall out, as most certainly it will not, for the reasons just now given, that a finite Satisfaction should prove to be enough, yet even in that case, those who trust to an infinite Satisfaction sustain no loss. For if a finite Satisfaction be sufficient, much more will an infinite Satisfaction be so. So that the *Arian* Scheme is attended with infinite Danger, but the *Trinitarian* with none at all, even on the supposition, they who hold it are mistaken.

These are Considerations that deserve our most serious attention, as matter of the highest importance to our Souls; and I have purposefully hinted at them, to awaken us to a due consideration of the weight of this Controversy; and may the Lord himself, by the power of his Grace, impress them upon our Minds:

And to his Name be Praise.





S E R M O N III.

I JOHN 5. 7.

For there are three that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost : and these three are one.

IN the preceding Discourse, after a general Explication of the words of the Text, I proposed to shew something of the Importance of the Doctrine of the Trinity, before I came to a more particular Explication of it: and here I shewed how the belief or disbelief of it affects some of the principal and fundamental Articles of the Christian Scheme; and particularly shewed you how the very End of the divine Revelation is gained or obstructed to us, according as we stand affected to this Doctrine, and that both with respect to the illustration of the Perfections of the Deity, as subsisting in a Trinity of Persons, which was one great end of the supernatural Revelation to manifest, as the end of the natural was to manifest the Perfections of the Deity essential to the divine Nature,

Nature, considered as one undivided Substance, abstracting from all consideration of the Distinction of the Persons of the Godhead; and also with respect to the settling of the Object of divine Worship.

I shewed also how the disbelief or denial of the Doctrine of the Trinity, and particularly of the proper Deity of Jesus Christ, is absolutely inconsistent with the Doctrine of Justification, as it is taught in the Scriptures. I proceed now to shew how the denial or disbelief of this Doctrine is inconsistent with other Articles of Christianity. Therefore for our further conviction, as to the importance of this Controversy in the Christian Scheme, and to excite us with the greater Impartiality to weigh what may be offered on this subject; I shall farther shew, how the *Arian* Scheme cuts off other important and essential Articles of the Christian Faith, such as the Incarnation, and Satisfaction by the Death of Christ, his Exaltation, and Intercession; and the Doctrine of Sanctification by the Power of the Holy Ghost: I say, all these Articles of our holy Religion are so interwoven with this Doctrine of the holy Trinity, and they have so near and close a dependance upon it, that they stand and fall together. And indeed, the belief or denial of this Doctrine of the holy Trinity affects all the Articles of Religion, both those which are fundamental, and those which are of less importance; it affects the essential and fundamental Articles directly and immediately, and those which

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which are less fundamental, more remotely, and in a more indirect manner: but one way or other, all the Articles of Religion are interwoven and connected with this Article of the Trinity; and they have all a dependance upon it, either directly and immediately, or indirectly and more mediately.

I begin with that of the Incarnation of the Son of God; which is so far an essential Article of the Christian Faith, that it is the Foundation of the whole Mystery of Redemption; the *Messiah* to come was the sole Hope of the *Jews* under the Old-Testament Dispensation; and the *Messiah* actually come, God actually manifested in the Flesh, is the sole Hope of Christians under the New-Testament Dispensation. Yet the *Arian* Scheme is utterly inconsistent with this Doctrine of the Incarnation of the Son of God, and the denial of the Trinity of Persons in the Unity of the divine Essence, and particularly the denial of the proper Deity of the Son of God utterly overturns all that is delivered to us concerning his Incarnation in the divine Revelation.

This will plainly appear by comparing the Doctrine of the Incarnation of the Son of God, as it is taught in Scripture with the *Anti-trinitarian* Scheme in all its shapes; whether as 'tis modelled by the *Socinians*, who affirm, that our Saviour Jesus Christ was no more than a mere Man; or as by the *Arians*, who tho' they allow him to have had a Being before other Creatures, yet affirm, that he himself is
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but a Creature of a superior kind; or whether we take their Scheme, as 'tis dress'd by the *Semi-Arians*, who allow all the divine Perfections to the Son, except Self-origination, Independency, and necessary Existence: I say, let us compare all these Schemes with the Doctrine of Incarnation, as we are taught it in the Scriptures, and we shall find, that each of them overthrows it, and is utterly inconsistent with it.

For in the Doctrine of the Incarnation of the Son of God we are taught, that the eternal *Logos*, the second Person of the ever-blessed Trinity, in the fulness of time assum'd and took to himself, a true Body and a reasonable human Soul; so that his divine Nature and his human Nature, by a mysterious hypostatical Union, became one Person; both which Natures were absolutely necessary in order to his being qualified to undertake and execute the Offices of Mediator. His divine Nature was necessary, in order to give an infinite value to the Sufferings of his human Nature; for otherwise, if he had been only a mere Man, or a Creature, of never so high a rank, his Sufferings had been of no avail to expiate and atone for the infinite Evil that was in Sin, being committed against the infinite Majesty of God: and on the other hand, it was as necessary, that he should be truly Man, that he might be capable of suffering and shedding his Blood, without which there could be no Remission; and also that the same Nature, which sinned, might

might suffer : for the Mediator having undertaken to expiate and atone for the Sins of Men, it was necessary that he should take upon him their Nature, and suffer in it. If he had designed to atone for the Guilt of the fallen Angels, he would have taken on him their Nature, and suffered in it ; but his delight being only with the Sons of Men, he took not on him the Nature of Angels, but the Seed of *Abraham* : so that we see it was necessary, that the Redeemer of Mankind should be both God and Man in one Person, to qualify him for the Offices incumbent on him as Mediator. And accordingly we see, that he assumed the human Nature in his Incarnation, in conjunction and strict personal Union with his divine.

John i. 14. The Word was made Flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his Glory, the Glory as of the Only-begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth. Now that this Word who was made Flesh, and became Man by assuming the human Nature into a personal Union with his divine ; I say, that this Word was truly and properly God, even the supreme God, appears plain, from the first Verse of the same Chapter, where it is expressly said of him, that *in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God* ; and ver. 3. *All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made* : than which there can nothing be plainer, than that he, who was made Flesh, and became Man, was the supreme God ; since he made all things.

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things. This is the very Character by which we are taught to distinguish the alone supreme and true God from all other Gods falsely so called; that he made the Heavens and the Earth, *Nehe. ix. 6. Then the Levites said, Stand up and bless the Lord your God for ever and ever; and blessed be thy glorious Name, which is exalted above all Blessing and Praise; Thou, even Thou, art Lord alone; Thou hast made Heaven, the Heaven of Heavens with all their Host, the Earth and all things that are therein; and thou preservest them all, and the Host of Heaven worshippeth thee; Thou art the Lord the God, who didst chuse Abraham.* There we see, that it is the distinguishing Character of the alone supreme God, that he made all things; and since this eternal Word, who was made Flesh, and dwelt among us, is that very God who made all things, and without whom nothing was made, that was made, he must needs, to a demonstration, be the alone supreme God, of the same Essence and Nature with the Father.

Other Scriptures, where the Incarnation of this divine Person is mentioned are these, *Gal. iv. 4. But when the Fulness of Time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a Woman, made under the Law; and Rom. ix. 5. Whose are the Fathers, and of whom, as concerning the Flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever, Amen.* Where the Apostle declares, as expressly, as words can do, that Christ, who as to his Flesh, and concerning his human Nature, came

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came of the Father, and descended from them, was God over all blessed for ever. Again, *Luke* 3. 35. *The Angel answered and said to her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the Power of the Highest shall over shadow thee; therefore also, that holy Thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God:* which we may compare with these words, *Col.* ii. 9. *For in him dwelleth all the Fulness of the Godhead bodily.*

That the Lord Jesus Christ by his Incarnation, had two Natures, the divine and human Natures, is plain from the following Scriptures; *Phil.* ii 6. *Who being in the form of God, thought it no Robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a Servant, and was made in the likeness of Men; and being found in fashion as a Man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto Death, even the Death of the Cross.* Where we have plainly his two Natures; his divine Nature, whereby he thought it no Robbery to be equal with God; and his human Nature, whereby he became obedient to Death, even the Death of the Cross. And, *1 Cor.* ii. 8. *The Lord of Glory is said to be crucified;* he was Lord of Glory, as to his divine Nature; and crucified, as to his human Nature. And, *Acts* xx. 28. says the Apostle to the Elders of *Ephesus*, *Feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own Blood.* There the Blood, by which Christ purchased the Church, is called God's own Blood; because of the Union

nion of his divine Nature with his human. Now these Texts are so clear and full concerning the two Natures of Christ in one Person, that it is absolutely impossible to make sense of them upon the supposition, that he had not both the divine and human Natures.

Now the *Anti-trinitarian* Scheme flatly contradicts this Doctrine of the Incarnation of the Redeemer in all the Views in which it can be taken; for if we take it in the shape into which the *Socinians* cast it, who say, that our Saviour was only a mere Man, then is his Divinity intirely dropt; which was the only thing, which gave value to his Sufferings as Man, and made them available, and of sufficient virtue to atone for the Sins of the World. Nor is the *Arian* Hypothesis one whit more favourable to this Doctrine; for tho' they allow our Saviour to be a Creature of a higher rank, yet they intirely cut off his proper Divinity; as do also the *Semi-Arians*: so that according to them, the Deity did not assume and take into personal Union with himself the human Nature. And indeed, according to the Opinion of some of them, there is neither the divine Nature nor the human in his Person; for tho' they allow to him a human Body, which does not constitute the human Nature; yet in place of the rational Soul of the human Species and Kind, they substitute a super-angelical Spirit to inform that human Body; which makes his Person, according to them, neither to have the divine, nor the human Nature; for

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for it has not the divine, because that super-angelic Spirit which they talk of, as united to his human Body, is not God. And neither can his Person have the human Nature, according to that Hypothesis; because the Spirit, united to his Body of the human Shape, is not of the human Kind; but, as they say, of a super-angelical Nature; and therefore not qualified to constitute the human Nature: for a Body of human Shape, united to any kind of Spirit, does not constitute the human Nature; but a Spirit of the human kind united to a human Body, That only constitutes the human Nature. And therefore since the *Arians* and *Semi-Arians* leave nothing to the Person of Christ, that is truly divine; and at the same time also take away that which is essentially necessary to constitute the human Nature; they absolutely overthrow the Doctrine of the Incarnation, that Doctrine, which enters so much into all the Principles of our holy Religion; and the Belief of which is so essentially necessary to Salvation, that it was the only Article, which the Apostles required the Acknowledgment of in the *Jews*, in order to their being owned for Christians, and their having a Title to eternal Life through him. Not but there are other essential Articles of the Christian Faith necessary to be believed; but this of the Incarnation of the Son of God, and that Jesus of *Nazareth* was the *Messias*, the *Immanuel*, God with us, God in our Nature; this, I say, is an Article, that has so close a Connexion
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with all the other Articles of Faith, and they have all so necessary a dependance on it; and it is so very comprehensive of them all, that it was easily presumed, that those who in Sincerity could give in to this, and assent to it heartily, would not disrelish other Articles, which were necessarily connected with it, and comprehended in it. It must needs then be a great prejudice against the *Arian*, and *Anti-trinitarian* Schemes, that they overthrow so essential an Article of the Christian Faith, and wound it in so fundamental a point. Again,

2. As it destroys the Doctrine of the Incarnation; so also does it that of the Satisfaction. I have already anticipated what might be offered for the proof of this, when I spoke on the head of Justification; and shall not resume, what was there delivered. Only in order to shew, that the *Arian* Scheme destroys the Doctrine of the Satisfaction; I shall shew these two Things; that a Satisfaction was necessary; and that a Person truly divine, alone could make a full and compleat Satisfaction; because a Satisfaction of infinite value was necessary. And if these two are made out, then it will inevitably follow, that the *Arians* overthrow the Doctrine of the Satisfaction, by denying the true and proper Deity of the Son of God.

(1.) Now as to the first of these, that a Satisfaction was necessary, and that it was inconsistent with the Perfections of the Deity, to forgive Sin without a sufficient reparation of the Injury done to his sacred Majesty, and to

the Honour and Authority of his Laws; will appear from this; that the Rectitude, the Justice, and Holiness of his Nature obliges him to testify his resentment against Offenders by punishing the Offence, either in the Person of the Offender, or him who is substituted in his place. Vindictive Justice, or Inclination to punish Sin, is the natural consequence of the hatred which God bears to it; and as the Holiness of the divine Nature cannot but dispose him to hate Sin, so his hatred thereof cannot but incline him to punish it. Besides, the Lord is to be considered as the Judge of all the Earth, and the Rector and Governor of the Universe, who must maintain the Honour of his own Laws, that encouragement may not be given to the rest of his Subjects to revolt, by seeing their Fellow-Subjects, who are Offenders, escape without Punishment; and this makes it necessary, that the Judge of all the Earth should insist upon a Satisfaction for Offences against his Laws, that they may not be brought under contempt; but that a due Reverence and Regard to their Authority may be kept up; so that both the Rectitude and Holiness of the divine Nature, and his Wisdom, as Ruler and Governor of the Universe, made it necessary, that he should insist upon a Satisfaction.

'Tis true, Sin is called a Debt, from whence some have inferred, that because a Debt may be forgiven without paying down the whole Sum, therefore it is consistent with the Perfections

fections of the Deity to remit Sin without insisting on a Satisfaction. But here it must be considered, that tho' Sin so far resembles the Nature of a civil Debt, which a Man may forgive, in regard, that as a civil Debt gives a claim to the Creditor to commence a Suit and Action against the Debtor; so Sin committed against God, gives him a title to punish the Sinner: I say, tho' it in this respect resembles a civil Debt; yet it is not the same with a civil Debt in point of its capacity of being forgiven without Satisfaction and Payment. In this respect, Sin has not the nature of a civil Debt, but of a criminal Offence; to forgive which, is an injury done to public Justice; and a Violation of the Rights of all the Society, when it passeth without Punishment. And if Princes and Magistrates are sometimes obliged to forgive criminal Injuries committed both against themselves and the State for preventing greater Evils, which the State may be brought under by their being punished; yet this is intirely owing to the Imperfection of human Society and Government, which cannot be presumed to take place in the perfect Government of the Judge of all the Earth, and the Rector of the Universe. Thus we see, that Sin could not be forgiven without a Satisfaction.

(2.) It remains therefore to be inquired, what kind of Satisfaction was necessary; whether a Satisfaction made by a finite Person, or one of an infinite Value and Merit, such as might be made by a Person that was truly di-

vine. Now if we consider duly the infinite Excellency of the divine Majesty, against whom Sin is committed, we cannot but be persuaded, that an Offence against him must needs have an infinite Evil in it: for the Aggravation of an Offence is more or less heinous according to the Dignity and Excellency of the Person, against whom the Offence is committed. The nature of an Offence is not denominated only from the Person who commits it, but also from the Person against whom it is committed. An Offence committed by a Servant against his Master, or by a Child against his Parent, is of greater aggravation, than the same Offence committed by one, who does not stand in any of these relations.

But on the other hand, not only is a Sin aggravated from the consideration of the Person committing it; but also from the consideration of the Person, against whom it is committed; the same Offence committed against a Person of low degree, and of an inferior station, is not of that heinous aggravation that an Offence is of, which is committed against a Prince, or Person of an exalted station. The very Dignity of the Person aggravates the guilt of the Offence; and in proportion as the Person, against whom the Offence is committed, is raised in Dignity, Honour and Excellency; so in proportion is the aggravation of the Offence committed against him. From whence it naturally follows, according to the common Sense and Reason of Men, as is allow'd in other Cases,

Cases, that, since the Majesty of the great God is exalted in infinite measures, and his Excellency rais'd to an infinite degree, the Offence committed against him, must for that very reason be infinitely aggravated; and consequently it must deserve an infinite Punishment. For why it should be allow'd to earthly Princes, or any great Man to resent Offences against them in such measures and degrees, as are proportioned to their finite Dignity; and yet it should be deny'd to the absolute Sovereign of the Universe to resent Injuries and Offences committed against him, in such a manner as is proportioned to the infinite Excellency and Dignity of his sacred Majesty, is what lies on those to account for, who assert, that a finite Satisfaction is sufficient to atone for the guilt of Sin.

Moreover, that an infinite Satisfaction was necessary, in order to atone for the Guilt of Sin, will appear from this, that nothing short of an infinite Satisfaction could answer those Ends which were propos'd by insisting upon a Satisfaction at all. Now the great Ends for which a Satisfaction was required at all, were, that God might give sufficient proof of his natural Aversion to, and Hatred against Sin; and that other reasonable Beings, who had not sinned against him, might have no Encouragement to rebel, by seeing others revolt without being punished condignly; and that the Honour of his Laws might be sufficiently maintained; and that the Affront offer'd to his in-

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finitely dread Majesty, might be sufficiently repaired. Now none of those Ends could have been gained by accepting a finite Satisfaction; and he might as soon have dropt all Satisfaction, and not insisted upon any Reparation of his Honour at all, as to have taken up with a Satisfaction that was not of infinite Value; for a finite Satisfaction would not have been a sufficient proof, if he had accepted of it, of his infinite Love of Holiness, and infinite Abhorrence of Sin; nor would it have struck other reasonable Beings, who had not yet rebelled, with an Awe sufficient to engage them to continue in a dutiful Obedience to his Law, under which he had laid them. Nor yet would a finite Satisfaction have been a Punishment adequate, and duly proportioned to the infinite Majesty of God, whose Honour was lesed and affronted by the heinous Offence committed against him by the Transgression of his Law. So that we see, that none of those Ends could be gained by a finite Satisfaction, which were proposed by insisting upon a Satisfaction at all; and therefore an infinite Satisfaction was absolutely necessary to be made, before God could rest satisfied, or in honour be reconciled to Sinners.

But here it may be objected, How could the second Person of the Trinity pay this infinite Satisfaction, since himself is acknowledged to be God, and therefore is the Party himself offended? Is not this ludicrous and absurd, to make Satisfaction to himself? Is it not taking
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of his own to pay himself with? which is the same thing as to drop all Satisfaction intirely.

To this I answer, that in private Cafes, and when a Person's private Interest only is concerned, it is absurd for a Person acting in a private capacity, to make Satisfaction to himself, where none else are concerned; in such a case, the Reparation of the Injury made by himself to himself, is the same with no Reparation and Satisfaction at all. But the case differs widely with respect to a public Concern, and where a Person acts in a public capacity, where the Person is not concerned himself only, but others also; in that case, there is no manner of absurdity in such a Person's repairing the Injury done to himself and others along with him; this is a case that has actually happened among Mankind. *Valerius Maximus* gives an account of *Zaleucus*, a famous Legislator in *Locris* in *Greece*; there was a Law enacted, whereby he who transgressed it should lose both his Eyes; it happened that *Zaleucus's* own Son transgressed, by which he forfeited both his Eyes. The wise and just Legislator would by no means suffer the Honour of the public Law to be trampled upon, but in order to make sufficient Satisfaction to public Justice, though himself was a Party injur'd, he caused one of his Son's Eyes to be pull'd out, and another of his own; by which he maintained the Honour of the Law: nor was the Fact condemned, as a ludicrous and ab-

furd Elufion of the Satisfaction due to public Juftice; but *Zaleucus's* Name was renowned for it, as a wife and juft Legislator, who obferved the true and juft Mean between a compaffionate Father and an equitable Judge. This I have obferved, to fhew that in the opinion of Mankind, it is reckoned no Abfurdity for a Perfon acting in a public Capacity to make Satisfaction, where others are injured, even tho' he himfelf has a private Concern; which was plainly the cafe with our bleffed Lord. He did not take upon himfelf our Nature to repair any private Injury done to himfelf only, but to make Satisfaction to public Juftice; all the other Perfons of the Trinity were injured, and the Laws of Heaven violated; and therefore he fhed his precious Blood, which was of infinite Value, becaufe it was the Blood of him who was God, that the Affront offered to the injured Deity, fubfifting in three Perfons, might be atoned for, and Satisfaction made to the public Laws of Heaven, which had been trampled upon.

Now from what has been offered on this head, concerning the Satisfaction of Chrift, we may fee, that from the very Principles of the Light of Nature, and according to thofe Maxims which obtain among Men, a Satisfaction was neceffary, and an infinite one too; and that the Father, the firft Perfon in order of the holy Trinity, who in the Oeconomy of Salvation in a fpecial manner fufains the Character of the Deity, and defends its injured

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Rights and Honours, could not in a consistency with his Perfections, take up with a finite Satisfaction; nor could he declare himself well pleased in his beloved Son, and the Sacrifice which he offered, nor with us in him, unless he had been truly and properly a divine Person, of the same Nature and Essence with the Father; not the same in Kind only, but the same in Number; and consequently this Doctrine of the Holy Trinity, which so nearly affects so important an Article, must itself be of great importance, and a matter of the greatest consequence to Sinners, how they determine themselves concerning it. And the *Arians*, and other *Anti-trinitarians*, who deny it, must be in a most dangerous, not to say desperate way; since by denying the Trinity, they deny all Possibility of a *sufficient Satisfaction to be made*; and by denying the true and proper Divinity of the Son of God, they cut Mankind off from all Possibility of Salvation. For there is Salvation in none else, but in him; and it cannot be in him, if he was not truly God, to render the Merits of his Sufferings of infinite Value: because, as I have just now proved, the Person in the Trinity whose province it is to sustain the Character in a peculiar manner, and defend the Rights of the Deity, could take up with nothing short of an infinite Satisfaction, as a sufficient Reparation of the injured Honour of the Deity.

3. Another very important Doctrine of Christianity, which the *Arian Hypothesis* overthrows,

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verthrows, is that of the Exaltation of Jesus Christ, as Mediator, to the right hand of the Father; which is a piece of Honour above the condition of any created Nature to be raised to: for the Glory to which Christ is raised, by being *exalted to the right hand of the Majesty on high*, is a Glory peculiar to the Deity; and that same divine Glory which he had with the Father before the World was, as will appear from the following Passages of Scripture: *Who being the Brightness of his Glory**, to wit, of the Father's Glory, *and the express Image of his Person, and upholding all things by the Word of his Power*; Epithets which cannot belong to any but to the supreme God; when he had purged our Sins, *sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high*. And in the following Verses, the Apostle shews, that this Glory of Christ, as Mediator exalted, is peculiar to the Deity, and is above that of the Angels, Beings of the highest Order of the Creatures. Nay, in the sixth Verse the Apostle tells us, that the Angels had express Orders and Command from the Father to worship him, *Let all the Angels of God worship him*; an irrefragable proof of his proper Deity, since he is the Object of Worship, and that to the highest of Creatures, even the very Angels; which is a piece of divine Glory he would not give to another. But his eternal Son, as to his divine Nature, is not another, but the same Essence and Nature, and the same supreme

* Heb. i. 3.

preme God with him ; and so much the Father owns in his speech to him *, *But to the Son he saith, Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever.* And in the ninth verse, the Father addresses the Son, with respect to his human Nature, in which respect he is a Creature, and therefore in that respect, God the Father is his God ; yet even in that respect he is by his mediatorial Glory exalted above his Fellow-Creatures ; *Thou hast loved Righteousness, and hated Iniquity, therefore God, even thy God,* (for as to his human Nature, I say, he is a Creature, *God, even thy God*) *hath anointed thee with the Oil of Gladness above thy Fellows.* And again †, the Father addresses his Son in point of his Divinity, *And thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the Foundations of the Earth, and the Heavens are the Works of thy hands.*

Another Passage of Scripture, which proves the Glory of Christ's Exaltation to be a Glory peculiar to the Creator, and above that to which any Creature can be exalted, is ||, *Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand, far above all Principality and Power, and Might and Dominion, and every Name which is named, not only in this World, but also in that which is to come :* which takes in the whole Creation of God.

The Psalmist David ‡ prophesied of this Exaltation of Christ, *The Lord said to my Lord,* (to David's Lord) *sit thou at my right hand,*
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* Ver. 8. † In ver. 10. || Ephes. i. 20. ‡ Psal. cx. 1.

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'till I make thine Enemies thy Footstool; which our Saviour applies to himself in the twenty-second of St. *Matthew*, when he is making a Reply to the Pharisee's Answer to that Question, which he proposed to them: *What think ye of Christ, whose Son is he?* To this they answer, that *he is the Son of David*. In our Saviour's Reply, he insinuates to them that he had another Nature than that which was from *David*, for he had a divine Nature, whereby he was *David's Lord*: * *How then, saith he to them, doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand, 'till I make thine Enemies thy Footstool? if David then calls him Lord, how is he his Son?* As if he had said, if I had no other Nature than that which I derived from *David*, I could not be his Lord: no, as he was the Offspring of *David*, as to his human Nature; so he was the Root of *David*, *David's Lord* and Creator, as to his divine Nature. † *I Jesus have sent mine Angel, to testify to you these things in the Churches; I am the Root and Offspring of David; I Jesus am the Root and Offspring of David, the bright and morning Star.* Thus we see, that the Doctrine of the Exaltation of Christ raises him to the possession of Glory, which is truly divine, and to which he could not be exalted, unless he had truly a divine Nature. And therefore the *Arians*, who deny his proper Divinity, utterly overthrow this Doctrine, which is one of the peculiar and
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* Ver. 43.

† Revel. xxii. 16.

fundamental Doctrines of Christianity, upon which the Churches Security, and the Salvation of every particular Believer depends.

4. The *Arian* and *Anti-trinitarian* Schemes overthrow the comfortable and fundamental Doctrine of the Intercession of Christ, and defeat its Efficacy; for the prevalent Efficacy of his Intercession is entirely grounded upon the infinite Value and Merits of his Sufferings, and that depends upon his being truly God: for if the Person suffering had not been God, to give an infinite Value to the Sufferings of his human Nature, they could be of no sufficient Value, nor could he plead their Merit in his Intercessions for his People, so as to prevail to obtain saving and eternal Blessings to them.

5. As their Scheme overthrows the Doctrine of the Intercession of Christ in Heaven, by denying his Deity, upon which it is founded; so it overthrows the Doctrine of Regeneration of the Souls of Men on Earth, by the Power of the *Holy Ghost*, by denying the Deity of that Person. The Work of Grace upon the Soul at Conversion, is a Work of Omnipotence; because a Work of Creation, as this is often called in Scripture, requires infinite Power to effect it: and the Holy Ghost being the Person of the Trinity, whose Province it is in the Oeconomy of Salvation to apply the Purchase of Christ to the Souls of Men, by the Efficacy of his almighty Grace:

* *According to his Mercy be saved us, by the Wash-*

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Washing of Regeneration, and Renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly thro' Jesus Christ our Saviour: I say, since this is his peculiar Work, the execution of which requires infinite Power and Wisdom, and other divine Perfections; it necessarily follows, that the Holy Spirit must be God: And to say that he is not a divine Person, and truly God, is to overturn that important Doctrine of the Christian Faith, the Doctrine of Regeneration and Sanctification by the Holy Ghost.

Thus I have somewhat largely shewed the Importance of this Controversy, how it affects the most essential and fundamental Articles of our holy Religion, that we must either retain or renounce them, according as we are determined in this matter. I have shewed particularly how the *Arian* and *Anti-trinitarian* Schemes defeat the very Design of the supernatural Revelation of the Scriptures, both with respect to the Illustration of those Perfections of the Deity as subsisting in a Trinity of Persons, which are manifested thereby, and which could not be manifested by a natural Revelation: and also with respect to the settling the Object of religious Worship upon its true Basis. I have also shewed how the *Arian* Scheme overthrows the Doctrines of Justification, Incarnation of the Son of God, and his Satisfaction, his Exaltation, and Intercession; and the Doctrine of Regeneration, and Renovation

tion by the Holy Ghost; which are Articles of the utmost consequence to Christians, and which all who have a just concern for Religion, will be very tender of, and cannot but entertain the utmost Aversion to any Principles which are inconsistent with them. Thus I have finished what I thought necessary to premise, in order to awaken in us a due Attention to what may be offered upon this Controversy. I should now proceed to prove the first thing proposed from the Text, to wit, that in the divine Essence there are three Persons, absolutely equal in all divine Perfections and Glory. But this I shall leave 'till it please the Lord to give another Opportunity. May God bless his Word :

And to his Name be Praise.





S E R M O N IV.

I J O H N 5. 7.

*For there are three that bear record
in Heaven, the Father, the Word,
and the Holy Ghost : and these three
are one.*

UPON the last occasion I had to speak from these Words, I endeavoured to shew you the Importance of this Controversy, and how much it affects the Christian Scheme. I have shewed particularly, how the denial of the holy Trinity defeats the Design of the whole divine Revelation ; and that both with respect to the Illustration of the Perfections of the Deity, as they manifest themselves in the Trinity of the Persons of the Godhead ; and also with respect to the setting Mankind right, as to the true and proper Object of divine and religious Worship. I have also largely shewd, how the *Arian* and *Anti-trinitarian* Scheme overthrows the most fundamental Articles of the Christian Faith ; that it is
utterly

utterly inconsistent with the essential Doctrines of Justification by the Righteousness of Christ, and the Satisfaction, Incarnation, Exaltation, and Intercession of the Son of God; and that it overthrows the Doctrine of Regeneration and Sanctification by the Power of the Holy Ghost.

I proceed now to explain more particularly the Doctrine contained in these Words; in the general Explication whereof I told you, that we had principally these two Propositions contained in them:

I. That in the divine Essence there are three Persons, all on the same level of Equality, and in the same divine Character, all of them equally bearing witness in Heaven: *There are three that bear record in Heaven.*

II. Notwithstanding this Trinity of the Persons in the Godhead, yet nevertheless, the Godhead and divine Essence is but one. So that each of these three divine Persons are possessed equally of it; *for these three are one: one in their Nature, and one in their Essence.* These things I shall in the following Discourses endeavour to explain; and answer the Objections which are made by the *Arians* and other *Anti-trinitarians*.

I begin with the first of these, which was to shew, that in the divine Essence there are

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three Persons, all of them on the same Level of Equality, possess'd of the divine Nature and Essence. And here I would have it observed, that this Doctrine of the Trinity is intirely depending upon a supernatural Revelation, and is by no means to be deduced from any Principles implanted in the Nature of Man, or any other rational Creature of whatsoever Rank and Order they may be : for the highest pitch, that the Principles of the Light of Nature can reach, is to discover the Nature of the Deity, as to the Unity of his Essence. All these Effects of Wisdom and Power, which appear in the Works of Creation and Providence, may carry the Mind of Man, in its rational Deductions from them, to the Knowledge of the Being and Existence of the Deity, as one undivided Essence ; he may by these things, which are made, clearly see his eternal Power and Godhead : but as to the Manner of the Subsistence of this Godhead, that the divine Nature subsists in three Persons, is what cannot be gathered from any Effects of the divine Perfections, which manifest themselves in the Works of Creation. The natural Revelation by the Works of Creation was design'd only to manifest those Perfections of the Deity, which belong necessarily to the undivided Essence ; and it can by no means reach to the Discovery of that Perfection of the divine Nature, which results from the Trinity of Persons in the Godhead ; the Illustration of that was reserved for the Work of Grace in the
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Redemption of Men to manifest; and if it had not been for the Method of Salvation, that Perfection of the Deity had been hid from the Knowledge of all reasonable Beings for ever; for any thing that appears from the Reason of Things to the contrary. 'Tis true, there are some, who have been of opinion, and that too, Men of no small Note and Eminence for Learning, that the Knowledge of the Trinity of Persons in the Unity of the divine Essence, was manifested to the Angels and to Men in a State of Innocence; because, say they, they could not worship him aright, and as the true God, and as he requires himself to be worshipped, unless they address'd themselves to the one divine Essence, as subsisting in the Trinity of Persons. But this seems not to be a sufficient Reason; nor does it prove, that it was necessary, that the Angels and Man, in a State of Innocence must have had the Knowledge of the Trinity, in order to their worshipping of God acceptably; for if they worshipp'd God according to the manner, that he had revealed himself to them; That no doubt would be acceptable Worship to him. The Deity had manifested himself to the Angels and Man in a State of Innocence, only in the Character of God Creator; and not in the Character of God Redeemer and Renewer; nor was it necessary, nor indeed fit, that he should have manifested himself either as Redeemer, or Restorer and Renewer; and if they worshipp'd him in that Character

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as Creator, which was the only way he had manifested himself to them; they answered the End sufficiently, for which they were made; and their Service and Worship directed to him, as Creator only, could not but be acceptable to him; and own'd as all the reasonable Service that could be demanded of them; since the Lord was pleas'd to reveal and manifest himself no farther to them, and discover no other of his Perfections to them, than such as resulted from his being Creator.

'Tis true the Case differs widely now, both with respect to Men and Angels. Now that the Lord has reveal'd himself, not only in the Unity of his Essence in the Works of Creation, and thereby made a Discovery of those Perfections which are essential to the divine Nature, and inseparable from it; but also has discovered a Trinity of divine Persons in the Works of Redemption. Whereas Men and Angels were under an Obligation to worship God, only as Creator, and a Being of one infinite undivided Nature, and Essence, before the Mystery of Redemption was made known in the World; now that he has manifested a Trinity of divine Persons in the Godhead, they lie under the same Obligations to direct their Service and Worship to the Deity, as subsisting in a Trinity of Persons; as before they were bound to serve him, as he had manifested himself as Creator, and a Being of one infinite Essence. And accordingly we see, that in the first to the *Hebrews*, ver. 6. when
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Jesus Christ was manifested in the Flesh, and the Father brought in his first-begotten into the World, the Angels received Commandment to worship him. So that it would appear that this is a Mystery, which was made known by the Church to Principalities and Powers in heavenly Places; and that they had had no Orders, at least so clear and express, to worship the Son, before he was revealed, as Mediator betwixt God and Man; and by that manifested and declared to be a divine Person; and on that account the Object, the proper Object, of Worship both to Men and Angels. But whatever be in this, whether this Mystery of the Trinity was known to Angels and Man, in a State of Innocence, or not; most certain it is, that Men in this fallen State are ignorant of it, and cannot attain to the Knowledge of it without a divine supernatural Revelation: yea, even those who affirm, that Angels and Man, in a State of Innocence, had the Knowledge of this Mystery; own that they had it not from any rational Deductions from their natural Reason, but by a supernatural Revelation from God: much less can Man, in the deprav'd State that he is in at present, by the Ruins of the Fall, attain to the Knowledge of this profound Mystery by the Force of his deprav'd natural Understanding.

Nay, so far from that; so far are Men from being able to acquire and arrive at the Knowledge of this Mystery, by the Power of their

natural Light, without a divine Revelation; that they are so corrupted and deprav'd, and the Sight of their natural Understanding so vitiated, that they'll hardly admit it, when it is reveal'd by a supernatural Revelation, by God himself, in the clearest manner. The natural Man has an aversion to receive the things of the Spirit, and he cannot know them, because they are spiritually discerned; the Glory of this Mystery dazles the weak Eye of Nature's Light; the Eyes of our natural Understanding since the Fall are sore; and the brilliant Light of divine Revelation is offensive to them; and they cannot bear it without a great deal of uneasiness; it galls and frets them, and will do, till the Lord applies his Eye-Salve to Mens Minds, and reveals his Arm, and gives them the saving Knowledge of God in the Face of Jesus Christ: then they shall receive and love the Light, and not till then.

'Tis true, there are some Passages in the Writings of some Heathens, which seem to be Hints at this Mystery; and one would think, to read them, that they did not seem to be obscure Hints of it: particularly we have a Passage in *Seneca* to this purpose; says he, "Whoever it was that formed the Universe, whether it was the almighty God; or incarnate Wisdom, the great Author of Things; or the Holy Spirit, whose Energy diffuses itself with equal force thro' all things, whether greater or smaller". But tho' it may be supposed, that

that *Seneca* in that Passage had indeed an eye to the Persons of the Trinity, as, I must own, it looks somewhat like it; yet it will not from hence follow, that that Mystery is discoverable by the Light of Nature. *Seneca* might have borrowed this Knowledge from the Christians, as he did a great many other excellent things, which he has in his moral Philosophy: nor is this at all improbable, for he had a fair opportunity of being acquainted with the Principles of Christianity, since he lived at a time when Christianity flourished greatly in *Rome*; for *Rapin* gives an account, that this *Seneca* by oppressing the *Britons*, who owed him an immense Sum of Money, and squeezing them by an exorbitant Usury, which he exacted of them, provoked the *Britons*, the Inhabitants of the southern Part of this Island, to revolt from under the *Roman* Yoke in the sixtieth Year of our Lord, when they massacred all the *Romans*, who were at that time in *Britain*, to the number of eighty thousand Men. Now this was done, I say, in the sixtieth Year of our Lord, the very Year when the Apostle *Paul* wrote his Epistle to the *Romans*; from whence 'tis plain, that Christianity flourished greatly in *Rome* in *Seneca's* time; and consequently he had an opportunity of being acquainted with its Principles; and particularly a Man of his curious and inquisitive Turn of Mind, and penetrating Judgment, could not but come to the Knowledge of the Trinity, that great Foundation-Article, on which all the

rest stood. And therefore, altho' this Heathen Philosopher gives some Hints of a Trinity in his Writings, it is no argument, that he came to the Knowledge of it by the Light of Nature, since he had an opportunity easily to borrow it from the Christians.

We must therefore regulate our Sentiments, and draw our whole Light concerning this matter from the divine Revelation; and when carnal Reason, Reason falsely so called, thwarts, and seems inconsistent with what is taught us concerning this Doctrine in the Scriptures, in that case we ought to subject our blind, vitiated and corrupted Reason, which is indeed truly not Reason, but a pretence to it; I say, this we ought to subject to divine Revelation. For as to true Reason, Reason which has a just title to that name, it always agrees with divine Revelation; and 'tis impossible there can be any Difference and Inconsistency betwixt them, because the God of Truth is the Author of both; and therefore, what he reveals by a natural Revelation, must needs accord and harmonize with what he reveals in a supernatural way in his Word. Yet, tho' there be a perfect Harmony betwixt that which is truly Reason and Revelation; or, which is the same thing, tho' there be a perfect Harmony betwixt the Principles of natural and supernatural Revelation; yet it may, and does frequently happen, that that which is called Reason, and passies for it in the Opinion and Judgment of the World, may contradict and be inconsistent with

with that, which is truly a divine Revelation; in which case, there can be nothing more reasonable than to renounce that false pretended Reason, and subject it to the sure Dictates of divine Revelation. We must put on the spiritual Armour, which is mighty thro' God, to the pulling down of Strong-holds, these Strong-holds of false and pretended Reason; and to the *casting down Imaginations*, or, as the word is in the Original, *Reasonings*, (false Reasonings;) *and every high thing that exalteth itself against the Knowledge of God; and bringing into Captivity every Thought to the Obedience of Christ* *. Tho' there be nothing in this great Mystery of the Trinity, which is contradictory to any Principle of true Reason, Reason which deserves the Name, yet it is greatly above it; and it becomes Mortals, when the great God is speaking to his Creatures, and revealing the great Depths of his incomprehensible Nature, to give credit to him when he speaks, tho' they cannot tell how these things can be so, and cannot so much as comprehend the manner how they are so; for it may be easily supposed, that there are Perfections, Attributes and Relations in the divine Nature and Essence, which finite Creatures cannot comprehend, as to the manner and way of their Existence: and it is a piece of the most horrid Arrogance for any Creature, even of the most perfect kind, to question Truths delivered by God, upon the score of their

* 2 Cor. x. 5.

their being incomprehensible by him, as to the Manner how they are. *Who art thou, O Man, that thou hast the assurance to reply against God?* Is it fit, that the thing formed, should say to him who formed it, why dost thou speak thus? How can these things be? Does the great God say, that they are? there is no farther question then to be made about it, but they are; however dark the matter may be, as to the Manner, of it, how they are.

We ought not therefore either to speak or think of this Mystery, but with the greatest modesty, and sense of our own Weakness and Inability to comprehend the great things of God. There are depths in this adorable Mystery, which Men of the most profound knowledge and improvements in all the Accomplishments of acquired Learning, are not able to dive into; nor is it to be expected, that any finite Being can ever comprehend it, even in the state of the highest Perfection and Glory. I do not question, but in that happy state we shall have more satisfying apprehensions of it, than what we have now; but to be able to comprehend it is impossible, because the foundation of it is laid in the Infinity of the Deity; and that being incomprehensible, this Mystery of the Trinity, having its foundation laid in it, must, for that very reason, be equally incomprehensible, as to the manner how it is: tho' it is easily comprehended, that it is, because it is plainly reveal'd; but how it is, is not reveal'd; nor indeed can it be reveal'd to
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any Being, who is but of a finite Comprehension, as all Creatures are, tho' in the most exalted state.

Let us see then, what the Word of God reveals to us in this matter; and let us be determined intirely by that; and form our Sentiments wholly upon the divine Revelation; and receive with Meekness and Humility what the great God himself delivers to us, as it becomes his Creatures; let us believe him, when he tells us adorable Truth concerning himself, even when we cannot comprehend the Manner, how these things are so, which he reveals to be. Nor is this any unreasonable demand; it is no more than a just deference, and suitable regard, paid to the veracity of God, who cannot lye: nay, it is no more, than what we are oblig'd to do every day in other cases. Does any man deny the Eternity of the supreme Cause of all things, because he cannot comprehend the Manner how any Being can be eternal? Or does any body refuse, that there is a Union betwixt his Soul and his Body, because he does not know and cannot comprehend the Manner how they are united? If any Man should reason after such a manner in those cases, and deny plain and evident Fact, because he could not account for the Manner and Modus of the Fact, would he not justly expose himself to the ridicule of Mankind? And yet this is the very way of Reasoning of the *Arians*, as absurd as it is; and, which is yet more ridiculous, even when they insist upon that

that absurd way of Reasoning, at the same time they give themselves the airs of Men of Reason; while yet of all Men in the World, themselves are making the greatest Inroad upon the plainest and most obvious Principles of Reason, and the clearest Dictates of common Sense. It ought not therefore to be any objection against this Doctrine of the Trinity, that we cannot comprehend the Manner how three divine Persons subsist in one Essence. This is a profound Mystery, and incomprehensible by Men or Angels; but the Fact is clearly and plainly revealed, and therefore it ought to be believed by us on account of the infinite Veracity of God, who has reveal'd it.

Now let us inquire, what Evidence we have for this Doctrine of the Trinity; that there are three Persons in the divine Essence, according to the Scripture-Revelation in the Books of the Old and New Testament. As to the Old Testament, we have not so clear and express a Discovery of this Doctrine therein, as there is in the New: nor can it be expected, that there should; for the Revelation of this Doctrine taking its rise from the Revelation of the method of Salvation through a Redeemer, in proportion as this is discovered in clearness and perspicuity, so in proportion, the Evidence of the other must be dark or clear. Now in the New Testament the method of Salvation is much more clear and evident; Life and Immortality are in a more eminent manner brought to light by the Gospel-Dispensation,

tion, than what they were by the Legal: and therefore we are not to expect that clear Evidence for this Doctrine under that Dispensation, as is to be found in the other; yet the Old Testament is not altogether silent about it; by no means, but gives broad hints of a Plurality of Persons in the Deity; and speaks particularly of the Redeemer, the *Messias* to come, as God, and that too as the supreme God, equal with the Father; and possess'd of the same Nature and essential Perfections with him: and so does it also of the Holy Ghost, as a distinct Person.

Now, that the Old Testament gives us hints of a Plurality of Persons in the Deity, will appear from the following Passages; *Gen. i. 26. And God said, let us make Man in our Image, after our Likeness.* There the Deity is introduced by the inspired Penman, as speaking in a Plurality of Persons, and not as one Person, *God said, let us make Man in our Image after our Likeness:* the supreme Being does not express himself, as if there were but one Person in the Godhead; he does not say, let me make Man in my Image after my Likeness; but, *let Us make Man in OUR Image, and after OUR Likeness.* Nor can it be suppos'd, that he is addressing himself to the Angels in that Speech; for the Persons here spoken to, are addressed, as concerned in the Work of creating Man, *let Us make Man.* Now the Angels had no hand in this Work: Man is the Workmanship of God only, and not of the Angels; and there-

therefore in point of Creation, *Adam* was in a peculiar manner call'd the Son of God. If the Angels had been Co-Workers with the Deity in the Creation of Man, he might have been call'd with the same parity of Reason, the Son of the Angels; but since the Angels had no concern in this Work of creating Man; and since it was inconsistent with their state, as Creatures, to be imploy'd in a Work, which is peculiar to the Deity; it cannot, with any shadow of Reason be presumed, that the Angels are meant, when God said, *let us make Man*. No, none can be presumed to be meant by it, but those who are capable of the Work; and therefore the Persons of the Trinity must be understood to be meant there: and this accords with the rest of the divine Revelation, which in many places ascribes Creation to each of the eternal Three in the Deity, but never to any of the Angels.

Nor is that the only passage, where we have, in the Old Testament, an Insinuation of a Plurality of Persons in the Deity: we have others to the same purpose, *Gen. iii. 22. And the Lord said, behold the Man is become as one of us*; and *Gen. xi. 7. And the Lord said, behold the People is one, and they have all one Language; and this they begin to do; and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Go to, let Us go down; and there confound their Language, that they may not understand one another's Speech. The Lord said, let Us go down*: this form of Speech plainly

plainly insinuates and intimates to us a Plurality of Persons. 'Tis true, the force of this Argument is not so discernable in our Language, as it is in the original Tongue: for in the *English* Language it is common enough for one Person, especially a great Personage, to speak of himself in the plural Number; and with us the use of the plural Number does not infer a Plurality of Persons; but it is not so in the *Hebrew* Tongue, according to the Idiom of that Language; where the plural Number is us'd, it infers a Plurality of Persons; and the plural Number is not us'd to denote Honour and Dignity as with us, but to signify a Plurality of Persons. Thus we see, that there are Intimations of this Doctrine, as high as the Creation, or the Fall and Confusion of *Babel*; or at least as *Moses's* time.

In the hundred and tenth Psalm, Verse the first, the Psalmist *David* very plainly intimates to us a Plurality of divine Persons in the Deity, when he says, *The Lord said to my Lord, sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine Enemies thy Footstool*: this our Saviour applies to himself, *Mat. xxii. 44.* and there proves his Deity and Godhead from this passage, that *David in the Spirit call'd him Lord*; and therefore there was of necessity another Nature in him, than that by which he was *David's* Son; even a divine Nature, whereby he was his Lord. *While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, saying, what think you of Christ? whose Son is he? They say*

to him, the Son of David. There the *Pharisees* seem to be of the *Socinian* Scheme, that they would acknowledge our Saviour to be no more than a mere Man; and that he had no other Nature, than what he derived from *David*, as his Son. But our Saviour undeceives them of this Error, and proves from the first Verse of this hundred and tenth Psalm, that he had a divine Nature, by which he was *David's* Lord; he saith unto them, *How then doth David in Spirit call him Lord? saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right Hand, till I make thine Enemies thy Footstool: if David then calls him Lord, how is he his Son?* Thus does our Saviour silence these infidel *Pharisees*, who denied his proper Deity: but tho' they were not able to answer him a word, or ask him any more questions, ver. 46. yet we have no account of their being convinced, and persuaded to embrace him. Their Judgments were overcome by the force of his Reasoning, but their Hearts were not conquered by the power of his Grace.

We have another Passage in the Old Testament, where all the three Persons of the Trinity are mentioned distinctly, and it is in the 63d Chap. of *Isaiab* from the 7th Verse; *I will mention the loving-kindness of the Lord, and the Praises of the Lord according to all that the Lord hath bestowed on us, for he said surely they are my People, Children that will not lye.* These words are spoken of the Father, and in Verse 9. the holy Prophet gives a description of God the Son;

Son, him who was the *Messias*, and was to come in due time in the *Flesh* to save the *World*. *In all their Afflictions he was afflicted, and the Angel of his Presence saved them; in his Love and in his Pity he redeemed them: and in the 10th Verse he mentions God the Holy Ghost; but they rebell'd and vexed his Holy Spirit, therefore he was turned to be their Enemy.* And again we have another, and that not an obscure hint of the three Persons of the *Trinity*, in the 61st Chap. of *Isaiab*, 1st and 2d Verses, *The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, (upon the Son) because the Lord hath anointed me, (with the Holy Ghost) to preach good Tidings to the meek, he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim Liberty to the Captives, and the opening of the Prison to them that are bound.*

In the *Psalms* of *David* there are a great variety of Passages, which speak particularly of the second Person of the *Trinity*, *God the Son*, the promised *Messiah*; *Psal. xcvi. 7. Confounded be all they that serve graven Images, that boast themselves of Idols; worship him all ye Gods.* And that the *Psalmist* is there speaking of *God the Son*, we are expressly taught by the *Apostle* in the first Chap. to the *Hebr.* 6 ver. where he applies this very passage to *Christ the Son of God*: the words are these, in the 6th ver. *And when he bringeth in his First-begotten into the World, he saith, and let all the Angels of God worship him.* And in the 45th *Psal* 6 and 7 ver. we have such a description of the *Son*, the second Person of the *Trinity*, as puts it beyond

all doubt that he is a divine Person, and truly God, the one supreme God with the Father, tho' a distinct Person from him: the words are these; *Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever, the Scepter of thy Kingdom is a right Scepter.* And in the 7th ver. the Father is addressing the Son, with respect to his human Nature, and his Office as Mediator; *Thou lovest Righteousness, and hatest Wickedness; therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the Oyl of gladness above thy Fellows.* Where we have a description of the Person of the Redeemer by the *Psalmist*, both with respect to his divine, and also with respect to his human Nature; so that the second Person of the Trinity was not unknown to the Old-Testament Saints altogether; tho' he was not revealed to them so clearly as to us under the Gospel; and lest any should doubt, that the 6th and 7th Verses of the forty-fifth *Psalms* are spoken of God the Son, the Apostle puts it beyond all question, in the first Chap. to the *Heb.* from the 7th ver. where he is shewing the superior, the infinitely superior Dignity of the Son above the Angels; he expressly applies this passage to Christ the Son of God: *Unto the Angels he saith, who maketh his Angels Spirits, and his Ministers a Flame of Fire; but unto the Son he saith, thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a Scepter of Righteousness is the Scepter of thy Kingdom.*

We have another very plain Passage concerning the Deity of God the Son, in the Old Testament; and that is in the cii^d *Psalms*, ver. 25.

In the 24th Verse, the *Psalmist* addresses himself to the Mediator, in the Character of the supreme God; *I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days; thy Years are throughout all Generations; of old hast thou laid the Foundations of the Earth; and the Heavens are the Work of thy Hands; they shall perish, but thou shalt endure; yea, all of them shall wax old like a Garment, as a Vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy Years shall have no end.* But, lest any should imagine, that the *Psalmist* in these Words is addressing himself to God the Father, and not to the Mediator, God the Son; the Apostle *Paul* teaches us expressly, that in these Words he is speaking of the Son; and explains this Text of him, and applies it word for word to him, in the first Chap. to the *Heb.* 10th ver. *But unto the Son, he saith, And thou, Lord; in the Beginning hast laid the Foundations of the Earth; and the Heavens are the Work of thy Hands; they shall perish, but thou remainest; and they shall all wax old, as doth a Garment; and as a Vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy Years shall not fail.*

We have another Text concerning the supreme Deity of Christ, the second Person of the Trinity, in the Book of *Numbers*, 14 Chap: 22d ver. where the Lord *Jekovah* himself is speaking, as appears from the 20th ver. and he says, ver. 22. *All these Men, who have seen my*

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Glory, and my Miracles which I did in Egypt, and in the Wilderness, and have tempted me now these ten times, and have not hearkened to my Voice. Now we have an infallible Commentary on this Text by the Apostle *Paul*, in the 1 *Cor.* x Chap. 9th ver. where he tells us, that Person, call'd *Jehovah*, which is the incommunicable Name of the supreme God, whom the *Israelites* tempted, was Christ, the second Person of the ever-blessed Trinity: *Neither*, says he, *let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of Serpents.* He who is called *Jehovah* in that passage in *Numbers*, is here by the Apostle called Christ: nor is he only called *Jehovah* in the Old Testament, but *Jehovah*, or *the Lord our Righteousness*, *Jer.* xxiii. 6. *In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely, and this is his Name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.* And in the Old Testament, the *Messiah*, God the Son, is represented as the Object of the highest Acts of religious Adoration and Worship; particularly of Faith and Hope, which is called by the *Psalmist*, a kissing the Son, *Psalms* ii. 12. *Serve the Lord with Fear, and rejoice with trembling; kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way; when his Wrath is kindled but a little, blessed are all they that put their trust in him.* And in the xi *Isa.* 10th ver. the Prophet speaks of Christ, as the Hope and Confidence of the *Gentiles*, in whom they shall be blessed; says he, *In that day there shall be a Root of Jesse,*
which

which shall stand for an Ensign of the People, to it shall the Gentiles seek. Which the Apostle Paul explains and interprets of Christ, and applies this very Text to him in the xv Chap. to the Rom. 12th ver. *And again, says the Apostle there, Isaiah saith, there shall be a Root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles, in him shall the Gentiles trust.* So that we see, the *Messiah*, the second Person of the Trinity, the Lord Christ, was represented even to the Old-Testament Believers, as a divine Person, as one of the Three possessed of the divine Nature and Essence; in regard that he was held forth, as the Object of their Confidence, in whom they should believe and hope, and so be blessed in him; which necessarily infers and proves his proper Deity, *Prov. xvi. 20. Whoso trusteth in the Lord, happy is he.* But if he were no more than a mere Man, as some would have him to be, hoping and trusting in him would intail a Curse, and not a Blessing; and that by the irreverfible Appointment of the supreme *Jehovah* himself, according to his own Denunciation, *Jer. xvii. 5. Thus saith the Lord, cursed be the Man that trusteth in Man, and maketh Flesh his Arm, and whose Heart departeth from the Lord.* The Words are the Words of *Jehovah*; and awful Words to those, who expect Salvation from Christ, only as a mere Man; and whose Heart departs from him, as he is the Lord, the Lord of Glory, the great and supreme God, the same supreme God with the Father.

From these Texts it abundantly appears, that according to the divine Revelation made even in the Old Testament, there is another Person besides the Father in the Deity, who is truly *Jehovah*, the supreme God, as the Father also is, even God the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. So that the second Person of the Trinity was not altogether hid from the Old-Testament Believers.

As the second Person of the Trinity was revealed in the old Dispensation, so also was the third, the Holy Ghost; for the Work of Creation is expressly ascribed to him in the tenth Chapter of *Genesis*, verse the second, where 'tis said, *The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the Waters.* And the Prophet tells us*, that *Jehovah* said, *Go, and tell this People, hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not; make the heart of the People fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.* Now in the *Acts of the Apostles* †, the Apostle Paul applies this Passage expressly to the Holy Ghost, and tells us in so many words, that that Person whom the Prophet *Isaiab* calls *Jehovah*, who spake these words, was this very third Person of the holy Trinity, the Holy Ghost, who spake them; *Well spake*, says he, *the Holy Ghost, by Isaias the Prophet, unto our Fathers, saying, Go to this People, and say, Hearing, ye shall*

* *Isai.* vi. 9.† *Acts* xxviii. 25.

shall bear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive; for the heart of this People is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing; and their eyes have they closed, lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

Thus we see that all the three Persons of the Trinity were known under the Old Testament. There are also other Passages in the Old Testament, where there is a three-fold Repetition of the Names and Attributes of God, which intimates to us a Trinity of Persons in the Deity; such as*, *The Lord bless thee, and keep thee; the Lord make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious to thee; the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee Peace.* And there seems so much the rather to be an intimation of a Trinity here, in that *Aaron* and his Sons are directed to ask these Blessings in the order they are said to be dispensed by the different Persons of the Trinity, according to the Oeconomy of Salvation, in other Places of Scripture; such as Protection from the Father, Grace from the Son, and Peace from the Holy Ghost. Another Expression of the like nature we have †, *Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of Hosts:* which compared with the eighth Verse of that same Chapter, where this Lord of Hosts is introduced, saying, *Who will go for US?* does not obscurely intimate a Plurality of Persons in the Deity; for as I

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* Numb. vi. 24.

† Isa. vi. 3.

hinted before, it is not according to the Idiom of the *Hebrew*, for Persons to speak of themselves in the plural Number, to denote their Dignity and Honour, though it be so in our Language. It is true, the Names of great Persons, on account of their Dignity and Honour, have been used in the plural Number; but it is not at all agreeable to the *Hebrew* Idiom for any to speak of themselves plurally, where a Plurality of Persons is not intended. May God bless his Word:

And to his Name be Praise.





S E R M O N V.

I JOHN 5. 7.

For there are three that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost : and these three are one.

ON the last occasion I began to prove, that in the Deity, or Godhead, there are a Trinity of Persons; and seeing this is a Doctrine only to be learn'd from divine Revelation, and the Principles of Nature's Light are utterly a Stranger to it, therefore I propos'd to draw all my Proofs of it from the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament. For tho' this Mystery of the Trinity, as I told you, has nothing in it that contradicts any Principle of true Reason, Reason justly so called, yet it is not to be discovered by it; nor can it be deduced from any Principles that are naturally known by any rational Creature of whatever Rank: therefore, I propose to confine myself intirely to the Arguments drawn from Scripture, for the proof of this Point.

Among

Among other Arguments, and Passages of Scripture, taken from the Old Testament, which I insisted on, particularly, on the last occasion, we have another proof in the Old Testament, of the Deity of the second Person in the Trinity, in the Book of the Prophet *Isaiab*, 7th chap. 14th verse; where it is prophesied of the eternal Son of God seven hundred and forty Years before his Incarnation, that he should appear in our Nature, and where he is expressly called God; *Therefore, says the Prophet, the Lord himself shall give you a Sign, behold a Virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call his Name Emanuel.* This is expressly applied in the New Testament to Jesus Christ, (in the Gospel according to *Matthew*;) from the 19th verse; *Then Joseph her Husband, being a just Man, and not willing to make her a publick Example, was minded to put her away privily, to wit Mary, his Wife; but while he thought on these things, behold, the Angel of the Lord appeared to him in a Dream, saying, Joseph thou Son of David, fear not to take to thee Mary thy Wife, for that, which is conceived in her, is of the Holy Ghost: and she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his People from their Sins.* Now all this was done, says the Evangelist, that it might be fulfilled, which was spoken of the Lord by the Prophet, saying, *Behold, a Virgin shall be with Child, and shall bring forth a Son, and they shall call his name Emanuel; which being interpreted,*

preted, is, GOD WITH US; that is, God in our Nature, God tabernacling in the Flesh amongst us. Now after so plain a Declaration from Heaven, who can either imagine that Jesus Christ was no more than a mere Man? or that the Messias, who was to come, was not in some degree known, even under the Old Testament, to be the true and supreme God?

See another Testimony concerning him by that same Prophet *Isaiab ix. 6. For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the Government shall be upon his Shoulder: and his Name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.* And in the 40th chap. of *Isaiab*, from the third verse, it is prophesied of *John the Baptist*, the Harbinger of the Redeemer; *The Voice of him that crieth in the Wilderness, prepare ye the Way of Jehovah, make strait in the Desert a high Way for OUR GOD; (there he is call'd JEHOVAH, and OUR GOD :) every Valley shall be exalted, and every Mountain shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made strait, and the rough Places plain; and the Glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all Flesh shall see it together; for the Mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.* Now this is applied by all the Evangelists to *John the Forerunner* of our Saviour, *Matt. iii. 3. Mark i. 3. Luke iii. 4. John i. 23.*

And *Hosea i. 7.* the Messias to come, the Saviour of the World, is expressly called *Jehovah,*

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Jehovah, their God, to wit, the God of Judah. *I will have mercy on the House of Judah, and will save them by the Lord their God, and will not save them by Bow, nor by Sword, nor by Battel, by Horses, nor by Horsemen.* This is applied to Jesus Christ by St. Luke ii. 11. *For unto you is born this day in the City of David a SAVIOUR, which is CHRIST, THE LORD.* And Malachi iii. 1. *Behold, I will send my Messenger, and he shall prepare the Way before me, and the LORD whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his Temple, even the Messenger of the Covenant, whom ye delight in; behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts.* Now that this is to be understood of Jesus Christ, the second Person of the Trinity, is plain from Mark i. 1st, and 2d verses; *The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as it is written in the Prophets; behold, I send my Messenger before thy Face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.* From all which Passages in the Old Testament it abundantly appears, that a Distinction of the Persons of the Deity was known, even to them, tho' not so clearly as it is reveal'd to us in the Dispensation of the Gospel; since even under that Dispensation there are Three to whom the Title Jehovah, the incommunicable Name of the supreme God, is ascribed; and not only the Name, but the incommunicable Attributes of the supreme Deity are ascribed to Three; which will appear more fully afterwards.

Now

Now the strength of this Argument, for proof that Jesus Christ is Jehovah, and that the three Persons of the Trinity were known under the Old Testament, tho' more obscurely than under the New, appears plain from this, that the New Testament applies the things spoken of Jehovah, the supreme God, to the Son and Holy Ghost; and therefore these three Persons must have been known in some degree, even under the Old Testament: for the same Sense in which the New Testament explains those Passages of the Old, must have been the Sense of them before that Explication, tho' it was not altogether so well understood, till it was more fully cleared up in the New Testament; and therefore since the Spirit in the New Testament explains those Passages of the Old, where Jehovah is named, both of the Son and Holy Ghost, and applies them to them, they must always have belong'd to them, and ought always to have been understood of them; for the same Spirit was author of both, and must be consistent with himself, and could not have a different meaning in the Old Testament, from what he declares himself to have of the same Passages in the New.

But, as I hinted above, this is more clearly reveal'd in the New Testament; because, in proportion, as the Mystery of Salvation came to be more fully discovered, so this Mystery of the Trinity proportionably was more clearly reveal'd: for the Revelation of the Mystery

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of Salvation was the occasion of the Revelation of this Mystery of the Trinity; and if it had not been for the one, we have no reason to believe that ever the other would have been known: and therefore it was not to be expected, that when the Mystery of Salvation thro' the Messias, the second Person of the Trinity, was but darkly reveal'd under the Old-Testament Dispensation; that this Mystery of the Trinity should be so clearly reveal'd therein, as in the New, where the whole Contrivance of Grace is brought to so clear a Light by the Gospel. Yet there is even in the Old Testament, as I have shew'd, such Evidence as is sufficient to convince any honest and upright Inquirer after Truth, that there is in the Unity of the divine Essence a Plurality of Persons; and that even under that obscure Dispensation of the Covenant of Grace, there are Three to whom divine Honours and Operations are ascribed; and such too as are peculiar to the supreme God, as indeed all divine Honours and Operations, properly speaking, are peculiar to the supreme God. Nor would there be any occasion for such an Observation as this, if there were not some, who call themselves Christians, who contrary both to natural and reveal'd Religion, contrary both to Scripture and Reason, are endeavouring to introduce into the christian Scheme the Polytheism of the Heathen and Gentile World, and frame in their vain Imaginations an idol Divinity of an inferior kind; which is a middle
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kind of Being betwixt the supreme God, and the Creature ; a Being which is inferior to the supreme God, and at the same time above the Level of created Existence, than which there cannot well enter a more ridiculous and vain Imagination into the Mind of Man ; a *Whim*, very unworthy of those, who pretend to be such Masters of Reason.

But I proceed to open the Evidence which we have from the New Testament, that there are three divine Persons, all of them Partakers of the one divine Essence ; and I shall begin with the Evidence which we have for this Doctrine in the Text, than which there is not a more express Passage, in all the divine Revelation, nor more clear and full against the *Arian* Heresy, nor their viler Spawn, the *Socinian* : on which account it has been the BUTT of their Malice these two hundred Years, and it so flatly contradicts their received Notions, that they have exerted their utmost Efforts against it, endeavouring to weaken its authentic Authority, as canonical Scripture. But because I have prov'd this in the first of my Discourses, I shall not insist upon it here, referring to my Answers to the Letters annexed, for fuller satisfaction ; only I shall briefly shew, how this Text in particular is a proof of the Trinity of Persons in the Unity of the divine Essence.

And here I think there can be nothing plainer, than that the Apostle asserts, that *there are three who bear record in Heaven*, all
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of them upon the same Level of Equality, *bearing witness*. That they are said to bear witness, evidently proves that they are Persons; and that they are three Witnesses, proves that they are three Persons; for Persons alone can witness, in a proper Sense: and therefore, if it appears, that these three, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are capable of witnessing in a proper Sense, it will evidently follow from thence, that they are three distinct Persons; because they are three distinct Witnesses bearing Record, and emitting their Testimony in a proper Sense. 'Tis true, the three Witnesses on Earth, mentioned in the 8th Verse, following my Text, are also called Witnesses; and yet it does not prove them to be three distinct Persons; and the Reason is plain, because tho' they are called Witnesses, yet it is not in a proper Sense they emit their Testimony, and they bear Record not in a proper, but a figurative Sense; and therefore they have not that title to the Character of distinct proper Persons, as the three Witnesses in Heaven have, who witness, and bear Record, not in a figurative, but in a proper Sense. Now that these three heavenly Witnesses bear Record and Witness, in a proper Sense, as Persons, I proved at large, when I was on the Explication of the Words of the Text, and therefore I need not resume what was then delivered; only for reviving your Memory, and that the Argument, I am upon, may appear to you in a clearer Light, I shall very briefly shew, that these

these three Witnesses in Heaven bore record, and did emit their Testimony, in a proper Sense.

As to the first of these Witnesses, the Father, there is no controversy about his distinct Personality, or his being a Person, capable of bearing witness in a proper Sense; and therefore I need not insist upon the Proof of that. The only controversy then, is concerning the Son, and Holy Ghost, whether or not they are capable of witnessing, and did emit their Testimony in a proper Sense, as Persons.

As to the WORD, the eternal Son of God, that he is capable of witnessing in a proper Sense, is evident from what *John* says of him; that * *All things were made by him, and that without him there was not any thing made, that was made.* Sure, he who made all things, cannot but be capable of bearing witness in a proper Sense. It is easier to bear witness than to make all things; but he not only is capable of bearing witness in a proper Sense, as a Person, but we have Instances of his actually doing so †. Jesus Christ, as God, bore witness to himself, as Mediator, when he appear'd at *Stephen's* Martyrdom, and shewed himself in sensible Majesty, standing at the right Hand of God: again he appear'd to *John* in the Isle *Patmos*; there he heard this eternal WORD, with an audible Voice declare, and give testimony with a Voice as loud as a Trumpet, that he himself was the first and the last, *Rev.* i. 17. Now; if this is not bearing witness in

* *John* i. 3. † *Acts* vii. 55, 56.

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a proper Sense, as a proper Person, there is no such thing as witnessing either in Heaven or Earth.

As to the third Person of the Trinity; the Holy Ghost, that he is capable of bearing witness in a proper Sense, as a Person, will appear from this; that *Ananias* is said to lye to him. Men do not use to lye but to Persons; and our being baptized in his Name, is a demonstration of his distinct Personality: for we cannot be baptized in the Name of a Name, but in the Name of a Person; and if he is a Person in a proper Sense, he must be capable of witnessing in a proper Sense. And therefore as other passages prove him capable of witnessing in a proper Sense; this, wherein he is called a Witness, proves him to be properly a Person. But he is not only capable of witnessing in a proper Sense, as a Person, but he has actually done so; *John* i. 32, 33. *For he bore record, and gave testimony to Jesus Christ, that he was the Son of God, by descending and remaining upon him immediately after his Baptism.* And it was by this Testimony, which the Holy Ghost bore to Christ, that *John* knew, that Jesus Christ was he who had power to baptize with a peculiar kind of Baptism, even with the Holy Ghost, ver. 33. *I knew him not, but he that sent me said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, the same is he that baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.* Again, he bore witness to the Truth of this, that Jesus was the Son of
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of God, and that his Doctrine was from Heaven, by his coming down in a visible Form upon the Apostles, the Servants of Christ, whom he employ'd to spread the knowledge of his Name. And this Testimony and witnessing of the Spirit gave a Sanction to the Apostles divine Mission; and hereby the World knew, that both their Commission, and Doctrine which they taught, were from God. Moreover, that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in a proper Sense, is plain from this; that he is expressly said to witness with our Spirits, that we are the Sons of God.

Thus now, we see, that the Son, and Holy Ghost are not only capable of witnessing in a proper Sense, as Persons; but that they have actually done so; and consequently, since the eternal Three, who bear record in Heaven, are three distinct Witnesses, witnessing in a proper Sense, they must of necessity be three distinct Persons; because Persons alone can witness in a proper Sense: so that from this Text, a Trinity of Persons in the divine Essence plainly appears.

The next Passage in the New Testament which I shall cite, and which plainly proves a Trinity of Persons in the Unity of the divine Essence, is, the baptismal Charge given by Christ to his Disciples*; where they are expressly commanded to baptize all the Profelytes to the Christian Faith, in the Name not only of the Father, but also of the Son, and of the

* Math. xxviii. 19.

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Holy Ghost ; which plainly implies, that these Three are three distinct Persons ; in regard that it is absurd, as I hinted just now, that we should be baptized in the Name of any thing, and not of a Person. So that these three must of necessity, according to this baptismal Charge, be three distinct Persons, and not three mere Names, as the *Sabellians* say. For it is ridiculous to say, that we are baptized in the Name of a Name : Nor can the Holy Ghost, according to this, be a mere Virtue, and not a proper Person ; because 'tis absurd to say, that we are baptized in the Name of a Virtue ; we can only be baptized in the Name of a Person properly so called. Moreover, as our being baptized in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, is a Proof of the Trinity of Persons in the Deity ; so also it is a Demonstration, that each of these three Persons is God, the supreme and independent God. For our Baptism in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost carries in it these three things, each of which is a Proof, that that Person, in whose Name we are baptized, is truly and properly God.

1. Our Baptism in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, carries this in it, that he, in whose Name we are baptized, is the Author of that Covenant, whereof the Rite of Baptism is the external Seal ; and that he whose Name is named in that Ordinance, alone hath a power of instituting Sacraments, as the external Seals in the Covenant. Now the Name
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of the Son, and the Holy Ghost, being used in that holy Ordinance, and that by divine Appointment, as well as the Father's, it plainly follows hence, that each of these two Persons is to be looked upon as the Author, and Institutor of the Covenant, and its Seals, as well as the Father: and consequently, if the Son, and Holy Ghost, are to be owned each of them, as the Author of the Covenant, and as having a Power to institute the Seals of the Grace of it, as they have a just Title and Claim unto, since their Name is used in the Ordinance, as well as the Father's; then it evidently follows, that they must be God equal with the Father.

For 'tis absurd, to the last degree, to conceive, that the Father should take into fellowship, and admit into partnership with himself, to share with him in this divine Glory, in being the Author of the Covenant, and in assuming a Power to institute the Seals thereof, Persons of an infinitely inferior Rank to himself; as the Son and Holy Ghost must needs be, if they are not God, equal with him, and Partakers of the same divine Essence, as he himself is. And yet this Absurdity, as gross as it is, will necessarily follow upon the supposition, that the Names of the Son, and Holy Ghost, are allowed to be used in the Ordinance of Baptism, along with the Father's; while, at the same time, these two Persons are supposed to be of a Nature inferior to him.

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2. Baptism, in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, imports, that these Persons, whose Names are used in that Ordinance, are both capable of promising, and performing the Grace and Glory promised, and contained in the Covenant, which is sealed by the Ordinance of Baptism: Now, none but the true and supreme God can either promise, or bestow these Benefits, which are contained and represented in the Covenant, which is sealed by Baptism; and therefore, since the Names of all the three Persons in the Trinity, being used in the Ordinance of Baptism, imports their promising, and performing the Benefits, sealed, and signified in that Ordinance; it follows, by a necessary Consequence, that all these three must be the true and supreme God; otherwise the using their Names in that Ordinance, would be a cheat, and a falsehood, which is most absurd and impious to imagine.

The Father, by virtue of his Name's being used in that Ordinance, promises to bestow Grace and Glory, and all the Benefits of the Covenant on all, whom he gave to Christ, to be redeemed by him. The Son, by his Name's being used in that Ordinance, engageth to perform to Believers, all that lies upon him, as the Mediator betwixt God and Man, and the Redeemer of Sinners. And the Holy Ghost, by virtue of his Name's being named in that Ordinance, engageth to apply the whole Purchase of Christ to them. Now, none of these
Persons

Persons could perform the respective Parts which lie upon them, unless they were truly God; and therefore, since the very Nature of this Ordinance of Baptism imports, and carries in it, both the promising, and in due order making good these Benefits, each of them must be the one true God.

3. By virtue of our being baptized in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, we who are baptized, are by that Rite obliged to the Worship and Obedience of those Persons, in whose Name we are baptized; this is of the very nature of that Ordinance; and consequently, each of these Persons must be truly God, and the supreme God; otherwise we should be bound to the Worship and Obedience of that, which is not God: which is a most glaring Absurdity, and would be to turn the Christian Religion to a Scheme of Idolatry.

Thus we see, that that baptismal Charge given to the Apostles, and their Successors in Office, *To baptize in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, proves, that each of these sacred Three are divine Persons; and must of necessity be so, according to the very Nature and Genius of the Ordinance of Baptism; and to deny the proper Deity of any of these Persons, is an effectual Renunciation of our Baptism, and a renouncing all claim to the performance of that part of the Covenant, executed by the Person, whose Deity we deny. By denying the Deity of the Son, we thereby

renounce that part of the Covenant, which he in Baptism engages to execute; and by denying the Deity of the Holy Ghost, we renounce all interest in the application of the Benefits of the Covenant, which is made by that Person.

Let me therefore, in the Bowels of our Lord Jesus Christ, exhort all who are guilty in this matter, to bethink themselves what they are doing; let them seriously ponder, how much this Error affects their Salvation, and obstructs the participation of those Benefits conferred and bestowed by those Persons, whose Deity they deny. Let them *kiss the Son, lest he be angry with them*, for denying the Lord, by whom they profess to be bought. Let them not grieve the Spirit, by whom alone they can be sealed to the day of Redemption.

Another Passage we have in the New Testament, where the Trinity of Persons is mentioned all together, and at one time, is, where God the Son, in the character of Mediator, says, * *I will pray the Father, and he shall send you another Comforter*. Now there can be nothing more clear, than that in this Text, the distinct Personality of the three Persons of the Trinity is proved; there the Son, as a distinct Person from the Father, in the character of Mediator, and Intercessor for his People, is represented as praying to him; which is the Action of a Person, not a Quality,

* JOHN xiv. 16.

ty, Relation, or Property, as some say that the Son is, and not a proper Person; for neither a Quality, nor Relation, can, in any propriety of speech, be said to pray, or interceed: besides, the personal Pronoun, *I*, being made use of, *I will pray the Father*, puts it beyond all doubt, that he is in a proper sense a Person. Moreover, the distinct Personality of the Holy Ghost is also, to a demonstration, clear from this Text; he is called, *another Comforter*: which could not be said of him, if he was not a proper Person, but a mere Virtue, as some maintain. The word translated, *another*, is a relative Term in the original Language of the New Testament, as well as in our own; and has a necessary reference to a Person, as is plain to any, who considers the common use of Language. This is so very evident, that the Holy Ghost is a distinct Person, that some of the *Socinians* have been forced to drop this Tenet; and have owned him a distinct Person; but then they allow him to be no more, than the chief of the created Spirits, and Prince of the Angels, whom God sends on his Errands, as his chief Minister: but the contrary of this I have proved just now, both from his being one of the three Witnesses in Heaven, and also from our being baptized in his Name; both which prove his proper and supreme Deity. And I shall farther, God willing, confirm it, when I come more directly to prove the proper Deity of those Persons; and shall say no more of it now, being
only

only upon the distinct Personality of the Persons of the Trinity. In fine, the Personality of the Holy Ghost is plain from this Text, in regard that he is called a Comforter; which is a personal Character, and cannot be attributed or affirmed of any thing properly, which is not a Person.

Another Passage, where we have a Trinity of Persons in the divine Essence mentioned, is the Apostle's Benediction *, where he addresseth all the three Persons of the Trinity, as the supreme Object of Religious Adoration; and begs from them distinctly those peculiar Benefits, which these distinct Persons, according to the different Parts which they act in the method of Salvation, do bestow upon Believers; says he, *The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God, and the Communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all, Amen.* Where all the three are, by the Apostle, in that religious Piece of Worship, acknowledged as the supreme God, by applying to them for, and owning them as the Authors of those saving Blessings; which he prays for in behalf of these *Corinthians*. Much to the same purpose is that Prayer of the Apostle *John* †, where we have the several Persons of the Trinity mentioned distinctly; says he, *Grace be unto you, and Peace from him which is, and which was, and which is to come.* Which, tho' it may be said of any of the other Persons of the Trinity, yet here it must be understood of the first Person of the Trinity,

* 2 Cor. xiii. 14.

† Rev. i. 4.

Trinity, God the Father ; not only because the Father is described so in the Book of *Exodus*, *ch. iii. v. 14.* as the self-existent Being, where he calls himself, *I am, that I am* ; but also, because the other two Persons are distinctly mentioned afterwards, by other Epithets. Farther the Apostle prays, *and from the seven Spirits* ; Grace be *from the seven Spirits, which are before the Throne* ; by which we must understand the third Person of the sacred Trinity, the Holy Ghost, who is so called, on account of the multiplicity of his Gifts, by an Allusion to the seven Churches of *Asia*. Moreover, he prays, *and from Jesus Christ, the faithful Witness* ; Grace be *from Jesus Christ the faithful Witness*. So that we see, all the Persons of the Trinity are equally owned by the Apostle, as the Source of Grace ; and consequently, they have an equal Title to supreme Deity, and equal Claim to be the Object of Religious Worship.

But besides those Passages where all the divine Persons are mentioned together, which necessarily imply their distinct Personality, as three Persons, there are many other Passages in the New Testament, that speak particularly of the Son, and Holy Ghost, as distinct Persons, as Persons both distinct from one another, and also from the Father : As for instance, all those places prove the distinct Personality of the Son, where he is said to be sent ; where he is described to be a Creator, a Mediator, a Redeemer, a Surety, a Prophet, a Priest, or

a King; these are all Characters which infer his distinct and proper Personality; and the Works which he performs in consequence of his being vested with these Characters, and by virtue of his standing in these relations, are such as are peculiar to a Person, and many of them such as are peculiar to his own Person, and such as are not performed either by the Father, or Holy Ghost; and such as are infinitely above the reach of any Creature to perform. From all which it is abundantly plain, that the Son is a distinct Person; and that he is a divine Person, properly so called, has been partly proved already, and shall be further proved, when we come to prove more particularly the proper Deity of the Son and Holy Ghost.

And so also with respect to the Holy Ghost, all those Passages of Scripture where personal Characters are ascribed to him, and Works are said to be performed by him, a constant Series of Actions, which can only be performed by one who is a Person in a proper sense; I say, all these prove him to be a proper and distinct Person from the Father and Son, not only against the *Sabellians*, but also against the *Socinians* and *Arians*, who say, that he is no more than the Power and Virtue of the Father, whom alone they allow to be God: as for instance, when he is called a Sanctifier, a Comforter, a Reprover, a Witness; these are such personal Characters, that they cannot but denominate that to which they are attributed, and of which

which they are affirmed, to be a proper Person. And the Works which the Holy Ghost performs, in consequence of his being vested with such Characters, are such as are peculiar to a Person, and can be performed by none but one who is a Person in a proper sense; for it is said of him *, that *when He, to wit, the Comforter, is come, he will convince the World of Sin, of Righteousness, and of Judgment; and that he will guide his People into all Truths, and shew them things to come, and teach them all things.* The Holy Ghost is said to be a Witness, in the same proper sense, as a Person, as the Apostles were †; *We are his Witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.* To appoint and constitute any to execute an Office, is doubtless a personal Character, and yet this is applied to the Holy Ghost, and affirmed of him ‖, *The Apostles being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed;* and ‡ he is said to have made them. *Overseers over the Church and Flock of God.*

But here it may be objected against the distinct Personality of the Son and Holy Ghost, That although they may be spoken of in Scripture as Persons, and personal Characters applied to them; yet that does not prove that they are Persons in a proper sense: for personal Characters are applied to inanimate things in Scripture, in an improper and figurative sense **; *Canst thou bring forth Mazaroth in his season,*
or

* John xvi. 8. † Acts v. 32. ‖ Acts xiii. 4. ‡ Acts xx. 28.

** Job xxxviii. 28.

or canst thou guide Arcturus with his Sons? where the Stars of Heaven are spoken of in a personal Character. The like also is said of brute Creatures, particularly the Horse is spoken of in a personal Character ||, *He goeth on to meet the armed Man, he mocketh at Fear, neither believeth he that it is the Sound of the Trumpet.* Sometimes also the Faculties of the Soul of Man have personal Characters ascribed to them; thus the Conscience is said to *bear witness*. But all this is but in an improper sense; and why may we not also suppose, that when personal Characters are ascribed to the Son and Holy Ghost, they may be interpreted in an improper sense with respect to them also?

To which I answer, That the Scriptures are delivered in such a manner of Style, that it is very easy to understand when a thing is taken in a proper, and when in a figurative sense. Now when the Scripture ascribes personal Characters to things which are not properly Persons, it is done in such a manner, and the Speech is clothed with such Circumstances, as a Person who has not a mind to be imposed on, cannot but understand it; as, on the other hand, when the Scripture ascribes personal Characters to Persons in a proper sense, it is done in such a manner, and the Speech is clothed with such Circumstances, that it is easy to discern, that the personal Character is to be understood in a proper, and not in a figurative sense: As for instance, when personal Cha-

Characters are ascribed to things animate or inanimate, which are not rational, 'tis easily known that it must not be understood in a proper, but figurative sense; because the Subject is not capable of a personal Action, and generally such a figurative way of speaking is in poetical Books, and delivered in a Style very different from that by which naked Truth is delivered, without a Metaphor, or any peculiar Elegancy of Style, or beautiful Turn of Expression.

On the other hand, we may know when personal Characters are applied in a proper, and not metaphorical sense; when the Subject spoken of, and to which such a Character is applied, is capable of a personal Action; and when there is such a Series of Actions ascribed to the Person, as does not accord with, and suit a Metaphor; and that too delivered in a plain Style, without those Embellishments of rhetorical and beautiful Modes of speaking, which the Spirit of God chooses not to make use of, when he delivers the plain necessary Truths, wherein our Salvation is immediately concerned. 'Tis true, there are in the Scriptures many Metaphors, and figurative Modes of speech, but these are in the poetical Books, where that Style is used; but when the Lord delivers the necessary Truths of the Gospel, essentially necessary to our Salvation, he delivers himself in a plain and simple Style, so that the Ignorant and Unlearned, who are not versed in the flights of Rhetoric and Criticism, may easily understand:

stand: nor indeed would it be consistent with the Perfections of the Deity, in speaking of the Son, and Holy Ghost, to deliver himself in a point of that importance, which settles the Object of religious Worship, in such a manner as it could not be easily known whether he spoke in a proper, or metaphorical sense; this would be to render the Scripture-Revelation intirely useles. Moreover, let it be here observed, that these personal Characters ascribed to the Son and Holy Ghost, when they are applied to Men and Angels, are allowed not to be metaphorical, for that very reason, that these are Subjects capable of having Personality attributed to them: and why they should be reckoned metaphorical, when applied to the Son and Holy Ghost, is hard to account for; since, although these two are not distinct Beings, yet each of them has a divine Understanding, and Will; and therefore capable of having Personality attributed to them, and that a distinct Personality too, as distinct as the several personal Characters, attributed to them, are distinct, by which they are described.

In fine, there is no Argument can be advanced, to prove that these personal Characters, when attributed and applied to the Son and Holy Ghost, are to be taken in a metaphorical sense, but what will equally prove that any personal Character attributed to the Father, may be taken in that sense also. And so, by endeavouring to prove that there are not three distinct

Persons in the Deity, they unluckily make use of Arguments, which so far over-do, that if they have any force in them, they prove that there are no Persons in the Deity at all : and by their absurd way of reasoning, the Father himself is not a Person ; for according to them, when a personal Character is ascribed to him, it may be taken in a metaphorical sense. But these are such Absurdities which are necessary Consequents of their Principles, that it is plain the Principles themselves from whence they flow, must needs be absurd. Thus I have proved, from the Scriptures both of the Old and New Testament, that there are three Persons in the divine Essence, three to whom Deity is ascribed, who are vested with distinct personal Characters, of each of whom something may be affirmed, which cannot be affirmed of the rest ; which both proves their proper Personality, and also that it is distinct. And so I have explained and proved that *there are three who bear record in Heaven* ; but though they be three, three Persons in a proper sense, in opposition to three Names, yet they are but one as to their Essence, and one in all their essential Perfections, though distinguished as to their Persons. And this is the next thing in the words, which I am to shew, that these three who bear record in Heaven, are yet one in their Nature, one in their Essence.



S E R M O N VI.

I JOHN 5. 7.

*For there are three that bear record
in Heaven, the Father, the Word,
and the Holy Ghost : and these three
are one.*

HAVING proved both from the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, that there are three to whom the incommunicable Name *Jehovah*, and the Attributes and Perfections of the supreme God are applied; three, who, according to the divine Revelation, are possessed of supreme Deity: the next thing in the words is to shew, that these three are one, one numerically in their Nature and Essence, and not one in a similar or like Nature. For 'tis a plain Absurdity in Philosophy, and contrary to the Principles of natural Reason, to say that there are three possessed of a like and similar divine Essence, which is not one in Number; it would be plainly to make three distinct

distinct Gods, each of which was like the other, but not the same infinite Being and Substance. That there is but one God, one infinitely perfect Being, and simple, undivided, self-existent Substance, is plain both from the Principles of natural and revealed Religion; this the *Unitarians* and *Trinitarians* are agreed in; and though it be no matter of Controversy betwixt them, yet because it is a Truth absolutely necessary to be believed, and the Foundation of all manner of Religion, whether natural or revealed, I shall spend some little time in the proof of it, both from the Principles of natural Reason, and also from the infallible Discoveries of divine supernatural Revelation. And,

I. That there can be but one God, is clear from the Principles of natural Reason; for the very Idea and Notion which Reason suggests to us of the Deity, is, that he is the Author and Cause of all things; and if it was not for the Effects which flow from the Power and Wisdom of the Deity, discoverable by our rational Faculties, we could have no notion of a Deity at all. Since then the very notion of a Deity, includes in it that he is the Author of all things; if every other thing then, which has Existence, must be a Creature, there is nothing, no Being left to be Creator but one; and consequently the Creator, the Author of all things, must of necessity be one, for all other Beings are Creatures, the Effects of this one Being's Power.

Moreover, another thing included in the essential Notion and Idea of God, is, That he is a Being of infinite and unlimited Perfections. Now this also proves the Unity of the divine Essence, and that there can be but one God; for if it be an essential and necessary Ingredient in the very Nature and Notion of the Deity, that he is a Being of infinite, unlimited Perfection, then he must for that very reason be one, and there cannot possibly be more: for if there be supposed to be more, these others, who are supposed to be, would limit and set bounds to his Perfections, so that he would not have all Perfections; because these others, that are absurdly supposed to be, must by that Supposition have Perfections peculiar to themselves; and if they have Perfections peculiar to themselves, they must have Perfections which are not his; and consequently his Perfections in that case would not be infinite, but limited. So we see that the very natural Notion of the Deity, that he is a Being of infinite unlimited Perfection, necessarily infers and concludes his being one; one infinite, unlimited, perfect Essence. This will more clearly appear, if we bring the matter down to a particular instance, in some one of the divine Perfections: and that which we shall pitch upon, is the divine Omnipotence. Now 'tis plain in the nature of things, that it is impossible that there should be two distinct Essences both omnipotent; for it is a Contradiction to say, that two Beings can each of them be the
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sole Cause of the same Effect; and if two cannot be each of them the sole Cause of the same Effect, that necessarily runs up to one Being, who alone can be the Author of all things; which is just the same in other words, that there is but One, to wit, one Being who can be Omnipotent; and consequently that there is but one Being, or Essence, which can be God.

For let it be supposed that the Effects produced were shared amongst a Plurality, so that each should have their own peculiar Effects, whereof they were Authors; these very Effects, which are supposed to belong to others, would limit and set bounds to the Power of those, to whom they did not belong, as not being their Effects, produced by their power. So that a Plurality of divine Beings is utterly inconsistent with the divine Essence being omnipotent. And if there be any Being which is omnipotent, as the supreme Being, according to the natural Notion and Idea which we have of him, must needs be; then for that very reason, that he is omnipotent, he can be but one, one in Being and Essence, numerically one in Substance.

The Unity of the divine Essence, and that there is, and can be but one God, will farther appear from those Absurdities, which are consequent upon the supposal of more, and that Irregularity and Confusion which would rise upon the Supposition, that there were more than one divine Essence. The first and most necessary Ingredient, which enters into the

natural Notion which we have of the Deity is, that he is the Creator of all things; and that he is an infinitely wise Being, and did create all things for some valuable End, worthy of exerting the Efficacy of his almighty Power, in giving things their Existence. Now this ultimate End could be nothing else than himself, the Illustration of his own Glory and Perfections. The Good and Happiness of the Creature might be an inferior and subordinate End of his creating Things; but the ultimate End could not be any thing short of himself, in consistence with his infinite Perfections; particularly his Wisdom and Sovereignty would not permit him to create Things, with any other ultimate View, than the Illustration of his own Perfections, and the Glory of his own Name. And to have any inferior End, any End of less importance, as his chief and ultimate End in that divine Work of creating, would be both to infringe upon the Rules of infinite Wisdom, which always proposes the highest and best End which can be gained by means which are made use of in the execution of any Design. And also it would be inconsistent with that Sovereignty which is essential to the true Notion of the Creator God, to suppose that he should resign his Title to that Glory, which is a just Tribute due to him from things created; to wit, that he should not be the ultimate End himself, for which they are made. Since then it is plain that Creation involves in it an Obligation to ac-
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knowledge the Creator, as the last End of all things; and since there can be but one divine Essence, Creator of all things, as I have proved before; so there can be but one ultimate End of all things: And if there can be but one ultimate End of all things, there can be but one God. For to suppose any other God besides him, who is not the ultimate End of all things, is to suppose a Being to be God, who has not those things which are necessary and essential to the Nature of the Deity, whereof this is one, to be the ultimate End of all things. For that Being, who is not the ultimate End of all things, cannot possibly be God: and therefore since there can be but one ultimate End of all things, there cannot possibly be any other God but one. For whatever Gods more are supposed to be, who are not the ultimate End of all things, these cannot be truly Gods; because they want that Glory, which is essential to the Deity, to wit, being the ultimate End, because the original Cause of all things.

Moreover, from hence it follows, that since there can be but one Author of all things, one Being and Essence, who is the Author of all things, and one, who is the ultimate End of all things; from thence, I say, it plainly follows, that there is but one divine Nature and Essence, who is to be worshipped and glorified as such; one Being who is to be owned, as the supreme Object of all religious Adoration and divine Service; one Being and Essence, whom we are to look upon, as the chief Good and the

Center of our Happiness, and sole Portion ; and who is to be served and loved with all the Heart, Soul, Mind and Strength ; and consequently but one God. This is what natural Reason teaches concerning the Essence of the Deity, that it cannot possibly be more than one in number : yet that does not prove, but in that divine Essence there may, notwithstanding the absolute Unity of it, for all that be three distinct Persons, each of which is this very infinite incomprehensible Essence. But here the Principles of natural Philosophy forsake us ; here they are at a loss, and cannot light us our way : and tho' they cannot prove, but that notwithstanding the Essence of the Deity is but one, yet for all that, there may be three Persons possessed of this one divine Essence : I say, as the Principles of Reason cannot prove but it may be so ; so neither can they prove, that it is actually so ; and therefore what knowledge we have of this, must be drawn intirely from supernatural Revelation.

But as to the Unity of the divine Essence, this is abundantly plain from the known Principles of natural Reason ; and notwithstanding the Heathens owned and worshipped a Plurality of Gods, and that not one particular Sect of them only, but the practice of Idolatry universally obtain'd, where supernatural Revelation was not known : yet in the very darkest times of Idolatry, there were not wanting Philosophers, who overcame the Prejudices of Education, and in spite of prevailing Custom,

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asserted the Unity of the Deity : and tho' in their practice they conformed to the Customs of the Countries where they lived, and gave way to prevailing Idolatry, and did themselves pay a lower kind of Worship to those who were esteemed Deities by the unthinking Multitude ; yet in opinion they maintained the Unity of the Godhead, and asserted one God, superior to all others, whom they called the Father of Gods and Men. And it is not improbable, but that Altar which was erected at *Athens* to the UNKNOWN GOD, whereof the Apostle *Paul* makes mention in the 27th Chap. of *Aëts*, 23d ver. was dedicated to this supreme God ; because the Apostle in that same Verse says, *Whom ye therefore ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.* That many of the wiser Heathens did own a supreme God, who was infinite in all Perfections, and was possessed of incommunicable Excellencies, is very plain from many of their Writings ; such as those of *Porphyry*, *Platinus*, *Plutarch*, *Epiëctetus*, *Seneca*, *Plato*, and others ; and particularly *Plato*, in his 13th Epistle to *Dionysius* has these express Words, That when he wrote gravely, and in a serious manner, he begun his Epistle always with the mentioning of one God ; but when he wrote in jest, he mentioned other Gods ; and that this was the Mark by which he might be understood, whether he was serious or not. And *Valerius Soranus* has Verses to this purpose, as they may be seen in *Augustine's* Book *de Civitate Dei*, Book vii. Chap. 9. *Jupiter Omnipotent,*

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potent, the King of Kings, himself God, and the Father of Gods, and only God. Nay, *Socrates* was so strenuous an Asserter of the Unity of the Deity, that he was a Martyr for that Cause; for he fell under the displeasure of the *Athenians* to such a degree for opposing their *Polytheism*, that it cost him his life: but tho' he asserted the Unity of the Godhead, yet he did not refuse to pay some religious Honour to their Heathen Deities, in compliance with the established Custom of the Country; but it was of an inferior degree, not much unlike to that, which at this day is paid to Angels and departed Saints, by some Christians.

Yet tho' they ascribed a kind of Divinity to those inferior Deities, they were, at least the wiser sort of them, far from putting them on a level with omnipotent *Jove*; for they owned they were but Men, who formerly had lived upon this Earth; and gave an account of their Life, their Birth, their Death, and their Actions, while here on earth; and a particular Account of these Actions, especially those whereby they procured that Honour, to which they supposed them to be advanced after their Death; how some of them atchieved it, as a reward of their Virtue, in commemoration of the Good and Benefit they had done Mankind, while they were in Life. Some were raised to that Honour, for their being the Inventors of useful Arts: others on account of their Success in Wars against the Enemies of the State. Yet they always put a difference, at least the wiser

wiser sort, betwixt those inferior Deities, and the supreme Being, the Author of all things; whose Unity they plainly asserted, and that from the Principles of the Light of Nature: which is a sufficient Proof, that the Unity of the divine Essence is discernible by the discoveries of mere Reason; setting aside the clearer Light of supernatural Revelation.

II. As this Truth may be known by the Light of Nature, that there is but one only living and true God, one Godhead, and divine Essence; so it is also very clearly and expressly revealed in Scripture in many places both of the Old and New Testament: * *Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord*; and in that same Book, † *See now, that I, even I am he, and there is no God with me; I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal, neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand.* And in the 4th Chap. 35th ver. *Unto thee it was shewed, that thou mightest know, that the Lord he is God, there is none else besides him.* And Psal. lxxxvi. 10. *Thou art Great, and dost wonderful things; Thou art God alone.* ‡ *Thus saith the Lord, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the Lord of Hosts, I am the First, and I am the Last, and besides me there is no God.* And Chap. xlv. 5. *I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God besides me.* Chap. xlv. 8. *Have not I told thee from that time? ye are even my Witnesses; is there a God besides me? yea, there is*

* Deut. vi. 4. † Chap. xxxii. 29. ‡ Isai. xlv. 6.

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is no God, I know not any. Chap. xlvii. 9. *Remember the former things of old, for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me.*

The same Doctrine of the Unity of the divine Essence is also plainly taught in the New Testament, *Mark* xii. 31. There our Saviour referring to *Deut.* vi. 4. calls the acknowledg-ment of the Unity of the Deity, the first of all the Commandments; and Jesus answered him, *The first of all the Commandments is, Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord.* And when the Scribe, with whom he is there dis-courfing, said, ver. 32. *There is but one God, and none other but he;* he approved of his Speech, and said, that he was not far from the Kingdom of God. The same also the Apostle Paul teacheth; * *As concerning therefore the eating of those things, that are offered in Sacri-fice to Idols, we know, that an Idol is nothing in the World, and that there is none other God but one; for tho' there be that are called Gods, whether in Heaven or in Earth; as there be Gods many, and Lords many; but to us there is but one God.* And, † *There is one God, and one Mediator betwixt God and Man, the Man Christ Jesus.* ‡ *One Lord, one Faith, one Bap-tism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*

Thus we see, that according to the Princi-ples of the Light of Nature, and according to exprefs divine Revelation, the divine Nature,
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* 1 Cor. viii. 4. † 1 Tim. ii. 5. ‡ Ephes. iv. 5, 6.

Essence and Substance is but one ; and therefore, since the incommunicable Name of the supreme God, *Jehovah*, and the Works, and Actions peculiar to the supreme Deity, are applied to, and affirmed of these Three, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, these three must be this one supreme God : otherways there must be three Gods, which is contrary both to Scripture and Reason. These three Witnesses who bear record in Heaven, all on the same level of Equality, are this one supreme God. According to the Text, there are three who bear record in Heaven, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and THESE THREE ARE ONE. That the incommunicable Name *Jehovah*, and the Works, which none else can perform, but the self-existent, independent and supreme God, are affirmed of, and applied to both the Son and the Holy Ghost, I have sufficiently proved in a former Discourse ; when I was upon the Explication of these Words in general, *There are Three that bear record in Heaven* : and it shall be more particularly evinced, when I come to a particular Proof of the proper and supreme Deity of these two Persons ; therefore I say no more of it here, but refer you to what was then delivered. The part of the Words, that I am at present upon, being THESE THREE ARE ONE. And indeed the Unity of the Essence of these three Persons appears very plainly to be One in number ; since, as I shewed on the last occasion, that the Name, Properties, and peculiar Actions of the

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the supreme Deity are ascribed to each of them in the Scriptures both of the Old and New Testament; otherwise this palpable and glaring Absurdity would follow, that the essential Properties of the divine Nature, and the Essence itself, might be separated, and a Being might have all the divine Properties, and be capable of performing divine Actions, and at the same time not be partaker of the divine Essence; than which nothing can be more extravagant: for it is a direct Contradiction, and is as much as to say, that a Being may be God, and yet not God at the same time. From all which it plainly follows, that if each, and all of these three Persons be truly God, they must of necessity be the one and supreme God; for there is none else: the divine Being has himself declared that he knows none else; and it is strange if the *Arians* should be able to find out another.

But here it is pretended, that this Doctrine of the Trinity in Unity, and an Unity of Essence in a Trinity of Persons, is absurd, and in it self a Contradiction; therefore I shall, for removing this Pretence, state the true Notion of a Contradiction, and enquire how far it is to be found in the present Case; whether the Contradiction lies here in the Absurdity of the Thing, or in the Imagination and Fancy of the *Arians* only. Now, a Contradiction is to deny and affirm the self-same thing, in the self-same sense; to affirm that both is, and is not, at the same time: and wherever there is a Con-

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Contradiction, it may be ultimately resolved to that Absurdity at last, that it is, and is not; for here lies the very Spirit and Essence of a Contradiction. As for instance, to say, that three Persons are one Person, and no more; that one God can, at the same time, be three Gods: To assert, I say, this, is to affirm a direct Contradiction; or to assert any thing, which, by a necessary Consequence, may be at length resolved to any of these, is also a Contradiction. But this, we contend, is by no means the present Case; we neither assert, that these three Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, are but one Person; nor that the one Godhead, subsisting in these three Persons, are three Gods; nor do we assert any thing, that by a just and necessary Consequence can be reduced, and ultimately resolved to any of these absurd Contradictions. What we assert, is this, That the three Persons, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are but one God; not that they are one Person, which alone is the Contradiction, because that is both to affirm and deny the same thing in the same Sense. Moreover, what we assert is, That the one undivided Essence subsists in three Persons, not in three divided Essences, which alone makes the Contradiction, if it was asserted; but that is not affirmed by us: and therefore the Charge of Contradiction does not fall upon our Principles, in what we affirm concerning the Doctrine of the Trinity.

But it may be farther urged, That though we do not say, that three Persons are but
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one Person, nor that the one undivided Essence is, or subsists in three divided Essences; yet we say that which is equivalent to it, and that which may as much be resolved to a Contradiction, as any of these. In answer to which we reply, That it is absolutely false, to say, that three Persons are one God, or that one undivided Godhead subsists in three Persons, can be reduced to any of the forementioned Contradictions by any just Inference from these Propositions; nor is it possible to resolve them into any of these Absurdities. 'Tis true, according to the Notion which some entertain of the word Person, and which is the Notion that all the *Arians* understand it in, it does infer a Contradiction, that there can be three distinct Persons, and at the same time not three distinct Beings; for they understand the word Person in the same Sense, when it is applied to the Persons of the Trinity, as they understand it, when it is applied to finite Beings. Now when it is applied to finite Beings, a distinct Person always implies a distinct Being; and in that Sense, according as the Persons are multiplied, so in the same proportion are the distinct Beings multiplied. And indeed to go upon such a Supposition as that, and to apply the word Person to the divine Being in that Sense, to wit, in such a Sense, as that the Beings are multiplied, according to the number of the Persons; to assert three Persons in that Sense, and yet but one God, or one divine Being, most certainly would be

a very palpable Contradiction. But this is the Mistake and Error of the *Arians* upon this head; they understand the word Person, when applied to the Deity, in the very same Sense, as when applied to finite Beings; even in such a Sense as to import a Multiplication of the Beings and Essences, according as the Persons are multiplied: whereas, according to the true Notion of the word Person, when it is applied to the Deity, and according to the Sense that those, called the Orthodox, take it in, when they say there are three Persons in the Godhead, the word Person does by no means carry in it such an Idea, as if the Essences were multiplied according to the Plurality of Persons; for according to them the one divine infinite Essence is but one and the same, subsisting after a different manner in all the three Persons; which different manner of subsisting of the one divine Essence in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, is the true Foundation of that Distinction that there is among these Persons. And it is not any Variation of the Essence, or Difference in the Substance, or Nature of the Father, or of the Son, or of the Holy Ghost, that is the Foundation of their distinct Personality; for that is the same in them all, without any variation; that affects their Nature or Essence, which, I say, is one in them all; but the only Foundation of their distinct Personality is the Manner in which each of these Persons are possess'd of the same divine Essence. The different Manner that the Fa-

ther is possess'd of the divine Essence from the Son and Holy Ghost, is the Foundation of that Distinction which there is in his Person, whereby it differs from the Person of the Son and Holy Ghost. Again, the peculiar Manner that the Son possesses the supreme divine Essence, is the Foundation of the Distinction of his Person from that of the Father and Holy Ghost: And so of the Holy Ghost, the Manner of the Godhead's subsisting in him, being different from that by which it subsists in the Father and the Son, is the reason of that Difference which is betwixt his Person and that of the Father and the Son. So that the reason of the Difference and Distinction there is betwixt each of these Persons is drawn intirely from the different Manner, that the one and the same Godhead subsists in each of them, and not from any difference in the Godhead itself; which is the same in all of them, only each of them possess it in a different and distinct Manner.

But if it be further objected, that it is impossible to conceive how the one divine Essence can so subsist in a different manner in the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, so as to denominate and constitute them different Persons from each other: I readily grant that it is so. It is indeed impossible for any finite Creature to conceive that different Manner in which the one divine Essence subsists in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, whereby they become three distinct Persons; but then this

is no Argument against the Truth of it, that it is so; unless we shall suppose that there is no Property, Perfection, or Excellency in the infinite Essence of the Deity, but what we are able perfectly to conceive and comprehend, which is an Absurdity, which is contrary to the plainest Dictates of Reason. 'Tis enough for us, that we have sufficient Evidence that the Deity is One in Essence, and that there are Three to whom the divine Attributes and Perfections are ascribed; if this be true, as we have proved that it is, then it follows to a Demonstration, that there are three possessed of the divine Essence, tho' we are at a loss to be able to conceive the Manner how they are possessed of it, and to comprehend the different manner in which the Deity subsists in each of these three Persons: but that it does subsist in each of them, so as to constitute them distinct Persons, that we know most certainly; both because divine Attributes and Operations are ascribed to each of them in Scripture, which proves them possessed of the divine Essence; and also, because some things are asserted and affirmed of each of these Persons, which cannot in truth be affirmed of the rest: which plainly proves that they are distinct Persons, and that the Distinction of their Persons is not nominal, but real.

And here I would admonish those of the *Arian* and *Anti-trinitarian* way, of the high presumptuous Arrogance they are guilty of, in imputing a Contradiction to that which is so

plain a divine Revelation; and that only upon the score of their not being able to comprehend it. Here they betray their Ignorance of the Nature of a Contradiction; for before that any Man can with any reason pronounce a thing a Contradiction, he must know the Nature of that thing, whereof the supposed Contradiction is affirmed: it is not enough that he says, he cannot see how this, or the other thing can agree, and is consistent with the Nature of the thing; for if he be ignorant of the Nature of the thing, for any thing he knows it may be consistent with it: so that before any Man can with any shadow of Reason pronounce a thing a Contradiction, he must have a perfect Knowledge of the Nature of that Thing, to which any Property is affirmed to belong; or at least he must have the Knowledge of it so far, as to know that it hath some Property which is inconsistent with that which is affirmed of it. But it is by no means enough to justify a Man in calling a thing a Contradiction, when he can only say, that he cannot conceive or comprehend how it can be consistent and agree with the Nature of the thing; he must be able to say more than that; he must be able to say, that he sees and knows some Property or Quality in the Nature of the thing, with which that which is affirmed of it is inconsistent; which is a great deal more than only to be able to say, that he cannot comprehend and conceive how it can be consistent with the Nature of the thing: for these are two things

things very widely different, to be able to see and discern, that what is affirmed of a thing is inconsistent with its Nature, and when a Person can only say that he does not see how it is consistent with it; for it may be consistent with the Nature of the thing, whether the Person sees it or not, whether he be able to comprehend it or not. And if a Person meets with one who asserts, that what is affirmed of a thing is consistent with its Nature, whose Knowledge he can depend on that it is sufficient to discern it, and whose Faithfulness he can rely upon that it will not deceive him; he has reason to believe that what is affirmed of a thing is consistent with its Nature, altho' he himself has not a faculty to be able to discern or comprehend how it is consistent with the Nature of the thing; and if the Person, on whose Credit he depends, be both of infinite Knowledge and infallible Veracity, he may be as infallibly certain of it, on his Testimony, that what is affirmed of the thing is consistent with its Nature, altho' he cannot comprehend how it is so, as if he himself had a faculty to discern and comprehend the Agreement of what is asserted and affirmed of the thing with its Nature, and did himself see its Consistency with all its essential Properties. For that Evidence which is founded upon the infallible Testimony of one, who can neither be deceived himself, nor is capable of deceiving others, gives the Mind as satisfactory a Certainty, and as infallible an Assurance of the Truth of a thing,

as when the Person himself sees the Agreement and Consistency of what is affirmed of a thing, with the Nature of the thing itself, and its essential Properties. And in many cases, especially where the Subject, about which any thing is affirmed, is intricate and hard to be understood; the Mind finds more satisfaction in relying on the Testimony of one, who is known to be thoroughly acquainted with the Subject, and whose Veracity is equally certain, than he has by his own Intuition and scientific Knowledge, and Introspection into the Nature of the thing itself. Now let us bring home this to the Case in hand, and apply it to the pretended Contradiction our Adversaries say, there is in asserting a Trinity of Persons in the Unity of the divine Essence: their way of reasoning runs thus, We cannot conceive and comprehend, how the one undivided Essence of the Deity can subsist after three different ways in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; so as to constitute and denominate them three distinct Persons: therefore we hold it a Contradiction to affirm, that it is so. Which amounts to nothing short of this, that whatever they cannot conceive and comprehend how it is, is a Contradiction in the thing it self; which is no less than arrogating Omniscience to themselves. For none but the omniscient God himself can say, that he conceives and comprehends every thing, that does not involve a Contradiction in the nature of the thing. Indeed, if they could
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prove, that the subsisting of the divine Essence in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, so as to constitute them three distinct Persons, such as might answer to the different Characters ascribed to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost by the *Trinitarian* Scheme; I say, if they could prove, that this were contrary to any known Attribute and Perfection of the Deity, then they might with reason impute a Contradiction to this Doctrine. But since they cannot do that, and yet say, that the subsisting of the divine Essence in such a distinct and different manner in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as is sufficient to lay a foundation for their distinct Personality, is a Contradiction, merely because they cannot conceive and comprehend how it can do so; this is to make their own Conception and Comprehension the Standard and Measure of the Truth of things: So that nothing can be affirmed of any thing in Truth and without a Contradiction, unless they are capable of discerning and comprehending its agreement with the nature of the thing. It is not enough, that an omniscient and faithful God sees, how it agrees with the nature of the thing, and tells them that it does so: unless they themselves see it, and conceive the Manner of it, it must be pronounced a Contradiction.

If the Doctrine of the Trinity had any appearance of being inconsistent with any of the divine Perfections, it would be with that of the Unity of the Deity; the Unity of the Deity

is the only known Perfection and Attribute, which does but seem to be inconsistent with this Doctrine; but that its Inconsistency with it is but seeming, and not real, will most evidently appear from this, That the distinct Personality does not flow from any Distinction of the Essence of the Deity: which is the same, without any Division, in all the three Persons; but it is only founded, as I hinted above, on the distinct ways and manner, that the one undivided Essence subsists in these three Persons, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: so that notwithstanding the Distinction of the Persons, the Unity of the Essence is maintained. If the divine Essence, which subsists in the Son, were different from that which subsists in the Father, or Holy Ghost; in that Case, the Plurality, or Trinity of Persons, would be inconsistent with the Unity of the Essence: but since the Distinction of the Persons flows from the different Manner of the Subsistence of the divine Essence in the three Persons, and not from any Distinction or Division of the Essence it self, which is one and the same in all the three Persons; it follows then to a demonstration, that the Plurality or Trinity of the Persons is not at all inconsistent with the Unity of the divine Essence. To make an Inconsistency here, would be to say, that the divine Essence subsists in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, so as that they are three Persons, and yet but one Person; that is a Contradiction. But then that is not what we affirm; what we affirm is, that

that these three Persons are one Substance, or Essence, which is far from being a Contradiction, however hard it may be to be conceived, as to the Manner of it how it can be: but the Difficulty of conceiving of it can no more be an Objection against the Fact of it, or that it is, than the Difficulty of conceiving, how our Souls and Bodies are joined together, is an Argument that they are not join'd together at all.

But moreover, it may be farther urged, that since we are obliged to believe things which we do not understand how they are, and cannot so much as conceive and comprehend, how that, what is affirmed of them, can be consistent with their Nature; if we carry the matter so high, then we may be obliged to believe the most glaring Absurdities. As for instance, we may be bound to believe, as the Papists pretend to do, that the Bread in the holy Sacrament is transubstantiated into, and becomes the real Body of Christ; and so we may be bound to believe what is both contrary to Sense and Reason.

To this I answer, That if the Belief of a Trinity of Persons, in the Unity of the divine Essence, were as contrary to the Principles of Sense and Reason, we should allow the Consequence, and own, that it would be absurd to believe it; but if it can be proved, that there is a great Disparity in the two Cases, the *Arians* must excuse us, if we embrace the one, while, with the greatest detestation, we abhor the

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the other; and our Reason for it is plainly this, That the Doctrine of Transubstantiation is contrary to the plain Dictates and Report of our Senses, and inconsistent with that known Property of Matter, That it cannot be in two Places at once, which yet that Doctrine supposes it to be: so that we not only cannot conceive, how the Bread and Wine can be transubstantiated to the real Body and Blood of Christ; if we could go no farther, we should have no Reason to disbelieve it entirely on that head; but we know, from the essential Properties of these Elements, that they cannot be so transubstantiated; and that it is contrary to their very Nature, and their essential Properties, that they should be so transubstantiated, which is more a great deal. But the Case is very different with respect to the Doctrine of the Trinity of Persons in the Unity of the divine Essence: for tho' we cannot comprehend the Manner how the Trinity of Persons subsists in the Unity of the divine Essence, because we do not fully comprehend the divine Nature and Essence; yet we cannot say, that we comprehend that these two are actually inconsistent; which we must be able to say, before we can, with any reason, call it a Contradiction. Nor are we able to discover any known Property of the divine Nature and Essence, with which a Trinity of Persons is inconsistent. The only Property of the divine Nature and Essence, that so much as seems to be inconsistent with the Trinity of Persons, is the

the Unity of the Godhead; but that I have proved just now to be perfectly consistent with the Trinity of Persons. But it is not so in the other Case, in the Case of Transubstantiation; for we are not only at a loss, how to reconcile it with the Properties of Matter, but we farther see, that it cannot be reconciled with them; and therefore we justly reject that Doctrine, as an absurd Contradiction; while we receive the other as an infallible Truth, because it is revealed by God, and we firmly believe it, because God has said it; That these three, who bear record in Heaven, are one: altho' we are at a loss, because of the finite and defective Comprehension of our imperfect Nature, to be able to conceive the Manner how they are one. However, we firmly believe the Fact of it, because it is revealed, and does not contradict any of the known Properties of the Deity; and therefore it is capable to be attested to as a Truth, by divine supernatural Revelation.

Other Objections, that are usually made against this Doctrine, shall be farther considered, when the Lord gives another Opportunity.





S E R M O N VII.

I JOHN 5. 7.

For there are three that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost : and these three are one.

IN the preceding Discourse I have endeavoured to shew that the divine Nature and Essence is but One, both from the Principles of natural and revealed Religion, and that the Unity of the divine Essence is clear both from Reason and Scripture. I also endeavoured to take off that Objection against the Unity of the divine Essence in the Trinity of Persons; that it is a Contradiction in the nature of the thing, that the Godhead can so subsist after that different and various manner in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as that they can thereby be denominated three distinct proper Persons. Without repeating what was then offered for removing this Difficulty, I shall farther observe some other things, which may set this matter in a clearer Light.

And here let it be carefully attended to, that the Light of Nature is so far from being able

to discover an Impossibility in the divine Essences, so subsisting in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as to denominate them three proper distinct Persons, that there is no Principle of Reason can prove it to be impossible, even for a finite Spirit to have its Subsistence in, and animate three different Bodies after such a manner, as they might be constructed three distinct Persons; and if such a thing does not imply a Contradiction in the finite and imperfect Creature, far less does this imply a Contradiction in the infinitely perfect and incomprehensible Essence of the Deity, to subsist after that various manner, as to be three distinct Persons.

I have not proposed this Example with any design to illustrate that inconceivable Manner, in which the one divine Essence subsists in three Persons, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as if I thought there was any Analogy and Resemblance between the one and the other; no, there is no Example taken from the Creature, capable to set it in a clear light; such is the infinite distance betwixt God and the Creature. And indeed, it has not a little tended to disparage this sacred Doctrine, that Men have attempted to illustrate it by Similies taken from Nature, and to endeavour to bring it within the reach of their finite Understandings, as to the Manner how it is: I say, I have no such design, as if I would insinuate any Parallel betwixt these two, nor do I speak of a finite Spirit's animating three distinct Bodies, as if there was any such thing actually existent in Nature;

ture; nor do I so much as affirm positively that any such thing is possible: only I say, that the Impossibility of it can't be proved, from any known Principle of Nature's Light; nor can it be demonstrated to be impossible, from any Property peculiar to the Nature of a Spirit, or from any of the known Laws of Union betwixt the immaterial Substance of the Spirit, and an organized Body. And therefore, since it cannot be proved to be a Contradiction in the nature of things, that a finite Spirit may animate three distinct Bodies, so that the Union of it with them might constitute them three distinct Persons; why should it be accounted a Contradiction to say, that the absolutely perfect Spirit of the Deity, should subsist after such a different and distinct manner in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as to denominate them three distinct Persons, and that in a proper sense, tho' not altogether in the sense in which the word Person is applied to Men, but in such a sense as is consistent with the absolute Union of the divine Essence. If, for any thing we know, such a thing might happen in the case of a finite Creature, there is not the least reason to suspect the Possibility of it in the nature of the thing, with respect to the Creator; nay, although it could be demonstrated from the Nature of a finite Spirit, and the establish'd Laws of Union between the immaterial Substance and an organized Body, that it is utterly impossible for any finite Being to subsist after any such different manner, or to animate dif-

different organized Bodies, so as that they might be denominated different and distinct Persons, while they had but one common Spirit among them all: I say, although this could be proved from plain Principles of Reason to be impossible, yet it would by no means follow from thence, that the infinitely perfect and incomprehensible Essence of the Deity could not subsist after such a various and different manner, in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as that they might be denominated three distinct Persons, capable of those distinct Characters, ascribed to them in Scripture.

From a finite Nature to an infinite, there is no Consequence; the infinitely perfect Nature of God has an Infinity of Perfections and Excellencies, which a finite Nature is not capable of; *we cannot by searching find out God, we cannot find out the Almighty to Perfection.* There are but part of his Ways known by us, and a little Portion of him is heard; by the Dictates of Reason we may feel after him, and *clearly see his eternal Power and Godhead from the things which are made*; but by our most elaborate Inquiries and most studious Endeavours, we are not able to find out the Manner of his Existence. 'Tis true, by divine Revelation we arrive at a far greater Knowledge of God, and the Nature of his Perfections, than what is possible for us to attain to by the mere Light of Nature; yet notwithstanding all the Discoveries made of him therein, we are still at a loss to fathom the incomprehensible depth of his

his Perfections; and when he reveals things concerning himself, and asserts the Fact of them, that they are; we ought to give credit to him, and believe his infallible Word, tho' the Manner of the thing, how it is, should be never so great a Mystery to our natural Reason, tho' it should be never so much hid from it, or incomprehensible by it; otherwise, we render the supernatural Revelation intirely useless, or at best we make the Book of the Scriptures to be no more than a Commentary upon, or Explication of the Book of Nature; and what new Truths it reveals, which were not originally taught by the Principles of Nature's Light, are rejected: which is to lose the very Design of a supernatural Revelation, the chief Purpose of which is to discover to us things relating to our own Happiness, and the Duty we owe to God, which are not discoverable by the Light of our Reason, and which the Light of Nature in no rational created Being could discover, in its most perfect State; and especially which the Light of Reason, as it stands corrupted and vitiated in Man, since his Apostacy from God, is incapable of discovering now in his present lapsed Condition.

There are two ways by which we come to the knowledge of the Truth of any thing; the one is by our own personal Intuition into the nature of the thing; and the other is, by the Testimony of others, upon whose credit we can depend. Now these Truths, which are discovered to us by Speculation, and our own personal Intuition

tuition and Introspection into the nature of the thing, are such as are revealed in a natural way, and known by a natural Revelation: and these must needs be comprehended by our natural Reason, as far as we suffer ourselves to be persuaded concerning them; for our persuasion concerning them is founded upon our comprehending that Truth, of which we are persuaded, and upon our own personal Intuition of it, by surveying the nature of the thing, and comprehending its agreement with it. But it is by no means so with respect to these Truths which are revealed to us in a supernatural way: it is by no means necessary in these Truths, that our Reason be able to comprehend and discern the Connexion betwixt the Subject and the Predicate of a Proposition, supernaturally revealed; or to see by our own personal Intuition the agreement of the thing asserted, with the thing to which it is affirmed to agree and belong: I say, it is by no means necessary with respect to these supernatural Truths, that we have a personal Intuition, or Comprehension of this Connection, as it is in Truths naturally revealed. It is enough with respect to these supernatural Truths, in order to beget a certain Persuasion of them, that the Connection be affirmed to be by him who is infallible; who can neither himself deceive, nor be deceived; altho' we do not ourselves see the Connection by our own personal Intuition and Introspection into the nature of the thing. And therefore in a supernatural Revelation to re-

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quire, that Truths revealed in it, should be comprehended by us, how they are Truths; that is, how the things affirmed or denied, agree or disagree with their several Subjects, with which they are affirmed to agree or disagree, is to destroy the distinction betwixt a natural and supernatural Revelation. For in things supernaturally revealed, the Persuasion of the Mind is founded on the Testimony of God, who affirms the Truth revealed; but in a natural Revelation, the Persuasion of the Mind is founded intirely on the Man's personal Intuition and Introspection into the nature of the thing it self. And did the *Arians*, and other *Anti-trinitarians*, duely consider this difference betwixt natural and supernatural Revelation, they would never pretend to bring down the supernatural Revelations of God to the Standard of their Reason, so as to suffer themselves to be persuaded of nothing, but what they know by an Introspection into the nature of the thing, and a personal Intuition into it: no, they would be persuaded of a thing and firmly believe it, provided they had sufficient Evidence for it, that it was revealed in a supernatural way, and that they had the Testimony of Heaven to vouch the Truth of it; were they never so much at a loss, how to comprehend the Agreement or Disagreement of what is affirmed or denied, with the thing it self, and were it never so much impossible for them to be satisfied about that Agreement or Disagreement by a personal Intuition and In-

trofpection into the nature of the thing it felf. For fuch is the deference which a fupernatural Revelation juftly claims, and fuch is the regard which we ought to have to the Veracity of God, when he fpeaks to us, that his Teftimony ought to be depended upon, tho' we had never fo little Evidence for the Truth revealed from an Introspection into the nature of the Thing.

There are indeed fome Truths which we know both by a natural and a fupernatural Revelation, which we know both by the Light of Reason and that of the Scriptures. But when the Light of the Scriptures is clear, tho' the other fhould fail us; we have a fufficient Foundation for Affent and Perfuaſion: and to fay, that we are to believe nothing delivered in the Scripture, but what our Reason comprehends, that is to fay, what the Light of our Reason discovers to be true from an Introspection and Intuition into the nature of the thing itſelf; is to confound theſe two forts of Revelation; natural and fupernatural; which are in themſelves diſtinct, and which lay a foundation of Affent upon diſtinct Principles; the one from the Knowledge of the nature of the thing, and the other from the Veracity of the divine Teftimony.

Now to bring all this home to the preſent Caſe, and to apply it to this Doctrin of the Trinity, which is a pure fupernatural Revelation; and which is beyond the Reason of Man to diſcern, that there is an Agreement

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of this Predicate of three Persons with that Subject of the divine Essence; or which is the same thing, that it is incomprehensible by the Reason of Man to discern, how three divine Persons are yet but one God: The Objection which they form from hence is, That their natural Reason does not comprehend it; that is to say, that they do not see by any natural Light, the Connection there is betwixt three divine Persons and one divine Essence; and upon that account they reject it, as not being a Truth to be believed; because their natural Reason is not able to discern, how the divine Essence subsists in a Trinity of divine Persons. But this, from what has been said, will appear most palpably absurd; because this Doctrine of the Trinity of Persons in the Unity of the divine Essence, is a Truth of pure divine supernatural Revelation; and is not to be discerned and comprehended after the manner that Truths, which belong to a natural Revelation, are discovered and known; to wit, by an Introspection into and Intuition of the nature of the thing it self. The nature of the thing, to wit, the divine Essence, is an Object too big to be sufficiently surveyed and comprehended by the Eye of Nature's Light; and there are Properties and Perfections which belong to it, and may be affirmed of it, which the Reason of Men and Angels cannot discern and comprehend, whether these Perfections and Properties do indeed belong to the divine Essence or not; at least, how they belong to it. It
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must needs then be absurd to the utmost degree to refuse our assent to this Truth, that there are three Persons in the one divine Essence, merely upon this account, that we cannot come to the knowledge of it, after the manner that natural Truths are discerned and comprehended, by the Introspection into and Intuition of the nature of the thing. It belongs to another Class of Truths, to wit, those which depend upon a mere divine supernatural Revelation; and our Persuasion and Belief of it must be grounded on that Principle, on which the Belief of supernatural Truths is founded, the Veracity of the divine Testimony; and not upon that Principle, upon which the Persuasion of Truths naturally revealed is founded, an Introspection into the nature of the thing.

Our Inquiry therefore concerning the Truth or Falshood of this Proposition, *In the one divine Essence there are three divine Persons*, must not proceed after the manner by which we proceed, when we determine of the Truth or Falshood of Propositions, which belong to the Class of natural Revelation, by surveying the nature of the Thing. This is entirely a false Rule to go by in this Case: for this being a Proposition, which belongs to the Class of supernatural Revelation, in our Inquiry concerning the Truth or Falshood of *it* we must proceed after the manner by which the Truth or Falshood of Propositions are determined, which belong to that Class. We must inquire

whether or not it be revealed in the Scriptures of Truth; whether or not *he* has said it, who cannot lye; and if it comes out so, that this is a Truth attested by Heaven, we have all the Reason of the world to assent to it, altho' our natural Reason can't take up and comprehend how it is so; when in its own imperfect and narrow way it surveys the Nature of the divine Essence. For there is no Creature, no not of the most exalted Rank, who can have such a perfect Comprehension of the divine Nature, as to discover all its Perfections; and therefore to say, that such and such Perfections and Excellencies do not belong to the divine Essence, merely because our narrow Knowledge of the divine Nature cannot comprehend and discern that they do belong to it, or how they belong to it, by its scanty and superficial Intuition into it, is to do violence even to Reason it self: for even Reason, *impartial Reason*, loudly declares to us, that there are Perfections in the divine Nature, which escape the observation of our narrow and contracted View, when we contemplate the divine Essence. The very Light of Reason itself confesses, that there are Properties and Perfections in the infinite and incomprehensible Essence of the Deity, which are hid from its Ken. The omniscient God himself only has a comprehensive Knowledge of his own Perfections; and he should be heard and believed, when he delivers any thing concerning himself to us; and what he affirms of himself, who best, nay, who only knows himself,

self, should be assented to, be it never so far removed from the Comprehension of Nature's Light; and tho' the Reason of Man were never so incapable of taking it up, and discerning it by its own Contemplation of the divine Essence; because that is not the way of attaining to the knowledge of the Truth, or Falshood of every thing which relates to the Deity, by contemplating the divine Essence. There are some Truths concerning God, which can only be known by his own Testimony concerning them; of which kind this is one, That there are three divine Persons in the one divine Essence: and since that does not contradict nor is inconsistent with any of the divine Perfections, which are known by the Light of Reason, no not the Unity of the Essence it self (as I proved at large in the former Discourse;) it is therefore capable of being attested by a divine Revelation, and the Testimony of Heaven; and the Incomprehensibility of it by Nature's Light, as being above our Reason, does not supersede our Belief of it on the divine Testimony; tho' indeed it supersedes that scientific knowledge of it, which is drawn from the Contemplation of the divine Essence by the mere Light of Nature.

Against the Trinity of the Persons of the Godhead, the *Socinians* and other *Anti-trinitarians* object, That the Deity is in many places of Scripture said to be One; and here they alledge for this, these following Places; *Deut. vi. 4. Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one*
M 4 *Lord.*

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Lord. And 1 Cor. viii. from ver. 4. *As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered to Idols in sacrifice, we know that an Idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one.* And Ephes. iv. 6. *One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*

To which we answer, that these Places speak of the Unity of the divine Essence, and not at all of the Unity of the Persons in the Trinity; for notwithstanding we maintain a Trinity of Persons, yet according to these Scriptures, and the Principles of natural Reason, we firmly believe and hold the absolute Unity of the divine Essence. Nor, as I have proved already, is the maintaining a Trinity of Persons in the Deity, any way inconsistent with maintaining the Unity of the divine Essence; because the self-same One undivided Essence subsists in these Three, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, after such a different and distinct Manner, as to constitute each of them different and distinct Persons. The manner, after which the divine Essence subsists in the Father, being different and distinct from that Manner, after which that same one Essence subsists in the Son and Holy Ghost, denominates and constitutes him a different and distinct Person from the other two; and so also the different Manner, after which the divine Essence subsists in the Son and Holy Ghost, constitutes and denominates each of these Persons both different from one another, and distinct from the Father,

Father,

Father, as to their Personality; tho' the same one and undivided Essence subsists in them all without any the least variation, that affects the Essence; only the different Manner of its subsisting in each of them, is the Foundation and Reason of their being distinct, as to their Persons. So that those Scriptures, wherein the Unity of the Deity, as to its Nature and Essence, is taught, are no ways inconsistent with those other Scriptures, where the Trinity of the divine Persons is as strongly asserted, as those others assert the Unity of its Essence; and they both agreeably accord and harmonize with each other. Whereas, on the other hand, to give such a false Gloss to those Scriptures, which speak of the Unity of the Essence, as to exclude the Trinity of the divine Persons, is to make the Scripture to clash and be inconsistent with it self; and to render all those Passages of Scripture, which speak of the Trinity of Persons useless, and to have no meaning at all. And since those Scriptures, which treat of the Trinity of Persons, are part of the divine Revelation equally with those which treat of the Unity of the divine Essence, they have an equal claim to be believed, with the other; especially since they carry nothing in them, that contradicts any known Property and Perfection of the Deity, nor contradicts any Principle of sound Reason; tho' they teach what is far above its Comprehension. But though it be above the Comprehension of Nature to fathom how these three subsist in

one Essence, and though our finite Capacity is not able to comprehend the Manner how the Father subsists distinctly from the Son and Holy Ghost, and how the divine Essence subsists in such a peculiar manner in the Son and Holy Ghost, as to lay a Foundation for their Personality, distinct from the Father and one another: I say, though this be above the reach of our finite Capacity, to comprehend the Manner how these things are so, because we have not sufficient Knowledge of the incomprehensible Perfections of the Deity, to enable us to discern how these things are so; yet we are as capable to understand the Fact and Truth of it, that they are so, as any other thing which is revealed from Heaven in a supernatural way. As for instance, though we are not able to comprehend the Manner in which the divine Essence subsists in the Son, by which his Person is distinguished from that of the Father, and Holy Spirit, because of the Finiteness and Weakness of our limited Faculties, and because of the Infinity and Incomprehensibility of the Deity; yet we know from the divine Revelation most certainly, that that divine Essence does subsist in him, and that he is possessed of the supreme Deity, though after another manner than the Father is; and that because the divine Perfections are ascribed to him, and Works were performed by him, which are peculiar to the Deity. Now if divine Perfections are ascribed to him, he must needs be possessed of the divine Essence, and the

the divine Essence must of necessity subsist in him; otherwise, when divine Perfections are ascribed to him, they would be ascribed to him without any foundation: for where the divine Essence is not, there there can be no foundation for claiming the divine Perfections; for the divine Perfections, and the divine Essence, which is the foundation of them, are inseparable, and the one can't possibly be without the other.

Moreover, since we are assured from Scripture, that divine Works were performed by our Saviour, Works which none can perform but he who is truly God, such as none could produce who is not possessed of divine Perfections, and such as were the Effects of Omnipotency only; we may from hence safely conclude, that the divine Essence, and the supreme Deity subsisted in him. For where the Effects of divine Perfections are, there of necessity the divine Perfections themselves must be, which are the Cause: for the Effect could never be produced without the Cause. And if the divine Perfections are in him, the divine Nature and Essence must needs be in him of consequence: for the divine Perfections can never subsist, where the divine Essence does not subsist. For, as I shewed just now, the divine Essence is the very Foundation of the divine Perfections; and to suppose, that a Being can be possessed of divine Perfections, who yet for all that hath not the divine Essence, is to suppose the grossest Absurdity, and a down-

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downright Contradiction : for it supposes him both to be God, and not to be God at the same time. For to suppose him to be possessed of the divine Perfections, that necessarily carries in it the Supposition that he is God; and that he has not the divine Essence, on the other hand, as necessarily supposes that he is not God. So we see what Absurdities necessarily result from the Supposition, that our Saviour, the second Person of the Trinity, should have divine Perfections ascribed to him, and yet to have the divine Nature and Essence denied to belong unto him.

Again, the *Arians* and *Anti-trinitarians* object against this Doctrine of the Trinity of Persons in the Unity of the divine Essence, that the Father is alone called God; and here they cite the 17th Chapter of St. *John*, 3d Verse, where our Saviour addressing the Father, says to him, *And this is Life eternal, to know thee the only true God.* And *Jude*, Verse 4. says the Apostle, *There are certain Men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this Condemnation, ungodly Men, turning the Grace of our God into Lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.* Where it would appear, according to the Turn which they give to that Text, that the only Lord God is distinguished from the Lord Jesus Christ. As to the first of these Texts, *John* xvii. 3. where our Saviour addressing the Father, says to him, *This is Life eternal, to know thee the only true God*; from whence

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whence it is very unjustly concluded, that the Father is the only Person in the Trinity who is the true God ; there is no such thing there asserted by our Saviour. For it is not said, that the Father only is the true God, in opposition to the other Persons of the Trinity, who are the only true God equally as he is, but that the Father is the only true God, in opposition to Idols, who are not the true God ; for the Son and Holy Ghost are that same only true God which the Father is ; and there is no other true God, but that true God which the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are ; all other Gods are Idols, and Gods falsely so called. These two are very different things, to say that the Father only is the true God, and to say, that the Father is the only true God ; these two Propositions are of a very different Import and Signification : for the first, that the Father only is the true God, excludes the other Persons of the Trinity from being the true God ; but that is not asserted. But the other Proposition, which is the Proposition our Saviour asserts, to wit, That the Father is the only true God, is perfectly consistent with the other Persons being the true God also ; only it excludes Idols from being that true God which the Father is.

As to that other Text in the 4th Verse of *Jude*, where the Apostle says, *There are certain Men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this Condemnation, ungodly Men, turning the Grace of God into Lasciviousness,*
and

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and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ : These last Words; and our Lord Jesus, are explicatory of the other Words, denying the only Lord God. For the Lord Jesus Christ is the only Lord God, whom they denied ; and the same Person is described by these Words, *The Lord Jesus Christ*, as was described by the Words immediately preceding, *the only Lord God*. And the Apostle is not speaking of, nor describing two distinct Persons, whom these ungodly Men denied ; but of the same Person, whom he calls both the *only Lord God*, and *our Lord Jesus Christ*. So that this Text is so far from being a Proof, that the Lord Jesus Christ is not possessed of the divine Nature, and the only and supreme God, that it is the strongest Proof of his true and proper Deity ; because the Apostle calls him *the Lord God*, and *the only Lord God*. Not that the Person of the Son is the only Person who is the Lord God, exclusive either of the Father, or the Holy Ghost ; no, for these both are the only Lord God equally with the Son : but, when the Son is here called the only Lord God, it is only in opposition to Idols, and not in opposition to the other Persons of the Trinity, in whom the one and self-same undivided divine Essence subsists equally, and that in the same manner as before, when the Father was said to be the *only true God*, it did not exclude the other Persons of the Trinity from being that same only true God as the Father was ; so here, when the Son is called

the only Lord God, it does not exclude the Father, or the Holy Ghost, from being that same only Lord God, but only Idols, in whom the undivided Essence of the Deity does not subsist in any manner, as it does in each of the three Persons of the Trinity, after their peculiar manner.

These are the Objections which are usually brought against the Doctrine of a Trinity in Unity. I should now go on to the particular Proof of the proper and supreme Deity of the Son and Holy Ghost: But this I shall leave, till the Lord give another Opportunity.

God bless his Word, and to his Name be Praise.





S E R M O N V I I I .

I JOHN 5. 7.

For there are three that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost : and these three are one.

HAVING before proved, that there are Three to whom the divine Attributes and Excellencies are ascribed in Scripture, and consequently that there are three divine Persons in the Deity, and that these three are one God, one in their Nature and Essence; and answered those Objections which are brought against a Trinity in Unity, and a Unity in Trinity; and shewed particularly the Weakness of that Objection, That this is incomprehensible by the Light of our natural Reason; and also that the Doctrine of a Trinity of Persons is abundantly consistent with those Passages of Scripture where the Unity of the divine Essence is asserted: I proceed, according to the Method proposed, to a particular Proof of the

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the proper and supreme Deity of the Son and Holy Ghost, and their absolute Equality with the Father, as to their Nature and Essence, and all their essential Perfections; notwithstanding whatever inferior Character they may sustain, with respect to the several Parts which these two Persons act in the execution of the Method of Grace; and that though the Son, as Mediator, in that respect is the Father's Servant, and as sustaining that Character is inferior to him: and that though the Holy Ghost, in the Oeconomy of Redemption, sustains the Character of the Father's Messenger, and the Character of the Comforter sent by the Son, and in that respect may be considered as inferior to them; yet both these Persons, considered in their essential Character, and with respect to what they are by Nature, are absolutely equal with the Father; and the same degree of divine Honour is due to them which can be claimed by him, with whom jointly and inseparably they are the one supreme God.

I begin therefore with the first of these two Persons, the Lord Jesus Christ, the second Person of the adorable Trinity. And in order to prove that he is the true and supreme God, equal with the Father, and of the same Nature and Essence with him, I shall do these things.

I. I shall shew, that these Names by which the supreme God is described to us in Scripture, are ascribed to him; particularly, that the incommunicable Name **J E H O V A H**, which is never

ver ascribed to any Creature, but only to the supreme God, is given and applied to him; and also that other Names of God are applied to him, which though they are in a figurative sense sometimes applied to the Creature, because they faintly resemble the Creator in some special thing, more than the generality of others their Fellow-Creatures do, yet they are applied to him in an emphatical manner, and ascribed to him in such a sense, as they are never ascribed to the Creature, even in that sense whereby they are peculiar to the Creator and supreme God.

II. I shall shew, that the Lord Jesus Christ not only has the Names by which the supreme God is described in Scripture, applied to him; but also those Perfections, Attributes and Excellencies which are peculiar to the supreme God, are ascribed to him, and affirmed of him; even those Excellencies wherein the Splendor of the divine Glory does in a peculiar manner consist, and which cannot be ascribed to any Creature of the most exalted Rank, without incurring the Guilt of the most horrid Blasphemy.

III. I shall shew, that not only the Attributes and Excellencies peculiar to the supreme God, are ascribed to Christ, but also that these Perfections manifested themselves really to be in him, and that he was truly possessed of them, by the Effects of them which he produced. I shall shew, that such divine Works were produced, such Actions were performed by him, as could only flow from Perfections and Excellencies

lencies which were truly divine, and which it would have been utterly impossible for him to produce and perform, if he had not been, in the most proper and strict sense, the one only and supreme God.

IV. I shall shew, that divine Honour, due to the supreme God alone, was claimed by Christ, and commanded to be paid to him, and that Adoration was performed to him, and that even by those who were under the infallible Conduct of the Holy Ghost; which they could not be supposed to give to him, if he had not been owned by them really to be, what he gave out himself to be, the eternal Son of God; that is, of the same Nature and Essence with him: And that divine Adoration was not only paid to him, but he accepted of it as due to him, without disclaiming his Right and Title to it; which would have been absolutely inconsistent with his being an innocent Man, if he had not been truly and properly, and in the strictest sense, the supreme God:

If these things can be made out sufficiently, it will appear to be abundantly plain, that the Lord Jesus Christ is a divine Person, in the highest sense of the word; and equal with the Father, as to his Nature and Essence, and all essential divine Perfections.

I. In order to prove the true and proper Deity of the Son of God, and his Equality with the Father, I am to shew, that the

Names peculiar to the supreme God, particularly, that the incommunicable Name JEHOVAH, is ascribed to him; which is never ascribed to any Creature, but only to the supreme God, as importing that Excellency and Perfection, which is infinitely above the condition of any mere Creature; and also that the other Names of the supreme God, which, tho' they are applied to the Creature in a figurative sense, yet they are given to him in that sense, in which they are incommunicable to any Creature, and in which they can only be applied to the supreme Deity. And if this can be made appear, that the Name *Jehovah* is an incommunicable Name, and not given to any Creature, and that the supreme God claims it to himself, as his own proper and peculiar Name, expressive of his incommunicable Glory, and yet notwithstanding the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, is in Scripture called by that Name, then it will be abundantly plain, that he is the supreme God; since that part of the divine Glory belongs to him, and is actually by divine Revelation ascribed to him.

That the Name *Jehovah* is given to Christ in Scripture, will plainly appear from the following Passages; * *The Voice of him that crieth in the Wilderness, Prepare ye the Way of the LORD, (the Word is in the first Language, JEHOVAH) make streight in the Desert a Highway for our God.* Now that this is spoken of Christ

* Isa. xl. 3.

Christ, is plain from this Passage being in Scripture expressly applied to our Saviour *, *This is he, saith John the Baptist, that was spoke of by the Prophet Isaias, saying, The Voice of one crying in the Wilderness, Prepare ye the Way of the LORD, make his Paths streight.*

Another Passage we have for the proof of this †, *Tell ye, and bring them near, yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? who hath told it from that time? have not I the LORD? the Word is Jehovah have not I JEHOVAH? And there is no God else besides me, a just God, and a Saviour, there is none besides me. Look unto me, all the Ends of the Earth, for I am God, and there is none else. Surely, shall one say, in the LORD (the Word is, in JEHOVAH) have I Righteousness and Strength. In the LORD, in JEHOVAH, shall all the Seed of Israel be justified.* Now that the Prophet is there speaking of JEHOVAH the Son, the Second Person of the Trinity, and the Mediator betwixt God and Man, even of him who was in due time to be the Man Christ Jesus, by taking on him the form of a Servant; and not of the Person of the Father; is abundantly plain from the Description which he gives of him, which by no means agrees with the Person of the Father, and can only be understood of the Person of the Son.

And the first thing that I would observe in the Character of him, who is in these Verses stiled

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* Matt. iii. 3.

† Isa. xlv. 21, &c.

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JEHOVAH, and beside whom there is no God else, is, that he is the very same Person to whom all the Ends of the Earth are called to look for Salvation. * *Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the Ends of the Earth; for I am God, and there is none else.* Now he to whom all the Ends of the Earth were to look, and from whom the farthest Isles of the Gentiles were to seek Salvation, was no other than the Lord Jesus Christ, the Messiah, he who was to come of the Root of Jesse. † *And in that day there shall be a Root of Jesse, which shall stand for an Ensign to the People, to him shall the Gentiles seek.* Besides, the Lord Jesus Christ, thro' the whole of the New Testament, is described to be the Person from whom the Gentiles were to expect Salvation, and to whom they are to look for Life. And our blessed Lord applies this very part of the Character, by which *Jehovah* the Son is here described, to himself; ‖ *In his Name shall the Gentiles trust.* And in many places he is called *the Light of the Gentiles*; and when Christ was preached to the Gentiles, Salvation is said to come unto them.

Another part of that Character by which *Jehovah*, this second Person of the Trinity, is described, is, that *to him every Knee should bow, and every Tongue shall swear.* Now this in express terms is applied to our Saviour in the New Testament, as being a Prophecy of the Mediator's being constituted Judge of the World.

* Ver. 22.

† Isa. xi. 10.

‖ Matt. xii. 21.

World. * *For we shall all stand before the Judgment-Seat of Christ*; the Words are expressly referred to, and applied to Christ, of whose Judgment-Seat mention is likewise made: *For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every Knee shall bow unto me, and every Tongue shall confess unto God.* And we have a Phrase to the same purpose †; *That at the Name of Jesus every Knee should bow, of things in Heaven, and things in Earth, and things under the Earth: and that every Tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father.*

Moreover, another part of the Character of the Person here described, to whom the Name *Jehovah* is ascribed, and which proves that it is *Jehovah* the second Person of the Trinity, that is spoken of there, is, that Believers are said to have Righteousness and Strength in him; *Surely, shall one say, in Jehovah have I Righteousness and Strength; in Jehovah shall all the Seed of Israel be justified.* Now that it is in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Mediator, that Believers alone have Righteousness and Strength, and that it is through him alone that we are justified, are Truths wherewith the New Testament abounds so much, that there is no room left for doubting of it. And therefore such Characters whereby *Jehovah* is here described, being the very same by which he is described all over the New Testament, and by which he is distinguished from the Father and

* Rom. xiv. 10, 11.

† Philip. ii. 10, 11.

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the Holy Ghost, evidently prove that it is Christ the Mediator who is spoken of, and not the Father.

We have another Passage, where the Name *Jehovah* is applied to Jesus Christ the Mediator: * *Sanctify the LORD*, or, as it is in the first Language, *JEHOVAH of Hosts; and let him be your fear and your dread.* That this is not to be understood of God the Father, but of *Jehovah* the Son, is plain from the very next Verse, where he is said to be *a Sanctuary to some, but a Stone of stumbling and Rock of offence to Israel:* which so exactly agrees to Jesus of Nazareth the Mediator, and was so particularly fulfilled in him, and can in no tolerable sense be applied to the Father, that it is abundantly evident, that the *Jehovah* spoken of, is meant of the second, and not of the first Person of the Trinity. But, which puts this beyond all dispute, this is expressly applied to Christ the Mediator, by the Apostle Peter †; *Wherefore also it is contained in the Scriptures, Behold, I lay in Sion a Corner-Stone, elect, precious; and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. To you therefore that believe, he is precious; but to them which be disobedient, the Stone which the Builders disallowed, the same is made the Head of the Corner, and a Stone of stumbling and Rock of offence, to them who stumble at the Word, being disobedient, whereto also they were appointed.*

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* Isa. viii. 13.

† 1 Pet. ii. 6, &c.

We have another Scripture where the Name *Jehovah* is used * ; *And the People spoke against God, and against Moses ; and the Lord sent fiery Serpents among the People, and they bit the People, and much People of Israel died. Therefore the People came to Moses, and said, We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord, (the Word is JEHOVAH) and against thee.* Now this is applied to Christ by the Apostle Paul ; † *Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of Serpents.* He who was called *Jehovah* by the inspired Historian, and who is said to send these fiery Serpents, being tempted by the *Israelites* Rebellion, to destroy them, the same is called Christ by the Apostle ; and he tells us, that it was Christ whom they tempted, and that it was he who destroyed them by these fiery Serpents, by exerting the Power of *Jehovah* : though afterwards, to accomplish his gracious Purposes to Mankind, he took on him the form of a Servant, and veil'd his Glory which he had as *Jehovah*, but he did not put off the Nature, nor was he ever stript of the Perfections peculiar to *Jehovah*, in the lowest state of his Humiliation.

Once more, in || *Isaiab's* Prophecy, we have an account of a Vision which that Prophet had from *Jehovah*, when he revealed to him that Judgment, which was to befall the People of the *Jews*, that they should be given up to hardness of Heart, that they should not embrace

* Numb. xxi. 6, 7, 8. † 1 Cor. x. 9. || Isa. vi.

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brace Christ the *Messias*, when he should come in the Flesh; which Vision happened in the Year that King *Uzziab* died; and at that time it is expressly said, that he saw *Jehovah* of Hosts. Now in the Gospel of St. * *John*, we are expressly told, that when the Prophet *Isaiab* utter'd that Prophecy concerning that Judgment, which was to befall the People of the *Jews*, when Christ should come in the Flesh, *that in seeing they should not perceive, and hearing they should not understand, nor be converted and healed*; it was when he saw the Glory of Christ in a Vision: *Therefore they could not believe, because that Isaias said again, he hath blinded their Eyes, and hardened their Heart, that they should not see with their Eyes, nor understand with their Heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.* And then the Evangelist adds, *These things, said Isaias, when he saw his Glory, and spake of him.* So that what the Prophet *Isaias* calls the Glory of *Jehovah*, which he saw at that time, the Evangelist *John* calls the Glory of Christ; and therefore one of these Books must either not be of divine Inspiration, or the Name *Jehovah* must be owned to belong to Christ.

Thus we see from a variety of Scriptures, that the Name *Jehovah* is used of the second Person of the Trinity, and is applied to the Son by the sacred Penmen; which carries in it all the divine Perfections, and is expressive of necessary Existence, and Self-origination; and

* xii. 39, 40, 41.

and on that account is never applied to the Creature, but is a peculiar Name of the supreme God: and if it shall appear from the Scripture, that this Name is absolutely incommunicable to the Creature, as well as the Perfections which it comprehends in it, then, seeing it is applied to Christ, it will abundantly prove, that he is the supreme God, God equal with the Father.

Now that it is an incommunicable Name, and never ascribed to any Creature, but only to the supreme God, will appear most evidently from the following Scriptures; the first is, * *That Men may know, that thou, whose Name alone is Jehovah, art the most high over all the Earth.* There it is expressly affirmed of the one only living and true God, that his Name alone is *Jehovah*, and all Creatures are excluded from any Right of bearing that Name; and therefore, since it is peculiar to the supreme Deity, and at the same time is ascribed to God the Son, the second Person of the holy Trinity, he must of consequence be the supreme God.

Again, the great God says of himself, † *I am the Lord*: the word in the original is, *I am JEHOVAH*; *that is my Name, and my Glory I will not give to another.* There the Lord himself tells us, that his Name *JEHOVAH* is his Glory; because it is expressive of those Perfections wherein the Glory of the Deity consists; it is expressive of Self-origination, Independence,

* Psalm lxxxiii. 18.

† Isai. xliii. 8.

pendency, and necessary Existence; which are the Glory of the Deity. And therefore that Name can no more be given to any others, than the Perfections which are imported and involved in it can be ascribed to them.

Moreover, when the Prophet *Amos* is describing the Creator of all things, and therefore the supreme God, he tells us, that his proper and peculiar Name is *Jehovah*; * *Seek him, says he, that maketh the seven Stars and Orion, and turneth the shadow of Death into the Morning, and maketh the Day dark with Night; that calleth for the Waters of the Sea, and poureth them out upon the Face of the Earth, JEHOVAH IS HIS NAME.* And the same Prophet gives another magnificent description of those Works, which are peculiar to God the Creator; † *It is he, says he, that buildeth his Stories in the Heaven, and hath founded his Troop in the Earth; he that calleth for the Waters of the Sea, and poureth them out upon the Face of the Earth, JEHOVAH IS HIS NAME.*

Moreover this Name *Jehovah* was so well known among the *Jews*, who may be presum'd to be best acquainted with the Use and Importance of Words in their own Language; I say, it was so well known among them to be the peculiar Name of the supreme God, and they had such a Veneration for it, that they would never pronounce it; but in place of it, they us'd some other Expression, whereby they described it; sometimes they called it,
That

* *Amos* v. 8. † *Chap.* ix. 6.

That Name, or That Glorious Name, or The Name which is not to be expressed: and particularly their Historian *Josephus* tells us, that it was not lawful for them to utter it, or so much as to write it; which if any of them offered to do, he was reckoned guilty of Prophaneness and Blasphemy: And therefore it is not to be met with in any Jewish Writings of human Composure. And even the Translators of the *Septuagint*, as the *Greek Version* of the Old Testament is commonly called, never translate the word *Jehovah* otherways than *Lord*; but when it occurs, they always put *Kyrios* in the place of it; so venerable were the very Letters of that Word and the Sound of it to their Ears. And even in that known place, *Exod. vi. 3.* where it is said, *By my Name JEHOVAH was I not known*; which one would have thought by the very sense of the place, they should have been obliged in the Translation to retain this proper Name, and not translate it by any other; yet they render it by another Word: which shews a kind of veneration for that Name, even to Superstition. Tho' it was not altogether commendable in them to carry the matter so high, yet at the same time it is a very pregnant Evidence, that the current, approved, and established Opinion was, that *Jehovah* was the peculiar Name of the great God; and that both among the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and that it was not used of the Creature. A Testimony of this nature, especially from the *Jews*, the most proper Judges of the use of Words in their

their

their own Language, is of no small weight ; tho' it does not come up to that demonstration of the Point, which we have of it by the express Testimony of the Scriptures already cited. Nay, not only was this Name *Jehovah* used only by the *Jews* to signify the supreme God, but this also obtained even among the *Gentiles*, who worshipped a Plurality of Deities, who had all their respective Names ; yet they always put a difference betwixt these inferior Deities, and supreme *Jove* ; which is nothing else, but a Corruption of this incommunicable Name *Jehovah* ; and this Name *Jove* was never used by them to signify any of the inferior Deities, but only the supreme Being.

But here some object, that this Name *Jehovah* is sometimes given to the Creature ; and therefore does not belong to the Creator ; and consequently it is no demonstration of the proper Divinity of our Saviour, that that Name is ascribed to him.

To this I would answer, That we have already proved, by express Testimony of Scripture, that the Name *Jehovah* is the Name only of the true God ; and therefore to say, that this Name is ascribed to any other, and given to the Creature, is to say, that the Scripture is contradictory. And this Objection, at the bottom, is of a Deistical Extract ; tho' the *Arians* also make use of it, as indeed they are very frequently obliged to fly to the Deist for Protection, and their Principles frequently coincide. But let us hear upon what Foundation they

they say, that in the Scripture the Name *Jehovah* is ascribed to the Creature. Here they make reference to several Scriptures, such as those*, where the Altar which *Moses* erected is called *Jehovah Nissi*, that is, *the Lord is my Banner*; and that erected by *Gideon* †, is called *Jehovah Shalom*, *the God of Peace*; and where it is said ‡, that *Abraham* called the Name of that Place, where *Isaac* was to have been offered up, *Jehovah Jireh*, *the Lord shall provide*; and *Jerusalem* elsewhere is called, *Jehovah Shammah*, *the Lord is there*. But to name these Objections only, is to refute them; because they are Propositions concerning *Jehovah*, and things affirmed of him, and not at all Names either of Things or Persons. As to that *Jehovah Nissi*, and *Jehovah Shalom*, they were not the Names of these Altars built by *Moses* and *Gideon*, but Inscriptions written on them, declaring, that they belonged to *Jehovah*, and were built at his Command. And when it is said, that *Abraham* called the Name of the Place where he was to sacrifice his Son *Isaac*, *Jehovah Jireh*; the Meaning is not, that *Jehovah* was the Name of that Place; the proper Name of that Place was *Moriab*, and it was always known by that Name, and never called either by *Jehovah*, or even by *Jehovah Jireh*, as its proper Name: but only *Abraham* would signify here, by that wonderful Dispensation and Interposition of the divine Providence, who provided the Ram in place

* Exod. xvii. 15. † Judges vi. 24. ‡ Gen. xxii. 14.

place of his Son *Isaac* for a Sacrifice, that what was done there at that time, might be an Encouragement to the Faith of others in future Generations. And when *Jerusalem* is called *Jehovah Shammah, the Lord is there,* the Prophet only is foretelling the Presence of Christ with the Church, the *New Jerusalem*, that he would be with them always to the end of the World; which was a Promise made to the Church, and renewed by Christ himself, after he came in the Flesh*.

Again, when the Ark was carried up to the City of *David*, the Psalmist upon that occasion says, that † *Jehovah went up with a Shout, even the Lord with the sound of a Trumpet.* From whence they infer, that the Ark is called *Jehovah*; but there is no such thing intimated there, as if the Ark was called *Jehovah*; but only upon the Ark's going up, the peculiar Presence of *Jehovah*, who dwelt between the *Cherubims*, went along with it. The same will serve for a Solution to that Objection, that the Ark is called *Jehovah*, because when the Pot of *Manna* was laid up before the Testimony, it is said to be laid up before *Jehovah*; but it is not the Ark that is there called *Jehovah*, but the divine Majesty, who had taken up his special Residence on the Mercy-Seat, which was over the Ark, who is called *Jehovah*.

Moreover, it is farther objected, That the Name *Jehovah* in the Old Testament is applied

* Matt. xxviii. 20.

† Psal. xlvii. 5.

plied to Angels, and therefore it is not the proper Name of the supreme God.

To which I answer, That this Name *Jehovah*, in all the Old Testament, is never given to any created Angel: it is indeed given to the Angel of the Covenant, the second Person of the Trinity, who under the Old-Testament Dispensation frequently made his Appearance to Men, before he for good and all took to himself the human Nature into a personal Union with his divine; and when in that Character, as the Angel or Messenger of the Covenant, he appeared to the Fathers under the Old Testament; as a Prelude of his future Incarnation, he did not act as a simple Messenger, as if he had been a created Angel only, sent of the Father to represent him, as his Ambassador to Men; but he acted as *Jehovah* himself, which Name he bore as the Angel of the Covenant: for he both claimed and allowed divine Honour to be paid him, which would have been utterly inconsistent with his Character, and what he would never have been guilty of, if he had been a simple Messenger, Ambassador, or Representative only of *Jehovah*. When Ambassadors or Representatives of great Persons act in their Master's Name, if they are faithful, they do not usurp that personal Honour due only to their Masters; but they act and speak, and behave themselves every other way, becoming their inferior Station, as Ambassadors and Representatives: but the Angel of the Covenant, when he appeared to the

Fathers, he shewed that he was *Jehovah* himself, in his whole Deportment, and claimed and accepted of all the Honours due to supreme Deity. Which is plain from the Appearance of this Messenger of the Covenant to *Moses*, when he was keeping *Jethro's* Sheep *; it is said, *The Angel of the Lord appeared to him in a Flame of Fire out of the midst of a Bush*: and this Angel is expressly called God, † *God called to him out of the Bush*; and this Angel claims to himself the Title and Honours of the supreme God; for he said to *Moses*, ‖ *I am the God of thy Father, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*: and it is said that *Moses* hid his Face, for he was afraid to look upon God. And afterwards, when *Moses* asked the Name of this Messenger and Angel of the Covenant, and who he should say to the Children of *Israel* he was who sent him, he gave him this Answer, That his Name was, **I AM THAT I AM**; † *And God said unto Moses, thus shalt thou say unto the Children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you*. Where the Angel of the Covenant assumes the Character of the supreme, self-existent, unoriginated Being, which is infinitely more than his Commission could have borne him to and supported him in, if he had been barely the Ambassador or Representative of *Jehovah*, and not *Jehovah* himself.

Moreover, this Angel of the Covenant received divine Worship and Adoration from *Jacob*, when he pray'd to him in these Words,

* *The*

* *The Angel that redeemed me from all Evil, blefs the Lads*: which is far from the Behaviour of a mere created Angel; for these, such of them as are not in a fallen State, refuse this Homage, as that which does not belong to them. 'Tis true, the evil Angels, who have forsaken their first state, affect divine Honours, and *Satan* would have tempted our Saviour himself to pay it to him; but such of them as have continued in their Obedience, reject it with the greatest Horror and Indignation, as an Incroachment on the Dignity of their Master, when they are upon any occasion sent by him, as his Messengers and Ambassadors: and accordingly, we see that the Angel who was sent to *John*, to make a Revelation to him, absolutely refused divine Worship. Before the Angel farther informed him who he was, *John* did not know, but the Angel who conversed with him, had been the Angel of the Covenant, who was wont to appear so frequently to the Fathers, and to whom he knew they paid divine Homage, and therefore he was for doing the same to this created Angel; but he declined the Honour, and would by no means be worshipped. † *And I John saw these things and heard them, and when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the Angel which shewed me these things; then saith he unto me, See thou do it not, for I am thy Fellow-Servant, and of thy Brethren the Prophets, and of them which keep the Sayings of this Book;*

* Gen. xlviii. 16.

† Rev. xxii. 9.

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worship God. Here the Angel gives the Reason why he refused and declined divine Homage; and it is the same with that which our Saviour gave to *Satan*, to wit, that none have a Claim to divine Worship, but those who are by Nature God: and if the Angel of the Covenant had not been God, he would have declined being worshipped by the Fathers under the Old Testament, and by his Disciples under the New.

Thus we see that the Name *Jehovah* is an incommunicable Name, being expressive of Self-Existence and supreme Deity, and is never applied to a mere Creature, were he of never so high a Rank; and yet that this Name, which is the proper Name of the supreme God, and his alone, is applied to Christ, is a plain Argument of his supreme Deity; for this Glory the Father would not give to another, no not to the Son, if he was not God by Nature.





S E R M O N IX.

I JOHN 5. 7.

For there are three that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost : and these three are one.

WE have seen in the preceeding Discourse, that the incommunicable Name of God, even *Jehovah*, is given to our Saviour in Scripture ; we shall likewise find, that other Names of the Deity are ascribed to him ; and that too, in a sense, in which they can only be given to the true God, to wit, LORD and GOD. 'Tis true, these Names are given sometimes to Creatures, in an improper and figurative Sense, because of some faint Resemblance which these Creatures have of the divine Perfections ; but whenever these Names of LORD and GOD are given to the Creatures, they are always determined as to the Sense of them, and so cautioned, by some Epithet annexed to them, or by something in the Context, which sufficiently secures us from mistaking them, as if they were given and applied to them in a proper Sense : but when

these Names are applied to our Saviour, the Epithets which accompany them, and the Context where they are applied to him, are so far from discovering, that they are applied to him in an improper and figurative Sense, that they determine sufficiently, that they are to be taken in a proper Sense, in the same proper and strict Sense, as when they are applied and ascribed to God the Father.

As for instance, the word GOD is sometimes ascribed to the finite Creature: but that we may not be led to Idolatry by such an Ascription of the Name of the Deity to it, and induced to pay that Honour to it, which is only due to God the Creator, the Holy Ghost, who indicted the Scripture, sufficiently guards us from any Mistake, by adding some diminutive Character, whereby we may know, that the word GOD is not meant in a proper, but figurative Sense. Thus when the word GOD is applied to Idols, they are called *Strange Gods, Molten Gods, New Gods*; and those who worship them are called *Brutish, or Foolish*: and when the word God is applied to Princes and great Men, at the same time there is something added, which shews, that they are not Gods by Nature, that they are not the true God in a proper Sense. Thus Princes are called Gods*; but then at the same time it is declared, that these Princes, who are called Gods, are liable to be controlled by the great and only true God; *God standeth*

* Psalm lxxxii. 1.

S E R M O N IX. 199

in the Congregation of the Mighty; he judgeth among the Gods. - And in the same Psalm † they are again called *Gods*; but at the same time it is declared, *That they shall die like Men.* It is also said, *That Moses was a God to Pharaoh**; but at the same time it is declared, that he was but a *made God*; that is, not a God by Nature, but the great God's Minister: so that none are in any danger of mistaking such for the true God, and paying divine Honours to them. But the Case is infinitely otherwise, when the word God is applied and ascribed to the Son, the second Person of the Trinity; there is no diminutive Epithet added to him, whereby we are guarded from mistaking him for the supreme God. The term God is applied to him absolutely, without any thing added in the Context to detract from his being God by Nature, God in the strictest and most proper Sense; as is plain from the Passage, *The Word was with God, and the Word was God* †. Nay, so far is the Context here from insinuating any thing to detract from the proper Deity of the Son, who is called God, that there are other Epithets added, which prove him undeniably to be the supreme God, God in the strictest and most proper Sense of the Word; for 'tis expressly said, that *all things were made by him, and that without him was not any thing made that was made* ‡: which Character of Creator of all things, is the chief

O 4

Ground

† Ver. 6, 7. * Exod. vii. 1. † John i. 1. ‡ Ver. 3

Ground on which the Father himself claims divine Honours.

We have another Text of Scripture, where the word God is applied to our Saviour, and such Epithets along with it, as are so far from determining the Sense of it, as if it was applied to him only improperly and in a figurative manner, that they clearly prove, that it is applied to him in the strictest and most proper Sense, even in such a Sense as does not belong to the Creature, and can only be affirmed of him who is the supreme God. The Text is this, *Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever* * : now that this is spoken of God the Son, and not of God the Father, is plain from its being applied expressly to the Son, by the Apostle Paul; *But unto the Son he saith, thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a Scepter of Righteousness is the Scepter of thy Kingdom* †. Now there are in the Psalm Epithets added to the Name of God, by which he is expressly called, which plainly determine it to be taken in a strict and proper, and not in a figurative Sense; for there is an express Command given to worship him, *He is thy Lord, and worship thou him* || ; and it is said, *that his Name shall be remembered in all Generations, and that the People shall praise him for ever and ever* ‡. These are by no means diminutive Expressions to detract from the proper Deity of God the Son, as if the word God were applied to him in an inferior Sense,

* *Ist* r. xlv. 6. † *Heb.* i. 8. || *Ver.* 13. ‡ *Ver.* 17.

Sense, than that in which it is applied to the Father. 'Tis true, as there are Expressions, which to a Demonstration prove, that the word God is applied to him, in the strictest and most proper Sense; so there are things affirmed of him, which could not be said of him, if he had been God only, and not Man also; for the Mediator there described is held forth to us, as one who was to have two Natures in one Person. And as these Expressions, which can only be understood with respect to his Deity prove, that the word God is applied to him, in the highest Sense; so these other Expressions, which cannot be understood of the Deity, nor applied to that, shew, that there was also another Nature to be in the Mediator, to which these inferior Characters belong'd; as when it is said, that his God should anoint him with the Oil of Gladness above his Fellows, that is to be understood with respect to his human Nature; and if it was not for this, that he hath two Natures, the Description given of him would be nothing else than a Heap of Contradictions. But on the Supposition, that the Mediator hath two Natures in one Person, a divine and a human Nature, it is easily accounted for, why the Description of his Person should consist of Characters so infinitely different from one another, even because he was to have two Natures, as widely different from one another, as these Characters themselves are,

are, by which his distinct Natures are described, that is to say, infinitely different.

There is another Scripture, where the Name of the Deity, God, is applied to our Saviour; and that is, *Feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own Blood*.* Here the Church of God is said to be purchased with his own Blood, which determines the Sense to be, God the Son, who purchased the Church; because neither God the Father, nor God the Holy Ghost, did ever assume the human Nature into a personal Union with the divine; and therefore they never had Blood, that is, the human Nature, wherewithal to purchase the Church; and therefore this Text can only be understood of God the Son, who was made Flesh, by assuming the human Nature into a personal Union with the divine. Since then, it can only be understood of God the Son, and not of any of the other two Persons of the Deity, the name God, being applied to him, is a Proof of his proper Deity; for this reason, that the Church, which he is here said to purchase with his own Blood, is called his Church, *Feed the Church of God*; he is declared to have a Property in it, which raises him infinitely above the Condition of any created Being; for no mere Creature can claim that high Prerogative, that the Church is his, the Church is the peculiar Property of him, who is the true God, God by Nature. And therefore we see, that an Interest in the Church,

Church, as a divine Prerogative, is in a peculiar manner ascribed to God the Son; and others, who are mere Creatures, are intirely excluded from all right of Property in it, by the Apostle, when he says of our Saviour, that *He was counted worthy of more Glory than Moses, in as much as he, who hath builded the House, hath more Honour than the House* *. And our Saviour's Property in the Church is farther illustrated by a comparison of him with *Moses*, who was but a Servant in God's House, the Church: but our Saviour is a Son in *his own House*, by which he is distinguished from a Minister, Ambassador, or Representative of the Father in his Church, as *Moses* and others; to whom the Title of God is given in an improper and figurative Sense. Christ is the Proprietor of his Church himself, because he is the Builder of this House, as the Apostle argues; and that he not only built his Church, but also built, that is, created all things; *He*, says the Apostle, *that built his Church is the Builder of all things, he that built all things is God* †; God in the strictest and most proper Sense of the Word. And indeed our Saviour's building this House of God, his Church, is as evident a Demonstration of his proper Deity, as his being the Builder and Creator of all things; nay, the divine Perfections and Excellencies of the supreme God have displayed themselves, in a more eminent degree in our Saviour, in his being the Builder of his Church,

* Heb. iii. 3, 4, 6.

† Ver. 6.

Church, than what they did, in his being the Builder of all other things. So that the Propriety of Christ in his Church, as the Builder of it, having purchased it with his own Blood, is as plain a Demonstration of his proper Deity, as the Character of being the Creator of all things, is a Demonstration of the proper and supreme Deity either of the Father or the Son. From all which it plainly follows, that, since the Title God is given to the second Person of the Trinity, and that too, with an additional Circumstance determining, that that Title is ascribed to him in the highest Sense, (in a proper, and not in a figurative Sense) since he is here said to be the Proprietor of the Church, and the Builder of all things; it follows to a Demonstration, that therefore he is the true and supreme God.

We have another Passage of Scripture, where the name God is applied to Jesus Christ; *Behold a Virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call his Name Immanuel**; compared with what we had in *St. Matthew*, where this Passage is applied to Christ expressly; the Words are these: *Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled, which was spoken of the Lord by the Prophet, saying, Behold a Virgin shall be with Child, and shall bring forth a Son, and they shall call his Name Immanuel; which, being interpreted, is God with us* †. Now that this is to be understood of

* Isa. vii. 14.

† Mat. i. 22, &c.

of God the Son, and not of God the Father, is plain, in that he, who is here called God with us, is the same, who was born of the Virgin as to his human Nature, even Jesus; for the Father never assum'd to himself that human Body, which was born of the Virgin: besides, the Phrase, *God with us*, determines it plainly to be the second Person of the Trinity here spoke of. For altho' the Father, by virtue of his Omnipresence, may be said, in a general Sense, to be with us, as he is with all things; yet this Phrase, *God with us*, denotes a more emphatical Sense; it holds out to us the Presence of God the Son, in a more eminent and special Manner, even his personal Union with our Nature, and in it tabernacling for some time here in the World. And it is explained by another Phrase, of the same importance, by the Evangelist *John* *, where the Word, who in the preceding Part of that Chapter was said to be with God, and is said to be God, is there said to be manifested in the Flesh, and to dwell among us; *the Word was made of Flesh, and dwelt among us*. This Title *Immanuel*, *God with us*, is further explain'd, by the Apostle *Paul*, who stiles Christ, *God manifested in the Flesh* †.

Moreover, our Saviour not only called God by the same Apostle, but an Epithet is annexed, which proves him to be God in the highest Sense of the Word; the Words are these: *Of whom, as concerning the Flesh, Christ came,*
who

* John i. 14.

† 1 Tim. iii. 16

who is over all God blessed for ever *. This is an Expression so high, and it is so far from detracting from his Character, as if he was not God in the strictest Sense, even the one only supreme God, that it is the very Epithet, by which the supreme Deity of the Father is express'd, by the same Apostle, in these Words; *God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore* †. In the former Text, the Son is said to be *God over all blessed for ever*; here the Father is said to be *God blessed for evermore*.

It would be endless to enumerate all those Passages, where our Saviour is stiled God, without any diminutive Epithet to detract from his proper Deity, or determine the Sense to a figurative Signification. In the 20th Verse of this Chapter, where my Text lies, he is called the true God, and eternal Life; *we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an Understanding that we may know him that is true; that we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ; This is the true God, and eternal Life.* According to the Stile of this Apostle, our Saviour in this Epistle, and in his Gospel, is frequently stiled Life, and eternal Life; which is an Epithet never given to the Father: tho' indeed the Father is said to give eternal Life, yet he is never stiled the Life, nor eternal Life, as the Son is. Now here in the Text just cited, he whom the Apostle stiles eternal Life,

* Rom. ix. 5.

† 2 Cor. xi. 31.

Life, which can only refer to our Saviour, is also call'd the True God; *This is the true God and eternal Life.* He is also call'd, * *The mighty God*; and many other Epithets there are added to him, which do not detract from his proper Deity, but rather determine the sense in such a manner, as that it is plainly to be understood of the supreme Being; for he is also called, *the Wonderful, Counsellor, the everlasting Father*; because he is the Parent, Original and Author of all things.

Moreover, as the Name of God is ascribed to our Blessed Lord, and that in a higher sense than it is ever ascribed to any Creature; even in a sense in which it can only be understood of the supreme God; so also the Name LORD is ascribed to him in a higher sense than it is ever applied to any mere Creature, even with the addition of such Epithets and Characters, as plainly shew that it is to be understood in such a sense, as can only belong to the supreme God. The Apostle said to *Timothy*, † *I give thee this Charge, that thou keep this Commandment without spot, unrebukable until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.* And then it follows, ‡ *Who only hath Immortality, dwelling in the Light which no Man can approach to, whom no Man hath seen, nor can see;* to wit, (with respect to his divine Nature, which he is there describing.) Now these
Charac-

* Isa. ix. 6. † 1 Tim. vi. 14. ‡ ver. 16.

Characters added there to his Title of Lord, plainly shew, that that Title is given to him in a sense superior to that Signification of it, when it is applied to the Creature: for as there are Gods many in the inferior sense of that Word, so there are also Lords many, in an inferior Signification. But when our Saviour is stiled *Lord of Lords*; that plainly determines the sense of the Word, that it is applied to him in the same sense, as when it is applied to the Father, denoting the supreme God. And elsewhere the Lamb is called Lord of Lords, and King of Kings; which cannot be understood of the Father, for he is never called so in Scripture: the words are, *These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them; for he is Lord of Lords, and King of Kings**. Now that this Title and Name of Lord of Lords, denotes the supreme God, will appear farther from this, that it is the very Title by which the *Anti-trinitarians* themselves own the supreme God is described by Moses: † *For the Lord your God is God of Gods and Lord of Lords, a great God, a mighty and terrible, which regardeth not Persons, nor taketh Reward*. And therefore we have as much reason to believe, that the Lamb, the second Person of the Trinity, is the supreme God, when he is described to us by the Name of Lord of Lords, as we have to believe, that the Father is the supreme God, when he is described to us by the same Name.

We

* Rev. xvii. 14.

† Deut. x. 17.

We have another Passage of Scripture, where our Saviour is expressly called Lord, and that too with additional Circumstances, which determine the sense of the word to be understood in the highest Signification, denoting the supreme God; * *The Lord said to my Lord, sit thou at my right Hand, until I make thine Enemies thy Footstool.* Now that the Person whom David here calls his Lord, is the Lord Jesus Christ, is plain from this; † *When the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them saying, what think ye of Christ? whose Son is he? They say unto him, the Son of David.* Here these Pharisees would intimate, that he was no more, and had no other Nature than that which he derived from David, as being one of his Posterity. But our Saviour undeceives them of this Error, if they would have received it; and proved from this Passage, that he had another Nature, even a divine, whereby he was David's Lord, as was hinted already; and therefore that he was the supreme God, as to his divine Nature, as well as he was David's Son, with respect to his human Nature. ‡ *He said unto them, how then doth David in Spirit call him Lord? saying, the Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand, till I make thine Enemies thy Footstool; if David then call him Lord, how is he then his Son? that is, how can he be no more than the Son of David? If he was David's Lord, he must needs be something more, even the Son of*

P God;

* Psalm cx. 1.

† Mat. xxii. 41.

‡ Ver. 43.

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God; that is, the supreme God himself, otherwise he could not be *David's* Lord. The *Pharisees* here were so struck with the force of our Saviour's Reasoning, that they were quite silenced, and durst not ask him any more questions. Moreover, that the Name Lord is to be taken in the highest sense, will appear from this, that the Person called *David's* Lord, is the same who makes God's People willing by the Day of his Power; * *Thy People shall be willing in the Day of thy Power.* Now it is by the Power of the supreme, the most high God, that Men are made willing; and nothing short of this can do it: and therefore when it is said, that *David's* Lord exerted this almighty Power, the word Lord must be taken in the highest sense, since no Lord of any inferior degree was capable to exert that almighty Power, by which Men are made willing and converted. But to put this matter beyond all dispute, and to shew that the word Lord, here applied to our Saviour, must be taken in the highest sense, as denoting the supreme God, this very Person, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is here called *David's* Lord, is said to be he, † *who laid the Foundations of the Earth, and that the Heavens are the Works of his Hands:* which sure can be none else but the supreme God. Nay, this very part of the Text, in which our Saviour is called *David's* Lord, is applied word for word to Christ; and at the same

* Psalm cx. 3. † Heb. i. 10, &c.

same time he is said to be the Creator both of Heaven and Earth.

Thus I have shewed that the Name Lord is applied to our Saviour in that highest sense, in which it can only be applied to the supreme God; and therefore his being called Lord in that highest sense, is a demonstrative Proof of his true and proper Deity: for when it is used in that highest sense, it becomes an incommunicable Name; and cannot be ascribed to any mere Creature, without incurring the Guilt of the most dreadful Blasphemy.

There is only one Text further which I would mention upon this Head; and it is the more remarkable, that in it, our Saviour is stiled both Lord and God at once; and that too with this very special and peculiar Circumstance, that religious Worship due only to the supreme God, is ascribed to him: which remarkable Circumstance plainly determines the sense of these two Names Lord and God, to be taken in the highest Signification; it is this: *Thomas, the Disciple of our Saviour, upon a full Conviction of the Truth and Reality of his Resurrection from the Dead, address him with the most profound religious Adoration, due only to the most high God, in these words, My Lord and my God. Then Thomas answered, and said unto him, My Lord and my God**. If our Saviour had not been God, if he had not been Lord, in the highest and strictest sense of these words; in such a sense as carried

* John xx. 28.

along with it a title to religious Adoration, and comprehended in it a Right to Worship, which is due only to the supreme God, our Saviour would never have suffered *Thomas* to go undeceived of so fatal an Error; but would have sharply reprov'd him, and instructed him how to address him in a manner becoming his true Character. He would never have accepted of that religious Homage and Adoration, which belonged only to the Father, upon supposition that he himself was not God equal with him, and possessed of the same divine Excellencies and Perfections, which gave him an equal Claim to the most profound Worship and religious Adoration, which the Father has a right to. Can it be supposed that our Saviour himself would have been less tender of the Rights of the Deity, or more ready to make a sacrilegious Incroachment on them, and invade these Prerogatives, which are purely divine, than *Paul* and *Barnabas* were? who, when the People of *Lystra* had seen them work a miracle, they concluded that they were Gods, and both Priest and People were directly for offering sacrifice to them; to *Paul*, under the Name of *Jupiter*; and *Barnabas*, under the Name of *Mercury*. But so far were they from encroaching upon the Prerogative of the true God, and so far from allowing that Worship and Honour which was due only to him, to be paid to themselves, that they would not so much as admit of that Worship to be paid to them, nor accept of that Honour, which was given

to that which was but in Men's Opinion a Deity, and had the Reputation of being God. The Apostles, *Paul* and *Barnabas*, knew very well, that those Deities to whom the Heathen Priests and People at *Lystra* offered Oxen in Sacrifice, and in honour of whom they made Garlands, were Idols, and not Gods by nature: Yet because they had the reputation of being Gods among those blinded Heathens, they would not so much as accept of that Worship and religious Honour, which was paid even but to them. So far were they from making any Infringement upon the Prerogative of the true God, by accepting of, or allowing that Honour due only to him, to be paid to themselves. They must needs then have a strange opinion of our Saviour, who suppose him to be any thing inferior to the supreme God; and yet at the same time own, that he admitted that religious Worship should be paid to him by his Disciples, and accepted of it when offered to him by them. This is so far from entertaining an opinion of him, as being truly and in a proper sense God, that it is to deny him to be an innocent Man. For on the supposition that he was no more than a Creature, and yet so presumptuously to arrogate to himself, to claim, and accept of divine Honours, is to say, that he was the most abandon'd of all Impostors; and, with reverence be it spoke, the wickedest of all Criminals, thus to make so daring an attempt upon the divine Prerogative. I would not have ventured so much as to pronounce

these Words, which must needs be so very shocking to the ears of a Christian Assembly. But the Absurdity of those Principles of the *Anti-trinitarians* I am endeavouring to refute, make it necessary, in order to expose the rampant, the audacious, and consummate Blasphemy, which is the necessary Consequent of them.

Did the Apostles *Paul* and *Barnabas*, when these People of *Lystra* were going to offer Sacrifice to them, bear their Testimony against so horrid a Wickedness? Did they, with a flaming Zeal for the Glory of God, who is jealous of his Honour, and will not allow it to be given to another, did they rent their Clothes, and in detestation of so horrid a Crime, run in among the People, crying out, and saying, *Sirs, why do ye do these things, we also are Men of like Passions with you?* And can it be supposed that our Saviour, *who knew no Sin, and in whose mouth there was no Guile*, should suffer Idolatry, in the grossest Act of it, to pass without reproof, and that too where himself was the Object of it? Were *Peter* and *John*, when they had cured the lame Man *, by the Interposition of the divine Power, so jealous, lest it should have been an occasion of Idolatry, and lest the *Jews* should have entertained too high an Opinion of them, as if they had performed that Miracle by their own Power, and not by the Power of Christ, the supreme God? And shall we suppose, that if Christ himself had

* ACTS iii. 11, 13.

had not been truly God, that he would have given any Encouragement, either to his Disciples or others, to pay divine Honours to him, if he had not had a just Claim to them, by being the most high God? We see that *Peter* and *John* renounced all claim to the Honour which redounded from the performance of the Miracle, and referred it all to Christ, to whom only it was due; say they, *Why marvel ye at this, ye Men of Israel? or why look ye so earnestly on us? as though by our own Power or Holiness we had made this Man to walk; it is Faith in the Name of Christ, the Prince of Life, that hath made this Man strong, whom ye see and know.* They refer the whole Glory of the Miracle to the Power of Christ; *Yea, says Peter, the Faith that is by him hath given this Man perfect Soundness, in the presence of you all.* But so far was our Saviour from declining religious Worship, and disclaiming his Right and Title to it, that on the contrary, on all proper Occasions he discovered his Divinity, and displayed the Glory of his Deity, even when he was **tabernacled** here in the Flesh, to those who had Eyes to see, and to those to whom Hearts were given from above to overcome those Prejudices which others laboured under. And even in his Conferences with the *Jews*, his inveterate Enemies, before whom he had the greatest reason to be cautious and circumspect in his Conduct, and to give them no just handle against himself, he did not stick to assert his proper Deity, and Equality with the

Father; for which they sought to kill him, as being guilty of Blasphemy, as most certainly he would have been, if he had not been truly God. We have a very pregnant instance of this; † *Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he had not only broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.* Now if our Saviour had not given out himself truly to be God equal with the Father, he would with the greatest Abhorrence and Detestation have disowned this Charge, and been at pains to undeceive them of their Mistake, and to shew that they misunderstood him: but so far was our Saviour from correcting them in this, as if they had been in a mistake, that he was equal with the Father, that in all his Discourse to them afterwards, he in stronger Terms asserts his Equality with the Father, by shewing that he exerted the same almighty Power as the Father himself exerted: that as he raised the Dead, so also did the Son, and that too for that very purpose, that Mankind might have a just foundation of paying the same Honour to the Son, which they do to the Father. || *For as the Father raiseth up the Dead, and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will; that all Men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father.* Now that our Saviour, immediately after a Charge of Blasphemy was laid against him by the *Jews*, for making himself equal with God, should with the same Breath over again assert his

† John v. 18, &c.

|| Ver. 21, 22.

his Equality with the Father, and give a Reason why he claimed the same Honour with him, instead of vindicating himself from so dreadful a Crime, and declaring his utter Abhorrence of it, is altogether inconsistent with his being innocent. And if he had been so gross an Impostor, as to give out himself to be equal with God the Father, while at the bottom he was but a mere Man, it would have been altogether inconsistent with the divine Perfections, to countenance either him or his Disciples so far, as to endow them with a power of working Miracles, or attest the Truth of what so vile Impostors taught, by any supernatural Interposition of Heaven in their behalf. But more of this, when we come to the fourth thing proposed, to shew the true and proper Deity of God the Son, from his claiming and accepting that Worship which is only due to the supreme God. I had no other view in insisting on this here, than to shew that the Names Lord and God, given to our Saviour by his Disciple *Thomas* in a way of Adoration, and thereby owning him as the true and proper Object of religious Adoration and Worship, is a proof, that these Names are ascribed to him, in a sense superior to that wherein they are ascribed to the Creature; and that they are given to him in the same incommunicable sense, in which they are only ascribed to the supreme God.

And

And thus I have delivered what I think is sufficient to make good the first Argument, by which I proposed to prove the supreme Deity of God the Son; and I have shewed largely, that the incommunicable Name *Jehovah* is applied to Jesus Christ, which is declared in Scripture to be the Name alone of him who is the most high God; and to be that part of the divine Glory, which God will not give to any other, who is not by Nature God, the one only and living God: And therefore, since that Name is given to Jesus Christ, he must of consequence be the same one only living and true God with the Father.

I have also shewed that the Names, Lord and God, are ascribed to Jesus Christ, with such additional Epithets and Circumstances in the Context, as prove that they are to be understood in the same high sense, as when they are applied to the Father; and therefore are a proof of his supreme Deity, as well as they are of that of the Father.





S E R M O N X.

I JOHN 5. 7.

For there are three that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost : and these three are one.

UNDER the preceding head, for proof of the true and proper Deity of Jesus, the Son of God, and that he is the one only supreme God, equal with the Father, I shew'd that those Names which are peculiar to the Deity, are ascribed to him; particularly, that the incommunicable Name *Jehovah*, which is never ascribed to any Creature in any sense, is yet ascribed to the second Person of the Trinity, God the Son. I have also shewed, that the other Names whereby the supreme God is described to us in Scripture, are also applied to him, and that in the same sense wherein they are applied to the Father, and not in that inferior sense wherein sometimes they are, in a figurative way, ascribed to the Creature.

II.

II. I proceed now to the second Thing proposed ; which was to prove the proper Deity of the Son, by shewing that he is possessed of those Perfections and Excellencies which are peculiar to the Deity, and which are inseparable from the divine Essence. So that if it shall be made appear, that he has exerted almighty Power, Wisdom, and other Perfections, which are peculiar to supreme Deity, it will be evident, beyond all reasonable contradiction, that he is truly God, God in the highest sense, the supreme God, and of the same Essence with the Father. But before I enter upon the proof of this, that the divine Perfections are ascribed to the Son, whereby it will appear, that the divine Nature and Essence belong to him ; I shall mention some Scriptures which expressly ascribe the divine Nature and Essence to him ; which two give mutual Light to one another : for as we may justly infer his having the divine Perfections and Excellencies, from his having the divine Nature and Essence, because the divine Essence cannot possibly be and subsist without the divine Perfections ; so on the other hand we may, with equal strength of argument, infer from his having the divine Perfections and Excellencies, that of consequence he must have the divine Nature and Essence : for these two are so closely linked together, that they are absolutely inseparable, and the one cannot be without the other ; and by proving any one of them to belong to Christ,

Christ,

Christ, we prove them both. For by proving that he has the divine Nature, we prove that he has all those Perfections, which are necessarily connected in the nature of the thing with it: as also, on the other hand, by proving that he has the divine Perfections, we at the same time prove, that he must needs be possessed of the divine Nature and Essence; because the divine Perfections can as little subsist where the divine Nature is not, as the divine Nature and Essence can, where the divine Perfections are not. Now although the Holy Scripture had taught us nothing relating to the divine Nature and Essence of Christ expressly, yet if it had taught us, that he had the divine Perfections, we need not be at a loss in this matter; for from thence we might easily conclude, that he had the divine Nature. Nor, although the Word was silent as to our Saviour's being possessed of the divine Perfections, yet if it taught us, that he had the same Nature and Essence with the Father, that is, the true divine Nature and Essence, we needed in that case be as little at a loss, with respect to the divine Perfections being in him: for upon our having sufficient Evidence that he has the divine Nature, from the Principles of the very Light of Nature, we may conclude, that therefore he must of consequence have all the divine Perfections. But blessed be God, such is the shining Clearness of the Divinity of Jesus Christ in the Scripture, that we have not only abundant Evidence, and express Testimony
for

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for it, that he is possessed of the divine Nature and Essence; but also, that he is possessed of all the divine Perfections.

I proceed therefore to mention some Scriptures, which expressly ascribe to our Saviour the divine Nature, Essence, or Godhead: and for this purpose we may consider the Apostle *Paul's* Words, where he cautions Christians against a pretended Philosophy, which was but vain Deceit, which had no other Tendency, but to lead Men from Christ; which is directly contrary to the Nature of true Philosophy, and the right Use of our natural Powers, which rather facilitates our coming to Christ. *Beware lest any Man spoil you thro' Philosophy, and vain Deceit, after the Traditions of Men, after the Rudiments of the World, and not after Christ*: then he adds, *For in him dwells all the Fulness of the Godhead bodily; and ye are compleat in him, which is the Head of all Principality and Power* †. The Godhead's dwelling in him bodily imports, that strict and personal Union, which there is betwixt his divine and human Natures: Here we may take notice, that it is not said of Christ, that God dwells in him, which is an Expression of a much lower Importance, than that the Godhead dwells in him. It may be said, and is said, of the Saints, that God dwells in them; but it is never said, that the Godhead dwells in them. And lest it should be imagined, that Christ had only the Presence

† Col. ii. 9, 10.

fence of God dwelling in him, as Saints may have, it is not only said, that the Godhead dwells in him, which cannot be said of any Saint, without the most horrid Guilt of Blaphemy; but the Expression is rendered more emphatical by this, that it is said, that the Fulness of the Godhead dwells in him. Particular Saints may have the special Presence of God with them; which, in Scripture Stile, is called God's dwelling in them: they may have his gracious and special Presence with them to supply all their Wants, and to furnish them, with all those Necessaries, which their particular Case calls for. But it is utterly incompetent and inconsistent, with their State, as Creatures, that the Fulness of God should dwell in them; much more is it inconsistent, that the Godhead should dwell in them; and far less, that the Fulness of the Godhead should dwell in them. The Fulness of the Godhead never dwelt in any, but in him, who was truly God: but the Expression here is yet raised higher, and it is said, not only that the Godhead dwells in him, and that the Fulness of the Godhead dwells in him, but that *all the Fulness of the Godhead dwells in him*. This is an Expression so high and emphatical, and holds forth the Essence, Nature, and Substance of the supreme God, in so strong a manner, that it is hard to conceive, how the divine Nature of Christ could be evidenc'd to Mortals in Language more significant. And if the *Arians* and other *Anti-trinitarians* will but indulge

dulge us so far, as to make the Supposition, that the Lord Jesus Christ is truly the supreme God, and that the Spirit of God had a mind to reveal that Truth to Mankind; what more proper Words, what more emphatical Expressions could he have used, which are capable of being understood by Men, than to say, that *All the Fulness of the Godhead* dwelt in him? Moreover, I would observe, upon this Expression, that it seems to have been peculiarly calculated to refute the *Arian* Doctrine, according to the Turn which that Error has taken in the Church of God at this day; as if the Spirit of God, who indicted the Scriptures, foreseeing, that some thro' their subtilty would grant, that all the divine Perfections belonged to Jesus Christ, except Supremacy, Self-Origination, Independency, and necessary Existence; I say, the Spirit of God foreseeing, that the Controversy was to take this Turn, he seems purposely to have secured the Church, by this very Passage of Scripture against this Error, and furnished them with an Antidote to refute it, by revealing unto Mankind, that *All the Fulness of the Godhead dwells in Jesus Christ*; that not only infinite Power, infinite Wisdom, infinite Duration, and other Perfections, which the *Semi-Arians* allow to dwell in him, but also that Supremacy, Self-Origination, Independency, and necessary Existence dwell in him. For if these dwell not in him, all the Fulness of the Godhead does not dwell in him; for these Perfections belong

belong necessarily to the *Fulness of the Godhead*, as well as the other Perfections, which they allow to dwell in him. And by the by, as I hinted in a former Discourse, it is a glaring Absurdity, and contrary to all the Maxims and Principles both of Philosophy and Divinity, to say, that a Being is possess'd of any one of the divine Perfections, and not of them all; it is no less than an absurd Contradiction to the Nature of the thing: for it supposes him to be God, by having any one divine Perfection, and at the same time not to be God, because he wants another; for that Being cannot be God, in whom all the *Fulness of the Godhead* does not dwell.

Some object here against the Sense of the word *Godhead*, that it signifies no more than extraordinary Gifts conferred on Christ, or the Authority, which he had from God, to go about the Work, which he came into the World for. But this is a Sense in which the Word is never used, nor is it capable of it; and to affix such a Sense to it, so remote from its natural Signification, does nothing but expose the *Anti-trinitarian* Cause, by shewing to what desperate Shifts they are reduced, when they are obliged to fly to such Evasions, which are so vastly ridiculous and extravagant.

But to proceed; there is another Passage of Scripture, where the divine Nature is ascribed to our Saviour, which is this: *Let this Mind be in you, which was also in Jesus Christ; who being in the FORM of God, thought it no Rob-*

bery to be equal with God *. By that Expression, *the Form of God*, we are to understand the divine Nature and Essence, and it is capable of no other meaning; and that this is the meaning of it will appear from the use of that Word among the Learned at that time, when this Epistle was wrote, who understood by the Form of any thing its Nature, Essence and essential Properties. 'Tis true, the Scriptures being designed for a Standard for all Ages, has not many of these ways of speaking, which are peculiar to any particular Age; yet there are Instances of some, and the Lord in his Providence has so ordered it, that these Customs, to which there are Allusions in Scripture, and which have been peculiar to any particular Age, are handed down to us in History; and where there are any Expressions, which have been peculiar to any particular Age, such is the Goodness of God, that he has helped us to the Sense of of them, by the Remains of ancient History, which he has preserved: so that we are not at a loss, if we will lay aside Prejudices and a cavilling Disposition, to find out the Sense of such Expressions. Now of this nature is this Expression, *the Form of God*; all who have any tolerable Acquaintance with the ancient Philosophy, know very well, that, among them, the *Form* of a thing and the *Essence* of it, stood for the same thing. Hence it is, that we have that celebrated Phrase, so common among all Philosophers, *FORMA DAT REI ESSE*,

* Philip. ii. 5, 6.

ESSE, 'Tis the Form which constitutes the Essence of the thing. Nor is it any longer than the last Century, since that way of speaking came to be disused by Philosophers, and with some is not quite out of use even at this day. So that we see, that this Phrase, *the Form of God*, must signify the Nature and Essence of God, and that according to the usual acceptation of the Word, both several Centuries before the Incarnation of Christ, and for sixteen Centuries since; for during all that time, the Form of a Thing signified and passed for its Nature and Essence.

But altho' we had no Evidence from the common acceptation of the Word, that the Form of God signified his Nature and Essence; yet the very sense of the Place, and the Connection of the latter Clause of the Verse with the former part of it plainly shews, that by the Form of God, or Christ's being in the Form of God, must be understood of his having the divine Nature or Essence, and that it is capable of no other sense; so as to make the latter Clause of the Verse to cohere and be consistent with the former, and so as to make the Apostle speak good sense. For in the former part of the Verse, the Apostle is giving the reason, why our Saviour did arrogate to himself the Dignity, and why he claim'd the Honour of being equal with the Father: and the reason he gives for this is, that he was in the Form of God; therefore he thought it no Robbery to be equal with God. Now if we understand by Christ's being in the Form of God,

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his being possessed of the divine Nature and Essence, then the Apostle's Reasoning will hold good ; and the Foundation, which he lays for our Saviour's claiming that supreme Dignity of being equal with God, is sufficient to bear the Superstructure which he builds upon it: for his having the Nature and Essence of God, is a just and sufficient reason for his claiming Equality with the Father ; and nothing else can lay a sufficient Foundation for that high Claim ; and unless our Saviour had been truly possessed of the divine Nature and Essence, and in the Form of God in that sense, it would have been Robbery in him in the highest degree, to arrogate and claim to himself that Dignity, of being equal with the Father.

But on the other hand, if by the Form of God we understand any thing else than the divine Essence or Nature, we shall never be able to make the Apostle's way of Reasoning here in the Text just ; for if we understand by being in the Form of God, with some *Antitrinitarians*, that Christ had not the divine Nature, but only that he in a glorious manner, sometimes *in a bright Cloud*, at other times *in a Flame of Fire*, appeared to Men, and at other times *with an Host of Angels*: I say, if we suppose, that that Expression carries no more in it than this, his so appearing without his having truly the divine Nature and Essence, could never have saved him from being guilty of Robbery, in making himself equal with God.

His

His appearance in a bright Cloud, or in a Flame of Fire, or attended with an Host of Angels, is no more than what a mere Creature, which had not the divine Nature and Essence, might do; and could never lay a Foundation for his claiming an Equality with the Father upon it: and consequently that cannot be the sense of the Expression, *his being in the Form of God*; for the true Sense of that Expression must be something which gives him a just Claim to Equality with the Father; and that can be nothing short of his having the divine Nature and Essence, according to the Apostle's Reasoning; because he gives his being in the Form of God, as the reason why he thought it no Robbery to be equal with him.

There is an Objection here, which some make against our Translation of the words of the latter Clause of this Verse; and they say, that in place of these words, *he thought it no Robbery to be equal with God*, the words ought to be translated, *he did not affect the Honour to be equal with God*: and they would justify this Translation from a Passage out of *Heliiodorus*, where ἠγείσθαι ἄρπαγμα signifies to covet or affect the Honour of. But let it be carefully observed, that the word here used by the Apostle is another word than that which is used by *Heliiodorus*, and of a different Signification: the word used by *Heliiodorus* is, ἄρπαγμα, and that used by the Apostle here in this Text is, ἄρπαγμαον; and to infer, that because ἠγείσθαι ἄρπαγμα in *Heliiodorus*, may signify

to covet or affect the Honour of, that therefore ἠγέσθαι ἄρπαγμα here in this Text must signify the same, is a wide Consequence; and what no Interpreter can justify, since the words are both different of themselves, and known to be of a different Signification.

Another Passage of Scripture by which I would prove, that the Nature and Essence of the supreme God is ascribed to Jesus Christ, is that, where our Saviour himself says, * *I and my Father are One.* Now this must needs be understood of an Unity of Nature and Essence, and not of a Unity of Consent, for this Reason; that our Saviour is accounting for the Preservation of the Saints, and their Perseverance in a state of Grace; and shews that he is as able to preserve them, as the Father is; and as none is able to pluck them out of his Father's hands, because he is greater than all, so for the same reason, none is able to pluck them out of his hands; for, says he, *I and my Father are One.* Now if we understand this Text of a Unity of Nature and Essence, that our Saviour is possessed of the same Nature and Essence with the Father, then his Reasoning will hold good, that as none can pluck the Saints out of his Father's hand, so neither can any pluck them out of his hand; because he has the same divine Nature, Essence, and essential Perfections to enable him to preserve them, which the Father hath. But on the other hand, if we understand this Unity, which our

* John x. 30.

our Saviour says, he has with the Father, to be a Unity only of Consent, as the *Anti-trinitarians* would have it; then our Saviour's Reasoning is false and weak: for his Unity of Consent with the Father, without an Unity of Nature and Essence with him, would never put him in a capacity to save his People, and keep them from being pluck'd any more out of his hand, than they could be pluck'd out of the Father's. In that case the Father would have this advantage to enable him to keep them from being pluck'd out of his hand above the Son, that he was possessed of the divine Nature and Essence, which the Son is not, if this Text be understood only of a Unity of Consent, and not of a Unity of Nature and Essence. Moreover, if this Text be understood only of a Unity of Consent, and not of a Unity of Nature and Essence, then the holy Angels, who have this Unity of Consent with the Father, would be as capable of preserving the Saints, as the Son is, if he has not a Unity of Nature and Essence with the Father, as well as Unity of Consent; but because he is one with the Father in Nature and Essence, therefore he is equally capable to keep his People from being pluck'd out of his hand, as the Father is of keeping them from being pluck'd out of his. But besides that our Saviour here gave out, that he was One with the Father, not only in Consent, as mere Creatures may be, but also that he was One with him in Nature and Essence, is plain from this, that the

Jews took up Stones to stone him, upon his saying, that he was One with the Father. Now, if our Saviour had given out, that he was only One with the Father by a Unity of Consent, there had not been the least pretence upon that account, to charge him with Blasphemy, as making himself equal with God: his asserting himself to be One with the Father by a Unity of Nature and Essence, was the only Foundation on which they could, with any shadow of reason, charge him with Blasphemy. And we see, when the *Jews* understood him in that sense, as meaning that he was One with the Father by a Unity of Nature and Essence, and consequently equal with the Father, as being himself God, he does not correct them, as if they had misunderstood his Meaning; but owns that his saying, that he was one with the Father, inferr'd that he made himself God; that is, thereby asserted his true and proper Divinity. Nay, so far is he from telling them, that when he said that he was One with the Father, that he meant thereby no more than that he was ONE in Consent with him; that he farther explains his Meaning to them, that he meant not a Unity of Consent only, but a Unity of Nature and Essence, whereby he was truly and properly God, and the same God with the Father: and he proves it by appealing to his Works; *that he did the same Works which the Father did, even such Works, whereby the Father discovers and*
manifests

manifests his supreme Deity *. And therefore he concludes, that since he did the same Works which in the Father were a Proof of his divine Nature, the same Works wrought by the Son were no less a Proof of the divine Nature of the Son, and that he had the same divine Nature and Essence with the Father: for otherwise, if he had not the same Nature and Essence with the Father, he could not have produced the same Works which the Father produced, and which were only the Effects of the divine Nature in him. *If I do not the Works of my Father, believe me not; but if I do, tho' ye believe not me, believe the Works, that ye may know and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him.* This can be nothing short of a Union of Nature and Essence; and therefore they fought again to take him, because he asserted over again such an Union with the Father, as made him God equal with him.

But here the *Arians* object, that if the Son has the same Nature and Essence with the Father, then he cannot be a distinct Person from him; for if he has the same Nature and Essence, he must have the same Understanding and the same Will; and if so, then he must be the same Person. I answer, if what was said in a former Discourse upon the Distinction and Difference of the Three that bear record in Heaven, be carefully attended to, it will easily furnish a satisfying Answer to this Objection. But here, for farther satisfaction, let it be observed,

* Ver. 37.

served, that the Son's having the same Nature and Essence, and consequently the same infinite Understanding and Will, as he is God, is by no means inconsistent with his being a distinct Person from the Father. For the distinction of the Persons of the Trinity is not founded upon a distinction either in their Nature and Essence, or in any of their essential Properties: for these are the same in them all, without any the least Variation, Difference or Distinction; otherways they would be different and distinct Gods, which they are not; but One and the same God. But the true Foundation of the Distinction of their Persons, and that which constitutes them distinct Persons, is the Difference and Distinction which is in their personal Characters; by these, and by these alone, they become distinct Persons; and not by any Difference, Variation or Distinction in their Nature and Essence, or any of their essential Properties, which are absolutely the same in them all. As for instance, infinite Understanding is an essential Property of the Deity, and all the Persons of the Trinity are equally possessed of it; as the Father is possessed of this infinite Understanding, so is the Son and Holy Ghost, only it subsists in them in a different manner; and this different manner of its Subsistence in them, together with the different manner of the Subsistence of the divine Nature, and other essential Perfections in them, is that which lays the Foundation of their distinct personal Characters, and constitutes

tutes them distinct Persons; and not any different Distinction or Variation of the infinite Understanding it self, which is absolutely the same in them all without any Difference, Variation or Distinction. And to say here, that we cannot conceive and comprehend, how the divine Essence, and divine essential Perfections can so subsist in the distinct Persons of the Trinity, as to constitute them distinct Persons, is indeed, to say a great and tremendous Truth; but at the same time, it is to say nothing to the present purpose, so as to be any Objection against this Doctrine; for who ever asserted either, that we can conceive or comprehend the Manner how it is? Yet that does not hinder, but the divine Nature and Essence, and the divine essential Perfections may subsist, after that different manner in the several Persons of the Trinity, so as to constitute them distinct Persons, whether we can conceive and comprehend the Manner, how they do so, or not: since the divine Being, who best, nay, who only knows, the manner of his own Subsistence, has revealed to us that it is so, it is the highest arrogance in any of us to question the Truth of it. Indeed, if we could prove by any Principle of the Light of Nature, that it was impossible, and a contradiction in the nature of the thing, that the self-same infinite undivided Essence could so subsist after such a different and various manner, as to constitute different and distinct Persons, any pretended Revelation from Heaven, in that case to the contrary,

contrary, was not to be regarded; but this is what no Mortal ever was, or ever will be able to prove. So that, by the Principles of the Light of Nature, and as far as these reach, the Doctrine of a Trinity of Persons in the Unity of the divine Essence is possible to be true; and by the divine Revelation, made in the Word of God, provided it be allowed to be a divine Revelation, it is evident and certain, that it is true.

There is another Mistake which the *Anti-trinitarians* labour under in this Point; which if they would allow themselves to reflect upon with any tolerable measure of Attention, all the little trifling Objections, drawn from a Pretence of natural Reason, would instantly vanish: and that is, they imagine, that, in order to constitute a distinct divine Person, there is a Necessity, that there must be a distinct divine Understanding and Will. 'Tis true, in order to constitute a Person, there must needs be an Understanding and Will, one at least: but it will not from thence follow, that one Understanding and Will, cannot serve in common to many Persons, and answer all the Purposes of those Faculties in them. This Mistake goes upon a false Supposition; and that is, that the only thing which distinguishes Persons is a Distinction in these Faculties of Understanding and Will; and where these are the same, the Person is the same. But let us observe it with a careful Attention, that there are other things, which

which are sufficient to lay a Foundation for a Distinction of Persons, and to constitute a distinct personal Character, even where the Understanding and Will is the same. That which has led the *Anti-trinitarians* into this Mistake is, that, among Men, they observe, that wherever there is a distinct Person, there is a distinct Understanding and Will; and because they see, that it is so in fact, therefore they conclude it is impossible to be otherwise: but altho' it be so in fact, that wherever there is a distinct human Person, that there is a distinct Understanding and Will; yet it will not from thence follow, that therefore it cannot be otherwise, even in human Persons; and that it is impossible, that two or more human Persons can subsist, where they have but one Understanding and Will, or one intelligent rational Principle in common among them. This, I say, cannot be evidently proved from any Principles known by the Light of Nature; far less can it be inferred with any Justice of Consequence, that because, as far as we know human Persons, a distinct Person among Men, always has a distinct Principle of Understanding and Will; that therefore, wherever there is a distinct divine Person, there must be also a distinct divine Understanding and Will: this, I say, is a wide Consequence, and contrary to the very Light of Nature, and the Reason of Man; for it supposes, that the Principle of infinite divine Intelligence in the Deity, is no more capable of a different way
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of subsisting in different divine Persons, than the Principle of finite Intelligence is in different and distinct human Persons.

Moreover, it is further urged here against our Saviour's having the same Nature and Essence with the Father, that he is represented to us in Scripture, as having a different and distinct Will from the Father; for it is said, by our Saviour himself, *I seek not mine own Will, but the Will of the Father which sent me* *; and, *I came down from Heaven, not that I might do mine own Will, but the Will of him that sent me* †: where the Will of the Son, who came down from Heaven, seems to be opposed to the Will of the Father, who sent him. Now, in answer to this, let it be considered, that our Saviour is here speaking of himself in the Character of Mediator: for in both the Texts mentioned, upon which the Objection is founded, he is spoke of, as sent of the Father. Now, as he is vested with that Character, and is acting in that Capacity, what he does is not to be constructed, as done by him, as if he was acting up to the full Character, and insisting on all the Claims of his supreme Godhead; no, That he vailed voluntarily, in some degree, when he took upon him the Form of a Servant, and did not insist upon those high Claims which he had a Title to, as he was the supreme God, equal with the Father. But, in order to accomplish the Work of Redemption, he condescended to conform

* John v. 38.

† John vi. 38.

conform to the Will of the Father, who, in the Oeconomy of Redemption, sustains the Character, and defends the Rights of supreme Deity; therefore, in accomplishing that Work, he is justly said, *Not to do his own Will, but the Will of the Father, who sent him.* For herein lies a great part of the Merit of what he did for Sinners, that he did it in obedience to the Father's Command, who is the Person of the Trinity, who, in the Oeconomy of Salvation, defends the Rights of supreme Deity: so that the Will of the Father, and the Will of the Son, as God equal with the Father, are not in these Texts set in opposition to one another; for these are numerically one, nor are they so much as represented to be different and distinct in these Texts. Indeed, the Will of the Father and Son, as God, tho' it be one numerically in itself, yet it may come under a different and distinct Consideration, as it is the Will of distinct Persons; and the Lord Jesus Christ may be said to veil and drop his divine Will, as the divine Will subsists in him; and as he has taken on him the Form of a Servant, he may be said, *to do the Will only of his Father.* But the Opposition in these Texts is betwixt the Will of the Father and the Will of Christ, as Mediator; nor is this Opposition an Opposition of Contradiction, but an Opposition of Distinction; that is to say, the Will of Christ, as Mediator, is, and may be, distinct from that of the Father; but it is never contradictory, but subordinate to it.

it. This Matter will appear in a clearer Light, from that Text, where our Saviour prays in these Words; *Father, if thou be willing, remove this Cup from me* †. There our Saviour represents himself as Mediator, as having a distinct Will from the Father, and that was his human Will; which would have been satisfied, that if the Cup of his dreadful Sufferings could have been removed from him in a Consistency with his accomplishing the Work of Redemption, to have been rid of them: for his human Nature, tho' innocent, recoil'd and shrunk at the Thoughts of undergoing them; yet even his human Will, tho' it was distinct from the divine Will of the Father, was not contradictory, but subordinate to it; and therefore he expressly says, *Nevertheless not my Will, but thine be done.* And this human Will of the Mediator is the Will of him, *who came down from Heaven*; because of the close Union betwixt his divine and human Natures in one Person, by virtue of which, those Phrases, which are peculiar only to one Nature, are applied to the whole Person of Christ. Thus the Blood of Christ is called the Blood of God, because it is the Blood of that Person who is God, as well as Man; and for the same reason the human Will of Christ, tho' it be distinct from his divine, yet it is the Will of him *who came down from Heaven*, because it is the Will of that Person, whose divine Nature, in a peculiar and eminent

† Luke xxii. 42.

nent manner, came down from Heaven : and indeed, in some sense, even his human Nature came down from Heaven, as Christ teaches us ; *This is the Bread that cometh down from Heaven, that a Man may eat thereof, and not die; I am the living Bread, which came down from Heaven ; if any Man eat of this Bread, he shall live for ever ; and the Bread that I will give, is my Flesh, which I will give for the Life of the World**. There the human Nature of Christ, even his Flesh, is called *the Bread of Life, that came down from Heaven* : so that when Christ says, *that he came not to do his own Will*, we have good reason to understand it of that Will, which belong'd to his human Nature, even his human Will, notwithstanding it is the Will of him, *who came down from Heaven* ; since the human Nature of Christ is called *the Bread that came down from Heaven*. Tho', as I said before, even his divine Will, as he is considered as Mediator, and a distinct Person from the Father, may come under a distinct Consideration from the Will of the Father, tho' it be essentially the same.

Thus I have shew'd, that the Nature and Essence of the supreme God, is in Scripture attributed to our Saviour Jesus Christ ; and answered those Objections which are made by the *Anti-trinitarians* against it. From whence it plainly follows as a necessary Consequence, that, since he has the divine Nature and Essence, he must needs have all the divine Perfections :

* John vi. 51, 52.

fections: For these, as I hinted above, are necessarily connected together; and the one cannot be without the other. But besides, that we may infer, by a necessary Consequence, that because our Saviour has the divine Nature and Essence, he must have all the divine Perfections; we have yet further Evidence, for we have express and particular Testimony from Scripture, that the divine Attributes and Perfections are ascribed to him. Which leads me to the next thing proposed, for Proof of the true, proper and supreme Deity of this second Person of the Trinity; to wit, that he is possessed of all those Excellencies and Perfections, which are peculiar to supreme Deity. But this I refer, till it pleases God to give another Opportunity. *To his Name be Praise.*





S E R M O N XI.

I JOHN 5. 7.

*For there are three that bear record
in Heaven, the Father, the Word,
and the Holy Ghost : and these three
are one.*

UPON the last occasion, after I had proved the Divinity of our Saviour; from those Names, that are peculiar to the supreme God, which are ascribed to him in Scripture; I shewed fully from several Passages of Scripture, that the divine Nature and Essence is ascribed to him; which, I told you, was an irrefragable Proof of his supreme Deity, and his Equality with the Father. I proceed now to shew the true and proper Deity of our Saviour, from his being possessed of the divine Perfections.

I. One divine Perfection ascribed to our Saviour in Scripture, is OMNIPOTENCE; as is plain

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plain from these words; * *For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the Government shall be upon his Shoulder, and his Name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God.* And in a Psalm †, which the Apostle expressly applies to Christ, he is called the *Most Mighty*; || *Gird the Sword upon thy Thigh, O MOST MIGHTY, with thy Glory and thy Majesty.* And the Apostle Paul has these words; ‡ *Our Conversation is in Heaven, from whence we also look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile Body, that it may be fashioned like to his glorious Body, according to the Working, whereby he is able even to subdue all things to himself.* In the Revelation, the Lamb, which is the Title only of the Lord Jesus Christ, is there expressly called, *the Lord God almighty*; ** *They shall sing the Song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy Works, LORD GOD ALMIGHTY, just and true are thy Ways, thou King of Saints.* Moreover, the Works and Effects of almighty Power are ascribed unto him, and he is declared to be the *almighty Creator of all things*; †† *All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.* And ||| *By him were all things created, that are in Heaven, and that are in Earth, visible and invisible, whether they be Thrones or Dominions, Principalities or Powers; all things were*

* Isa. ix. 6. † Psalm xlv. 3. || Heb. i. 8, 9. ‡ Philip. iii. 20, 21. ** Chap. xv. 3. †† John i. 3. ||| Coloss. i. 16.

were created by him and for him. So that we see, that the divine Revelation ascribes, in the plainest manner, that incommunicable Perfection of the Deity, OMNIPOTENCE, to Christ; and therefore he must be the most high and supreme God: for to be the Creator of all things, is the very Glory of the Deity, by which he is raised above all dependant Beings, and *his Glory he will not give to another*. And if our Saviour was not the same only true God with him, it is not to be supposed, the Scriptures of Truth would have ascribed this Glory to him, nor would it have belong'd to him of right, as not being God equal with the Father.

But here it is objected against the Omnipotency of our Lord Jesus Christ, that he disclaims that Perfection of the Deity, when he says, * *Of mine own self I can do nothing; as I hear, I judge, and my Judgment is just; because I seek not mine own Will, but the Will of the Father who hath sent me*. From whence they would infer, that because our Saviour says, *that of himself he can do nothing*, therefore his Omnipotence was not the Omnipotence of the supreme God, but a derivative Omnipotence, an Omnipotence derived from the Father. To this I answer, that here our Saviour is expressly speaking of himself, in the Character of Mediator; for he says in the latter Clause of the Verse, *that he seeketh not his own Will, but the Will of the Father that sent him*. Now

* John v. 30.

although our Saviour speaking of himself, as Mediator, said that of himself he could do nothing, but that in the discharge of all the Parts of his mediatorial Office, he acts by virtue of a derived Commission from the Father; yet that does not in the least derogate from his true and proper Deity; nor does it in the least prove that his Omnipotence, considered as God, was not an absolute and underived Omnipotence. For though as he was Mediator, and acting in that Capacity he could do nothing of himself, but in that Character being the Father's Servant, he was therefore obliged, in the discharge of all his mediatorial Offices, to conform to the Will of the Father, in order to his faithful and acceptable discharge of them; yet when he did not act in that Capacity as Mediator, as he did not, when he created all things, I say, when he acted in his original Capacity, as the supreme God, as he did when he created all things, then he discovered his absolute and underived Omnipotence, then he shewed, that of himself he could do all things; for of himself he created the World, and all things that were therein; for *by him all things were created, and without him was not any thing made that was made.* So that we see, there is a necessity to distinguish betwixt these two, when our Saviour is speaking of himself as Mediator, acting in the Capacity of the Father's Servant; and when he speaks of himself in the Character of the supreme God: for in the one case, when he is speaking of himself
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only as Mediator, and the Father's Servant, then he can do nothing of himself, but in order to acquit himself faithfully in that Station, he is tied down entirely to the Will of the Father, who sent him; but out of that Capacity, and when he is acting in the Character of the supreme God, as he did when he gave Being to all things, then of himself he can do all things, and that with as absolute, and equally underived Omnipotence as the Father himself. As he is Mediator, he is Man as well as God, and as such, he speaks with the Voice and in the Style of Man, saying, *Of myself I can do nothing*: but as he is God, he speaks with the Voice and in the Style of the supreme God, * *I am the Almighty, I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the Ending, saith the Lord; which is, and which was, and which is to come, the ALMIGHTY.* Now this the Apostle *John* declares to be the saying of the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave him that Revelation which he made to the Churches.

Again, it is objected against our Saviour's having this Perfection of the Deity; OMNIPOTENCE, that he saith, that † *his Father that dwelleth in him did the Works which were done by him.* From hence they conclude, that these Works were not done by the Omnipotence of the Son, but that of the Father. But whosoever will take the trouble to read only three or four Verses before that Verse, upon which the Objection is found-

R 4 ed,

* Rev. i. 8.

† John xiv. 10.

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ed, will easily perceive, that our Saviour's Words, when he said that his Father did the Works which he did, are so far from derogating from the Omnipotence of the Son, that they are the strongest Proof of it; and that our Saviour alledged them for that very purpose, to be a proof of his Omnipotence, and that what Works were wrought by him, were wrought by that same Omnipotence, exerting itself in his Person, which is exerted by the Person of the Father: so that when the Son says, that the Father did the Works which he did, he by no means excludes himself from being the Author of these Works; but only he would prove to *Philip* his Unity of Essence with the Father, and that he and the Father have absolutely the same essential Perfection of Omnipotence. And for a proof of this, among other Arguments, he tells him, that whatever Works he did, were also done by the Father; for he being possessed of the self-same almighty Power and Omnipotence with the Father, and since the Father and the Son had that essential Perfection of the Deity in common betwixt them, it was impossible that the Son could exert it, but it must also be exerted by the Father: because the almighty Power by which our Saviour did his Works, was the almighty Power not only of the Son, but also of the Father; and whenever it was exercised by any of the Persons, either by the Father or the Son, both are said to do that Work which was the Effect of the Exercise of it, because of the
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strict Union of these two Persons in their Essence and essential Properties. Now that this is precisely the sense of our Saviour's Words in this place, will appear from the way they stand connected with what goes before. *Philip* had been saying to our Saviour, * *Shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us*: From this our Saviour takes occasion to instruct him in that Union of Nature and Essence, which was betwixt him and the Father, which he seemed to be ignorant of, notwithstanding the many Opportunities he had of being better acquainted with that Doctrine. † *Jesus saith unto him, have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father; and how sayst thou, shew us the Father?* intimating to us plainly, that the Father and the Son are one and the same in Essence; and that by seeing the Son, that is, by understanding and taking up his divine Nature and Essence, and his essential Perfections, which shined in his Words and Works, the divine Nature, and Essence, and essential Perfections of the Father, were by the same means understood; because the Nature, Essence, and Perfections of the Son, are absolutely the same with those of the Father; and therefore further, in those Words upon which the Objection is founded, our Saviour upbraids *Philip* for his Ignorance and Misbelief; ‖ *Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me?* which could not possibly be, if they

* Ver. 8.

† Ver. 9.

‖ Ver. 10.

they had not one and the self-same Nature and Essence, and essential Perfections dwelling in them both. And as a farther proof of the Unity of their Nature and Essence, and as a necessary Consequence of it, our Saviour tells *Philip*, that they were ONE also in their Operation; and that the same Works which the Son did by his Omnipotence, the same very Works the Father does, by that same Omnipotence dwelling in him; *the Father that dwelleth in me doth the Works*. Now to understand these Words, as if the Father had been the Author of the Works which our Saviour performed, exclusive of the Son, is quite inconsistent with the Scope and Design of the Place; which is to convince *Philip*, that the Father is in the Son, and the Son in the Father, and that he that hath seen the Son, hath seen the Father. Now if we take the Words in that sense which is insinuated in the Objection, as if our Saviour had not been the Author of the Works, which he performed by his own Power and Omnipotence, but that the Father was the sole Author of them, exclusive of the Son; I say, if we take the Words in that sense, then instead of their being an argument to convince *Philip*, that the Father is in the Son, and the Son in the Father, and that he that hath seen the Son hath seen the Father, they have a direct tendency to persuade of the contrary, and they destroy the very Design for which they were alledged. For if we take the Words in that *Arian* and *Socinian*

nian sense, *Philip* no more saw the Father, when he saw the Son, than he saw him, when he saw any other Prophet or Apostle, who wrought Miracles, not by their own Power, but by the Power of God: which is contrary to our Saviour's Reasoning in this place; for he represents to *Philip*, that he had a peculiar Advantage by seeing him, which he could not have by seeing any other Prophet or Apostle: for by seeing him, he saw the Father, because he was of the same Nature and Essence with him. But on the other hand, if we understand these Words in the Sense above explained, that when our Saviour exerted his almighty Power, at the same time the almighty Power of the Father was exerted; then the Words alledged by our Saviour served the purpose he intended by them. And *Philip* has another strong Argument to believe, that the Son is in the Father, and the Father is in the Son; and that he that hath seen the Son, hath seen the Father; because the Father exerts his almighty Power, and is the Author of the same Works, when the Son exerts his almighty Power in the Performance of them, seeing they are One in Operation, as they are One in Essence.

As this *Arian* and *Socinian* sense, which this Objection puts upon these Words, is contrary to the scope of the Context where they stand; so it is contrary to the whole current of all those places of Scripture, where Omnipotence is expressly ascribed to the Son mentioned above; and particularly, it is expressly contrary to
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what Christ teaches us in these Words; * *All that the Father hath, is mine.* Now if the Father hath absolute and underived Omnipotence, and the Son hath it not, but wrought all his Works by the Power of the Father only, exclusive of his own Power; then it is impossible that the Text can be true, where our Saviour saith, All that the Father hath is his.

II. Another Attribute and divine Perfection peculiar to the Deity, and which is ascribed to our Saviour, whereby his proper and supreme Deity is proved, is OMNISCIENCE; he who knoweth all things, must be truly God. Now for proof of the Omniscience of our Saviour, we have these Words; † *Peter said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee:* where he appeals to our Saviour, as the Heart-searching God, for the Truth and Sincerity of his Love to him. Now if our Saviour had not been the omniscient God, he would not have suffered *Peter* to have gone without a severe Rebuke, for such a horrid Act of Blasphemy, in ascribing the divine Perfections to a mere Creature, if he had indeed been no more. Sure, if we suppose him but to be an innocent Man, he could not without Indignation reprove *Peter* in this case, than he did in another, that was not of so heinous and aggravated a nature, when he said to him, *Get thee behind me Satan.* But so far was he from that, so far was he from reproving him, as guilty of so gross a piece of Idolatry,

* John xvi. 15.

† John xxi. 17.

dolatry, in ascribing an incommunicable Perfection of the Creator to the Creature; that, on the contrary, he signifies his approving of his making that Confession of his supreme Deity; and in the Character of the supreme and most high God, he gives a Commission upon the spot to *Peter*, to feed his Sheep; and, as the omniscient God, at the same time he forewarns him of the Death, by which he should glorify God, without pretending to have that Knowledge of future Events revealed to him from the Father, as if he had not come at it by his own divine Omniscience; which he ought to have done, and given the Glory of it to the Father, and disclaimed it himself, if he had not been truly the omniscient God; especially at a time when that Character and Perfection of Omniscience was unjustly ascribed to him, he was in a peculiar manner called to vindicate the Omniscience of the Father alone, if this had been an assault upon the Prerogative of the Father, and if the Son had not been equally omniscient with him, when *Peter* asserted so roundly to his face, that he *knew all Things*.

But this is not the only place, where Omniscience is ascribed to our Saviour; we have another Passage where he is declared to be the Searcher of Hearts, which is declared to be the special Prerogative of the All-wise God, who says, * *I the Lord search the Heart, I try the Reins*: and, † *who only knowest the Hearts of all*

* Jer. xvii. 10.

† 1 Kings viii. 39.

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*all the Children of Men: I say, we have another Passage, proving, that this peculiar Privilege of the Deity belongs to Jesus Christ, that he knows the Thoughts of the Heart; which is the highest pitch that Omniscience can soar; * All the Churches shall know, that I am he who searcheth the Reins and Heart. These are the Words of the Son of God, as appears from ver. 18. and all the Disciples conjunctly with one voice agree in this; † Now say they, we are sure, that thou knowest all things. And lest any should object here; that our Saviour had all that knowledge of the Heart of Man by Revelation from the Father, we are expressly told, he had that Knowledge of himself, and stood in no need to have it by any Revelation: ‡ He needed not that any should testify of Man, for he knew what was in Man.*

Moreover, that our Saviour Jesus Christ is the omniscient God is plain from this, that he is called the Wisdom of God; || *Therefore also said the Wisdom of God, I will send them Prophets and Apostles; and some of them they shall slay and persecute, that the Blood of all the Prophets which was shed from the Foundation of the World, may be required of this Generation, from the Blood of Abel to the Blood of Zacharias, which perished between the Temple and the Altar. This may be compared with what our Saviour himself says: ** Wherefore behold, I send unto you Prophets, and wise Men, and Scribes; and some*

* Rev. ii. 23.
|| Luke xi. 49.

† John xvi. 30.
** Mat. xxiii. 34.

‡ John ii. 25:

some of them ye shall kill and crucify, and some of them ye shall scourge in your Synagogues, and persecute them from City to City; that upon you may come all the righteous Blood shed upon the Earth, from the Blood of righteous Abel, unto the Blood of Zacharias the Son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the Temple and the Altar. Now *Luke* in the first of these Texts says, that the WISDOM OF GOD sent these Prophets, Apostles, and wise Men; and in the other Text, Christ declares that HE sent them: so that CHRIST, THE WISDOM OF GOD, sent them; which is an irrefragable Proof of his Omniscience, since he is the Wisdom of God. And, **But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God.*

But here it is objected against the Omniscience of Christ, that he himself disclaims this divine Attribute; and for this purpose they cite these words; † *But of that Day and that Hour knoweth no Man, no not the Angels that are in Heaven; neither the Son, but the Father.* From whence they infer, that since the Son declared himself ignorant of the Day of Judgment, he cannot be the omniscient God. To which I answer, that in a former Discourse I have proved, that in the Person of Christ there are two Natures, a divine and a human Nature; and if this were heedfully attended to, this and a great many other Objections would easily appear to have nothing in them.

* 1 Cor. i. 24. † Mark xiii. 32.

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them. I have just now proved, that our Lord Jesus Christ, as to his divine Nature, is the omniscient God, because Omniscience is ascribed to him in a variety of Places; and as to his human Nature, we never asserted that he was Omniscient in that respect: so that from our Saviour's having two Natures, a divine and a human Nature, united in his one Person, it consequently follows that he had, and has a two-fold distinct Principle of Intelligence, Knowledge, and Understanding, agreeable to the distinct Natures which are united in his one Person. As to his divine Nature, he has a Principle of Knowledge, Intelligence and Understanding which is *infinite*; and this Principle of infinite Intelligence, which is in his Person as he is God, and possessed of the divine Nature, is the same with that Principle of infinite Knowledge and Intelligence which is in the Father: for infinite Intelligence being an essential Attribute of the Deity, all the three Persons are possessed of it equally; and it is absolutely the same in them all, without any Variation or Distinction. But besides this Principle of infinite Intelligence, which our Saviour has as he is God, and which is absolutely the same with that which is in the Father, and extends to the Knowledge of as many, that is to say, all things; I say, besides this, in our Saviour's Person, there is, as he is Man and has the human Nature, by taking it into a personal Union with his divine, a Principle of *finite* Intelligence and Understanding;

ing; otherways he would not be truly Man, if he had not this finite Principle of Intelligence: for that is as essential, and does as necessarily belong to his human Nature, as the other Principle of infinite Intelligence does to his divine. Now this finite Principle of Intelligence, which is in the human Nature of Jesus the Son of God, tho' it belongs to the Person of Christ, yet it is inferior to and distinct from that infinite Principle of Intelligence, which is in the same Person of the Son, as he is God, and equally distinct from that same infinite Principle of Intelligence, which is in the Father.

Now having observed this, I have laid a Foundation for an easy and natural Solution of that Difficulty, objected by the *Arians* and other *Anti-trinitarians* against the Omniscience of our Lord Jesus Christ, from that forecited Passage, where it is said, that the Son does not know the Day of Judgment, but the Father. Now here let it be observed, that the Son when he says, he knows not the Day of Judgment, but the Father only; he is speaking plainly with respect to that Principle of Intelligence in his Person, which is distinct from that Principle of Intelligence which is in the Father, to wit, his finite Principle of Intelligence, which he has as he is Man; for that, and that only, stands opposed to, and is distinct from the Principle of Intelligence, which is in the Father. For as to the infinite Principle of Intelligence which is in our Saviour,

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with respect to that, his Knowledge is of equal extent with that of the Father; because in that respect the Son and the Father have the same, absolutely the same infinite Principle of Knowledge and Understanding, whereby both these Persons know all things. So that the Son in this respect, in respect of the infinite Principle of Intelligence which is in him, can't be set in opposition to or distinguished from the Father; because in that respect they are absolutely the same: and therefore, when the Son speaks of himself in opposition to or distinct from the Father in point of Knowledge of any thing, or gives the preference to the Father, as having a Knowledge of any thing, which is hid from himself, he must of necessity be understood to mean, with respect to that Principle in him of finite Knowledge, which he has as Man, by which alone he can be supposed to be ignorant of any thing.

Nor is it at all strange, that Ignorance of the Day of Judgment is affirmed of the Son, and attributed to him; for the Son of God assuming the human Nature into a personal Union with his divine, these Infirmities which resulted necessarily from his human Nature, came to be affirmed of the whole Person of Christ; because of the close Union betwixt his divine and human Natures, as I have had frequently occasion to observe. It is no more strange that the Son should be said to be ignorant of the Day of Judgment, than that it should be affirmed of him, that he was weary,
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that he slept, that he was an hungred, or athirst, and that he was sorrowful: All these stand on the same footing, they are all finless Infirmities which were necessary Concomitants of his human Nature; and it was impossible in the nature of things, but he must be subject to them, upon his assuming the human Nature into a personal Union with his divine, and his being truly Man, as well as God in one Person.

And was this one thing carefully attended to, that in the one Person of the Son there are two distinct Natures, a divine and a human Nature, it would solve a great part of those Objections which are raised concerning this Doctrine; and therefore in the Spirit of Meekness I would seriously prescribe this Rule to be observed by the *Arians* and other *Anti-trinitarians*, when they read their Bibles: and that is, when they meet with any thing affirmed of Jesus the Son of God, which is above the condition of the Creature, and which cannot be applied to it without Blasphemy, that they would refer that to, and understand it of the divine Nature of the Son of God. On the other hand, when they find any thing affirmed of him, which is below the Dignity of the supreme God, and which can't be applied to the Creator, without Blasphemy, that they would refer that to, and understand it of his human Nature. And thus by a careful and discreet Application of this Rule, they will be able to make sense of their Bibles; which otherways

will appear to be full of Contradictions. Then that sacred Book will appear to be a Revelation worthy of God, and worthy of the Spirit of Truth who indicted it: whereas if they don't take this Rule along with them, they will be embarras'd in every Page, and find almost every Leaf of these Oracles of Heaven, clashing with and contradicting another. As for example, when they find, that the Son of God is stiled *Jekovah*, the great God, God over all blessed for ever, and the Almighty, that he was in the Beginning with God, and that he was God, that all things were made by him, and that without him was not any thing made that was made; that all the Fullness of the Godhead dwells in him, that he and his Father are One; that being in the Form of God, he thought it no Robbery to be equal with God; that all that the Father hath is his, and that he knoweth all things: These, I say, and such like Phrases, wherewith the Scripture abounds, which can in no tolerable sense be applied to the Creature, to a derived and dependent Being, such Phrases ought to be understood of the divine Nature of Christ, and applied to that alone; tho' by reason of the hypostatical Union betwixt his divine and human Nature, they are affirmed of his whole Person: for the closeness and strictness of the Union of his two Natures into one Person, lays a foundation for the Communication of these Phrases to his whole Person, which properly in themselves belong only to one Nature. On the other hand, when they

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they find it affirmed of the Son of God, that the Father is greater than he, that of himself he can do nothing, that he knew not the Day of the last Judgment, that he was weary, sorrowful, an hungred, a-thirst, and the like: These ought to be understood of him, as he is Mediator in the Character of the Father's Servant, or with respect to his human Nature. And by a fit Application of this Rule in its proper place, we shall come to the right understanding of the Scriptures, and by the divine Blessing on the Word, we may come to have that just Veneration for the Redeemer raised in our Minds, which all ought to entertain, who expect to be saved by his Righteousness, which is of infinite Value, and who alone can save to the uttermost all that come to the Father through him; and whose Capacity to save, is founded on this alone, that he is the one only and true God, even the same supreme God with the Father, tho' distinct from him in Person.

III. Another divine Perfection, peculiar to the Deity, which is ascribed to our Saviour in Scripture, and which is a Proof of his supreme Deity, is OMNIPRESENCE. That this Perfection of the Deity belongs to our Saviour, is plain from this, that he is Omniscient, which is a Perfection I have just now been proving our Saviour to have; as a Consequent of which, it necessarily follows, that he must be Omnipresent: for his Omniscience of all that passes, in all places, at all times, necessarily

farly infers his being present there, as a Witness in all places, and at all times; without which it would be absolutely impossible for him to have that intimate and universal Knowledge of them. And as this Perfection of Omnipresence, is a Consequence of his Omniscience; so we may also infer it from his being the Preserver and Upholder of all things. *By him*, says the Apostle, *all things consist, and that he upholds all things by the Word of his Power* *. Now his acting in all places, *by the Word of his Power*, in the Preservation of all things, which exist, necessarily infers his being present in all those places, and in all points of Duration, and in every part of Space, where he exerts this preserving and upholding Power. For to act in a place, necessarily supposes Presence in that place, according to the received Maxim in Philosophy, *Hic agere supponit hic esse*. Such is the precarious Condition of the Creature, that it stands constantly in need of the sustaining Power of that same Hand to maintain it in Being, which at first brought it into Being. If it was not for that preserving Hand of his Providence, which perpetually surrounds all things, and upholds them in Being, they would every moment drop back again into their original Nothing; and therefore, that every thing is sustained in its Existence, is a clear Demonstration of the Presence of him, who upholds all things, with these things thus upheld by him. For it is a Contradiction

* Heb. i. 3.

dition in the nature of things to say, That the Lord Jesus Christ upholds all things, and at the same time to affirm, that he is not present with them: for wherever he exerts his preserving Power, there he must needs be. Moreover, the various Necessities of the Church require, that the Mediator should be Omnipresent; nor would he have been fit to be called to that Office, if he had not had this Perfection of Omnipresence, that he might be a present Help to the Church, in time of need, in all places, and answer the various Exigencies of every particular Believer in him, into whatever Place of the World his Lot should be cast.

But not to insist upon that Proof of this Point which is drawn by just and necessary Consequence, we have more direct Proof of the Omnipresence of Christ, from express Scripture-Testimony, even Words spoke by our Saviour himself; *Where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midst of them* *: Which is an Expression of the same Importance with that, which we have elsewhere; *In all Places, where I record my Name, I will come to thee, and bless thee* †. And to say here, when our Saviour tells his Disciples, *Where two or three of them are met together in his Name*, that is, by his Authority, *that there he will be in the midst of them*, only by Representation, as a Prince is, when he deposes Persons to act in his Name, and

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* Mat. xviii. 20.

† Exod. xx. 24.

by his Authority, is giving such an absurd Gloss to the Words, as makes our Saviour deliver to his Disciples a Speech, which is a mere Tautology, and most insipid and flat, utterly unworthy of him, who is the Wisdom of God. For to say, that our Saviour means no more, than his being present with them by his Authority, as having such, there to act in his Name as his Deputies, is to make him deliver this jejune Speech to his Disciples, as if he had said, *Where two or three are met in my Name, that is, by my Authority, there my Authority is in the midst of them.* If this was all that is meant by these Words, they seem not to carry in them any such great Discovery, that the great Prophet of the Church needed to have given himself the trouble to reveal it: for without any Revelation any Person may know, that where any one's Authority is, there his Authority is; which is the wise Speech that this *Arian* Sense of these Words puts in the Mouth of him, *who spoke as never Man spoke.* And indeed, if their's was the true Sense of the Words, our blessed Lord would be introduced as speaking, as never any wise Man spoke: but such is the inveterate Malice they discover, on all occasions, against the true and proper Divinity of our Saviour, that rather than admit him to be truly God, they would readily agree, that he should be ranked amongst the weakest of Men. Farther, the Omnipresence of Jesus Christ is plain, from what our Saviour says; *Lo, I am with*

you alway, even unto the End of the World *. And elsewhere, *No Man hath ascended up to Heaven*, (that is, as is plain from the Context, to make a Discovery of heavenly Mysteries) *but he that came down from Heaven, even the Son of Man, who is in Heaven* †. These Words were spoken by our Saviour, when he was here on the Earth, as to his human Nature; and yet he says, at the same time, *That he is in Heaven*; which can only be understood with respect to his divine Nature, by the Omnipresence of which, he fills both Heaven and Earth. Nor is it just to translate the Words, *Who was in Heaven*, instead of, *Who is in Heaven*, because it would make them a very flat and insipid Tautology; for to be sure, if he came down from Heaven, he must of necessity have been there before he came down. This every Person might know, without being taught it, by the Prophet of the Church. The true Translation then must be, *The Son of Man who is in Heaven*; because that only makes Sense in the place, such as is worthy of him who is speaking.

IV. Another divine Perfection ascribed to our blessed Lord, whereby his proper Deity is proved, is absolute ETERNITY; that is to say, not only is he said to be without End, as Angels and the Souls of Men are; but also he is said to be everlasting, without either Beginning or Ending. In *Micah's* Prophecy, we have these remarkable Words concerning our Saviour

* Mat. xxviii. 20.

† John iii. 13.

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Saviour ; *But Thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, tho' thou be little among the Thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me, that is to be the Ruler in Israel; whose Goings forth have been from old, from Everlasting**; or, as the Words may be rendered, *from the Days of Eternity*. Now these Words speak so plainly of Jesus Christ, that I need not stand to prove, that they are spoken of him; and they are expressly applied to him by the Evangelists †.

Moreover, his Eternity is proved from the first Words of *John's* Gospel, where he is said to be in the Beginning; *In the Beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God*. The Word, the second Person in the Trinity, who afterwards is said to be *made Flesh, and dwelt among us*, is said to be *in the Beginning*; which is much more than if it had been said, That he was from the Beginning. For the first Creature, which was made, was from the Beginning; for the Beginning commenced and took its rise from the Production of the first Creature that was made; but none but the eternal God could be said to be in the Beginning: for to be in the Beginning is to have Existence before the Beginning commenced. The eternal Generation of the Son is also plain from these Words; *The Lord possessed me in the Beginning of his way, before his Works of old* ||. And tho' in the next Verse, he is said to be set up *from the Beginning,*

* Mic. v. 2. † Mat. ii. 6. John vii. 42. || Prov. viii. 22.

ning, yet that is explained to be from Everlasting, and or ever the Earth was, and before the Mountains were settled, and before the Hills was I brought forth. Which, according to the Psalmist, is a Description of absolute Eternity, and Being from Everlasting; *Before the Mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the Earth and the World, even from everlasting to everlasting thou art God* *.

V. Another divine Perfection, which is undeniably ascribed to Jesus Christ, whereby he is proved to be the same God with the Father, the true and supreme God, is IMMUTABILITY and UNCHANGEABLENESS. Whatever Being or Person is possessed of this, must of necessity have the Nature and Essence of the Deity; for that alone is exempt from all Variableness and Change; and every Creature, by the very Condition of its Nature, is obnoxious to it. That this Perfection of the Deity is ascribed to Jesus Christ will appear from these Words; *But unto the Son he saith, Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a Scepter of Righteousness is the Scepter of thy Kingdom; and thou, Lord, in the Beginning hast laid the Foundations of the Earth; and the Heavens are the Works of thy Hands; they shall perish, but thou remainest; and they shall wax old as doth a Garment; and as a Vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy Years shall not fail* †. These Words are taken word for word from the

* Psal. xc. 2.

† Heb. i. 8, 10.

the hundred and second *Pſalm*, and are applied to Chriſt by the Apoſtle; and they contain as full and plain an Account of the Immutability of the Deity, as any other Words in Scripture; or indeed, as any Words can expreſs. And if it was not that they are expreſſly applied to the ſecond Perſon of the Trinity, and furniſh an unanſwerable Argument for his ſupreme Deity, we ſhould not have heard any Objection againſt their being a full Deſcription of the Immutability of the great God; nor has any thing been offered, that has any tolerable Shadow of an Objection againſt them as ſuch. The Immutability of Chriſt is further proved from another place, where we have theſe expreſs Words, *Jeſus Chriſt the ſame yeſterday, to-day, and for ever* *. Thus I have proved, that theſe Perfections of the moſt high God, of Omnipotence, Omniscience, Omnipreſence, Eternity, and Immutability, are aſcribed to our Saviour in Scripture; any one of which belonging to him, is a ſufficient Proof of his being the ſupreme and moſt high God; ſince it is a Contradiction, as I have already proved, that he ſhould have any one of them, without being poſſeſſed of them all; nor is there any one of the divine Perfections, but what he is poſſeſſed of; for in him dwells all the Fulneſs of the Godhead; and all that the Father hath is his.

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* Heb. xiii. 8.

Our next Head of Discourse shall be to prove, that the Works, which are peculiar to the most high God, were performed by him: but this I shall not now enter upon. *God bless his Word, and to his Name be Praise.*





S E R M O N XII.

I JOHN 5. 7.

For there are three that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost : and these three are one.

IN the preceding Discourse, I have proved, that the divine Perfections of Omnipotence, Omniscience, Omnipresence, Eternity, and Immutability are ascribed to our Saviour in Scripture; any one of which belonging to him, is a sufficient Proof of his supreme Deity, because these are incommunicable Attributes; and whatever is inferior to supreme Deity, is for that very reason incapable of them: And to say, that these Perfections can be communicated to a Being, which hath them not originally in and of himself, is to assert a downright Contradiction; for it is to suppose, that Being at the same time both to be infinitely perfect, and not to be so. For the Being which hath these infinite Perfections, is for that reason infinitely perfect; and if they were communicated to him from another, and he had them

them not originally in and of himself, he would for that reason be infinitely imperfect, and degraded to the Level of the Creatures: for that is the distinguishing Characteristick betwixt supreme Deity and created Existence, that the one is sufficient, self-sufficient for his own Existence and all his Perfections; and the other is not, but depends upon the precarious Will of another for the Communication of them. Besides, the Communication of them from one Person to another, is a flat Contradiction to the Eternity and Immutability of that Person, to whom they are communicated: for as soon as the self-existent Being did communicate, that is, derive from himself Perfections of any kind whatever to any Being or Person, distinct from himself, Time commenced with that Communication; and the Being or Person, to whom the Communication was made, is by that very Communication declared mutable, in as much as that is communicated to him, which he had not originally in and of himself. From whence it evidently follows, according to the plain Principles of natural Reason, that whatever Being or Person is possessed of Eternity and Immutability, must of consequence, in the Nature of things, be Self-existent, Unoriginated, and Independent. And since these Perfections, by divine Revelation, are proved to belong to the Son of God, he must be the same one self-existent, unoriginated, supreme independent Being, with the Father, of the same

same Essence, and equal with him in all divine Glory.

'Tis true, some who are strenuous Asserters of the Equality of the Son with the Father, and of his Unity of Nature and Essence with him; yet explain that personal Distinction between the Father and the Son, BEGOTTEN by the Father's communicating his Nature and Perfections to the Son; but since that way of speaking gives a great handle to the Adversaries, and since, as we have shew'd, it infers the Dependence of the Son on the Father; and indeed to draw it out to all its Consequences, would degrade him to the Level of the Creature: I say, since that way of speaking has such absurd Consequences, it is much better not to attempt to explain the Generation of the Son, and the Manner of his possessing the divine Nature, and that personal Character, by which he is distinguished from the Father, and Holy Ghost, than to do it by such Terms, as *Communication* or *Derivation of the divine Essence and Perfections from the Father to the Son*, or any of that kind, which are inconsistent with the true Deity of the Son, which otherways these same Divines faithfully and honestly maintain. But since they give sufficient Evidence of the Soundness of their Faith, in maintaining the Doctrine of a Trinity of divine Persons in the Unity of the divine Essence in other respects, it would be hard to charge these absurd Consequences upon them, which flow from their rash and unguarded

guarded Explications of the hidden myſterious Manner of the Son's Generation, or Proceſſion of the Holy Ghoſt. And indeed, to attempt to explain theſe perſonal Properties, by which the diſtinct Perſons of the Trinity are diſtinguiſhed, *is to darken Counſel by Words without Knowledge, and to be wiſe above what is written.* For there is nothing revealed to us in the Scriptures, with a deſign to explain the different Manner, how the divine Nature and Eſſence ſubſiſts in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, ſo as to make them different and diſtinct Perſons; this is a Myſtery known only to theſe divine Perſons themſelves, and therefore it is enough for us to believe and know the Truth and the Fact, that it is ſo: ſince this is all that is revealed to us concerning it, we ought to ſatisfy ourſelves with the Belief of it, that the divine Nature does ſo ſubſiſt in theſe three, after ſuch a manner, that they are thereby conſtituted three diſtinct Perſons, and that there is a foundation in the Deity for that perſonal Diſtinction, though neither Men nor Angels can comprehend or explain it fully.

But here it is objected, That the perſonal Character of the firſt Perſon of the Trinity, whereby he is repreſented as Father, and that of the ſecond, whereby he is deſcribed as a Son, neceſſarily infers the Superiority of the one, and the Inferiority of the other; and therefore they are not equal in divine Glory.

To which I answer, That this Objection proceeds upon a false and groundless Supposition; which is this, that when the personal Property of the first Person of the Trinity is said to be Father, or that he begets the Son; and that of the Son, that he is begotten of the Father; that these terms, *Begotten*, and *Unbegotten*, are understood of, and applied to the first and second Person of the Trinity, in the same sense as they are applied to Father and Son among Men; which is a most absurd and blasphemous Supposition, and is by no means to be admitted. It is true, if the Son's personal Property, that he is begotten, were applied to him in the same sense as it is to Men, it might infer his Inferiority to the Father, and his being a distinct and different Being from him, and that he was not of the same Essence with him; but that he is of the same Nature and Essence with the Father, I have already sufficiently proved: and therefore *begotten* cannot be applied to him, in such a sense as is inconsistent with those Scriptures, which plainly prove his Equality with the Father; otherways the Scripture would contradict itself.

But here it may be said, In what sense then must we take that term? what is the Import and Signification of it? It must surely have some Meaning; otherways to what purpose is it to reveal it as his personal Property? To this I would answer; It is very true, that Men or Angels cannot comprehend or explain the full Import of this, or any other of the personal

sonal Properties of the Deity, more than they can do the essential Perfections; these are both upon a level, and the full Import of them is incomprehensible by any finite Mind; because they have both of them their foundation laid in the Infinity of the Deity: yet these terms by which the personal Properties of the eternal Three are described, are not so far insignificant, that we can affix no Idea to them, or have no apprehension of their Meaning at all. For though we cannot fully comprehend the whole Import, and know all that is to be known of them, or all that the divine Persons themselves know of them; though our Ideas and Conceptions of their Import be but languid, faint, and imperfect, yet we know, or may know, by what is delivered to us in Scripture concerning these Persons, as much as serves the purpose, for which these personal Properties were revealed to us; and that is sufficient.

And particularly, with respect to the personal Property of God the Son, that he is said to be begotten, though we cannot sufficiently declare his Generation: yet thus much we know of that term, that it distinguisheth the Person of the Son from that of the Father and Holy Ghost, neither of whom are said in Scripture, nor can be said, to be begotten. It denotes to us, that in the Way and Manner in which the Son is possessed of the divine Nature and Essence, there is a foundation laid for this term's being applied to him, which is not laid in the Way and Manner in which the di-

vine Nature subsists, either in the Father or Holy Ghost: and the peculiar Way in which the divine Nature subsists in God the Son, furnishes a Reason for his being said to be begotten, which does not hold either with respect to the Father or Holy Ghost, and which made it fit that his Personality should be distinguished from that of the Father and Holy Ghost, by the term *begotten*, as the fittest and most proper to express that Distinction to Mortals, as carrying in it a nearer Analogy and Resemblance to Generation or Filiation among Men, than what is to be found in the Persons of either of the other two; he being the express Image of his Father's Person in a peculiar manner, though distinct from him in Person. But how far this Analogy and Resemblance is to be carried, is beyond our reach to determine; only by what is taught us in other Passages of Scripture concerning the Son, we are directed and instructed not to carry that Analogy and Resemblance so far, as to be inconsistent with his true, proper and supreme Deity. And therefore,

1. The term *Begotten*, which is the personal Property of the Son, and which distinguishes him from the Persons of the Father and Holy Ghost, whatever more it carries in it, than what we have, can, or dare describe in a positive way, by other things which are revealed in Scripture concerning his Person; this we know, that it cannot be so understood as to import any Inferiority in his Person to
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the Person of the Father : for if it did, then the Description of him as a Son, or his being begotten, would be inconsistent with other Descriptions given of him in Scripture ; particularly with that, whereby all Men are commanded to pay Honour to him as they do to the Father ; and with this, that *he thought it no Robbery to be equal with God*. Since therefore there is a sense wherein the term *begotten* may be understood, as I have explained above, which is consistent with his absolute Equality with the Father, as these Texts affirm ; there is no reason, nor so much as the shadow of a reason, to take that term in any sense which is inconsistent with them ; as most certainly that term would be, if it was taken in such a sense, which imported Inferiority in it.

2. As this personal Property of God the Son, whereby he is said to be begotten of the Father, cannot be understood in such a sense as to import Inferiority to the Father in it ; so neither is it to be so understood, as if the Essence or Personality of the Son was communicated or derived to him from the Father ; this also would be inconsistent with all those Passages of Scripture, by which I have already proved his supreme Deity and Self-Existence, both with respect to his Person and Essence ; and by which I shall, God willing, prove it farther, when I come to shew, that he performed those Works which could only be performed by the supreme God ; and that Worship and divine Honour, which is due only to

the self-existent Being, was paid to him by divine Appointment: for to say, either that the Father communicated or derived to the Son his Essence or Personality, as I hinted above, is to degrade him to the Condition of a Creature; for a derived Being, or a Person who is not self-originated, is just, in other words, a dependent Creature. 'Tis true, some who are in the *Trinitarian* Scheme, as I hinted above, have made use of these terms of Communication and Derivation of the divine Essence and Personality to the Son, as the sense of the Son's being said to be begotten of the Father; but then they have at the same time given such an Explication of them, as excludes the Dependence of the Son upon the Father, either as to his Essence or Personality; and consequently, declare, that they used them not in their proper Signification, which abundantly frees them from all Heresy in this point; though we could have wished that they had not used such terms at all, as give any handle to the Adversaries of the Trnth. Besides, let it be carefully minded, that to suppose the term begotten, by which the personal Property of the Son is described, signifies and denotes that he derived his Existence or Personality from the Father, is directly contrary to the known Principles of Philosophy and natural Reason; for it supposes, there is something derivative, and which is not self-existent, in the Deity; than which there can be nothing more repugnant to the natural and self-evident Notion and Conception,

ception, which Reason itself suggests to us, of true and proper Divinity: for if we exclude Self-existence and Independency out of our Notion and Conception of the Deity, we leave nothing in it, whereby it is distinguished from created Existence; or at least, we exclude the chief thing by which it is distinguished from it.

But here it is further objected, against the Independency of the Essence and Personality of the Son, that he is said to have Life from the Father; * *As the Father hath Life in himself, so he hath given to the Son to have Life in himself.* To which I answer; That there is a two-fold sense given of these words by the *Trinitarians* and *Anti-trinitarians*. The *Anti-trinitarians* understand by the Life here given of the Father to the Son, that Life by which the Son himself lives and exists; the *Trinitarians*, on the other hand, by the Life given to the Son, understand not the Life by which the Son himself lives and exists, but the Life of the Saints, which comes originally from the Father, and from him is derived to the Son, and lodged in his hand, as Mediator, to be communicated to Believers; through whom, as their Head, all saving Benefits spiritual and eternal, are conveyed; therefore we are said †, *to be blessed of the Father with all spiritual Blessing in heavenly things in Christ Jesus.*

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* John v. 26.

† Ephes. i. 3.

Now let us examine both these Senses, and see which of them has the best claim to the true Meaning of the Text, and whether either of them conclude and infer the Inferiority of the Son to the Father, or that he is dependant on him, either as to his Essence or Personality. And as to the first Sense, or that whereby the *Anti-trinitarians* understand the Life here said to be given to the Son, to be that Life whereby he himself lives and exists; I say, though we should take it in this sense, then the Words are capable of this Meaning, that as the Father hath Life originally in and of himself, so that he does not depend on any other Being for it, but is of himself self-existent, so he hath given to the Son to have Life in himself; that is, he doth not dispute nor contest that point with the Son, but gives it up to him, and owns the Son's Self-Existence, that he hath Self-Origination in and of himself; and that he no more depends on any other for his Life and Existence, than the Father himself does, but has it in and of himself, in the same sense in which the Father hath his Life and Existence in and of himself, without being obliged to hold it of any other, by the precarious Tenure by which the Creature holds his of him, of whom he derives it. So that the word *give*, is here taken in the sense in which it is used by Logicians and Men of Law, when they yield a Point, and quit their Claim, they are said to give up the Cause, or give up the Argument. If the Life here spoken

ken of is the Son's own Life, by which he exists, then we might understand our Saviour here, as he does in many other places, to be asserting in the strongest manner his own Equality with the Father, and teaching us, that as he, the Son, thought it no Robbery to be equal with God the Father; so the Father esteeming it a Robbery to claim the Prerogative of having self-existent Life, in such a manner, as cuts off the Son from the same Claim; I say, the Father esteeming this a Robbery, renounces that Claim, as not being peculiar to his Person only, and gives up the Prerogative, as the Right of the Son, to share in it equally with himself; and owns, that as he the Father hath self-existent Life in himself, so the Son hath self-existent and independent Life in himself. And indeed, if these words are to be understood of the Life of the Son, by which he himself lives, the word translated *given*, cannot be taken in another sense, without making them a Contradiction; for it seems to be inconsistent to say, that he both hath Life in himself, and that it is given, that is, derived to him from another, to wit, the Father. But though this be a Truth, and a Truth asserted in many places of the Scripture, as I have partly proved already, and shall yet further prove afterwards, God willing, that the Son hath self-existent and unoriginated Life in himself, whereby he is the only living and true God, with the Father and Holy Ghost, yet this is not the Truth taught in this Text.

And

And therefore, I readily give in with the *Trinitarian* sense of the Life here said to be given by the Father to the Son, that it is the eternal Life of the Saints, which the Father gives to, and lodges in the hands of the Son, as their Mediator and Head, to be bestowed upon them at the last Day, when he adjudges them to everlasting Life. Now that this is the Life, which our Saviour says was given to the Son, and not his own Life, by which he himself lives and exists, will appear to be plain from the Context, where this Text lies, on which the Objection is founded; where we may see that our Saviour is speaking of the eternal Life of the Saints: particularly, our Saviour is telling the Jews, * *that he that heareth his Words, and believeth on him that sent him, hath everlasting Life: and, that he shall not come into Condemnation, but is passed from Death to Life.* Then he gives an account when it is to be bestowed upon them, and after what manner the Saints shall be possessed of it; and that is, at the general Resurrection, when they shall be raised up to eternal Life by the powerful Voice of the Son of God: and then he informs them, that he, the Son of God, as Mediator, had an express Commission from the Father, to bestow this eternal Life on the Saints; and that the Father, the first Spring of this eternal Life of the Saints, had lodged it for that very purpose in his hands, to be bestowed on them by him, as their Head and
 Medi-

* Ver. 24.

Mediator, constituted by the Father, and invested with Authority from him for that very end. Therefore it is said, as the Father hath Life in himself, this eternal Life to be enjoyed by the Saints, so he hath, according to the fixed Oeconomy of the Covenant and Method of Grace, given and delegated to the Son, as Mediator, this eternal Life; that he, as the constituted Head of his Church, may from himself confer this eternal Life upon all the true Members of his mystical Body: for, as it follows, **He hath given him Authority to execute Judgment*; that is, to adjudge the Crown of Life to Believers, because he is the Son of Man; that is, this mediatorial Power of conferring eternal Life upon Believers, is founded upon his assuming our Nature into a personal Union with his divine; and therein suffering in the stead of Sinners. From all which it appears, that the Life said to be given by the Father to the Son, is not his own Life by which he lives and exists, as the second Person of the Trinity; but the Life of the Saints, which is to be bestowed on them by him, as he is Mediator; and therefore his having received the Life of the Saints from the Father, and his having that lodged in his hand as their Head and Trustee, is no argument that he depends on the Father for his own Life, by which he himself exists: this he has in and of himself as independently, as the Father hath his Life in and of himself; tho' the other, to wit, the Life of the Saints, he receives

* Ver. 27.

receives of the Father, and bestows it on them according to his Will; and as many as the Father hath given him, on them he will bestow eternal Life, and will raise them up at the last Day to eternal Glory.

III. I proceed now to the third Head of Argument for the Proof of the proper and supreme Deity of God the Son, and his Equality with the Father; which is taken from those Works, which were performed by him, which were peculiarly the Works of supreme Divinity; and which he could never have performed, if he had not been the most high God.

One Work which offers it self to us, is that stupendous Work of Creation, whereby he brought all things out of nothing into Being and Existence. This is a Work so peculiarly divine, and so plain a Proof of the supreme Deity of him, to whom it is ascribed, that the Father himself claims supreme Deity upon it alone; and lays the foundation of that superior Worship due to him, in opposition to all Pretenders, on this very foot that he is Creator; as what raises him above, and distinguishes him from the Idols of the Nations; who pretended to Divinity without any just Foundation for so high a Claim; who were so far from being the Authors of things, that they themselves were either the Work of Men's Hands, or the Fictions of their Imaginations.

That

That Creation is a distinguishing Character of proper and supreme Divinity, is evident from the very Light of Nature and the Principles of Reason ; for it carries in it the notion of Eternity, Omnipotence, and absolute Sovereignty. It carries in it the notion of Eternity, because that which gave being to things, by which Time commenced, must have it self been before those things, which were the Effects of its own Power, as the Cause necessarily must precede the Effect. It carries in it the notion of Omnipotence, in regard that Almighty Power is involved in the very notion of Creation ; for there being an infinite distance betwixt Non-existence and Existence, nothing short of Infinity of Power can bring the one out of the other. Besides, Creation carries in it the notion of and lays a foundation for absolute Sovereignty over, and an independent Right to all things. He, for whose Pleasure all things are and were created, must undeniably have a Right to dispose of them according to his Pleasure. Since therefore Creation carries all these things in it, it must consequently be a Proof of supreme Deity in the Person or Being who performs such a Work. Now, that the Lord Jesus Christ, the second Person in the Trinity, did perform this Work, and was the Creator of all things, is abundantly plain from express Testimony of Scripture. And here, not to insist on that Intimation hereof, which we have in the Book of *Genesis*, where there is a Plurality of Persons supposed

to

to concur jointly in the Work of Creation ; particularly in the chief part of Creation-Work, in the Creation of Man, when God said, * *Let Us make Man in our Image, after our Likeness.* For the eternal *Three* being of one Substance and Nature, and possessed of the same essential Perfections, and so indivisibly and inseparably united in one and the same infinitely perfect divine Nature, it was impossible from the very Nature of that divine Essence, that any of the Persons could produce any Creature, but at the same time that Creature, which was produced immediately by any of the Persons, must be the Effect and Produce of the Power common to them all: and therefore the Work of Creation is justly ascribed to all the Three ; and particularly the Son is described to us in Scripture, as the joint Creator of things with the Father ; and that † *without him, or separate from the Son, nothing was made, that was made by him.* And indeed, without supposing that the Three are possessed of one and the same divine Nature, there is no accounting for the Work of Creation's being ascribed in Scripture sometimes to one of them, sometimes to another. But upon the supposition that all the Three are united in One and the self-same Nature, and have all the same essential divine Perfections, then whatever was the Work of any One, was the Work of them all ; and thus each of the Persons of the Trinity is justly reckoned,

* Gen. i. 26.

† John i. 3.

reckoned, and properly called the Author of all things.

But I say, not to insist on this, we have particular Proof, that Creation, and bringing things out of nothing to a state of Existence and Being, is ascribed to Jesus Christ, the second Person of the Trinity. * *Of old hast thou laid the Foundations of the Earth, and the Heavens are the Work of thy hands.* This is in so many words applied to our Saviour by the Apostle Paul; † *By him were all things created that are in Heaven, and that are in Earth, visible and invisible, whether they be Thrones or Dominions, Principalities or Powers; all things were created by him, and for him.* Now if our Saviour's creating all things is not a sufficient Proof of his supreme Deity and Godhead, then it would follow, that the eternal Power and Godhead even of the Father, is not seen and known by the things which are made; which is contrary to what we are expressly taught by the Apostle, in these words; ‡ *The invisible things of him from the Creation of the World are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal Power and Godhead.* And if the Creation of things, being ascribed to the Father, is a Proof of his Godhead, the same Creation being ascribed to the Son, is equally a Proof of his Deity to any impartial and unbiass'd Mind, who is not under the strongest Prejudices, and given up to strong Delusions to believe Lyes.

But

* Psalm cii. 25. † Heb. x. 10. Col. i. 16. ‡ Rom. i. 20.

But here it is objected against our Saviour's being proved to be God equal with the Father, by his being said to create all things; that he acted in that Work only as an Instrument in the hand of the Father; and therefore the Glory of that Work redounds to the Father alone, as the principal Cause; and no more results from it to our Saviour, than an inferior and subordinate Glory as the instrumental Cause. And for Proof that our Saviour was only the instrumental Cause of the Work of Creation, they alledge those Passages where it is said, * *that God created all things by Jesus Christ*; and, that *by him he made the Worlds*. To which I answer, That in Scripture there is a two-fold Creation, whereof mention is made. There is a Creation, which may be called natural, whereby all things were brought into Being and Existence out of nothing, by the almighty Power of God's Omnipotence. Of this we have an account in *Genesis*; † *In the Beginning God created the Heavens and the Earth*: and in those Scriptures, from which I proved just now, that Jesus Christ was Author of this natural Creation, by which things were brought out of nothing into Being and Existence ‡. There is in Scripture, also mention made of a spiritual Creation, whereby the Hearts and Minds of Sinners are renewed and changed. Of this we have an account in these Words; || *We are his Workmanship, created again in Christ*

* Eph. iii. 9. Heb. i. 2. † Gen. i. 1. ‡ Psalm cii. 25. Col. i. 16. || Eph. ii. 10. and iv. 24.

Christ Jesus to good Works. And, *Put ye on the new Man, which after God is created in Righteousness and true Holiness.* Now the first sort, the natural Creation, by which things are brought out of nothing into Being, doth not admit of any Instrumentality; for where there is an Instrument made use of, in the nature of the thing there must be a pre-existent Subject for the Instrument to exert its instrumental Causality upon. But here, in the natural Creation, there is no pre-existent Subject for the Instrument to operate upon; and therefore there can be no instrumental Causality exerted in such a Production. Besides, let us even suppose, that there was a Possibility of exerting instrumental Causality in the Production of things out of nothing, yet where could there be found such an Instrument, as would be fit to convey such an almighty Causality and Power, as is necessary to produce such an Effect, as the bringing a thing out of nothing is? For whatever Instrument can be supposed here to be made use of, it must either be a finite or an infinite One: an infinite One it cannot be; for that would suppose that there were two infinite Beings; one who was the principal and efficient Cause, and the other, which was the instrumental Cause. If any Instrument then was made use of in the natural Creation, it must have been a finite One. Now it is most absurd to say, that a finite Instrument was made use of in order to convey infinite Power, which is a thing impossible in the nature

ture of the thing; because there is no suitable Proportion betwixt the Power to be conveyed, being infinite; and the Instrument conveying, which is supposed to be but finite. This may be illustrated farther, by a very familiar Example: Let us suppose the strongest Giant only with a Rush or a Straw in his hand, attempting to knock down an Ox; the Effort becomes vain and ineffectual, for this very reason, that the Imperfection and Weakness of the Instrument he makes use of, is altogether unfit to convey a sufficient Blow. So in the other case, the Finiteness and Imperfection of the Instrument supposed to be made use of in the Production of things, makes it utterly incapable of conveying that almighty and infinite Power in a way of Instrumentality, which is absolutely necessary in order to bring things which have no Being to Existence. So that on the whole we see, that neither a finite nor infinite Instrument could possibly be made use of in the Production of things; and consequently there was no Instrument at all made use of in that Work. Moreover, as it is utterly repugnant to the Reason of Man to suppose, that the Lord Jesus Christ, or indeed any thing else, was made use of, as an Instrument in the natural Creation or the Production of things out of nothing; so it is also utterly inconsistent with the account given us of the Production of things in the sacred Writings, where there is not the least insinuation of an Instrument made use of, in any passage of Scripture, where the
 natural

natural Creation is spoken of; but on the contrary, according to the Scripture-account of the Production of things out of nothing, the Work was perfected by the Word and Command of God, exclusive of all Instruments. And therefore we see in the first Chapter of *Genesis*, at the Beginning of each particular Day's Work of all the six, it is said, *God said, let it be so, and so, and so it was*: and there is no mention of any other Instrument, but the sole Word and Command of God, exclusive of all Instruments. *He spake and it was done, he commanded and it stood fast* *.

But here it is objected, *That God created all things by Jesus Christ* †. So that it would seem, that Jesus Christ was the Instrument, by which things are produced out of nothing. To which I answer, That indeed it would seem so, if the Apostle was here speaking of the natural Creation, and the Production of things out of nothing. But that is not the Case; for the Apostle is here speaking of the spiritual Creation, whereby all regenerate Persons are renewed by Jesus Christ, as the great means of their Salvation, through the Redemption which he hath purchased; which plainly appears from the End, for which God created all things by Jesus Christ, which is declared in the following Words; *God created all things by Jesus Christ, to the intent, that to Principalities and Powers might be known by the Church the manifold Wisdom of God.*

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Now

* Psalm xxxiii. 9.

† Eph. iii. 9.

Now that manifold Wisdom of God, which was made known by the Church to Principalities and Powers, was the Wisdom of God in the Redemption and Renovation of Sinners, and their spiritual Creation; and not their natural Creation, whereby they are brought out of nothing to Existence. The manifold Wisdom of that is made known by the natural Creation, and things that are made; but the Church manifests the manifold Wisdom of God, in bringing Sinners from Darkness to Light, which is their spiritual Creation; and therefore, since the Design and Intent of God's creating all things by his Son, is declared to be that Manifestation of the Wisdom of God, which is made by the Church, it necessarily follows, that that Creating spoke of, must be the spiritual Creation, and not the natural. For the spiritual Creation only, whereby the Hearts of Men are renewed, obtains this End, that by it the Church manifests the manifold Wisdom of God to Principalities and Powers; and it was never the Design of the natural Creation, that it should be the Mean, by which this should be done: for the Angels know more of the Wisdom of God manifested that way by the natural Creation, than the Church itself. The same also may be said of that other Text, that it is to be understood of the Method of Grace and Dispensations of the Gospel, and not of the natural Creation; for the word *αιῶνας* translated here Worlds, more commonly signifies Ages, or
 Periods

Periods of Time, as is known to all who understand the Original. So that the Sense comes out to be this, That the Mediator, as King and Governor of the Church, made and constituted all the various Ages and different Periods of the Church, and erected all the various Dispensations of Grace in the old World and the new, before the Flood, after the Flood, in the time of *Abraham*, under the Law and under the Gospel. Upon the whole then; it plainly appears, that altho' the Lord Jesus Christ, as Mediator, be the great Means, by which the spiritual Creation was accomplished, yet that does not infer, that he was a Means and Instrument only in the hand of the Father in the Production of all things in the natural Creation: for tho' the spiritual Creation doth admit of a Mean or Instrument in accomplishing it, yea requires it as necessary; yet the natural Creation doth not, as I have fully shew'd above; and consequently our Saviour could not be made use of as an Instrument only in the first Production of things, but was himself the principal and efficient Cause of them: which is as much a Proof of his supreme Deity, as it is of the Father's, when the Production of things is ascribed to him.

But here it may be further urged, That since these Texts, where it is said, *That God created all things by Jesus Christ*, and *That by him also he made the Worlds*, may be understood of the spiritual Creation, whereby things are re-

newed and reformed by Christ, as Mediator; why may we not also understand those Texts in the same Sense, whereby it was proved, *That Christ created all things, and brought them from nothing to Being*; as that Text, where it is said, *Of old, thou hast laid the Foundations of the Earth, and the Heavens are the Work of thine hands* * : And that other Text, where it is said, *By him were all things created that are in Heaven, and that are in Earth, visible and invisible, whether they be Thrones, or Dominions, Principalities, or Powers; all things were created by him, and for him* †. Which Texts, if they be understood of the spiritual Creation, then they can be no proof, that Jesus Christ was the efficient Cause, who brought things out of nothing into Being; and consequently the Argument taken from that for the Proof of his supreme Deity and Equality with the Father, falls to the ground. To which I answer, That if indeed these Texts could possibly be understood of the spiritual Creation, by which things are restored, and the Image of God again renew'd in the Souls of Men, then no conclusive Argument could be drawn from them for the Proof of the Deity of Christ, as the Author of the natural Creation, and first Cause of the Existence of things. But that is not the case; for it is impossible to understand these Texts of the spiritual Creation, in a consistency with common Sense; and this I shall prove of them both.

* Psalm cii. 25.

† Col. i. 16.

both. And first, that Text where it is said, *Of old thou hast laid the Foundations of the Earth, and the Heavens are the Works of thine Hands*, can't be understood of the spiritual Creation, by which things are renewed and sanctified, but of the natural Creation, by which things received a Being and Existence. Which is plain from this, that the Heavens and the Earth are not capable of this spiritual Creation; not being subjects fit for Regeneration and Sanctification: and therefore it must be understood of their being at first made. The same may be said of that other Text, where it is said, that Principalities and Powers were created by Jesus Christ; for tho' they be intelligent Beings, yet being innocent Beings, it cannot be said that they were created in a spiritual Sense, that is, renewed; for they had never lost the Image of God: and therefore his creating them must be understood of his giving Being to them at first; which is a most incontestable Proof of his supreme Deity; since the very highest of all created Beings, Principalities and Powers, were created, that is, brought out of nothing to Being, by him. But tho' that Text was to be understood of the natural Creation, yet it is no certain Proof that Jesus Christ was the Father's Instrument only; for *Yehovah* is said to create all things by himself*. Sure he could not be his own Instrument; far less can Jesus Christ be reckoned inferior to or an Instrument in the hands of the Apostles,

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yet

* Isa. xlv. 29.

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yet they are said to give commandment by *δία*, Jesus Christ; the word is the same in both places.

So much for the Proof of the Deity of Christ from his being Creator. The next Argument shall be taken from his being Preserver and Redeemer; but this I leave, till the Lord give another Opportunity. *God bless his Word, and to his Name be Praise.*



S E R =



S E R M O N XIII.

I J O H N 5. 7.

*For there are three that bear record
in Heaven, the Father, the Word,
and the Holy Ghost : and these three
are one.*

IN the preceding Discourse I have endeavoured to prove the Deity of our Lord Jesus, and that he is the supreme God from his being the Creator of all things, and the efficient Cause of the Production of things from a state of Non-existence to Being ; and answered the Objections which are usually brought against it.

2. I proceed now to prove his proper and supreme Deity, from his being the Preserver and Upholder of all things. As the Deity of Christ appeared from his being the Creator of all things, because that Work required no less than infinite Power, which none but the true
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and supreme God is possessed of. So it appears with an equal Evidence from Christ's being the Preserver of all things, for the very same Reason; because to preserve things in their Being, does no less require infinite Power, than to give them an Existence at first. For such is the state of all created Beings, that they are no more sufficient of themselves for their continuance in a state of Being unto the next moment, than they were of themselves sufficient for their own Existence, and to give Being to themselves the moment before they had it. So that the Creature must as much depend upon the almighty Power of God the Preserver, for its Continuance in Being the next moment, as it did upon the almighty Power of God the Creator, in order to its having a Being that moment before it had its Existence at all. For altho' a Creature be brought into Being this moment, yet it does not from thence follow, that it will have a Being the next; and the same Exerting of efficacious Influence, flowing from the divine Will, the efficient Cause of all Existence, which is necessary and sufficient to the Existence of a Being this moment, is not sufficient to uphold it in Being the next, unless the Influence be continued; and the Subtraction, or Suspension of that Influence, would have a positive Effect upon reducing that Being into nothing, from which the preserving Influence was subtracted. Which seems to be plain from the natural dependence of all created Existence; and such a Subtraction of that Influence,

fluence, which flows from the divine Being, when he wills the Existence of the Creature, is the same thing in him with a positive Volition, willing its Non-existence: for it is absurd to suppose the divine Being indifferent in the case, neither willing the Existence nor Non-existence of the Creature in any supposed point of Duration. So we see, that the Preservation of things in a state of Being and Existence is as strong an Argument for the supreme Deity of that Being or Person, who is the Author of that Preservation, as even the Creation of them out of nothing it self is; in regard that the one equally requires the exerting of infinite and almighty Power as the other. And indeed, the Preservation of things, as to their simple Being and Essence, must, to the *Arians* at least, be a stronger Argument of supreme Deity, than Creation it self. For as to Creation, they have a sham pretence, as to Creation its being ascribed to our Saviour, that he was only made use of as an Instrument in that; but as to the Preservation of things in their Being, if it can be made out, that that is ascribed to Jesus Christ, they do not so much as pretend, as they do in the case of Creation, that any Instrumentality is us'd with respect to it. 'Tis true, there is a part of divine Preservation, which is mediate, and wherein Instrumentality is made use of: as for instance, in preserving the human Body in life and health, the divine Providence operates by the Instrumentality of Food or Physic; but in uphold-

ing the spiritual Substance of the Soul, or the material Substance of the Body, and keeping them from sinking into their first nothing; this part of Preservation is quite immediate, and done without the Intervention of any Mean or Instrument at all, more than their Creation at first; and therefore if this part of the divine Preservation of things be found to be ascribed to Jesus Christ in Scripture, it will undeniably follow, that he is the supreme God; because it can't be effected without the exerting of infinite and almighty Power, even the same almighty Power, which was exerted in their first Creation.

Now that the Preservation of things in their Being and Existence is ascribed to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is plain from these Words; * *God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in time past to the Fathers by the Prophets, hath in these last days spoken to us by his Son, whom he hath appointed Heir of all things, by whom also he made the Worlds.* Then it follows, *Who being the Brightness of his Glory, and the express Image of his Person; and upholding all things by the Word of his Power.* There the Son is represented to us as the Preserver of all things, without any other Instrument, than the Word of his almighty Power; which is an irrefragable Testimony of his supreme Deity; since nothing short of that almighty Power, which gave Being to things at first, according to the acknow-
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* Heb. i. 3.

ledged Principles of Reason and Philosophy, is sufficient to preserve them. We have for this, another plain Testimony of Scripture; * *In whom we have Redemption through his Blood, even the Forgiveness of Sins, who is the Image of the invisible God, the First-born of every Creature; for by him were all things created that are in Heaven and that are in Earth, visible and invisible, whether they be Thrones or Dominions, Principalities or Powers; all things were created by him, and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist: that is, by his almighty Power all things continue in that Being and Existence, which he gave them in Creation. So that from his immediate sustaining and preserving all things it appears, that he is possessed of those Perfections, which are peculiar to supreme Deity; yea, even in that part of Preservation which is called mediate, because therein God makes use of the Instrumentality of Means, as where he maintains by his Providence, the animal Life in Creatures, for that purpose he makes use of Air and Food for the support of it; yet, I say, even in that kind of Preservation, the supreme Deity of God the Preserver is demonstrated, and his almighty Power manifested in maintaining those Laws of Nature, and preserving those Qualities in the Means, by which they gain those Ends, and become effectual for the preservation of Life, and without which, those Means could contribute nothing at all: as for instance,*

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* Col. i. 17.

one great Mean, which God makes use of in the preservation of the Life of Man, is the Staff of Bread; but that could be of no service for maintaining the human Life, if the God of Nature did not maintain those qualities in it, which make it nutritive to the Body: for *Man does not live by the Bread alone, but by the Word that proceedeth out of the Mouth of God;* that is, by his almighty Power, giving it such a Blessing, as makes it effectual for the preservation of Life. So that whether we consider the Work of the mediate or immediate Preservation of God, each of them is a Proof of the supreme Deity; and consequently that Work of Preservation, being ascribed to the Lord Jesus Christ in Scripture, as I have just now shewed, is an undeniable Proof of his supreme Deity.

And here I cannot but observe, that the *Arians* and other *Anti-trinitarians*, who deny the supreme Deity of God the Son, notwithstanding the Preservation of things is ascribed to him in Scripture, resist the same Evidence, as the *Atheists* do, who deny the Being of God, notwithstanding he preserves all things by his almighty Power. For if it be true, as I have proved, that Jesus Christ upholds all things, and that by him all things consist, then this preservation of things is as strong a Proof for the supreme Deity of Christ against the *Arians*, as the preservation of things is, that there is any supreme Deity at all, against the *Atheists*. And a Man whose Reason is so far

far perverted, and Understanding fo far debauched, that he is proof againft the overpowering Evidence in the firft cafe, has nothing to hinder him to reject the Evidence of the laft; for it is equally clear and brilliant in both.

3. As the afcription of Works of Creation, and the Works of fuftraining Providence to Jeſus Chriſt, is a Proof of his ſupreme Deity, fo alſo there are ſome Works, performed by him, in conſequence of his being Mediator, and acting in that Character, which neceſſarily ſuppoſe and infer his being poſſeſſed of ſupreme Deity, and of thoſe Perfections which are peculiar to it. And the firſt of theſe I ſhall take notice of, is his governing and over-ruling all things; and that not only in the World, but alſo in the Church. As our bleſſed Lord is God, and conſidered as the ſecond Perſon of the holy Trinity, he hath an univerſal Dominion, a natural and original Right, to govern all things in conjunction with the Father and Holy Ghoſt; who are each of them the One ſupreme God, ſo as not to exclude any of the other. And, if it had not been for the Revelation of the method of Grace, and if Man had continued in a ſtate of Innocency, and had not ſtood in need of a Mediator, this univerſal Dominion over, and Government of all things, would have continued in the hands of the Deity, conſidered abſtractly, without being adminiſtered by any particular One of the diſtinct Perſons of the Trinity, as his proper

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and peculiar Province. But considering the Apostacy of Man, and that he stands in need of a Mediator ; this gives a quite different turn to things, and was the occasion that the universal Government of things should be lodged in the hands of the Mediator, and administered by him, till such times as all the Heirs of the Promise should be actually instated and settled in the full Possession of the eternal Inheritance, and the Church fully gathered in ; and then this universal Dominion, lodged in the hands of the Mediator for these glorious ends, when these are gained, shall be resigned by him back again ; and things shall return to their pristine and original state, and the Government of the Universe shall be administered by the three Persons of the Godhead, equally, as one God, considered abstractly, without devolving the Administration upon any one of the Persons more than another. But as these ends are not as yet obtained, the Mediator, as standing bound by his Office to bring all those to Glory, who were given to him by the Father in order to accomplish that end, and as a Reward for his undertaking for them, has the universal Government devolved upon him ; and this he shall continue to have, till all the Enemies of the Church are subdued. And therefore the Apostle tells us, *That he is given to be Head over all things to the Church.* Now, tho' this universal Dominion, which the Mediator has over all things, be a derivative Dominion, and devolved upon him rather than any of the other

other Persons in the Trinity, and tho' this universal Government be but to continue, as it is administred by him as Mediator, for a certain period of time, till the ends for which it was instituted, be accomplished : yet his exercising that Government, and his being possessed of those Perfections, whereby he was able to undertake, and execute such a Trust, is a clear and plain Proof of his being the supreme God; because nothing short of Omnipotence and almighty Power, and of Omniscience and infinite Wisdom, was sufficient to discharge so great a Trust. Nor would it have been consistent with the Perfections of the Father, nor with his Glory, which he will not give to another, that universal Government should be devolved upon the Son as Mediator, if he, as to his divine Nature, had not been God equal with him, and truly and properly a divine Person; because in consequence of his having that universal Government devolved upon him, he has a Claim to supreme divine Worship. His governing the Universe, and making all things in the issue, which fall out in the World, to conspire for the Good of his Church; his restraining its numerous Enemies, and defeating deep-laid Plots of Satan and wicked Men against it, require the exercise of those truly divine Perfections of infinite Power and Wisdom. The Government also of his Church requires the Exerting of these divine Excellencies; for without almighty Power it would be impossi-

ble to subdue the rebellious Hearts of Sinners, and make them the obedient Subjects of his Kingdom of Grace, whom he makes willing in the day of his Power; therefore the Work of Grace upon the Soul at Conversion, is justly called ** a creating of a clean Heart*: And Believers are said to be *† God's Workmanship, created again in Christ Jesus unto good Works*. The Work of Regeneration is said to be accomplished by no less a Power than that which raised Christ from the Dead, which was no less than infinite; and it is frequently in Scripture called a Resurrection. Now since Jesus Christ is the Author of this Work, who is called, *the Author and Finisher of our Faith ‡*; it plainly infers his almighty Power, and consequently his supreme Deity. He also exerted almighty Power in restoring the Dead to Life, and will still shew it more illustriously at the last Day, when by his powerful Voice all the Dead shall be raised. *Marvel not at this, for the Hour is coming, in the which all that are in their Graves shall hear his Voice, and shall come forth; they that have done Good, unto the Resurrection of Life; and they that have done Evil, unto the Resurrection of Damnation ||*: an awful Consideration to those, who without repentance persevere to deny his Divinity. They shall then be convinced, to their eternal Confusion, that he is the supreme God; when, by his almighty Power, they shall be dragged out
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* Psalm li. 10. † Eph. ii. 10. i. 20. ‡ Heb. xii. 2.
 † John v. 28

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of their Graves, and brought before his Tribunal ; and by his Omniscience, all the blasphemous Thoughts of their Hearts, and Expressions of their Lips, shall be revealed and laid open. * *Then God shall bring every Work into Judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be Good, or whether it be Evil; then he shall judge the World in Righteousness, and every one shall receive from him according to what he has done, whether it be Good, or Bad.* And therefore, since this part of universal Dominion and Government shall be exercised by him, he must be a God of infinite Power, and Wisdom ; that is, the true and supreme God : for it would be absolutely impossible for him to detect all the Secrets of the Hearts of all Men, who ever have been, or ever shall be, and proportion their Punishment suitably, without these Perfections of infinite Power and Wisdom.

But here it is objected, That what our Saviour did as Mediator, he did it as the Father's Deputy and Vicegerent, and that therein he acted for the Father's Glory : and the universal Government which he exercised, was a derivative Government, devolved upon him by the Father, and consequently he must be inferior to him, and not equal with him. To which I answer, That our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, as he is Mediator, was the Father's Deputy and Vicegerent, and that the Government which he received as Mediator,

* Eccles. xii. 14.

is derived to him from the Father, and is what he must resign, when the Ends for which it was devolved upon him, are accomplished; I say, all this we own; but what then? All that can justly be inferred from this is, that the Lord Jesus Christ, as he is Mediator, is not the Father's Equal, but his Servant: this we are always ready to own; but then that is not the Point in controversy. We have no Dispute with the *Anti-trinitarians*, whether the Lord Jesus Christ, as Mediator, and as he took on him the Form of a Servant, whether in that respect the Father be greater than he; this we readily grant: but what we insist on is this, that this Mediator has a divine Nature united in one Person with his human Nature, whereby he is absolutely and in all respects equal to the Father, and of the same Nature and Essence with him. And as we have proved this from many other Arguments; so we urge, that it is also plain from those Works, which he performed in consequence of his being invested with the Office of Mediator. 'Tis true, his being invested with that Office, taken simply and by it self, abstracting from the Honour consequent upon it, and the divine Excellencies it requires, as pre-requisite to the discharge of these Offices which belong to it, would be no Proof of his proper Deity, nor did we ever insist upon it as such; but grant, that as far as he receives a derived Commission, and acts as a Deputy and Vicegerent, so far he is inferior; as most certainly the Giver
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of a Commission is, in the nature of things, in that respect, superior to him, to whom such a Commission is given. But that does by no means infer, that in other respects he, to whom the Commission is given, the Deputy and Vicegerent, cannot be equal to him who gives it. And 'tis well known, in some cases he may be even superior to him; tho' it is not so in this: for the Father is in no respect inferior to the Son; yet the Son's Inferiority to the Father, in respect of his being his Deputy and Vicegerent, as he is Mediator, is by no means inconsistent with, nor does it derogate from his being equal to the Father in that respect, that he is possessed of the divine Nature and Perfections equally with him: and what we are urging in this part of the Argument is, that these Works which our Saviour wrought in prosecution of his Office, as Mediator, which were not done by him as Man, such as dying, suffering, and the like, are a clear Proof of his divine Nature and Equality with the Father in that respect; such as his governing the Universe, raising the Dead, forgiving Sins, searching the Heart of Man, and the like; because such Works are peculiar to supreme Divinity, and can't be perform'd by any, who is not possessed of divine Perfections.

But here it may be farther urged, That raising the Dead is not a Proof of divine Power; so that altho' our Saviour did raise the Dead, yet it is no Proof of his having almighty Power; for there are instances of Men, who were

divinely inspired, and had a Commission from Heaven, who have raised the Dead; particularly, *Elisba* raised the *Shunamite's* Son*. And therefore it is argued, that our Saviour, as Mediator, having a divine Commission, might also raise the Dead without being the supreme God. To which I answer, That raising the Dead by one's own proper Power, is undoubtedly an argument of Divinity, because nothing short of almighty Power can perform that Work: for to unite the Soul and Body, being Substances so very different and heterogeneous, must needs surpass the Power of any created Existence. Besides, from the Scripture we learn plainly, that the Union of the Soul and Body, in which the Life of Man consists, is the Work of God alone; † *For in him we live and move, and have our Being*; which the Heathen, who had no divine Revelation, themselves acknowledge. For the Apostle cites the heathen Poet *Aratus*, asserting the same thing; *As certain, says he, also of your own Poets have said; for we are also his Offspring*. Moreover, our Obligation to worship God, at least, one great Obligation to pay him divine Homage, is founded upon our being the Work of his hands, and our owing our Life to him, and having it in a dependance upon him. And therefore to suppose any other Being the Author of our Life, or of the Union of our Soul with our Body, would be to transfer the Obligation to divine Worship from

* 2 Kings iv. 34.

† Acts xvii. 28.

from God, as the Object of it, to the Creature, which is infinitely absurd. And whereas it is urged in the Objection, that *Elisba* raised the dead Child, and united his Soul again to his Body; that is absolutely false: there is no such thing asserted by the sacred Historian. All the hand and concern which *Elisba* had in that matter, or indeed could have, or any created Being else, was, that he pray'd to God for the Restoration of the Child's Life; and God in mercy to the affectionate Mother the *Shunamite*, answered the Prophet's and the Mother's Prayer; and by his almighty Power united again the Soul of the Child to his Body. All this is plain from these Words; *He went in therefore* (the Prophet went in) *and shut the Door upon them twain, himself and the Child, and prayed unto the Lord, and he went up and lay upon the Child, and put his Mouth upon his Mouth, his Eyes upon his Eyes, and his Hands upon his Hands, and he stretched himself upon the Child, and the Flesh of the Child waxed warm.* So that the Miracle was effected by the Power of God only at the Prophet's Prayer. It is true, when our Saviour raised *Lazarus*, he prayed also to the Father; but at the same time he declares, that his so doing was not that the Father might exert his almighty Power in raising *Lazarus*: our Saviour's own Word was sufficient for that; for he arose from the Dead upon our Saviour's saying, *Lazarus, come forth.* But the only reason why he owned the Father by Prayer, as

other Prophets did, when they were about to work a Miracle, and beg the Interposition of the almighty Power of Heaven, was that the People might be brought to a persuasion, that he, as Mediator, had a Commission from Heaven; for so obstinate were they, that they would not own even that. But says he, *because of the People that stand by, I said it, that they might believe that thou hast sent me.* Moreover, the Miracles which the Prophets wrought, were done that Men might believe, not in them, but in the living God. But those which our Saviour wrought, were done for that End, that they might believe in Christ as the Son of God; that is, according to the usual acceptation of that Phrase, as one equal with God; and particularly the raising of *Lazarus* from the Dead, was done to encourage his Sister's Faith, and to beget Faith in Christ in others who should see that Work performed. Therefore our Saviour saith to one of the Sisters, ** Said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldst believe, thou shouldst see the Glory of God?* Now, if our Saviour had not performed this Miracle in raising *Lazarus* from the Dead by his own Power, it would have been the highest Arrogance, and the greatest Blasphemy in him to arrogate to himself the divine Glory of it, and to claim a Right upon it of being believed in, as the Son of God; that is, as they interpreted that Claim, and as he himself owned, *God equal with the Father.* Moreover, as was hinted

* John xi. 40.

hinted above, the Resurrection from the Dead is ascrib'd to Jesus Christ, as the Author of it by his own Power *. *All that are in their Graves shall bear his Voice, and shall come forth.* Thus I have shewed the supreme Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ from his Works of Creation and Providence, and such divine Works as were performed by him in consequence of his being Mediator.

IV. I proceed to the fourth general Head of Argument, for proof of his supreme Deity, and that is, That religious Worship and Adoration, due only to the supreme God, was both paid to him, and claimed by him; that he was worshipped by rational Creatures of the highest Rank, and that by the Command of the Father himself. Religious Worship and Adoration is the just Revenue which the Deity claims of the reasonable Creature, as due to him for their Being, and all their Comforts, Benefits and Happiness, which they enjoy in a Dependence upon him; and whatever Being can claim a right to this Revenue, does upon that very account claim a Title to supreme Deity; and the reasonable Creature, paying religious Homage and Adoration to any Being or Person, does by that very Act own and acknowledge that Being or Person to whom such religious Homage and Adoration is paid, to be the most high God, and to be possess'd of all divine Perfections and Excellencies; for the Possession

* John v. 28.

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Possession of divine Perfections and Excellencies is the sole Foundation of a Claim to religious Homage. 'Tis true, there is a kind of inferior Worship or Reverence due to inferior Creatures, and ought to be paid to them suitably to the various inferior Perfections or Excellencies which these inferior Beings are indued with; and in proportion to the Perfection of their Nature and Excellencies they are possess'd of, so in proportion should the Degree of Worship paid to them arise.

Now in regard that there are two Objects of Worship existing, which differ infinitely from each other in Point of Perfection and Excellency; therefore Worship naturally divides itself into two Kinds, which are as different from one another, as the Object of them is different in Nature and Excellency; to wit, God and the Creature; and since these two differ infinitely in their Nature, Excellency and Perfection, so the Worship due to them must differ infinitely, and ought to be of an infinitely different Kind; and to mistake in this matter, and to pay that Worship to the one, which belongs only to the other, must needs be a Crime of the most flagitious Nature; since it infers no less than a levelling the supreme God with the Creature, or raising the Creature to the same pitch of Dignity with the Creator, which are equally blasphemous.

That Worship which is due to the supreme God, and which has infinite Excellencies and Perfections for its Object, is called religious
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Worship; and since there are no Degrees in infinite Perfections and Excellencies, which are the Object of religious Worship, and upon which it is founded, therefore there can be no Degrees in religious Worship itself. That Worship which is due to the Creature, and which hath but finite Perfection and Excellency for its Object, is called civil Worship; and since there are various Degrees in finite Excellency, which is the Object of civil Worship, and upon which it is founded; therefore there must of necessity be various Degrees in civil Worship itself, to answer suitably and proportionably those various Degrees of finite Perfection and Excellency, which is the Object of it.

Having observed these things concerning the Nature of Worship in general, they will help to clear our way to the Argument for the supreme Deity of God the Son, drawn from this, that religious Worship was paid to him; for if he is no more than a Creature, or if he is any thing short of infinite Perfection and Excellency, then he must be degraded to that Class of Beings, to whom civil Worship only is due; and however high a Place we assign him in that Class of Beings, yet we can never raise him so high, while we depress him to that inferior Class, as to lay a Foundation for his Claim to religious Worship: And therefore, if it does appear from Scripture, that religious Worship was actually paid him, and that by the Appointment of Heaven, the Consequence then

then must be clear and just, that he is none of those inferior Beings, as to his divine Nature, to whom civil Worship only is due; but that he is the supreme God. For it is the grossest Absurdity to suppose, that the Worship due only to infinite Perfection and Excellency, was by the divine Appointment given to one, who had only finite Excellencies; this would be to give the Sanction of Heaven to the grossest Idolatry.

Now to make good our Argument for the supreme Deity of God the Son from his Claim to religious Worship, and from its being actually paid to him, and that by divine Appointment; I shall point out such Passages of Scripture as plainly evince it, that religious Worship, Worship of the highest kind, due only to the supreme God, and that in all its Parts, both Adoration and Invocation was paid to him, and approved by him. That the Lord Jesus Christ is the proper Object of divine and religious Worship, as to his divine Nature, has already been sufficiently proved, from his being possess'd of the divine Nature and Essence, and all its essential Perfections; such as Independence, Self-Origination, Eternity, Immutability, Omnipotence, Omniscience and Omnipresence, and the like; which Perfections alone are the Foundation of religious Worship, and the ultimate Object to which it ought to be directed: and where these are wanting in any Being, there can be no just Claim to that Honour, which is the Consequent of, and results from
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religious Worship; as on the other hand, where these are found, as I have in former Discourses proved they are all found in Jesus the Son of God, there for certain is the proper Object of religious Worship; and it ought to be directed to him as the ultimate Object of it, and to whom it justly appertains. And altho' we had no particular Instances for proving, that religious Worship was actually paid to him in Scripture, yet that they are clear and plain in this, that he is possess'd of those infinite Excellencies, which are the proper Object of religious Worship, that of itself would be ground enough for our Practice in this Matter; and would be sufficient to lay an Obligation upon us to own him as the supreme Object of all religious Adoration and divine Homage. But this is not the Case; we are not left at a loss for Proof, that religious Worship has been actually paid to him, any more than for Proofs of his Right and Claim to it, by being possess'd of those Perfections which only are the just Foundation of it: the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are clear and full in this point; in them we have Instances, both wherein divine Worship of religious Adoration and Invocation is ascribed to him. But I have not time to enter upon so large a Field; only I shall instance in two Passages in the Old Testament, wherein this religious Worship was paid to him, as the Mediator under the Old Dispensation, and as the Angel of the Covenant; leaving the fuller Proof of this from the New Testament,

Testament, till the Lord give another Opportunity.

The first of these Passages*, is that where we find, that *Jacob* pays divine Honour and Worship to the Angel of the Covenant, the second Person of the Trinity; who frequently appeared to the Old Testament Believers, as a Prelude of his future Incarnation, and was worshipped by them, as a divine Person by religious Worship; the Words are these: — *God before whom my Fathers, Abraham and Isaac, did walk, the God who fed me all my Life long unto this Day, the Angel, who redeemed me from all Evil, bless the Lads.* Now, that this is the Angel of the Covenant, the second Person of the holy Trinity, appears from the Character of Redeemer here given of him, and his Epithet of Angel; for the Father is never call'd the Angel or Messenger; and I can hardly think, that the *Arians* themselves can allow this to be understood of the Father, for that reason, that he is called the Angel or Messenger; for that would oblige them to say; that the Father received a Commission from the Son, or Holy Ghost, whereby he became their Messenger; for he could not be his own Messenger, nor the Messenger of any Creature. The Angel or Messenger here spoken of then, whose Blessing was implored in behalf of *Ephraim* and *Manasseh*, by *Jacob*, their Grandfather; must needs be the Angel of the Covenant, the Father's Messenger, as he

* Gen. xlviii. 15.

was Mediator : and in regard that *Jacob* addresses him, as the Fountain of spiritual and eternal Blessings, by Prayer, he must needs be on that account a divine Person, and own'd as such by *Jacob* ; for to apply to any by way of Prayer, as the original Giver, either of temporal or spiritual Blessings, is a most solemn Act of religious Worship ; and practical acknowledging the Being or Person, thus apply'd unto, to be possessed of infinite Wisdom, Power and Goodness ; and consequently to be truly God. Moreover, what puts the Matter beyond all dispute, that religious Worship was paid by *Jacob* to the Angel of the Covenant, the Lord *Jesus Christ*, the second Person of the Trinity, in this Action of blessing *Ephraim* and *Manasseh*, that is, begging the divine Blessing on them ; is, that this Action in the New Testament is expressly called worshipping: *By Faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the Sons of Joseph, and worshipped, leaning upon the top of his Staff* *.

We have another Instance †, where the Lord *Jesus Christ*, the second Person of the Trinity, who was given as a Leader and Commander to the Old-Testament Church, and who is the Captain of our Salvation under the New, appear'd to *Joshua*, under the Character of the Captain of the Lord's Host, and accepted of Worship, and demanded it as his due ; and appointed the Place, where he made his Appearance, to be looked upon as holy,

* Heb. xi. 26. † Josh. v. 15.

because of his Presence: which is more than he had a Claim to, if he had not been the supreme God, and what was never done on account of any Creature. And we have but one Instance more of that kind; and it was, when the same Angel of the Covenant appeared to *Moses**, which Angel calls himself the God of *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, which shews he was a divine Person; and therefore might justly command *Moses*, as an Evidence that Worship was due to him, *to put off his Shoes from off his Feet*; as he commanded *Joshua* here: *Joshua fell on his face to the Earth, and did worship; and said unto him, What saith my Lord unto his Servant? And the Captain of the Lord's Host said unto Joshua, Loose thy Shoe from off thy Foot; for the Place whereon thou standest is holy: and Joshua did so* †.

God bless his Word, and to his Name be Praise.

* Exod. iii. 5.

† Josh. v. 14, 15.





S E R M O N X I V .

I JOHN 5. 7.

For there are three that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost : and these three are one.

IN the end of the preceeding Discourse, I endeavoured to shew the proper Deity of God the Son from this, That divine Worship was ascribed to him in Scripture; for proof of which, I cited some Passages from the Old Testament. I now proceed to prove it further from the clearer Discoveries made of it in the New.

In the New Testament, we have plain and express Proof, that divine Worship, Worship due only to the supreme God, and such as has infinite Perfections only for its Object, was paid to Jesus Christ: where the Angels, the highest of all created Beings, were commanded to worship him*; *And again, when he bringeth in the first-begotten into the World, he saith,*

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* Heb. i. 6.

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and let all the Angels of God worship him. The Wise Men also, who came from the East, and were in a miraculous manner directed of God by a Star, where to find the Child Jesus, who was born King of the Jews, paid divine Honour to him *: *When they were come into the House, they saw the young Child, with Mary his Mother, and fell down and worshipped him.* And after he had entred upon his publick Ministry, and displayed by his Works his divine Perfections, so far as was consistent with his State of Humiliation, all those, who were by the Power of divine Grace enabled to embrace him, as the Messias, the Son of God, and Saviour of the World; worshipped him with supreme divine Honour in the Acts both of Adoration and Invocation; which is plain from the whole History of our Saviour, recorded by the Evangelists. I shall instance only in one very remarkable Case; which was, when our Saviour was making his publick Entry into the City of *Jerusalem*, as the King of *Sion*; the Multitude shouted, and sounded forth his Praises in Hosannas of the highest Strain, insomuch, that the Chief Priests, the Scribes and Pharisees were greatly offended to see his Disciples and the Multitude pay divine Honours to Jesus, the Son of *David*; and address'd our Saviour, that he might rebuke his Disciples and Followers for so gross an Act of Idolatry, as they imagined, taking him to be no more than a mere Man; as some of the *Anti-Trinitarians*

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* Mat. ii. 11.

do at this day: and doubtless, if our Saviour had been any thing short of, or inferior to the supreme God, as to his divine Nature, he would most certainly have rebuked them most severely, and would never have suffered himself to be made by them the Object of their idolatrous Worship; this he would have done of himself, without any Application made to him for it by the Scribes and Pharisees. But so far was he from rebuking them, and restraining their Adoration of him, that in his Reply to the Chief Priests, he in the openest manner declares his Right to their Adoration; and tells them, *if these should hold their peace*, at that time, and forbear to acknowledge him as the supreme God, by Praise and Hosannas, *the very Stones themselves would cry out*; as the Evangelist *Luke* relates that History*: and, as we have another part of that History related by *Matthew*, our Saviour tells these Scribes, Pharisees and Chief Priests, when they would have him to rebuke those, who paid him this piece of divine Honour, that their so doing was prophesied of, as what was due to him, and ought and should be paid to him †: *When the Chief Priests and Scribes saw the wonderful Things that he did, and the Children crying in the Temple, and saying, Hosanna to the Son of David; they were sore displeas'd, and said unto him, hearest thou what these say? And Jesus said unto them, Yea, have ye never read, out of the Mouths*

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* Luke xix. 40.

† Mat. xxi. 15.

of Babes and Sucklings thou hast perfected Praise.

Faith in Christ is another Act of Worship, which was paid to him by his Disciples, and required of them by our Saviour himself; and that too in the same Sense, and of the same Kind, which was paid to the Father*: *Let not your Hearts be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in me.* And this Faith, which was exercised towards Christ, as it was of itself an Act of divine Worship, and could only be directed to an Object possessed of supreme Divinity; for it is said†, *Thus saith the Lord, cursed is the Man, that trusteth in Man, and maketh Flesh his Arm, and whose Heart departeth from the Lord;* so Faith in Christ was always accompanied with other Acts of Worship, performed to him by those who truly believed in him: thus it was in the Case of the blind Man, whom our Saviour cured‡; *Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? he answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? And Jesus said unto him, thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee. And he said, Lord, I believe; and he worshipped him.*

Moreover, as our Saviour was owned by his Disciples and Followers, as the supreme Object of divine religious Worship equally with the Father, during the time he was here upon the Earth; so was he also when he parted from

* John xiv. 1. † Jer. xvii. 5. ‡ John ix. 35.

them at his Ascension: * *And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up to Heaven; and they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great Joy.* And since his Ascension all along, he has been worshipped by the Churches, with all the Acts of religious Adoration and Invocation; and that too as the ultimate Object upon which religious Worship terminates. For even these Acts of religious Worship, which are exercised towards the Lord Jesus Christ, considered as executing the Offices of Mediator, even these Acts terminate ultimately upon the Perfections of his divine Nature, which alone are the proper Object of religious Worship: and consequently, such Acts of Worship, which are exercised towards Christ, even as Mediator, which terminate ultimately in the infinite Perfections of the divine Nature, are not at all to be counted inferior and subordinate Worship; because they have supreme Perfection for their Object.

'Tis true, there may be an inferior and subordinate Kind of Worship, or Honour and Veneration due to the human Nature of Christ, considered by it self; or even to his Person, considered only in the view of his having received a Commission from the Father, abstracting from all consideration of him, as possessed of the divine Nature and Excellencies: I say, our Saviour Jesus Christ, considered in both these respects, may have a Worship due to him,

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* Luke xxiv. 22.

which is inferior and subordinate; and therefore, for that very reason, only civil Worship: because such subordinate Worship paid to him, considered only as Man, or merely as receiving a delegated Commission from the Father, does not terminate upon any divine Perfection, which is the precise thing which discriminates and distinguishes between religious Worship, and that which is only civil or subordinate Worship; the one having infinite Perfection and Excellency for its Object, and the other only finite. But in all our Concerns with Christ our Mediator, we never have occasion to consider him in any of these respects abstractly; for whenever we are called to pay any Worship to him, such divine Perfections and Excellencies, peculiar to supreme Deity, present themselves to us in his Person, as intirely swallow up the inferior Considerations of him merely as Man, or merely as receiving a delegated Commission: and the Powers of the Mind are attracted by the superior Lustre of these infinite Excellencies of his divine Nature, and fixed upon them; so that the devotion of the Soul in that posture, pointing at his infinite Excellencies, and fixing and resting upon them, and terminating ultimately in them, becomes religious Worship; and Worship due only to supreme Deity, having infinite Perfection for its Object.

Believers are frequently represented to us in Scripture as worshipping our Saviour in all the various Acts of religious Adoration and Invocation,

cation, and fixing upon and pointing to his divine Excellencies, both in Adoration and Invocation. Besides these Instances already taken notice of before his Ascension, I shall point to some other Scriptures, which prove that he was consider'd as the Object of supreme divine Worship after his Ascension: And the first that I shall instance, is that Act of religious Worship, FAITH, believing and trusting in him, and depending upon him for eternal Life. I have already shewed that our Saviour before his Ascension, and while he was here on Earth himself, required, and had this piece of divine Worship pay'd him. So the inspired Apostles command this part of Worship to be performed to him by all who would inherit everlasting Life, as absolutely necessary in order to it. So did the Apostle *Paul* exhort the Jaylor; * *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy House.* And so also he practis'd himself; † *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.* But the Scripture is so full of Instances, wherein this Act of Worship is commanded to be paid to Jesus Christ, and is actually paid to him, that I need not further insist upon it; only I would have it carefully minded, that it is the very highest Act of religious Worship which can possibly be paid by the Creature to the supreme Being: for other Acts of divine Worship terminate, some upon

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* Acts xiv. 31.

† 2 Tim. i. 12.

one divine Perfection; others upon another; but this has all the Perfections of supreme Divinity for its Object. The Person who truly believes in Christ, trusts in, rests and relies upon him as All-sufficient, Self-sufficient, Immutable, Omnipotent, Infinitely Wise, and Infinitely Good, and in a word, Infinite in all Perfections; and consequently, an Act of Worship which hath all these Perfections for its Object, must needs be an Act of supreme religious Worship; and the Being or Person, to whom such an Act of Worship is due, and to whom it is performed by the Command of Heaven, must necessarily be the supreme God; for his Glory, or any part of it, much less all of it at once, he will not give to another.

Another Act of supreme and religious Worship, is, swearing by the Name of the only true God. The Command, is * *Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and serve him; and shalt swear by his Name*: And, we are expressly forbid to swear by the Name of Idols; † *Come not to these Nations, neither make mention of the Name of their Gods, nor cause to swear by them*. Yet this piece of religious Worship, whereby the supreme God is acknowledged the sole Judge and Avenger of Falshood, was paid by the Apostle *Paul* to Christ, when he appeal'd to him as the Heart-searching God, for the Truth of what he wrote to the *Romans*: ‡ *I say the Truth in Christ, I lye not; my Conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost; I say*
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* Deut. vi. 13. † Jos. xxiii. 7. ‡ Rom. ix. 1.

the Truth in Christ : or, as the word sometimes is rendred, and as it may be rendred here, *by Christ* ; *I say the Truth by Christ* : but whether it be translated *in* or *by*, it is equal ; the words plainly carry in them the Form of an Oath. And this is what was foretold of Christ by the Prophet *Isaiab* ; * *Look unto me, and be ye saved all the Ends of the Earth ; for I am God, and there is none else ; I have sworn by my self, the Word is gone out of my Mouth in Righteousness, and shall not return, that to me every Knee shall bow, every Tongue shall swear.* And that the Lord Jesus Christ is the Person spoken of there, is plain from the Context, where he is called, *the Lord our Righteousness*, and it is said, that in him the Seed of *Israel* shall be justified. And likewise, the Apostle *Paul* expressly applies this Passage of the Prophet *Isaiab* to our Saviour, as meant of him, in his Epistle to the † *Romans*, and in that to the *Philippians* he alludes to it. And therefore since the second Person of the Trinity is to be understood, when he says, *that to him every Tongue shall swear* ; 'tis plain, that he is the just Object of this piece of religious and divine Worship ; and consequently the true and supreme God.

Prayer is another Act of religious Worship which was offered to our Saviour ; and that in consequence of a Prophecy concerning him by the Prophet *Isaiab* ; ‡ *In that Day there shall be a Root of Jesse, which shall stand for an Ensign of the People, to him shall the Gentiles seek,*
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* Isa. xlv. 22. † Rom. xiv. 11. Phil. ii. 10. ‡ Isa. xi. 10.

and his Rest shall be glorious. To him did the Woman of *Canaan* seek, and in Faith directed her Prayer to him, and got a gracious Answer. * *And behold, a Woman of Canaan came out of the same Coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; and then came she, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me.* And again, the Father of a Child, possessed with an evil Spirit, addressed him in behalf of his Son by Prayer; and for himself, that he would remove the Unbelief of his own Heart; † *And straitway the Father of the Child cried out, and said with Tears, Lord, I believe, help my Unbelief.* In both which cases, the almighty Power of Christ, and his infinite Goodness are acknowledged by those Acts of Devotion, and are ascribed to him; which our Saviour accepts of, as what belonged to him, without insinuating in the least, any displeasure with them for worshipping him by Prayer; but on the contrary, he approves of their Worship, applauds their Faith in him, and in Testimony hereof, he answers their Prayers; which he would not have done, if he had not been the just and proper Object of Worship; but would have reprov'd them for their Idolatry, as his Disciples did, when divine Honours were offered to them. He, who told Satan, when he was tempted by him, to worship him; *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve,* would never be guilty of so gross a Sin, as to suffer himself

* Mat. xv. 22, &c.

† Mark ix. 24.

himself to be worshipped by Men, if he had not been indeed, the Lord their God. And in a variety of Places, needless here to insist upon, he is represented as the Object of Prayer in the New Testament. He is called, * *The Lord over all, who is rich to all that call upon him*; and, *Whosoever shall call upon his Name, shall be saved*. And that the Lord, the second Person in the Trinity is there meant, is plain from the very next Verse; *How shall they call on him, in whom they have not believed; and how shall they believe on him, of whom they have not heard?* The Lord there meant then, who is rich to those who call upon him, must be the Lord Jesus Christ; for it was he in whom the unconverted *Jews* and *Greeks* did not believe, and of him they had not heard: but they had both heard of the Father, as the living God; the *Jews* by a supernatural Revelation, and the *Greeks* by a natural: and both believed his Existence. But as to the Lord Jesus Christ, they could not believe in him, till he was preached to them by the Gospel, nor call upon him till he was heard of; and sufficient Grounds proposed, to lay a foundation for FAITH in him, by some other Preacher, than what had been sent, either to the *Jews*, who knew nothing of Jesus, come actually in the Flesh, by the Prophecies of the *Messias* to come; or to the *Greeks*, who knew nothing of him by the Works of Creation: until he was made known then to both by the Preach-

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* Rom. x. 12, 13.

ing of the Gospel, neither of them could believe in, or call upon him.

But here it is objected, that the Lord *Jesus Christ* is not the ultimate Object of Prayer, but the Father only; and that we are to direct our Prayers to the Father in his Name; so that the Worship terminates ultimately upon the Father, and not upon the Son. To which I answer, That in all the Instances above cited, the Lord *Jesus Christ* is considered as the ultimate Object to whom these Prayers were addressed; and consequently the divine Worship resulting from them, was directed to him as the ultimate Object of it: and Christians are in the New Testament distinguish'd from the *Jewish* and *Heathen-World*, by this peculiar Characteristick, that they are such as own *Jesus Christ* as the ultimate Object of that divine Worship which is paid by them to the supreme God. Therefore *Ananias* describes Christians by this *, *that they are such as call on the name of Jesus.* Here he hath Authority from the Chief Priests to bind all that call on thy Name; where *Ananias* is speaking to the Lord *Jesus Christ*, who appeared to him in a Vision, and sent him to *Paul*, then called *Saul*, as appears from the rest of the Chapter.

The Apostle *Paul*, addressing his Epistle to the *Corinthians*, and all other Christians and Saints, describes them by this Character, that they were such as own'd *Jesus Christ* as the
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* Acts ix. 14.

ultimate Object of this part of supreme divine Worship †. *To the Church of God, which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Jesus Christ; called to be Saints, with all that in every Place call on the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord.* From whence I would exhort those, who will not call upon *Christ* as their Lord, and the supreme Object of their Worship, together with the Father and Holy Ghost, to take heed to it, lest they be found not to be Members of the true Church of God, and such as are called to be Saints, and sanctified: for the Apostle joins that part of the Christian's Character, that they are Members of the Church of God,—— *effectually called to be Saints, and sanctified, with their calling on the Name of Jesus as their Lord;* and if they want the latter part of the Character, they would do well to take heed, lest they should be destitute of the former also.

'Tis true, that in our Addresses to the Father; we must come in the Name of *Christ*; but it can by no means be hence inferr'd, that therefore the Lord *Jesus Christ* is not the ultimate Object of our Worship: for that very Act, in coming to the Father in the Name of his Son, makes the Son as much the Object of our religious Worship as the Father; for our trusting to, and relying upon the Mediation of the Son, and employing him, as our Advocate with the Father, is as high an Act of religious Worship, as can possibly be performed to the
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Father himself: for hereby we acknowledge the infinite Dignity of his Person, and that he is possessed of all those supreme divine Excellencies, necessary to qualify him for being a complete Mediator; which is no less than to acknowledge, that he has all the infinite Perfections of the divine Nature, than which we cannot possibly perform a higher Act of divine Worship to the Father himself; and that the Father is not addressed by us immediately, but in our Approaches to him, we make use of, and employ the Mediation of the Son. This is not because the Father is possessed of any superior divine Excellency, which is not in the divine Nature of the Son; for all the divine Perfections, which the Father hath, are the Son's: but it is intirely owing to this, that the Father is the Person of the Trinity, who, in the Oeconomy of Salvation, sustains the Character of supreme Deity, and maintains the Rights of the offended Majesty of Heaven by the Sins of Men; and on that account is not to be approached to without the Intervention of a Mediator, suitably qualified to render him propitious; otherways the Rights and Honour of divine Majesty would have been intirely dropt. And if it had been so ordained in the Method of Grace, that the Son had been the Person agreed on to sustain that Character, as he might have been for the Dignity of his Person; he must have been addressed in the same manner, thro' the Mediation of one of the other two; but so it was ordered for Reasons

not sufficiently known to Mortals, that the Son sustains the Character of Mediator; yet his sustaining that Character, does by no means strip him of any Excellency or Perfection belonging to his divine Nature; and consequently is no ways inconsistent with his being the supreme and ultimate Object of religious and divine Worship. 'Tis true, his sustaining the Character of Mediator, and not that of the Defender of the Rights of the injured Majesty of the Deity, considered abstractly, has this Consequence, that he, as a distinct Person from the Father, and sustaining the Character of Mediator, may be addressed immediately without the Intervention of any other Mediator, distinct from himself; but that does not derogate from his proper and supreme Deity, or in the least degrade him, as to his divine Nature, below the Father; or conclude but he is the supreme and ultimate Object of religious Worship, equally with him; and that he has always been owned so by such as were truly Saints: So did St. *Stephen*, when he was breathing his last, he called upon Christ by Prayer, as the ultimate Object of his Worship, saying, *Lord Jesus, receive my Spirit* *.

Once more, another Act of religious Worship, plainly belonging to our Saviour, according to the Scripture, and which was performed by the inspired Penmen themselves, is Adoration, Thanksgiving, or Praise; the Scriptures are so full of these, that I need but mention

* Acts vii. 59.

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tion a few of the most remarkable of them; the first you have in those Words of *St. Paul*; where after, in each of the four preceding Verses, our Saviour had been expressly mention'd, then we have this Doxology to him; *Now unto the King immortal, eternal, invisible, the only wise God, be Honour and Glory for ever and ever, Amen* *. And to the same purpose, we have another by the same Apostle, to the same Person, and in the same Epistle: *I give thee Charge, that thou keep this Commandment without Spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which in his times he shall shew; who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords; who only hath Immortality, dwelling in the Light; which no Man can approach unto, whom no Man hath seen, nor can see; to whom be Honour and Power everlasting, Amen* †. Now that this Doxology is sung to the Praise of Jesus Christ, the second Person, is plain from this, that it is the second Person, who is to make the glorious Appearance at the last Day: And these glorious things are spoke of, and high Epithets ascribed to him, who is in his proper time to shew, and make that grand Appearance. Again, in the Epistle of *Jude* ||, we have a Doxology; *Now to him who is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the Presence of his Glory with exceeding Joy, to the only wise God, our Saviour, be Glory and Majesty, Dominion and*
Power,

* 1 Tim. i. 17. † vi. 15. || Ver. 24.

Power, both now and ever, Amen. That Praise is given to Jesus Christ in this Doxology; appears from this, That he is not only stiled God our Saviour, but also he is represented as the Person, who keeps his People from falling, and presents them faultless before the Presence of his Glory: which is the very Character given of Jesus Christ by the Apostle Paul*. And again in the Revelation †; *Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our Sins in his own Blood, and hath made us Kings and Priests unto God and his Father, to him be Glory and Dominion, for ever and ever, Amen.* Thus I have shewed that the highest Instances of religious and divine Worship have been performed to Jesus Christ by Angels and Men divinely inspired, and by the most eminent of the Saints; and that by the Appointment of God himself; and that this Worship was accepted of, and claim'd by Jesus Christ; from whence it necessarily follows, that he is the proper Object of supreme divine Worship, and is possessed of those infinite Perfections, upon which supreme Worship terminates, and consequently that he is the most high God equal with the Father.

But here it is objected, That notwithstanding divine Worship was paid to Christ, yet it does not necessarily follow that he is possess'd of infinite Perfections; for God the Father might command divine Worship to be paid to him;

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* Eph. v. 27.

† Rev. i. 5, 6.

tho' he is not his equal, and tho' he is not possess'd of those infinite Perfections, which are the Foundation of that supreme divine Worship paid to the Father; and the Command of the Father is a sufficient Foundation for us to pay divine Worship to him, how far soever he may be the Father's inferior. To this I answer, That this is a most unjust and injurious Reflexion upon the Person of the Father, to suppose, that he would give so unreasonable a Command to any rational Creatures, whereby they should be bound to pay that Homage and Worship, due only to the supreme God, to one who is infinitely inferior to him, as the Son must needs be, if he is not the same supreme God with the Father: 'Tis contrary to his own Declaration which he has made, that his Glory he will not give to another: 'Tis the highest affront to his Wisdom and Veracity; and makes his Commandments, which are all holy, just and right, and founded on the highest Reason, to clash and contradict one another; to say in one Place, that we must worship the Lord our God, and serve him only; and yet in another to bind us to honour the Son, even as we honour the Father, tho' at the same time he is not the Lord our God: These are such gross Imputations upon the Person of the Father, which hardly any would be guilty of, but those who make no scruple to dishonour the Son. Other Objections against the divine Worship

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ship paid to the Son, as a Proof of his supreme Deity; I leave till God give another Opportunity.

God bless his Word, and to his Name be Praise.





S E R M O N X V .

I J O H N 5. 7.

*For there are three that bear record
in Heaven, the Father, the Word,
and the Holy Ghost : and these three
are one.*

ON the last Occasion, I shew'd, that religious and divine Worship was paid to Jesus Christ, as a Proof of his supreme Deity: I instanced in the Act of Faith in him, which is an Acknowledgment of all his divine Perfections; in Prayer, Adoration, and Praise, and swearing by his Name. I come now to another Act of religious Worship, which was by all Christians performed to Christ, the second Person of the Trinity, in conjunction with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, and that by the Command of Christ himself, and that is, submitting to the Ordinance of Baptism: the Institution runs thus*, *Go ye and teach all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father,*
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* Mat. xxviii. 19, 20.

of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: and lo, I am with you always; even to the end of the World. I have in a former Discourse shew'd, that by our being baptized in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, we acknowledge all these three Persons to be the Authors of the Covenant, whereof the Rite of Baptism is the external Seal; and that they are capable to perform and make good the Grace and Glory to Believers, which each of them promise, according to the different Parts they sustain in the Method of Grace in that Covenant. And moreover, hereby we who are baptized in the Name of these Three, own that we are bound to their Service and Obedience, and dedicate ourselves to their Worship and Glory; all which are Acts of the most solemn and profound religious Worship, which on Earth we are capable to perform to the supreme God; and consequently the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son, being one of these Persons, in whose Name we are baptized by the divine Appointment, is hereby acknowledged to be the Object of all that religious Worship, which that holy Ordinance in its very Nature infers. Now this Ordinance, whereby we are baptized in the Name of Christ, infers particularly our putting on Christ*, *As many of you, as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ*; that is, as the Apostle explains it himself†, *That we are Christ's*, his by Dedication of ourselves unto him, and to his Worship and Service: and

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* Gal. iii. 27.

† Ver. 29.

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therefore since we are by this solemn Rite of Baptism deemed to be Christ's, as well as the Father's, that is, dedicated and bound to his Worship and Service, as well as the Father's, the Son must be God equal with the Father; otherways this holy Ordinance of Baptism must be reckoned to be instituted for no other end, than to alienate that religious Worship and Service from the supreme God, to one, who is infinitely inferior; which is the most gross and blasphemous Imputation, which can possibly be thrown upon the Christian Institution. And to say here, that our being baptized in the Name of Christ, carries no more in it, than that we acknowledge him to be the Father's Minister, and that we adhere to him as such; is directly contrary to the Nature of this Ordinance, wherein the eternal Three are represented all upon the same level of Equality, each of them bearing their proper part in the Method of Grace, and each of them claiming their peculiar personal Glory, which belongs to them from the Display of those divine Perfections, made by each of the particular Persons in the execution of the several parts they are concerned in, according to the Oeconomy of Salvation. 'Tis utterly inconsistent with the Honour and Wisdom of the Father to suffer any other Persons to be taken into Fellowship with himself in any Ordinance, which infers the performance of divine Honour and Worship to them, who are not as truly possess'd of supreme Divinity, as he himself is; and if the
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Son and Holy Ghost had not been truly the supreme God, as well as the Father, that is, the same God with him; it would have been no greater Absurdity, and every whit as consistent with the Honour of the Father, for Christians to be baptized in his Name, together with the Name of *Paul*, or any other of his Ministers, as in the Name of the Son, and Holy Ghost, if the naming of the Names of the Son, and Holy Ghost in Baptism infers no more, than our adhering to them, as the subordinate Ministers of the Father: for if they be but Ministers, tho' they should be supposed to be of never so high a Rank, yet they are infinitely inferior to the Father; and he must be as much dishonoured, by their being raised to the same level with him, in the Ordinance of Baptism, by having their Name called upon Christians equally with his, as he would be, by having the Name of *Peter*, or *Paul*, or any other of the lowest Rank of his Ministers joined with his in that holy Ordinance. And the Apostle *Paul* plainly intimates to us, how blasphemous and dishonourable it would be to God for Christians to be baptized in his Name, when he* thanks God in so solemn a manner, that in his holy Providence he had been so directed, and that it so fell out, that he had baptized none of those, who took Occasion from their being baptized by such and such Persons, to pay that undue Respect and Deference to them, which belonged only to him, who was cruci-

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* 1 Cor. i. 14, 15.

fied for them, lest he should unfortunately have been the unhappy Occasion, tho' without any Design of his own, of their very unwarrantable Practice in idolizing the Ministers of Christ, and putting them in his room*. *Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul, I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ; is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were ye baptized in the Name of Paul? I thank God, that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; lest any should say, that I had baptized in mine own Name. If Baptism then in the Name of the Son, and Holy Ghost, inferred no more than their being Ministers, acting in subordination to the Father, the Apostle needed not be so afraid of giving Christians an Opportunity, and furnishing them with an Occasion of esteeming him a Minister of God. But he knew, that if they should entertain an Opinion, that he baptized in his own Name, that would be of much more fatal Consequence; for it would infer no less Honour due to him, than he might claim, if he had been crucified for them, as he himself reasons: and if so, then it infers more than being acknowledged merely as a subordinate Minister; it infers even an Obligation to live to the Glory of him, in whose Name we are baptized: And therefore it is no wonder, that the Apostle *Paul* was so afraid, lest Christians should entertain so unworthy an Opinion of him, as if he had baptized in his own Name; because*

* Verse 12.

because such an Action in his opinion, was no less than claiming the same honour which was due to Christ, who was crucified for his People, which was no less than divine, and laid a foundation for a claim to unlimited Obedience to him; which is a Thought that he abhors with the greatest detestation; and a piece of Idolatry, which he would not so much as be suspected of, more than he would suffer the Priest of *Jupiter* and the People to do sacrifice to him*; for he reckoned that to baptize in his own Name, was affecting divine Honours, as much as accepting of offered Sacrifice. Upon the whole we may conclude, that our being baptized in the Name of Christ, lays upon us an obligation to own him as a Person truly divine, and possessed of those Perfections, which are peculiar to supreme Divinity; and that baptizing, or submitting to Baptism in his Name, is an Act of Worship paid to him, which could not belong to him, if he was not the same supreme God with the Father, and a divine Person equal to him in all supreme divine Honour and Glory.

But here it is objected, That baptizing in the Name of Christ, or any other Act of Worship paid to him, is no more than acknowledging that he has an Excellency and Glory superior to that of the Angels, or any other created Being; and to own him as one sent of God to teach us as our Prophet, to intercede for us as our Priest, and to give laws to us as a King, is all the Honour and Worship which is justly

* Acts xiv. 15.

due to him; and if we acknowledge to his Praise those Blessings and Favours which we receive from him as the great Benefactor of Mankind, we acquit ourselves sufficiently to him, and pay all that Worship which he can claim of us; altho' we do not look upon him as clothed with supreme Divinity, nor pay that equal Honour to him, which is due to the Father. To this I answer, that to pay a superior Worship to Jesus Christ, above that Worship which is due to Angels, or any other created Being, is by no means religious Worship, unless we consider him as possessed of infinite Perfections and the supreme God. For to pay any Worship to him, which is but of the civil, and not of the religious kind, tho' raised in degrees never so far above the civil Worship due to Angels, or any other created Being, is not the highest Worship which is due to him; nor do we acquit ourselves sufficiently to him, by paying to him such a Worship only: for what we contend for is this, That the Worship paid to him by Angels and inspired Men and Saints in Scripture, was Worship of the religious kind; that is, such Worship as was due only to the supreme God, and such as had infinite Perfections for its Object. And therefore we are bound to pay the same Worship to him, from their laudable Example; and the Works which he performed, discovered him to be possessed of those infinite Perfections, and supreme divine Excellencies, as gave him the justest Title to that equal Honour and Worship,

ship, which is due to the Father. And therefore we do not acquit ourselves sufficiently to him, in with-holding from him that supreme Adoration and divine Worship, which the Father himself may claim, since he is equally possessed of those divine Perfections, which are the only Foundation of that supreme divine Worship due to the Father.

And indeed, to conceive of him merely as a Prophet, Priest, or King, abstracting from all consideration of his divine Nature united to his human, in the execution of these Offices, is a very imperfect Idea of him, and infinitely below that which is given of him in Scripture: and while we take him only in that view, 'tis impossible for us to pay that due Honour to him, which he may justly claim in the execution of these Offices. If we would, indeed, worship him aright, as our Prophet, Priest, and King, and ascribe that Glory which justly belongs to him as vested with these Offices, we must by all means consider him as a Person of infinite Dignity; otherways we cannot entertain any just and suitable Conception of him, answering the Part which he acts, and Works which he performs in the execution of his Offices, either as Prophet, Priest, or King. For the other Prophets, Priests, or Kings, who were Types or Figures of him, were no more than mere Men, and as such might sufficiently answer the end of their being Types only; yet the Anti-type could not possibly have obtained the end of his being vested with these Offices,

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Offices, unless he had been the supreme God equal with the Father, as well as Man; and therefore the Word, who was God, and who made all things, was made Flesh for that very end, that what he did in the room, and for the sake of Men, might be of sufficient Merit and Worth to procure to Sinners those invaluable Benefits, to purchase which, he shed his precious Blood. If we duely consider the nature of his several Offices, and the Work incumbent on him, either as a Prophet, Priest, or King, we shall easily discern that it was absolutely necessary, that he should have a divine Nature; a Nature possessed of supreme divine Excellencies united to his human Nature; otherways his work of Mediation must of necessity have misgiven and marred in his hand. As he is a Prophet, he lies under an obligation to open the Eyes of his People's Understanding to discern the things of the Spirit in a spiritual manner, by his inlightning Grace, which requires both infinite Power and Omniscience. As he is a Priest, his Sacrifice must be of infinite Value, which cannot be, unless his Person be of infinite Dignity; and unless he have a divine Nature, his Person can't be of infinite Worth: and consequently his Sacrifice can't have Merit to expiate and atone for the infinite Evil which is in Sin. As he is a King, he must have infinite Power to subdue the Rebellion of the Hearts of his Enemies, and infinite Wisdom to govern his Church. So that all his Offices suppose, that he is possessed of
infinite

infinite Excellency; and consequently, Men don't pay that Worship, that divine and religious Worship which is due to him, as executing his Offices, unless they eye him as the supreme God as well as Man, in one Person.

Again, it is objected, That tho' divine and religious Worship was paid to Jesus Christ, yet he was therein considered only as the Father's Representative, and he accepted of it only in his Father's Name, and not in his own; and consequently the Honour resulting from that Worship did not redound to himself, but to the Father, whom he represented; and therefore his being worshipped, even with religious and divine Worship, is no Argument of his being the supreme God equal with the Father. To which I answer, That that divine Worship, which was paid to Christ, was performed to him by those who worshipped him, as possessed of the divine Excellencies himself, and not as representing the divine Excellencies of the Father, or merely having Authority from him to accept of divine Honours, not in his own Name, but in the Name of the Father; so far from that, that he accepted of divine Honours for that very End, that he might shew, that he was equal with God the Father, and thought it no Robbery to be so; and for that very End did the Father invest him with the Offices of Mediator, that in the Execution of them, he might discover such infinite Perfections and divine Excellencies, as might lay a just Foundation for,
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and Men might have sufficient Motives to honour the Son, even as they honour the Father; which is far from appearing, as if the Father designed him only as his Representative, and not to receive the divine Honours paid him in his own Name, but in his Father's. For whenever a Person acts merely as a Representative, there is particular care taken in his Commission, that he shall not inroach upon the Honour due only to him, whom he represents; and if our Saviour had not had a Right to the divine Honours pay'd him, from his own infinite Excellencies, and Perfections of his own divine Nature, he would have cautioned his Worshippers particularly to beware, lest they should refer these divine Honours they offered him ultimately to himself, but that they should refer them ultimately to his Father only. But there is no such Caution so much as in the least intimated in the Scripture; but, on the contrary, our Saviour, as I have proved at large above, every where accepts of divine Worship as pay'd to himself as the ultimate Object of it. The divine Revelation is peculiarly designed to direct Mankind to the immediate Worshipping of the supreme Being, without any Representation of him whatever, by any Creature, whether in Heaven or in Earth: And if our Saviour were no more than a mere Creature, as some of the *Anti-trinitarians* expressly affirm, and as the Principles of them all suppose, the supreme Being would be as much dishonoured by being

worshipped thro' him, as his Representative, as he would be by being represented by Stocks, or Stones, or the Sun, Moon, and the Stars, or any other Works of his own Hands; for Creatures as such are all equally upon the same Level, and all equally incapable of being the representative Object of religious Worship. And the Reason of that Command, which strictly forbids the Worshipping of the supreme Being by Images, or any other Representations of him, will equally hold against his being worshipped with religious Adoration, by the Man Christ Jesus as his Representative, if he was no more than a mere Creature, and was not himself possessed of supreme divine Excellencies; whereby he, as to his divine Nature, has an equal Claim to religious Adoration with the Father himself.

Thus I have largely proved the true, proper, and supreme Deity of the Son, and his Equality with the Father, from his having the incommunicable Name *Jehovah* ascribed to him, and those essential Perfections attributed to him in Scripture, which are peculiar to supreme Deity; such as Self-existence, Self-origination, Independency, Eternity, Omniscience, Omnipotence, and Omnipresence, Immutability, and all other divine Excellencies, whereby he is raised to an Equality of Glory with the Father, as to his divine Nature. I have also proved his supreme Deity from those Works which he performed; which could only be done by one in whom

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whom all the Fulness of the Godhead dwelt, and which could only be the Effects of infinite Excellency. I have also shewed, that he is the proper Object of supreme, religious and divine Worship; and that this has been paid to him by Angels, and Men divinely inspired, and Saints in all Ages, and that by the Appointment and at the Command of the Father; and that such supreme religious Worship was accepted of, and claimed by him, as that which he had a just Title to: And on all these Heads I have answered those Objections, which are made by the *Anti-trinitarians* against the Force of these Arguments for Proof of the supreme Deity of God the Son, who is the second of those eternal Three, who are said in the Text *to bear Record in Heaven.*

And I should now proceed to the Consideration of the Third of these Persons, to wit, the Holy Ghost: but before I enter upon the Proof of his proper and supreme Deity, I shall offer a few things, by way of Inference, from what has been delivered concerning the supreme Deity of God the Son. And,

1. Is it so, that our Lord Jesus Christ is the supreme God equal with the Father, in all divine Perfections and Glory? then we may hence infer, that the Doctrine of a Trinity of Persons in the Unity of the divine Essence, is not a Matter of mere Speculation; and particularly that the Doctrine of the supreme Deity of our Saviour Jesus Christ is of as practical Tendency, as any Doctrine of Re-

veal'd Religion; nor is there any Truth contain'd in the Scriptures, which is of greater Influence upon the Christian Life; nor is there any Article of Faith in the Christian Scheme, the Denial or Disbelief of which has a more fatal and pernicious Influence upon practical Godliness, than the Denial of the supreme Deity of Jesus the Son of God. It is one of the subtile Artifices of Satan, and his Emissaries in this Day of Error, to represent this Doctrine as a Matter of mere Speculation; and a Doctrine which is not clearly revealed; and the Belief or Disbelief of which is of no manner of Importance to Men, and wherein the Happiness and eternal Felicity of their Souls has no manner of Concern: yea, so plain and open are some, that they stick not to declare, that preaching the true and supreme Deity of Christ, is preaching only a speculative Jesus; and to infuse the Poison of their Errors more effectually into the Minds of unwary Men, they gild it over with the specious Pretence of a Zeal for the Duties of Morality, setting them up in Opposition to, and in Disparagement of supernaturally revealed Truths, as if there was an Inconsistency betwixt them; slyly insinuating an unjust and injurious Reflection against the *Trinitarians*, as if they either denied or neglected to teach the Obligation to the Duties of the moral Law. Whereas, of all Transgressions against the moral Law, this is the most heinous, not to worship our Lord Jesus with the highest Acts of Adoration and Invo-

cation, as the supreme God, whom the Scriptures reveal to be a Person of equal Dignity with the Father. But had Men a right and just Notion of Christian Morality, they would easily discern, that teaching the Doctrine of Christ's supreme Divinity is so far from being inconsistent with it, that no moral Duty can be performed after a spiritual and acceptable Manner, but from a firm Persuasion of the Truth of this Doctrine; for in order to render any moral Action spiritually good, and acceptable in the sight of God, according to the Christian Scheme, it must be performed in the Name of Christ; that is, with a Reliance upon his infinite Merits for Acceptance of it as Matter of Duty, which plainly supposes his Person to be of infinite Dignity, that is, that he is supreme God as to one of his Natures: for unless he be the supreme God, his Merits can have no infinite Dignity to be relied safely upon for Acceptance. And therefore the Person, who performs a Duty commanded by the moral Law, without a Dependence and Reliance on the infinite Merits of the Redeemer, for his Acceptance of God therein, wants a Qualification essentially necessary, in order to constitute an Action spiritually good and acceptable to God, according to the Scheme of the Gospel; and consequently no Duty of Christian Morality can be performed, without a firm Persuasion of the supreme Divinity of our Saviour Jesus Christ; by Faith in whose infinite Merits all our moral Duties, other-

otherways suitably qualify'd, are denominated good, and become acceptable in the sight of God; acceptable in his sight, I say, not as if they were the Foundation of our Justification before him, or as if they were any Part of that Righteousness, on account of which our Sins are pardoned, or our Persons accepted; but our moral Duties performed in the Name of Christ, and with a Reliance on his infinite Merits, if otherways suitably qualified, are accepted of God, tho' not as Matter of Justification, yet as Matter of sincere Obedience, and as the native Produce of a thankful Mind, and the genuine Fruit of a Heart restored to the divine Image, tho' but as yet imperfectly renewed.

Moreover, that the Doctrine of the supreme Deity of Jesus Christ is of practical Influence, is very evident from this, That the Belief or Disbelief of it affects so much the Object of Worship; there is nothing wherein the Practice of Religion is more concerned, than in settling the Object of religious Worship; and when Men mistake in this, it must needs be of very pernicious Consequence to the whole of their religious Practice. It is therefore a Matter of the last Consequence to Christians, to be determin'd aright in this Point; for were Men never so devout in their religious Worship, and never so frequent in the various Acts of Devotion, yet if all be directed to a wrong Object, and ascribed to one to whom it does not belong, this will effectually marr the whole Worship, and render it fruitless Service; nay,

which is worse, it will be accounted as the grossest Idolatry, and the greatest Affront, which can be offered to the sacred Majesty of Heaven. Nor will it sufficiently excuse their Guilt for Men to plead their doing it ignorantly; this may extenuate their Guilt, but it can never excuse it: for Guilt is contracted by a Transgression of a Law sufficiently promulgated, whether the Party bound by the Law transgresseth ignorantly or not. Since therefore it plainly appears from Scripture; that Jesus Christ is the supreme God, and the just Object of religious Worship; since this may be easily discerned by those who are divested of Prejudices, and the thing is clear as to the objective Revelation of it in Scripture; the Plea drawn from the Ignorance of it is utterly insufficient to excuse the Guilt of denying it; because 'tis justly presumed, that this Ignorance takes its Rise from some Default in the Person himself, who hath not used the Means, as he ought to have done, for attaining to the Knowledge of that which he was under an Obligation to know, it being sufficiently promulgated. And to say here, that the Doctrine of the supreme Deity of Jesus Christ is not sufficiently declared in Scripture, that these holy Oracles leave us in the Dark in this Matter, and that this is a disputable Point, which Men can't determine, even tho' they be not negligent in the diligent Use of those Means, which are furnished them, and which they are under an Obligation to use; this, I say,

is to impeach the Perspicuity of the Scriptures, in the most essential Articles of the Christian Faith. It is no less than to say, that we have a Revelation sent to us from Heaven, which is so dark and unintelligible, so imperfect, and obscure, that let Men do their best, let them be never so sincere in their Inquiries after Truth, and never so impartial and divested of Prejudices; yet it is impossible to know by these sacred Oracles, whether the Lord Jesus Christ be the supreme God or not whether he be the Object of religious and divine Worship or not; this reflects the greatest Dishonour either upon the Wisdom of God, as if he could not reveal this Truth sufficiently, or on his Goodness, that he would not. To what purpose was a divine Revelation made to Mankind, if it was not to set them right with respect to the true Object of Worship? And if it misses it in that, as it must needs do, if it leaves us in the Dark about this Point, whether Jesus Christ be the supreme God or not; I say, if the divine Revelation misses it here, it is hard to know what valuable Purpose it can serve. We must therefore conclude, that all Insinuations of the Doubtfulness and Disputableness of this Point have no other Meaning, than to draw a Veil over the horrid Guilt of denying the Deity of the Son of God, or to reconcile Men to a better Opinion of the *Arian* Heresy. This will be found to be plainly at the Bottom with all those, who, tho' they will not openly declare

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for *Arianism*, because of some Disadvantages, which might possibly attend an honest and open Declaration of their real Sentiments, yet have a hearty Attachment to that Interest; and would openly declare so much, if it was not for a dastardly Cowardise and Pusillanimous Weakness of Mind, whereby they are afraid of drawing upon themselves the Resentment of those who are of a different Judgment, and incurring those Disadvantages which might follow upon acting an honest and conscientious Part; but how far this is consistent with the Character of a faithful Minister, or a sincere Christian, we leave to others to judge.

It does not belong to us to determine concerning the final State of any Person, and to declare how far the Lord can, and how far he cannot, in a Consistency with his Perfections, extend his infinite Mercy to the most atrocious Sinner: But this we may safely say, That such is the Importance of this Article of the Christian Faith, the supreme Deity of the Son of God; and it is so closely interwoven with all the peculiar Doctrines of the Gospel, that those who deny it, thereby cut off one great and fundamental Ground, on which, in the just Exercise of Charity, we build our Hopes of the Salvation of others of our Christian Brethren, who openly declare their Faith in this fundamental Article of Religion.

2. Is it so, that the Lord Jesus Christ is the supreme God, and possessed of all the divine Perfections, as has been proved; then
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how lamentable is it, that there should be so many found, who deny his true and proper Divinity in the Face of so much Light, as shines so clearly in the Scriptures? What a glaring Instance is this of the Corruption of human Nature, which discovers itself so openly against the Revelations of Heaven? It is no small Evidence of the Depravity of the human Mind, that so much as any Doubts or Questionings should arise in Mens Hearts about a Point so well attested by the Veracity of God himself; tho' these, we suppose, do not arise to the Length of a settled Opinion; for sometimes they are, through the Temptations of Satan, to be found even in the best of Men, by reason of remaining unmortified Corruption: but when such Doubts are entertained and indulged, and not rejected with Abhorrence and great Detestation, but prevail so far, that Men are wrought up to such a pitch of Infidelity and Misbelief, that they not only suspend their Assent to such plain and important Truths, wherein the Felicity of their Souls is so much concerned, but openly and avowedly deny them, and appear with so much Keeness in opposition to them, that they spare no pains to propagate their pernicious Errors: This, I say, must needs be a plain Evidence of the woful Degeneracy of Mankind, and shews, to what miserable Circumstances the Fall has reduced us; that we are thereby become so very perverse, that we detest even the Means of our Recovery, and appear, with the greatest

Enmity, against the only Method, which infinite Wisdom and Goodness itself can devise for our Relief. And here we may all stand and pause, and with Astonishment admire the long-suffering Patience of a compassionate Redeemer, who bears with such Contradictions of Sinners against himself, as he meets with from every one of us; for we are all guilty less or more in this Matter; and if he should mark Iniquity strictly, none of us should be able to stand: and if we have not gone such Lengths in this Matter, as others have been suffered to do, it has been owing to the divine Grace; for we have all the Seeds of the same Corruption within us, which would have sprung up to as high a Pitch of notorious and open Impiety in us as in others, if it had not been for the Restraints of his Grace, exciting us to exert our strongest Endeavours to avoid the pernicious Paths of Error, which others have precipitantly thrown themselves into, and making these Endeavours effectual to keep us from fatal Mistakes, and erring in Points which are fundamental.

Many have reason to bless God, that, in his holy Providence, he has thrown such Means in their way, which have been made effectual to awaken their Attention to important Truths; which, if they had not met with, they would have unquestionably neglected as much as others have done, who were not bless'd with those Advantages. If we are in any measure helped to adhere to the Truth, let us impute
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this to the divine Grace, and give the Glory of it to him, to whom alone it is due ; for it is not in Man, who walketh, to direct his own Steps ; let us not sacrifice to our own Net, nor burn Incense to our own Drag. And since our standing fast in the Faith is the Effect of the divine Grace, working in us both to will and to do, let us beware of leaning to our own Understanding, but depending upon the divine Assistance, let us constantly and fervently implore the Aids of God's Grace to conduct us in his Way, and lead us into all Truth ; let us heartily pity those who have drenched themselves in the Ditch of Error, who stick fast in that miry Clay ; and, as far as lies in our power, let us lend them our helping Hand to recover them : Let us not irritate or provoke them by any unwarrantable Conduct, or unchristian and uncharitable Behaviour towards them, but let our just Resentment of the Indignity offered to the sacred Name of Eternal Jesus, flow rather from a Detestation of the horrid Guilt of blaspheming the God of Heaven, than any Grudge we bear against their Persons ; and let our Charity towards them discover itself, not in approving their erroneous Principles, or flattering them in them, or extenuating the Guilt of them, but in praying fervently to God to reclaim them.

3. Is it so, that Jesus Christ is the true and supreme God ? then how dreadful is their Guilt who deny him that Honour ? How will they be able to account for it at that solemn Day of Reckoning,

Reckoning, when they shall stand before his Judgment-Seat, whom they have so basely dishonoured? His Judgment-Seat, to whom all Judgment is committed by the Father, for that very purpose, that all Men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. O let such, who have been guilty in this matter, bethink themselves, while there is Place for Repentance; and indeed we are all guilty in some degree: but especially let such, who are guilty in a more notorious manner, of an open and avowed Denial of his proper Divinity, repent them of this their Wickedness, if perhaps the Thought of their Heart may be forgiven them; for their Heart seems not to be right in the sight of God. There is Forgiveness yet with God for such, if they will fear him; with him Compassions flow; he takes no Pleasure in the Death of Sinners, but would rather that they would repent, and live. Your Guilt as heinous as it is, is not greater than the Virtue of his Blood, whose infinite Merits you deny: Turn then to the Lord, and he will have Mercy upon you; hear, and your Souls shall live; acknowledge the infinite Dignity of his Person, and rely upon his Righteousness; he is both able and willing to save you to the uttermost.

God bless his Word, and to his Name be Praise.





S E R M O N XVI.

I JOHN 5. 7.

For there are three that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost : and these three are one.

HAVING proved the proper and supreme Deity of God the Son, I proceed to the Consideration of the other Person mentioned in the Text, who is said to bear record in Heaven ; to wit, the Holy Ghost.

In the general Explication of the Words, I shewed briefly, that the Holy Ghost is a divine Person, and a distinct Person from the Father and the Son : and this I proved particularly from this Text ; because he is here mentioned as one of the Three, who bear record in Heaven ; where he is put on a level with the other two Persons in the Trinity, the Father and the Son, and said to be one with them ; which is both a Proof of his distinct Personality, that he is said to be one of the

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the Three, who bear record in Heaven; and also that he is Partaker of the same divine Nature with the Father and Son, in as much as he is *one* with them.

But this, I hope, will more fully appear in the particular Proof of his supreme and proper Deity: to which I proceed, according to the Method propos'd in the prosecution of the words of the Text. And here I shall observe the same Method for Proof of the proper and supreme Deity of the Holy Ghost, as I did in the Proof of the Deity of God the Son.

I. The Names which are peculiar to the supreme God, and are incommunicable to the Creature, are given to the third Person in Scripture, and ascribed to him in such a sense, as declare his proper Divinity.

II. Those Perfections which are peculiar to supreme Deity, and which cannot possibly belong to any created Existence, are declared to belong to him; and he is possessed of those Excellencies which are inseparable from true and proper Divinity.

III. He performed those Works which are infinitely beyond the Power of any created Being.

IV. He is the proper Object of supreme religious Worship. If these things can be made out, I hope it will be abundantly plain, that this third Person of the Trinity is truly and properly God, the same supreme God with the Father and the Son.

I. I begin with the first of these, which was to shew, that the Names and incommunicable Titles, which are peculiar to the supreme God, are given to the Holy Ghost; and such Names as are applied to inferior Beings sometimes, are yet ascribed to him in such a sense, as can't agree to any Creature of whatever rank. I have, upon the Proof of the Deity of the Son, shew'd that the Name *Jehovah* is incommunicable to any Creature, and such as belongs only to the supreme God: and yet this is very plainly ascribed to the Holy Ghost, in the Book of *Numbers*, where the Lord *Jehovah* testifies, that he would speak by the Prophets; * *And the Lord came down in the Pillar of the Cloud, and stood in the Door of the Tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam, and they both came forth.* This was JEHOVAH who appeared; and *Jehovah* speaks in the following Verse; and he said, *Hear now my Words, if there be a Prophet among you, I the Lord will make my self known unto him in a Vision, and will speak unto him in a Dream.* So that it is *Jehovah*, who spake unto the Prophets in Dreams and Visions. Now compare this passage with that passage in *Peter*, where it is said, that it was this third Person of the Trinity, who spake of old to the Prophets: † *For the Prophecy came not in old time by the Will of Man, but holy Men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*
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* Numb. xii. 6.

† 2 Pet. i. 21.

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From whence it appears, that the Holy Ghost must be *Jehovah*, since he is declared by the Apostle to be he, who inspired the Prophets; and since in the Old Testament, at the same time it is declared, that it was *Jehovah*, who inspired them.

We have another passage, where the Prophet *Isaiab* had a Vision of *Jehovah* of Hosts, who spake unto him; * *I heard the Voice of the Lord, saying, whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, here I am, says the Propbet, send me. Then said Jehovah to him, go and tell this People, hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not; make the Heart of this People fat, and make their Ears heavy; and shut their Eyes: lest they see with their Eyes, and hear with their Ears, and understand with their Hearts, and convert, and be healed.* If this be compared with what we meet with in the *Acts* of the Apostles †, where the inspired Penman informs us, that the Holy Ghost spake these words, therefore he must be *Jehovah*; the words are these; *When they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one Word, well spake the Holy Ghost by Isaiab the Propbet unto our Fathers, saying, go unto this People, and say, hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand, and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive; for the Heart of this People is waxed gross, and their Ears are dull of hearing, and their Eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their Eyes,*

* Isa. viii. 8, 9.

† Acts xxviii. 25.

Eyes, and hear with their Ears, and understand with their Hearts, and should be converted, and I should heal them. Thus we see, that he whom the Prophet calls *Jehovah*, who spake these words, is by the sacred Penman of this Book of the *Acts* of the Apostles, expressly called the Holy Ghost: *Well spake the Holy Ghost by Isaias the Prophet.* So that the Holy Ghost is *Jehovah*, and therefore the supreme and most high God.

But here arises a difficulty from what was said in the Proof of the Deity of the second Person of the Trinity, God the Son; that this very Text of *Isaias* was applied to the Son, that he was the *Jehovah*, who spake these words; and they were alledged as a Proof of his supreme Deity, as being *Jehovah* also, and for Proof that he was the *Jehovah*, who spake them, the words in *John's* Gospel were cited, where the Apostle applied the words of *Isaias* to Christ, as spake of him; * *Those things, said Isaias, when he saw his Glory, and spoke of him.* So that it would appear, that the Apostle *John*, who applies them to Christ, the second Person, contradicts the Author of the *Acts* of the Apostles, who applied them to the Holy Ghost, as spake by him. But the difficulty may be easily taken off, if we consider, that both the Son and the Holy Ghost are *Jehovah*; and there is not the least contradiction to say, that both the second and third Persons of the Trinity spake them, as it is asserted by
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* John xii. 41.

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the two Evangelists; one applying them to the Son, the other to the Holy Ghost, both of them being the true *Jehovah*, the self-same supreme God, tho' different Persons. And if we inquire more narrowly into the words themselves in *Isaiab*, and observe the manner in which they were spoke, we shall plainly see, that the Evangelists had good reason to apply them to more Persons in the Trinity than one, as the Speakers of them. For when they were originally delivered by *Jehovah*, and uttered to the Prophet by him, *Jehovah* speaks to the Prophet, as is very observable, both in the singular and plural Number. *Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?* plainly intimating to us, that whoever the Person was, who spoke of himself in the singular Number, whether the Father or the Holy Ghost, or, which is more probable, the Son; who usually appeared as a Prelude to his future Incarnation under the Old Testament: yet all the Persons of the blessed Trinity were included, when *Jehovah* spake these words to the Prophet; so that they may be justly applied to any of the Three, as the Speaker of them; all the Three being each of them supreme *Jehovah*; tho' they are all distinct from one another in point of Personality: otherways the particular Person, who was the *Jehovah* speaking immediately, could not speak in the plural Number, and take in any Fellows or Partners with himself, as jointly concerned in the divine Honour of giving that Command to the Prophet *Isaiab*,
 autho-

authorizing him to speak in the Name of *Jehovah*, to the Children of *Israel*. From all which it plainly follows, that there is no manner of Inconsistency in the Evangelist *John's* applying these words in *Isaiab*, to the Lord Jesus Christ, the second Person; and the Evangelist *Luke's* ascribing them to the Holy Ghost, as the Speaker of them also. For, as has been hinted already, all the three Persons of the Trinity are concerned in all those Effects, which are produced without themselves; and they may be all ascribed to each of the Persons equally, whoever the particular Person of the Trinity may be, who is the most immediately concerned in the production of them, according to the established Method and Oeconomy agreed upon among them. 'Tis true, the Actions of the several Persons in the Trinity, *ad intra*, as they call them, such as terminate within the Deity, come under a different consideration: these are such as the several Persons are each of them distinctly concern'd in, and the Action of one can't be affirmed to be the Action of the other. But all those Actions of the Deity which terminate on any thing without the Deity, these are attributed to all the Persons equally, and they are all equally the Author of them; because they are the Effects of those essential Perfections, which are common to them all. Now, speaking these words unto the Prophet, or giving a commission to him to speak them to the *Israelites*, being an Action, which terminates upon some-

thing without the Deity, doth therefore belong equally to all the Persons in the Trinity; and they were therefore all of them equally the Author of it: and therefore, both the Apostle *John* had reason to ascribe these words to Jesus Christ, as him who spoke them; and also the Evangelist *Luke* justly ascribes them to the Person of the Holy Ghost, as the Speaker of them; since they are each of them the *Jehovah*, who spoke them, as well as the Father, whoever was the Person most immediately concerned, according to the Oeconomy agreed upon in speaking them. So that the Apostle *John's* ascribing these words to Jesus Christ, and *Luke's* ascribing them to the Holy Ghost, is so far from being a Contradiction, or any thing like an Inconsistency, that it is a most evident Demonstration both of a Plurality of divine Persons in the Deity, and also that the second and third Persons of the Trinity, the Son and Holy Ghost, are the supreme God, equal with the Father; since each of them are the *Jehovah* according to them, who uttered these words; because that incommunicable Name belongs to none, but the most high and supreme God: for that Name *Jehovah*, is his alone*. The Spirit, in another place, is called *Jehovah* †; for it was he, who was tempted at *Massah* and *Meribah*, who is called *Jehovah* ‡.

Another Title ascribed to the Holy Ghost, whereby he is proved to be the most high and supreme.

* Psalm lxxxiii. 18. † Heb. iii. 9. ‡ Exod. xvii. 7.

supreme God, is, he is expressly called *God*, and that too with such Circumstances as plainly shew, that that Name is taken in the highest sense, and not in that inferior Sense, in which it is sometimes applied to the Creature. The passage wherein this Name is ascribed to him, is this ; * *But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine Heart to lye to the Holy Ghost ; and to keep back part of the Price of the Land ? Whilst it remained, was it not thine own ? After it was sold, was it not in thine own power ? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine Heart ? Thou hast not lyed unto Men, but unto God.* Here Peter aggravates *Ananias's* Guilt, in lying, not to a finite Creature only, whose Knowledge was limited, but to the omniscient God, in lying to the Holy Ghost ; for what he calls a lying to the Holy Ghost, and when he spoke to *Sapphira*, a tempting the Spirit of the Lord, he calls, *lying to God* : and on that he lays the stress and weight of their Guilt, as that which raised it to the highest degree of Aggravation ; since lying to the Holy Ghost, and tempting the Spirit of the Lord, is no less than lying to God, and tempting him.

It is in vain to say here, as some of the *Anti-trinitarians* do, that the Holy Ghost being no more than a created Spirit, yet lying to him, being the Father's Minister, is really a lying to God, and a Contempt of him whose Minister he is. For an Answer to this, it may be observed, that the Apostle *Peter* aggravates

* Acts v. 3, 4.

the Guilt of *Ananias* and his Wife, from this Consideration, that they tempted the Spirit of the Lord, and lyed to the Holy Ghost: this was the highest pitch of its Aggravation, that it could be raised to; and he reckons it the same with lying to God, and attended with the same Circumstances of Guilt; which he could not have done, if the Holy Ghost were no more than a created Spirit, and the Father's Minister: in that case, lying to him, being but a Creature, and in the Character of a Minister, would be attended with no higher Aggravations, than such as accompany the Contempt of a Servant or Minister of God, such as *Peter* himself was. But the Apostle plainly aggravates their Guilt to a higher Pitch than the Contempt of, or lying to one, who was no more than God's Minister, as he himself was, as well as the Holy Ghost, on the supposition that he was but a mere Creature: he even aggravates it to such a pitch, that he accounts it a lying more immediately to God. So that according to the Apostle's Reasoning, the Holy Ghost, to whom *Ananias* and his Wife lyed, and the Holy Spirit, whom they tempted, must be more than a Minister or Servant of God the Father: he must be even God himself, otherways the Guilt of lying to him would be no more than the Guilt of lying to any other rational Being, invested with the same Authority from God, as his commissioned Servant. Whereas the Apostle plainly here would convince those Criminals of a higher
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pitch of Guilt; in lying to the Holy Ghost, even that thereby they were guilty of lying to the supreme God; *Thou hast not lyed to Men, but to God.* If the Holy Ghost had not been God, it would have been absurd in the Apostle, to fix the highest pitch of *Ananias* and his Wife's Guilt in lying to him, being only a commissioned Servant; he might have, with as great reason, fixed it in lying to himself, tho' but a Man, yet a commissioned Servant of God. But he would convince those Persons of a higher degree of Guilt than in lying to Men, tho' vested with a Commission from God. He would have them to know, that in lying to the Holy Ghost, they thereby lyed not to Men, or any other merely commissioned by God only, but to the supreme God himself; which plainly supposes, according to the Apostle's way of Reasoning, that the Holy Ghost is in the most proper and strictest sense, the true God. Otherways the Apostle should have reasoned thus; *Thou hast not lyed unto Men, nor even to the Holy Ghost, who is no more than a commissioned Servant of the supreme God, as I my self am; it were well if thy Guilt was not more heinous in sinning only against the supreme God indirectly, by contemning and affronting him in his commissioned Servants, which, tho' even that be great enough, yet is far from the degree of aggravation which thine is attended with, which was not a Sin against the Holy Ghost, but against the supreme God: I say, if the Holy*

Ghost had not been God, the supreme God, the Apostle must have proceeded after that manner in his Reasoning. But so far from that, so far is he from putting the Holy Ghost upon the same level with himself, that he lays the weight of the aggravation of their Guilt upon this, that they had lyed to him, as I hinted above, and thereby lyed immediately to the supreme God.

The Holy Ghost is also called God, in these words; * *Know ye not, that ye are the Temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?* Here the Holy Ghost is not only called God by the Apostle, when he explains our being the Temple of God by the Holy Spirit's dwelling in us; but also he ascribes supreme Divinity thereby to him; so that the Worship due only to the supreme God, belongs to him: for, according to the Christian Scheme, and the Doctrine of the Apostles, 'tis the peculiar Property of supreme Divinity to have a Temple, and to be worshipped with our Bodies and Spirits, which are his, as the same Apostle thus argues; † *Know ye not, that your Body is the Temple of the Holy Ghost, who is in you.* So that the Holy Ghost has here the Title of God not only ascribed to him, but with such Circumstances accompanying that ascription of it, as plainly shew, that he is called God, not in that inferior sense of the word; in which sometimes it is applied to the Creatures; for it does not belong to them to have Temples: nor can

* 1 Cor. iii. 16.

† 1 Cor. vi. 19.

can it be supposed, that the Apostle takes the Term God, when he ascribes it to the Holy Ghost, as denoting an Idol, who is not the true God : for he would never allow us, far less command us, to prostitute our Bodies to be Temples to such. And here, I think, *Augustine's* way of Reasoning is very just; says he, “ Tho’ we were commanded to build a Temple to the Holy Spirit of Wood and Stone, even that would be an incontestible Proof of his Deity; but how much more does it evidence the Truth of his Divinity, that we are not commanded to build a Temple to him, but our selves to be a Temple for him * ?

The Holy Ghost is also stiled the God of *Israel*, and the Rock of *Israel* by *David*; † *The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his Word was in my Tongue; the God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me; he that ruleth over Men must be just, ruling in the Fear of God.* There the Spirit of the Lord, the Holy Ghost, is called both the God, and Rock of *Israel*; and the Repetition of the Name of the same divine Person three times, adds to the solemnity of what is said, because of the awful Majesty of him who speaks it, being both the God, and Rock of *Israel*; no less a Person than he who utters this Speech, who is also called, the Spirit of the Lord?

Again, the Spirit of the Lord is stiled God in that passage, where we are told, that the

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Sons

* Aq Maxim. Epistola 66.

† 2 Sam. xxiii. 2, 3.

Sons of God, and those who receive Christ, *are born of God**; which may be compared with what the same Apostle calls, being *born of the Spirit* †; plainly intimating to us, that God the Spirit, or God the Holy Ghost, is the Author of Regeneration. And elsewhere, the Demonstration and Power of the Spirit is called, *the Power of God*: says the Apostle, *My Speech and my Preaching was not with enticing Words of Man's Wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of Power; that your Faith should not stand in the Wisdom of Men, but the Power of God* ‡.

The Name Lord is also ascribed to the Holy Ghost, and that too with such Circumstances as shew that it is taken in that high sense, in which it is applicable only to the supreme God. The Father and the Son are invoked by the Apostle Paul, with all the solemnity of divine Worship and Adoration, imploring their Direction of his way to these *Thessalonians*; and then he addresses the Holy Ghost, as the Object of the same divine Worship, under the Title of Lord; || *The Lord make you to increase and abound in Love one towards another, and towards all Men, even as we do towards you*; where we have the Three who bear record in Heaven, all mentioned distinctly, as the Object of supreme divine Worship. The first Person is addressed by the Title of *God himself*; not but that the Son and Holy Ghost are themselves God, as well as the Father: But the reason why that Title is, in

* John i. 13. † John iii. 5, 6, 8. ‡ 1 Cor. ii. 4, 5.
|| 1 Thess. iii. 11, &c.

a peculiar manner, ascribed to him, and he in an emphatical manner, is described by it as a distinct Person from the other two, who are equally God by Nature, with him, may be this, That in the Oeconomy of Salvation, the Father, the first Person of the Trinity, sustains the Character of supreme Deity, and defends its Rights; and therefore on account of that Oeconomy, the Title of *God himself*, when the Father is spoken of as a distinct Person from the other two, rather falls to his share, than to either of them; who, tho' as to their Nature and Essence, and even as to the manner of their possessing it, are equally divine and self-originated as he is, yet in point of the part which they act in that Oeconomy, their Character carries more of ministerial Subordination in it, and less of independent Supremacy and Sovereignty, than the part which the Father acts in that Oeconomy. But whatever different parts these several Persons act in that voluntary Oeconomy, it does not in the least affect their original Character, as being all equally possessed of the divine Nature, and all essential Perfections belonging to it, and equally underived and independent as to the way and manner of their possessing it, as the Father is. The second Person of the Trinity is in this Prayer of the Apostle, addressed under the Name which he usually goes by in the New Testament, *The Lord Jesus Christ: God himself, and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ direct our way to you.* And the Holy Ghost is addressed to
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under the simple Title, *The Lord*; which, tho' of itself is neither a Proof of the Deity of the Son, when applied to him, nor of the Divinity of the Holy Ghost, as ascribed to him, in regard that that Word is sometimes taken in an inferior Sense, and applied to the Creature; yet, inasmuch as this Title is applied to them both here, with this Circumstance of supreme divine Adoration accompanying the ascription of it, it is, for that reason, a sufficient Proof of the supreme Deity of both these Persons. That the Title *Lord* here, is to be understood, as denoting the Person of the Holy Ghost, appears from this, That what the Apostle prays for, is the Fruit of the Spirit; and his particular province in the Oeconomy of Salvation, to effect and work in the Hearts of Men. It is the Spirit who most immediately makes Believers to increase and abound in Love to one another; therefore this Grace is in a peculiar manner called, the Love in the Spirit. But what is yet a clearer Evidence, that the *Lord*, spoken of in that Verse, is to be understood of the third Person, the Holy Ghost, is, that this Person, who is called the *Lord*, and whom the Apostle addresses by Prayer, that he would make these *Thessalonians* to increase and abound in Love one towards another, is expressly distinguished as a different Person, both from God, even our Father, the first Person, before whom he, the *Lord*, was to establish their Hearts unblameable in Holiness; and also from the Lord Jesus Christ, the second Person, at
whose

whose coming with his Saints, this was to be done: so that the Relative *He*, must refer to the Lord; and consequently the Lord must be the Holy Ghost, since he is a divine Person, who is there addressed, and that too as a Person distinct both from God, even the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

There is also another Passage, where the Spirit is stiled *the Lord* *; and that too in such Circumstances as shew, that the term *Lord* is taken in the highest Sense of that Word, in regard that the Work he is there said to perform, requires the Exercise of divine Perfections: the Words are these, *But we all with open Face, beholding as in a Glass the Glory of the Lord, are changed into the same Image from Glory to Glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord*; or, as it may be more justly rendered, and as it is rendered in the Margin, *As by the Lord the Spirit*.

Thus we see, that the Names and Titles of the supreme God, the incommunicable Name *Jehovah*, is ascribed to the Holy Ghost; and the Titles, *God* and *Lord*, are ascribed to him in that high and incommunicable Sense, which doth not belong to any Creature, of the highest Rank whatsoever; and consequently he has those divine Perfections, which they denote; and therefore ought to be acknowledged as the most High God, as one of the eternal Three, who bear Record in Heaven.

II.

II. This will further appear, if we consider, That he has not only the Names and Titles which are peculiar to supreme Deity, but also he has those Perfections and Attributes ascrib'd to him in Scripture, which are signified by these Names, such Attributes and Perfections as are inseparable from the divine Nature and Essence.

I. Eternity is ascribed to him; this will appear from the manner in which our Saviour expresses the personal Property of the Holy Ghost, whereby he is distinguished from the Father and Son, as a distinct Person *. 'Tis observable, That our Saviour there expresses the Procession of the Holy Ghost in the same manner, as *Jehovah* expresses his own eternal Existence, as *neither having Beginning, nor Change, as being without Interruption or End.* For he says of him, That he PROCEEDS, in the present time; not that he did proceed, or shall for the future proceed, but that he proceeds: which is the same way, that the permanent eternal Existence of *Jehovah* is described by himself, *I am that I am, even the Spirit of Truth, who proceeds from the Father.* As the Eternity of *Jehovah* is fitly described by his having nothing Past nor Future with him; so is the Eternity of the Holy Ghost by his Procession's being always present: *He was in the Beginning, when all things were created, he moved upon the Face of the Waters, in the Formation of things on the first Day; and therefore was before them, that is, was*

* John xv. 26.

always;

always: and having the Name of God in the highest and strictest Sense, as I have just now proved, he must be Eternal; for it is said of God, *Thy Name is from Everlasting* *.

The Holy Ghost is expressly called the *Eternal Spirit*, by the Apostle, *How much more shall the Blood of Christ, who thro' the eternal Spirit offered himself without Spot to God, purge your Conscience from dead Works to serve the living God* †? According to some, the *Spirit*, by which our Saviour offered himself, denotes the Godhead of our Saviour; which gave a Value to his Offering, and made it have its purging Efficacy: And, according to that Sense, his being called the *Eternal Spirit*, is a Proof of the proper Deity of the Son. Others think, that the *Eternal Spirit* here, being distinguished from the Person of the Son, as that by which through the Influences thereof upon his human Nature, whereby it was made and preserved spotless, must therefore denote the Person of the Holy Ghost; and so it is a plain Proof of the Eternity of his Person: but in which soever of the Senses we take the Words, the Text is home against the *Arians*, who deny the Eternity of both these Persons. And as to the Eternity of the Holy Ghost, which is the particular Point we are now proving, it will appear abundantly plain farther from other divine Perfections, which are ascribed to him in Scripture; and therefore

* Isa. lviii. 16.

† Heb. ix. 14.

therefore I shall here only answer an Objection against it, namely,

It is objected against the Eternity of the Holy Ghost, that it is said, *That the Holy Ghost was not yet**, the word GIVEN not being in the Original; hence they conclude, that he had not then a Being. To this I answer, That, when it is said, *That the Holy Ghost was not yet*, the Meaning is not, That the Person of the Holy Ghost had not then a Subsistence; but by the Holy Ghost is meant, the Gifts and Operations of that Person, as it is frequently understood in other Passages of Scripture, and not the Person of the Holy Ghost himself, for he was from Eternity. But that solemn Manifestation of himself, in the Effusion of his Gifts, was not as yet made or given, as our Translators justly supply the Word to make the Sense clear; because that Jesus was not yet glorified, but was reserved until *Pentecost*. And in the same Sense, it is to be taken, when it is said, *That John's Disciples had not so much as heard whether there was any Holy Ghost †*. The Meaning is, That they were ignorant of the down-pouring of the Spirit in his miraculous Gifts, and that he had again returned to the Church in such kind of Manifestations, as he made to the Prophets before *Malachi*; for after him the Church had been without the Spirit of Prophecy for many hundred Years; and they had not as yet known, that he had returned in that manner again, or manifested himself in that glorious Way, as he had done

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* John vi. 39.

† Acts xix. 1.

to many of Christ's Disciples, and did afterwards to themselves, when *Paul* laid his Hands upon them; for *then the Holy Ghost came upon them, and they spake with Tongues, and prophesied.*

2. Omnipresence is also ascribed to this Person, by the royal Prophet, who said, *Whither shall I go from thy Spirit, or whither shall I flee from thy Presence *?* In those words, the Immensity of the Deity is very elegantly described, as all acknowledge; *If I ascend up into Heaven, thou art there; if I make my Bed in Hell, behold, thou art there; if I take the Wings of the Morning, and dwell in the uttermost Parts of the Sea, even there shall thy Hand lead me, and thy right Hand shall hold me.* So that the Representation of the divine Immensity, given in Scripture, whereby the supreme God is distinguished from the finite Creature, is, That he is in Heaven and Earth at the same time; and if the Holy Ghost be said in Scripture, to be in both these distant Places at the same time, then 'tis clear to a Demonstration, that this divine Perfection of Immensity and Omnipresence belongs to him. Now for Proof that the Holy Ghost is in Heaven, and at the same time upon Earth, we need go no farther than the Text, he being one of the Three, who bear Record in Heaven; *There are three who bear Record in Heaven, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost,* compared with what *St. Paul* says, *Your Body is the*

* Psalm cxxxix. 7.

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the Temple of the Holy Ghost, who is in you *; at the same time that he bears Record in Heaven; through his Omnipresence he is dwelling in the Body of every Saint, as in a Temple. Moreover, our Saviour tells his Disciples, *That they knew the Spirit of Truth; and that he dwelleth in them* †. And yet at the same time, he tells them, *That he would send this Comforter, the Holy Ghost, from the Father to them* ||. So that at the same time, that he was with the Father, as to his glorious Presence in Heaven, he dwelt with his People, as to his gracious Presence here on Earth.

But here it is objected, That tho' the Holy Ghost dwelleth at the same time with every one of the Saints, yet that is no more a Proof of his Omnipresence, than Satan's working at the same time in the several Children of Disobedience, is a Proof of his Immensity. To which I answer, That I have just now prov'd, the Holy Ghost not only is present, and dwells with every one of the Saints on Earth; but at the same time he is present in Heaven, which no created Angel is or ever was capable of: otherways, to be in Heaven and Earth, at the same time, would not have been given in Scripture, as a proper and true Description of the Immensity of the supreme Being, as it is acknowledged on all hands to be. Besides, when it is said, That Satan works in the Children of Disobedience, the Meaning is not, That any one of the evil Spirits works in all the

* 1 Cor. vi. 19.

† John xiv. 16.

|| Ch. xv. 26.

the Children of Disobedience at once. No, the Term, Satan, there is taken in a collective Sense, comprehending the whole Body of the fallen Angels; one of them working in one Child of Disobedience, and another in another. And this Word, Satan, is used in this Sense; as comprehending a Multitude of evil Spirits, by our Saviour, where he calls, *The casting out of Satan*, in one Verse, *a casting out of Devils*, in the other *. In like manner, that which is called *an unclean Spirit*, in the singular Number, is called *a Legion*, because they were many †. So that from that Expression, Satan worketh in the Children of Disobedience, it by no means follows, that any one finite Spirit works in all the Children of Disobedience at once, or can be in all the places where they are at the same time; much less can it carry in it a Possibility of any created Spirit's being at once in Heaven and Earth, at one and the same time.

'Tis beyond the Reach of our limited Capacity, to comprehend the Manner how any Spirit occupies and possesses Space; but it seems demonstrable by Reason, that a finite Spirit may occupy and exist in two or more Parts of Space, and consequently so many distinct Places at the same time, at least such as are very near and intimately contiguous to one another: for if it be possible, for a finite Spirit to act upon Matter, as all own it is, then that is acted upon, which is it-

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* Mat. xii. 26, 27.

† Mark v. 2, 9.

self divisible, and which possesses divisible and different Parts of Space; and consequently, seeing to act in a Place, supposes the acting Spirit's being there, to act then in any Point of Duration upon a Body, is in that same Point of Duration to act in all those Parts of Space possessed and occupied by the Parts of that Body, which is acted upon, and into which it is divisible; and consequently it infers the Spirit's being there. How contiguous these Places must be, we can't determine, nor is it within the Reach of human Knowledge, to define the precise Limits of Space, with which the Presence of a finite Spirit can only co-extend, so as that it can reach no farther. To be able to determine this, requires a more thorow Acquaintance with the Nature of Spirits, and the Manner of their possessing Space, than what Mankind has hitherto arrived at, or, perhaps, shall be ever able to do: but tho' we can't determine precisely, how far it is consistent with the Nature of a finite Spirit to co-exist in and co-extend with Space, and the several and various Parts of it; yet this much we are absolutely certain of from divine Revelation, that it is inconsistent with the Nature and Properties of a finite and created Spirit to occupy at the same time, and be present in those Parts of Space, which are so vastly distant from one another, as Heaven and Earth are; because to be in Heaven and Earth at the same time, is given to us, as a Description of the Ubiquity and Immenfity of the
supreme

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supreme Being, by which the omnipresent God is distinguished from created Spirits in Scripture, and raised infinitely above them in point of the Extension of his Presence to all Places; and his Existence in and with every Part of Space; which it is absurd to suppose would have been, if it was consistent with the Nature of any finite and created Spirit, to be present in these two so very distant Parts of Space, at the same time, in which Heaven and Earth exist. The Omniscience of the Deity is also ascribed in Scripture to the Holy Ghost, by which his supreme Divinity is evinced: but I leave the Proof of this until the Lord give another Opportunity.

To his Name be Praise.





S E R M O N X V I I .

I J O H N 5. 7.

For there are three that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost : and these three are one.

HAVING in the preceeding Discourse shewed, that the incommunicable Name *Jehovah*, and the Names *Lord* and *God*, are ascribed to the Holy Ghost, in such a sense, as is not applicable to any Creature; for further Proof of his supreme Deity, I proposed also to shew, that the Perfections and Attributes peculiar to the most high God, are in Scripture ascribed to him: and particularly I shew'd, that Eternity and Omnipresence are ascribed to him in Scripture. I proceed now to shew, that other divine Excellencies peculiar to the Deity, are ascribed to him.

3. The next I shall insist on, is the divine Omniscience. That this is a Perfection peculiar to the Deity, is abundantly evident from the Light of Nature: for such is the Condition

of created Existence, that it is limited in all those Perfections, wherewith it can possibly be endowed; and consequently it must be a Contradiction in the nature of the thing, that any created reasonable Being can be endued with an infinite Knowledge. Yet the Knowledge of the Holy Ghost is represented to us in Scripture in such a manner, as it cannot but be infinite; which is evident from his Foreknowledge of future Events; and such too, which depend on the free Actings of voluntary Agents. It would be endless to enumerate all the Events which were foretold by the Holy Ghost; for it was he who inspired all the Prophets in all their Predictions concerning future Events; * *For the Prophecy came not in old Time by the Will of Man, but holy Men of God spoke as they were moved by the HOLY GHOST.* He inspired also the Apostles, and other holy Men under the New Testament, as he did the Prophets in old time, as appears from these words of the Apostle; † *Now the Spirit speaks expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the Faith, giving heed to seducing Spirits, and Doctrines of Devils.* And it is said elsewhere, ‡ *Behold there was a Man in Jerusalem, whose Name was Simeon, and the same Man was just and devout, waiting for the Consolation of Israel; and the Holy Ghost was upon him, and it was revealed to him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see Death before he had seen the Lord's Christ.* Now, that

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* 2 Pet. i. 21. † 1 Tim. iv. 1. ‡ Luke ii. 25.

the Foreknowledge of future Events, which the Spirit revealed by his Prophets and Apostles, is a Proof of his infinite Knowledge, and a Perfection peculiar to the Deity, is evident from this, that the Lord, the God of *Israel*, challengeth it to himself as his peculiar Prerogative, whereby he is distinguished from those who are falsely called Gods, that he alone can shew the things that are to come hereafter; * *Shew, says he, the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know, that ye are Gods;* plainly intimating, that if they had had the Knowledge of future Events, they would thereby have a Claim to true and proper Divinity; but in regard they wanted it, their Deity is by that very thing disproved.

But here it may be objected, that the Holy Ghost has the Knowledge of future Events revealed to him from the Father and Son; and therefore that Knowledge of them, wherewith he inspired the Apostles and Prophets, and which he revealed by them, is not a Proof of his supreme Deity, and Equality with the Father. And for Proof of the Spirit's having the Knowledge of what he revealed originally from the Father, as a Revelation from him, and not from his own personal and immediate Omniscience, these Words are alledged; † *When the Spirit of Truth is come, he will guide you into all Truth; for he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak, and he will shew you things to come.* The main force

* Isa. xli. 23.

† John xiii. 16.

force of this Argument lies in this, that the Spirit is said not to speak of himself, and to speak and reveal nothing, but what he hears. Therefore in answer to this Objection, I shall consider the Import of both these Phrases distinctly, and shew, that neither of them is inconsistent with the Spirit's being truly Omniscient, and absolutely on a level with the Father, in point of infinite Knowledge. And as to the first of these Expressions, that the Spirit speaks not of himself, the import of this can't be, that what he speaks is not from his own Omniscience originally, but from the Father by Revelation, as if he spoke after the same manner as the Prophets and Apostles, who spoke not from their own original and personal Knowledge, but by Revelation from another: This, I say, can by no means be the sense of that Phrase, let it be what it will; because that Sense directly contradicts the Scripture, which asserts, that what Knowledge the Spirit hath, he hath it not by Revelation from any other. * *Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord? or being his Counsellor hath taught him? With whom took he counsel? and who instructed him, and taught him in the Path of Judgment? and taught him Knowledge, and shewed to him the way of Understanding?* Which Interrogations are the most emphatical way of asserting his original Knowledge of all things of himself, and in the strongest manner exclude his receiving the Knowledge of any

* Isa. xl. 13, 14.

thing by the imperfect and dependent way of Revelation from any other. Whatever sense we put on this Phrase then, it must be such, as accords with the original infinite Knowledge of the Holy Ghost; otherways we make the divine Revelation flatly contradict it self; nor is it a hard matter to affix a sense to these Words, which they are capable of, without any force on them; and which at the same time accords with other Passages of Scripture: as for instance, when it is said, that the Spirit speaks not of himself; the meaning may be, that whatever he revealed to the Prophets or Apostles, in that action he wrought in conjunction with the Father and Son, and not separately by himself, as if his Essence had been divided from that of the other two Persons, and had not been one with them. When the infinite Knowledge of the Holy Ghost was exerted in inspiring holy Men, his Omniscience was not only employ'd, but that of the Father and the Son: for as I hinted on another Occasion, all the divine essential Perfections are common to all the three Persons; so that none of them can be exerted in any Action, terminating upon any thing without the Deity, but all the Persons must be concerned, whoever the particular Person may be, who, according to the agreed Oeconomy, may be the most immediately concerned; because that Efficacy and Energy, productive of the Action, is the Efficacy and Energy of the Deity, and common to all the Three. So that neither the

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Father nor the Son can act of themselves in such kind of Actions, as terminate without the Deity, any more than the Holy Ghost ; that is to say, none of them can act separately from the other Persons. And therefore when it is said here, that the Spirit speaks not of himself, it no more infers his having his Knowledge revealed to him, than when it is said of the Son, that he can do nothing of himself infers, that his Power is derivative ; because there our Saviour interprets, his doing nothing of himself, in this very sense, that he did nothing separately or disjunctively from the Father ; for, says he, in the latter Clause of that Verse ; * *What things soever he (the Father) doth, these also doth the Son likewise.* The whole Passage runs thus, *Then answered Jesus, and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, the Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do ; for what things soever he doth, these also doth the Son likewise.* If our Saviour's doing nothing of himself is not only consistent with, but according to his own sense of these words, even supposes and imports his acting together with the Father, as an equal Person in the same Deity with him ; then the Spirit's speaking not of himself is consistent with, nay, must import his speaking and revealing things unitedly and together with the other Persons of the Godhead, and as a Person of the same infinite Knowledge originally with them ; none of which Persons can speak or act of themselves,

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* John v 19.

or separately from one another, if the Expression *αφ' εαυτου* have that signification in the Passage relating to our Saviour, it may easily be supposed to be of the same Importance when I spoke of the Spirit. But besides that this Phrase is used in this sense in other places of Scripture, there is something in the Context it self which determines this to be the sense, that the Spirit speaks not separately, but conjunctly with the other two Persons of the Trinity; for it is given as the Reason, why he should lead them into all Truth, because he speaks not of himself, that is, not separately, but together with the other two Persons: and therefore his Dictates must be of the same infallible Veracity and Certainty with theirs; and Men under the Conduct of the Spirit, since he speaks not of himself in this sense, must be as safe, as if they were under the Conduct of the Father and Son; as indeed they are, seeing they are under his. For when he speaks to them, he speaks not to them of himself, or alone and separate from them, but along with them; for they have all the same Omniscience, and all other divine Perfections; *All that the Father hath, is Christ's*; and all that he has, the Holy Ghost hath: tho' they are possessed of it, each after a different Manner; and what the Spirit reveals and shews unto Men, is from that infinite Treasure of Wisdom, which is originally in himself, and which the other two divine Persons have also originally in themselves.

The other Part of the Objection is, That the Holy Ghost speaks only that which he hears: from whence it is inferred, but very unjustly, that he speaks nothing, but what he has by a Revelation from another. I have already proved from express Testimony of Scripture, that the Holy Ghost receives no Knowledge by Revelation from any other; and therefore when it is said, That he speaks only what he hears, whatever the Sense of that Expression is, it is most certain, that the Meaning and Import of it cannot be, That he speaks what he receives by a Revelation from another; because this also would make the Scripture to contradict itself; and therefore that Expression, *He speaks whatsoever he hears*, must be interpreted in such a Sense, as is consistent with that Passage in *Isaiab*, which plainly asserts, That the Holy Ghost acquires no Knowledge by a Revelation from any other, and cannot possibly be understood to mean any thing else; especially seeing that Phrase is easily capable of a Sense, which is consistent with it, it must be taken in the same Sense, when it is applied to God the Holy Ghost, that it is taken in, when it is applied to, and spoken of God the Father. Now, when Hearing is spoke of, and applied to God the Father, it is never taken in such a Sense, as to import his receiving his Knowledge by Revelation from any other; because that is an absurd Sense, and contrary to what is reveal'd concerning his Nature and Perfections;

tions : And for the same reason, when Hearing is applied to God the Holy Ghost, it ought not to be taken in such a Sense, as imports his receiving his Knowledge by Revelation from another ; because that is equally inconsistent with what is reveal'd concerning him in Scripture, as the other is inconsistent with what is reveal'd concerning the Father. But, when Hearing is applied to the Father, it always denotes and imports the Perfection of his Knowledge, and the infinite Exactness of his understanding of that which he is said to hear. And therefore, when Hearing is applied here to the Holy Ghost, it is capable of, and ought to be taken in the same Sense, as denoting and importing his infinitely perfect Knowledge of all that he reveals to Men for their Salvation, as being one of the eternal and omniscient Three, who laid the Scheme of eternal Life and Salvation of Sinners ; and this Sense of the Spirit's hearing whatsoever he speaks and reveals, well agrees with this Context, where Hearing is applied to him. For our Saviour is giving the Reason, why they should be led into all Truth, by the Spirit of Truth, when he should come ; and he could not give them a more pertinent and encouraging Reason for their being led into all Truth by him, and for their depending with safety upon his Conduct, than to tell his Disciples, That the Holy Ghost, who was to come from him and the Father, to conduct them, was a divine Person, equal with them, and had an
equally

equally perfect and infinite Knowledge originally of himself of all things necessary to their Salvation; so that they could not possibly be missed by him. And thus we see, that the Holy Ghost's being said to speak what he heareth, is so far from being an Objection against his Omniscience, that it is the strongest Argument for it.

The Omniscience of the Holy Ghost will further appear from this Passage; *The Spirit searches all things, yea, the deep things of God**. Here the infinite Knowledge of God the Holy Ghost is distinguished from that of the Creature, not only in that he is said to *search*, or to know, *all things*, but in that he searches the deep things of God, which none but God himself can do. *Can'st thou by searching find out God? Can'st thou find out the Almighty unto Perfection? It is as high as Heaven, what can'st thou do? Deeper than Hell, what can'st thou know †?* And as he perfectly knows and searches the deep things of God, so much more is he acquainted with the deepest things of the Heart of Man; which is also a Proof of his Omniscience, since the omniscient God claims this to himself, as his Prerogative, that he searcheth the Heart; *I the Lord search the Heart, I try the Reins ||*. And Solomon ascribes the Knowledge of the Heart to God alone; *For, says he, thou, even thou only, knowest the Hearts of all the Children of Men ‡*. And yet
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* 1 Cor. ii. 10.

† Job xi. 7.

|| Jer xvii. 10.

‡ 1 Kings viii. 39.

the Apostle *Paul* appeals not only to Christ, but also to the Holy Ghost, as the omniscient heart-searching God; *I say the Truth in Christ, I lye not, my Conscience also beareth me Witness in the Holy Ghost**. It is objected against the Omniscience of the Holy Ghost, that it is said, *Neither knoweth any the Father, but the Son*†. But Creatures only are here excluded from the Knowledge of the Father, not the other divine Persons; for otherwise the Father would be excluded from knowing himself, which is quite absurd.

4. As to those divine Perfections of Omnipotence and infinite Goodness and Holiness, that they belong to the Holy Ghost, will appear from his performing those Works, which are peculiar to the Deity, which is the third Head for Proof of the Deity of the Holy Ghost; and therefore I shall not insist upon them here, because what may be said upon that Head will furnish us with abundant Evidence, that he is possessed of these divine Perfections.

5. There is only one other divine Perfection, which I shall take notice of, as ascribed to the Holy Ghost, and it is that of infinite Truth, which Attribute is applied to him, in a different way than it is to any Creature; for Truth and Veracity, as it is applied to the Creature, is ascribed to them in a dependent Manner, as not having it originally and independently of themselves, but in a derivative
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* Rom. ix. 1.

† Mat. xi. 27.

Way from the Holy Ghost. What was taught by the Prophets and Apostles, is of infallible Veracity; but the Infallibility of it does not depend upon them, but upon the original Veracity of the divine Person who inspired them. Hence it is, that the Holy Ghost is so often in Scripture called *the Spirit of Truth*; and that it is said, when he comes, *he will lead his People into all Truth*, as an infallible Guide: and particularly in the Text, he is classed among the three infallible Witnesses, who bear Record in Heaven; plainly intimating to us, that he is originally and independently equal with the other Two in this divine Perfection of infallible Veracity, and a distinct Person from them, as has been before observed. Independent Veracity and absolute Faithfulness is an incommunicable Attribute of the divine Nature, and incompatible to the Creature; and whatever measure of finite Veracity any Creature has, it is derived from the Spirit of Truth, who has that infinite Perfection originally and independently of himself, otherways he could not be called emphatically and eminently, *the Spirit of Truth*: therefore it is said of the supreme Being, that * *He abides faithful and cannot lye*; because that would be to deny himself. The Faithfulness and Veracity of God is as essential to him, as any of his other Attributes, and he can no more be without it, than he can be without any other of them; and therefore to deny that, is a denying of

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* Tit. i. 2. 2 Tim. ii. 13.

himself. Thus we see, that the Holy Ghost is possessed of the divine Attributes and Perfections, and therefore is truly and properly God.

III. I proceed now to the third Head of Argument for Proof of the Deity of the Holy Ghost, to wit, that Works were performed by him, which are peculiar to the most high God. And,

I. The Work of Creation is ascribed to him. That this is a Work peculiar to supreme Deity, has been fully shew'd already upon the Proof of the Deity of the Son, from this Work's being ascribed to him: It remains only therefore to be shew'd, that the Holy Ghost perform'd this Work; which will appear plainly, if we consider the Account given by *Moses* of the Formation of things, where Creation is ascribed to the Holy Ghost; * *The Spirit of God moved upon the Face of the Waters.* The sacred Historian is there giving an account of the Creation of things upon the first Day; and therefore when he says, *that the Spirit of God moved then upon the Face of the Waters*, he cannot be understood to mean, that the Air or Wind moved; for that Body did not then exist, at least in that Form, by which it became Air; this was the Work of the second Day: and therefore it could not be said to move before it had a Being. The Spirit of God then, who moved upon the Face of the Waters, can be nothing

* Gen. i. 2.

nothing else than the third Person of the Trinity; and altho' this Moving upon the Face of the Waters supposes the Pre-existence of the Chaos, as having a Being prior to it; yet that Moving on the Face of the Waters, in reducing things to their proper Forms, was no less a Work of Creation, than the Production of the *Materia prima*, or the Chaos out of nothing, and did equally require the Exerting of Almighty Power, because of the natural Inaptitude of it for the Production of the Creatures, which were afterwards made of it, without such an Exerting of Almighty Power. Besides the Reduction of things to their proper Forms is represented to us in Scripture, as the peculiar Work of the supreme Being, who says, *I am the Lord that makes all things, that stretches forth the Heavens alone, that spreads abroad the Earth by myself**. So that according to this Description, not only the Production of things out of nothing, is a Proof of supreme Divinity, but also the eternal Power and Godhead of the Holy Ghost is clearly seen and understood, by his reducing things to their proper Forms, as being a Work which could only be performed by him, who alone is *Jehovah*, exclusive of all other inferior Beings.

Moreover, even the first Creation, or the Production of things out of nothing, is ascribed to God the Holy Ghost; as well as the Production of them out of pre-existent Matter; for

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* Isa. xlv. 24.

the Creation of the Soul of Man is ascribed to the Holy Ghost, which could not be produc'd out of any pre-existent Matter, but was created immediately out of nothing; *The Spirit of God hath made, and the Breath of the Almighty hath given me Life* *. From whence it plainly follows, that since both the first Creation of things out of nothing, and the second Creation, as it is called, out of pre-existent Matter, are ascribed to the Holy Ghost, he must be the supreme God, one of the eternal Three concerned, when it was said, *Let us make Man.*

2. Miraculous Operations and Works, above the Reach of created Existence, are also attributed to the Spirit, as the immediate Author of them; which, at least some of them, being equivalent to Creation, are another Proof of his Deity. The Apostle *Paul* speaks thus; *There are Diversities of Gifts, but the same Spirit* †. And afterwards the Apostle particularly enumerates all those various Gifts, whereof the Holy Spirit is the Author, and which he dispenses in a way worthy of his Sovereignty, as the supreme God; *All these, says he, works that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every Man severally as he will.*

3. The Work of Providence in supporting and sustaining all things, which I have already shewn, requires the same Almighty Power, as Creation is ascribed to the Holy Ghost; *Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created.*

* Job. xxxiii. 4.

† 1 Cor. xii. 4.

created *. Perseverance in a State of Existence and Being, is owing to the constant Influx of the almighty Power of the supreme Being, preserving and upholding the Creature, which is not sufficient for its own Existence for the space of one moment. Government of the World, with respect to civil Affairs and supreme Dominion therein, is ascribed to him also; especially in controlling the Enemies of the Church, and procuring her Peace: *It is the Spirit of the Lord who causeth his People to rest* †; and when the Enemy comes in like a Flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a Standard against him. It was this Person the Holy Ghost, who raised up Judges and Kings; and qualified them suitably for civil Government; such as *Othniel, Gideon, Jephthah, Sampson, Saul, and David*, as is plain from the Book of *Judges*, and the first Book of *Samuel*. And all that Revolution, which happened in the *Babylonish* Empire, by the Hand of *Cyrus*, and the breaking of their Tyranny, to make way for the building of the Temple again, was all done by the Influence of the Spirit on *Cyrus* and others concerned in that Work, and all managed by his over-ruling Power and Providence, as is plain from these words; *This is the Word of the Lord to Zerubbabel, saying, not by Might, nor by Power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts; who art thou, O great Mountain before Zerubbabel? thou shalt become a Plain, and he shall bring*

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* Psalm civ. 30. † Isa. lxiii. 14.

forth the head Stone thereof with Shoutings, crying, Grace, Grace, to it *. All that vast Event was conducted by the Holy Spirit.

And in that emblematical Representation of the divine over-ruling Providence, which we have in *Ezekiel's* Vision, in the first Chapter of his Book, the living Creatures are all governed in their Motions by the Holy Ghost; whither he went, the Spirit of the living Creatures went, they obeyed and exactly observed all his Motions, and were absolutely subject to his Controul; and therefore he must together with the Father and the Son be the supreme God over all, otherways he should neither be capable of, nor have the Honour of the Government of the World conferred on him, nor could he be fit to be trusted with the Direction of the Wheels within Wheels of the divine Providence.

The Objections here raised against the Deity of the Holy Ghost, from his being an Instrument in the Creation of things, and his acting as a Representative, being the same with those made against the Deity of the Son, the same Answer will serve for both; and therefore I refer to what was said upon them, when I was treating upon the Deity of the second Person, and shall not here repeat it. And indeed the Arguments, whereby I exposed the Weakness of that Objection against the Son's Deity from his being an Instrument, will hold equally with respect to the same Objection against

* Zech. iv. 6, 7.

gainst the Deity of the Holy Ghost, and expose it as being yet a greater Absurdity, because it would make him an Instrument in the Hand of another Instrument, which is quite ridiculous.

4. Besides those Works of Creation and Providence performed by the Holy Ghost, which bespeak his Divinity, there are other Works performed by him in consequence of the Part he acts in the Oeconomy of Salvation, which are peculiar to supreme Divinity, and which he could not perform, if he was not the true and almighty God: it was the Holy Ghost who inspired the Prophets and Apostles, for holy Men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. This has already been taken notice of as a Proof of his Omniscience, and therefore I shall not farther insist on it. It was the Holy Ghost who appointed *Barnabas* and *Saul* to the Ministry; for as they ministred to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, *Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the Work, whereto I have called them* *.

Where the Holy Ghost, as the supreme God, takes upon him to call Persons to the sacred Function of the Ministry, and appoints them as his Servants; which is a peculiar Branch of the divine Glory, and which none can have a Right to, but a divine Person. 'Tis true, when Persons are called in an ordinary way to that Office, it is, and ought to be by Ministers, and the Voice of the Christian Peo-

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* Acts xiii. 2.

ple; but then in doing so, they do not act by any original and inherent Right in themselves, but by a derived Right from the Holy Ghost, according to the Rules, which he has prescribed in the Holy Scriptures, which were inspired by him; and such, who are called according to those Rules, inspired by the Holy Ghost, are as truly called by him, and separated to his Service, as *Barnabas* and *Saul* were, who were immediately call'd and appointed by him to the sacred Function in an extraordinary way; and therefore we see, that the Elders of the Church of *Ephesus*, who were fix'd Pastors there in a more ordinary way, are said to be set over the Flock of God there by the Holy Ghost, as he who appointed them to that Office; *Take heed therefore to yourselves, and to all the Flock, over which the Holy Ghost has made you Overseers, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own Blood**. The supreme God claims a peculiar Property in his Church as his House, and all the Office-Bearers of it are either to be called immediately to their respective Offices by himself, or according to Rules given by him; and to alter, or encroach upon these Rules, is a sacrilegious Invasion of the divine Right. And therefore the Holy Ghost's commissioning the Office-bearers of the Church, and appointing them to be separated to him, is a divine Work, and a plain Proof, that he

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* Acts xx. 28.

was the supreme God, otherways he had never pretended to so high a Claim.

Not only did he appoint the Officers of the Church to their Offices, but he also evidenced his supreme Authority over them as his Servants, in directing and determining them as to the Exercise of their Ministry, and appointing to them their respective Stations. This appeared in a more remarkable Manner, with respect to the extraordinary Officers of the Church, in the first Age of Christianity, when the Apostles and Evangelists were, in a special manner, directed in their Stations and Motions, from place to place, in publishing the Gospel. *Philip* was commanded to preach the Gospel to the Eunuch by the Spirit; *The Spirit* said to *Philip*, go near and join thy self to this Chariot *. And on another Occasion, *Peter* was commanded by the Spirit to go and preach the Gospel to *Cornelius* †. When *Peter* thought on the Vision, the Spirit said unto him, behold, three Men seek thee; arise, therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing; for I have sent them. And ‡ when *Paul* and his Companions had gone through *Phrygia* and the Region of *Galatia*, they were forbid by the Holy Ghost to preach the Word in *Asia*; and after they were come to *Mysia*, they essayed to go into *Bythinia*, but the Spirit suffered them not. And altho' the Holy Ghost does not interpose in that miraculous way now, in directing the Pastors of Churches to their

* Acts viii. 29. † Acts x. 19, 20. ‡ Acts xvi. 6, 7.

respective Places, yet he as really and effectually orders and directs them, and calls them to their respective Stations, when he enables them in their Motions to observe those Rules, which he has prescribed to regulate them in their Conduct this way: and while they strictly observe those Rules indicted by the Spirit, regulating their Conduct thereby, they have the same reason to expect the Countenance of the Holy Ghost, and his favourable regards towards them and their Ministry, as if he appeared to them in a more extraordinary way, directing them in a miraculous manner.

'Tis the Holy Ghost, who in a way worthy of God, furnishes his Servants for his Work, ** dividing to each of them Gifts severally as he will*; and he sends them forth, as the Lord of the Harvest, to labour for him: nor does he send them on a Warfare on their own Charges, but inspires them with Resolution faithfully to discharge their Trust, in spite of all Contradiction and Ridicule from hardened Sinners, of whatsoever Rank. So Christ promised to his Disciples, that when they shall be brought before Kings and Governors for his sake, that the Spirit should give them what to speak, in that Hour of Tryal: and how remarkably was this made good to *Peter*, when he was called before the High Priest and Rulers? What a noble and magnanimous stand did he make for the Truth, by the Power of the Holy Ghost? *† So that they were all filled with the Holy Ghost,*
and

* 1 Cor. xii. 11.

† Acts iv. 7—13, 19, 31.

and spoke the Word of God with Boldness. These supernatural Supports in such Circumstances, flowing from the Holy Ghost, are a pregnant Evidence of his true Divinity; and *Peter* and *John* told these Rulers, that their not acting according to that Impulse they were under from the Holy Ghost, to teach in the Name of Jesus, would be not to hearken to God; which plainly supposes, that the Holy Ghost is God. *Peter and John answered and said unto them, whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken to you more than to God, judge ye.* These Apostles were under so lively and strong an Impulse of the Holy Ghost at this hour of Temptation, that no fear of Shame from the most inveterate Enemies of Christianity, could hinder them to preach in the Name of Jesus; the Awe and Dread of his Godhead was so deeply impressed on their Minds, that no Terrors from Men could over-balance it.

The Holy Ghost, by his almighty Power, as the supreme God, gives success to the Ministrations of his Servants, so that their Speech and their Preaching, through his Influence, is not with mere enticing Words of Man's Wisdom, but in the Demonstration of the Spirit and of Power; and the Faith of Men produced by it, is not the Effect of the Wisdom of Men, but of the Power of God; because the Holy Ghost, the great God, crowns their Labours, in themselves weak, with powerful Success*. It is thro' the Operation of God,

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* 1 Cor. ii. 4, 5.

the Holy Ghost, that *the Weapons of our Warfare are to some so mighty, that they pull down strong Holds, and cast down Imaginations, or Reasonings, and every high thing, that exalteth it self against the Knowledge of God, bringing into Captivity every Thought to the Obedience of Christ* *. These are Effects which can be produced by no Being or Person, who is not possessed of supreme Divinity.

But more particularly the Work of Conversion and Regeneration is ascribed to the Holy Ghost, as the Author of it; and therefore it is called, the Washing of Regeneration and the Renewing of the Holy Ghost. † *Not by Works of Righteousness which we have done, but according to his Mercy he saved us by the Washing of Regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.* And that this is a divine Work peculiar to the supreme God, is plain from this, that they who are regenerated and born again, are said to be born of God: thus they are stiled many times by the Apostle *John*, and particularly in the first Verse of this Chapter where my Text is, says he, *Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ (that is, the Emmanuel, God-Man, in one Person,) is born of God.* And elsewhere, those who believe in Christ, as the true God, are said to be such, ‡ *who are born, not of Blood, nor of the Will of the Flesh, but of God.*

The Graces of Faith and Repentance which are implanted in the Soul at Conversion, and which

* 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. † Tit. iii. 5. ‡ John i. 13.

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which are the very Effence of it, are both a-
scribed to the Holy Ghost; therefore Faith is
called *the Fruit of the Spirit* *. And to shew
that the Production of Faith in the Soul is a
divine Work, the Apostle expressly tells us,
that *it is of the Operation of God* †. The Ho-
ly Ghost is also the Author of Repentance,
therefore the Apostle *Paul* ascribes their *turn-
ing to God from Idols, to serve the living and true
God* ‡, unto the Gospel's coming to them, not
in Word only, but in Power, and in the Holy
Ghost.

As it is God the Holy Ghost, who is the
Author of Conversion and the new Birth, who
begins this divine Work; so it is he who
carries it on in the Soul in progressive Sanctifi-
cation, which is a Work equally divine, and
requires the exerting of the same divine Perfec-
tions with the other, and is peculiar to the
supreme God, who said to *Israel*, || *You shall
keep my Statutes, and do them, I am the Lord
which sanctifieth you.* Hence the Work of
Sanctification is in a peculiar manner called,
*the Sanctification of the Spirit, ** and the Sanc-
tification of the Spirit to Obedience. It is thro'
the Spirit that Believers mortify the Deeds of the
Body: ††.* 'Tis owing intirely to God's Spirits
being put in us, causing us †† to walk in his Sta-
tutes, that we keep his Judgments and do them.
'Tis by the Spirit of the Lord, that we are
changed

* Gal. v. 22.

|| Levit. xx. 6.

†† Rom. viii. 13.

† Col. ii. 12.

** 2 Thes. ii. 13. 1 Pet. i. 12.

†† Ezek. xxxvi. 24.

† 1 Thes. i. 6, 9.

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changed into the same Image from Glory to Glory, when with open Face we behold, as in a Glass, the Glory of the Lord *. In a word, the Exercise of every Grace in the Believer, is the Fruit of the Spirit; and the whole of the Christian Conversation is a walking in the Spirit; *If we live in the Spirit, let us walk in the Spirit* †; *He worketh in us both to will and to do of his own good pleasure, we are strengthened with Might by his Spirit in our inner Man* ‡.

After the Holy Ghost has finished the Work of Sanctification upon the Souls of Believers by his almighty Power, he will at length raise their Bodies at the Resurrection, and unite them to their Souls, and crown both with eternal Glory; which is a Work infinitely above the reach of any created Being, and the sole Effect of the Omnipotence of the supreme God: yet it is ascribed to the Holy Ghost as the Author of it. || *If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the Dead, dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the Dead, shall also quicken your mortal Bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.* Raising the Dead is a Work which requires the Exerting of all those divine Perfections, which are necessary to Creation it self, and is equally a Demonstration of the proper Deity of him who performs it. Hence, the Faith of *Abraham* is recommended to be of the highest kind; that it rested upon God who raised the Dead, being impossible it could have a firmer Foundation. The Apostle

* 2 Cor. iii. 18. † Gal. v. 25. ‡ Eph. iii. 16. || Rom. viii. 11.

posse puts quickening the Dead, and bringing things out of nothing to Being, upon the same level as equally divine Works; * *Even God*, says he, *who quickeneth the Dead, and calleth those things which be not, as tho' they were.* Thus we see, that divine Works, Works which are peculiar to the supreme God, are ascribed to the Spirit as the Author of them; and therefore he must be the most High God.

Now there is only one Argument farther, by which I would prove the proper Deity of the Holy Ghost; and that is, that divine and religious Worship is ascribed to him in Scripture: But this I shall leave, till God give another Opportunity.

* Rom. iv. 17—21.





S E R M O N XVIII.

I JOHN 5. 7.

*For there are three that bear record
in Heaven, the Father, the Word,
and the Holy Ghost : and these three
are one.*

IN the preceeding Discourse I endeavoured to prove the Deity of the Holy Ghost from those Works, which were performed by him, which were peculiar to the most High God, such as Creation and Providence; and also from those Works, which he performs in consequence of the Parts he acts in the Oeconomy of Salvation; which are also peculiar to supreme Divinity, such as Regeneration, Authorizing the Ministers of the Church, Raising the Dead, and the like, which are above the Power and Condition of the Creature.

IV. I proceed now to the last Head proposed for Proof of the supreme Deity of the Holy Ghost, which was to shew, That divine

religious Worship was, and ought to be paid to him.

That God the Holy Ghost is the proper Object of supreme religious Worship, is abundantly plain, from what has been said already upon the former Heads of Proof of his supreme Deity, that he has the Names and Perfections peculiar to the Deity, ascribed to him; and that Works were performed by him, which none but the most high and supreme God could perform. And tho' we had no Instances in Scripture, that divine Worship was actually paid to him; yet since he is declared to be possessed of all those Perfections and Excellenciss in Scripture, upon which a Claim to supreme divine Worship is founded, he thereby becomes the proper Object of Worship to us; and to refuse him that divine Honour, after he is revealed and manifested to us, to be possessed of those Perfections, which give him a Title to the highest Acts of religious Homage and Obedience, is both unworthy of us, as reasonable Beings, and is the highest Affront and Injury to him.

Examples and Instances recorded in Scripture of Duties performed by pious Men, where their Practice is approved of, as being not contrary to any Rule laid down in the Word, but rather conform to the Precepts of it, are doubtless a sufficient Warrant for us to conform to their Practice, if our Circumstances and Obligations be the same with theirs: but Examples set before us, are by no means the only

only way of attaining to the Knowledge of our Duty, and the Obligations we lie under to perform it. The first reasonable Beings, which were created, had no Example of any Being, who had worshipped the Deity, set before them; yet the Manifestation of his eternal Power and Godhead, and the Discoveries of his infinite Perfections by the things which were made, and particularly by their own Existence and Being, laid an undoubted Obligation upon them to worship and obey him, as the Author of their own Existence, and upon whom they did depend; and there is no question, but they acted in Conformity to that Obligation, at least so long as they continued in that State, in which they were created. If so be, that the first reasonable Creatures, which were made, were among the number of those, who rebelled; and therefore, tho' there was no Example in Scripture of divine Worship's being paid to the Holy Ghost, yet since he is therein manifested and declared to be a divine Person, and possess'd of all those Perfections and Excellencies, which lay a Foundation for supreme divine Worship, it is the highest Impiety to deny him that Honour.

But this is not the Case; there are many Instances in Scripture, wherein supreme divine Worship is paid to the Holy Ghost, as a distinct Person from the Father and Son: and perhaps, upon a narrow inquiry, it will be found, that when either the Son or the Holy Ghost

Ghost are mentioned as distinct Persons, they are as frequently considered and acknowledged as the Object of religious Worship, as the Father is, when he is spoken of as a distinct Person. 'Tis true, there are many Instances, wherein the Deity, considered absolutely without any Distinction of the Persons therein, is proposed as the Object of supreme divine Worship, and religious Adoration and Invocation, are commanded to be paid, and are actually ascribed to the one supreme Being, without any particular Distinction and Difference mentioned or intimated of the divine Persons, who are that one Being. But in such Instances, the Father, as a distinct Person, is no more considered as the Object invocated or adored religiously, than the Persons of the Son and Holy Ghost, they are all equally included. And whereas, our Saviour in his Directory for Prayer given to his Disciples, commanded them to pray after this manner, * *Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.* we are not to imagine, that by the Term *Father*, in that Directory, the first Person of the Trinity only is understood, exclusive of the Son and Holy Ghost; for not only the first and the second Person of the Trinity, but the third also is our Father, who is in Heaven. And it should be carefully observed, that the first Person of the Trinity is not denominated Father, either because of the relation he bears to the Holy Ghost, or because of the relation he stands in to the Crea-

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tures;

* Mat. vi. 9.

and invokes and implores his Blessing, as the Applier of the Grace promised in it, and dedicates the Person baptized to his Service and Obedience. Parents, or Sponsors, offering Children born of believing Parents to Baptism in his Name, own him for their God themselves, and join in the dedication of theirs, to his Worship and Service. Persons who are adult, by their submission to Baptism in his Name, in that Action worship him as their God, in Covenant with them, and promise to perform all Acts of religious Duty and Obedience to him, by the aids of his Grace, acknowledging the almighty Efficacy of it upon their Hearts already, and imploring the farther Communications of it in progressive Sanctification, all which are solemn Acts of the most profound religious Worship paid to the Holy Ghost by all Christians, in celebrating this Ordinance of Baptism. Much of what was said upon Baptism in the Name of the Son, as a Proof of his being the Object of religious Worship, may be applied to the Holy Ghost, to which I refer.

That the Holy Ghost is represented in Scripture as the Object of religious Worship, appears from the Reproofs recorded in Scripture, given to those who did not pay a due regard to the Holy Ghost, and who had not that Veneration for his Works which they ought to have had, and which became them to pay to a divine Person. Accordingly, the Martyr *Stephen* severely reprehends the *Jews* as a stiff-necked People, for resisting the Holy Ghost.

* *Yoi*

S E R M O N XVIII. 421.

* *You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in Heart, you always resist the Holy Ghost; as your Fathers did, so do you.* Ananias is reproved for lying to the Holy Ghost; and his Sin charged upon him with that Aggravation of Guilt, that it was no less than a lying to God †. And the Apostle *Paul* chargeth it home upon the *Jews*, as a most heinous Crime, that they despised the Spirit of Grace; ‡ *He hath done despite unto the Spirit of Grace.* Nay, our Saviour himself declares, that not to pay that religious Worship and Obedience which is due to the Holy Ghost, is an unpardonable Sin, and to blaspheme his Name or speak against him, is a Crime attended with Circumstances of even higher Aggravation, than blaspheming the other divine Persons. || *Wherefore I say unto you, all manner of Sin and Blasphemy shall be forgiven unto Men, but the Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto Men; and whosoever speaketh a Word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this World, nor in the World to come.* Not that the Person of the Holy Ghost is of higher Dignity than the Father or the Son, because not paying a suitable regard to him is reckoned of that irremissible and unpardonable nature; no, all the Persons of the Trinity are of equal Dignity: but the sinning against the Holy Ghost, and blaspheming him and his Operations, is accounted of so heinous and criminal

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* Acts vii. 51.
 † Mat. xii. 31, 32.

† Acts v. 3, 4.

‡ Heb. x. 29.

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a nature, that it will never be pardoned, because it is not only a Sin against a divine Person, but it is attended with this farther Aggravation, that it is committed against the fullest Evidence of the divine Power, and the highest Efforts of the divine Energy, and because it carries in it a malicious Opposition to, and a blasphemous Contempt of the last and most condescending methods the Deity can stoop to, in order to convince Sinners. When the Operations and Works of the Father and Son, performed by them, in consequence of the part they act in the Oeconomy of Salvation, are blasphemed and contemned, great Guilt is undoubtedly contracted, and the Deity very criminally affronted: but when these Works and Operations of God the Holy Ghost, which he performs in consequence of the part which he acts, in the method of Grace, are blasphemed, reviled, and contemned, a higher measure and degree of Guilt is contracted; because these are accompanied with higher degrees of Evidence, and fuller manifestations of divine Energy, and more condescending methods of Conviction, than what are to be found in the other Case; and therefore the Guilt is proportionably aggravated, even to that Degree, that it is declared unpardonable.

In the next place, that Worship, supreme divine Worship, is due to the Holy Ghost, and is commanded to be paid to him, will appear from this, that Believers are said to be his
Temple.

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Temple. * *What, know ye not that your Body is the Temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you.* The very notion of a Temple carries in it Worship and religious Homage, to be paid to him whose Temple it is; and therefore our being the Temples of the Holy Ghost, necessarily infers our Obligation to worship him as our God. Our very acknowledging ourselves to be a Temple for him, and dedicating ourselves to him as his Temple, is of it self a solemn Act of religious Worship, and virtually carries in it all the parts of divine Worship and Homage: for it is an acknowledging him to whom the Dedication is made, to be the true God; an Adoration of him as such, a Recognizing his Right and Title to all that divine Service which shall be performed in that Temple, an Invocation of his divine Presence with, and Benediction upon the Persons performing divine Worship therein; and it imports a Desire and Prayer for the acceptance of that Service performed, and those Sacrifices which may be according to his Will and Command offered in this Temple. All this was done expressly, in the Dedication of the Temple to the God of *Israel*, by *Solomon* †. And the same thing is imported and meant by every true Believer, in the Dedication of himself to the Lord, when he covenants personally with him. And therefore we see the Apostle infers the Obligation of Believers to worship and glorify God, as his People, from their being his

E e 4

Temple;

* 1 Cor. vi. 19.

† 1 Kings viii. 22.

Temple; * *Ye are the Temple of the living God, as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my People.* Then he infers their Obligation to live as his People, and be separate from all manner of Unholiness: *Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing.* And he infers from God's promising to dwell in them, and walk in them as in his Temple, they are bound to all the Duties of holy Obedience, and religious Worship and Service. *Having therefore these Promises, dearly Beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all Filthiness of the Flesh and Spirit, perfecting Holiness in the Fear of the Lord †.* And the same Apostle exhorts Christians to Purity, both in Opinion and Practice, from their being the Temple of God the Holy Ghost; ‡ *Know you not that you are the Temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? if any Man defile the Temple of God, him shall God destroy, for the Temple of God is holy, which Temple ye are:* Where the greatness of the Punishment denounced against such as profane the sacred Temple dedicated to the Holy Ghost, is a plain Proof, that the highest Degree of divine Homage and supreme Worship is due to him by his Votaries, who serve in his Temple, and wait before his Altars. The Apostle explains the Preservation of the Body in Chastity, and living in the constant Practice of universal Purity

* 2 Cor. vi. 16.

† vii. 1.

‡ 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17.

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rity in Heart and Life, to be a worshipping of God the Holy Ghost in his Temple, and putting those things to those sacred Uses, and making them serve those holy Purposes, for which they were dedicated and consecrated to him. All the various Faculties of the Soul, the Understanding, Will and Affections; all the Powers of the Mind, and Members of the Body, are so many various Utensils in the Temple of the Holy Ghost, and they have all their several Uses and Purposes, which they serve; and when they are put to these several Uses, and made to serve these several Purposes, for which they were consecrated and devoted, then God is glorified in his Temple: but if these Vessels of the Sanctuary be prostituted to other Purposes, his Worship is marred, and his Temple profaned. *Flee Fornication, every Sin that a Man doth is without the Body, but he that committeth Fornication sinneth against his own Body; what, know ye not that your Body is the Temple of the Holy Ghost in you, which ye have of God? and ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a Price, therefore glorify God in your Body, and in your Spirit, which are God's.*

The Holy Ghost is addressed, as the Object of religious Worship, by the Church; *Awake, O North Wind, and come thou South, blow upon my Garden, that the Spices thereof may flow out* *. Here the Holy Spirit is applied to, for the Communications of his Grace; it is his
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* Cant. iv. 16.

Work to sanctify the Soul by the Influences of his almighty Power, both in subduing and mortifying Sin, and in strengthening and quickening Grace, in the Heart; and the Church here applies to him for both. By the North Wind is meant the Efficacy of his Grace, in nipping and blasting in-dwelling Corruptions; and by the South Wind, we are to understand the Influences of the Spirit, to cherish and revive languishing Graces, that they may be drawn forth into a suitable Exercise, in the Soul; and since these are the Effects of the Holy Ghost, and his Province, according to the Oeconomy of Grace and Salvation, to bestow, he is justly presumed to be the particular Person here applied to, by the Church, in a way of religious Invocation. And here let it be observed, that we are so far from being at a loss for Scripture-precept and Warrant to worship the Holy Ghost, in Acts of Invocation or Adoration peculiar to supreme Divinity, that all those Passages of Scripture, wherein that divine Person is represented to be the Applyer of all that Grace, decreed and designed, and given by the Father, and purchased by the Son, are so many Commands laying an Obligation upon us to address him under all our spiritual Wants; and those who deny the Holy Ghost to be the Object of divine religious Worship, seem to have little Acquaintance with the Duty of Prayer, and the Gospel-method of applying to the Deity, for the Communication of those spiritual Gifts and Benefits

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nefits we daily stand in need of; which is to have our Eye fixed upon the Father, as the Person who designed them for us, and contrived the Scheme and Method, in a way consistent with all the divine Perfections, whereby all needful Grace might be convey'd to us; and to have our Eye to God the Son, as the Purchaser of these spiritual Blessings; and on the Holy Ghost, as the divine Person, who, according to that settled Oeconomy of Salvation, applies immediately those saving Gifts to the Souls of Men. This is the Method in which our Prayers ought to be conducted, according to supernatural Revelation, which alone teaches the true effectual and acceptable Method of addressing the Deity; and it supposes each of these Persons thus ey'd in every Act of Invocation, to be the true and supreme God, and equally the Author, in his own way, and according to the special Part he acts, in the Oeconomy of Salvation, of the Grace we stand in need of, and for which we pour out our fervent Supplications. From whence it appears, that the Holy Ghost is not only the Object of religious Worship, but our Concern with him, as such, is so great, that a Believer can never lift up his Face to Heaven acceptably, at least he can't address the Deity suitably, without paying divine Homage to God the Holy Ghost, as the immediate Applier of those Benefits he prays for, either more directly or indirectly; and the more distinct and direct the Believer is, in his wor-

shipping

shipping the distinct Persons of the Trinity, in the Acts either of Adoration or Invocation, in ascribing the peculiar Glory which each of the Persons justly claim, according to the several Parts they act, as the Fountain and Author of Grace, so much the more acceptable and suitable is the Worship performed by them.

We have many Instances in Scripture, where the Holy Ghost is addressed directly, and expressly mentioned, as a distinct Person from the Father and Son, and Application is made to him for spiritual Benefits. The Apostle *Paul* prays, that he would by his Influences direct the Hearts of Believers into the Love of God, (the Father) and to the patient waiting for Christ; says he, *The Lord direct your Hearts to the Love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ* *. And again, *The Lord make you to increase and abound in Love one towards another, and towards all Men, even as we do towards you, to the end he may establish your Hearts, unblamable, in Holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, with all his Saints* †. Here the Lord addressed in this Prayer, and to whom it is particularly directed, is plainly God the Holy Ghost, because that which is prayed for is not only his peculiar Province, according to the Oeconomy of Salvation, to bestow and work it immediately in the Hearts of God's Children, their abounding in the Grace of
Love,

* 2 Theff. iii. 5.

† 1 Theff. iii. 12, 13.

Love, and their Establishment in Holiness; but especially because the Person here pray'd to, is expressly distinguished from God, even our Father, before whom the Apostle prays, *That this Person, the Holy Ghost, would establish their Hearts, unblamable in Holiness*; and also, because he is distinguished from the second Person of the Trinity, our Lord Jesus Christ, at whose Coming this is desired to be done. From whence it appears to a Demonstration, that it must be the third Person of the Trinity, who is here directly and immediately addressed, by solemn divine Worship of Prayer and Invocation.

Finally, That God the Holy Ghost is equally the Object of supreme religious Worship, with the Father and the Son, is plain from the Apostolic Benediction *; where the Apostle addresses the Person of the Holy Ghost, in a way of Invocation, imploring of him the Communication of those Blessings, which it is his peculiar Province, by reason of the Part he acts in the Method of Grace to impart, equally as he addresses the Father and the Son, for those Blessings and Benefits of the Covenant, which redound to Believers, from the Part which these two Persons act severally, in the same Method of Grace. The Father, in his eternal Love to Sinners, purpos'd, design'd, and contriv'd the Method of Salvation; the Son purchased all the Treasures of Covenant-Grace, and therefore it is in a peculiar manner called

* 2 Cor. xiii. 14.

called his Grace; and the Holy Ghost communicates and conveys all Covenant-Blessings. So that the Apostle, in this solemn Prayer, ascribes to each of the Persons that Glory which redounds to them, from the different Part they act in the Method of Grace; and owns each as the Author of Covenant-Grace; after his manner, by addressing each for the Conveyance and Continuance of their respective Benefits, and the Fruits of them; says he, *The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Love of God,* (of God the Father, as it is called by him in several other Epistles of his) *and the Communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all.* Amen.

There is another Act of solemn religious Worship performed by this Apostle to the Holy Ghost, in appealing to him as the Searcher of Hearts, and the Avenger of Falsehoods; *I say the Truth in Christ, I lye not, my Conscience also bearing me Witness in the Holy Ghost* *. Where the Apostle, in the Form of an Oath, calls both the Son and the Holy Ghost to witness, for the Truth of what he says, and therein acknowledges their supreme Divinity, as being the omniscient Searchers of the Hearts of Men, and the Avengers of Falsehood. And tho' the same Apostle gave a Charge to *Timothy* †, before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect Angels; yet these Angels are not there to be looked upon, as either the Searchers of the Hearts of Men,

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* Rom. ix. 1.

† 1 Tim. v. 13.

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or as Avengers of Falshood, but as Witnesses of external Acts, where they are personally present, as any finite reasonable Beings may be. For the Angels being Attendants on the Heirs of Salvation, and narrowly observing their external Acts, the Apostle had good Reason to give a Charge to *Timothy* as before them, which ought to have had its own Influence upon *Timothy* to observe it, tho' not so great as the Consideration, that it was given before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who are the only proper Judges, how far it was observed, and Avengers or Rewarders of the Non-observance or Observance of it.

I proceed now to answer some Objections, which I have not had occasion to touch at already. And first it is objected, That the Holy Ghost is the Spirit of God the Father, and the Spirit of God the Son; and therefore he is not to be applied to, or worshipped, as a distinct Person from them, any more than the Spirit of a Man is a distinct Person from the Man himself. But this Objection proceeds upon a false Hypothesis, to wit, that the Holy Ghost is the Spirit of the Father and the Son, in the same manner as the Spirit of a Man is his Spirit, which is grossly absurd; for the Spirit of a Man is a Part of that compound Being, which constitutes the Person of a Man, but it is not so in the Deity. There is no Composition therein, and therefore the Spirit of Christ, or of the Father, may be addressed as a distinct Person from them, because he is not a Part of
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the Father or Son, as if they were compounded Beings, as the Objection grossly and absurdly supposes them to be.

It is also objected, that the Holy Ghost is not join'd with the Father and Son in the Apostolic Salutations; from whence they conclude, that he is not a divine Person. To this I answer, That the Omission, or not mentioning of the Holy Ghost, in any particular Passage of Scripture, is not a Proof of his not being a divine Person, since his Divinity and distinct Personality is abundantly evident, as has been shewed from other Passages; for it can't be expected, that every Truth, which is to be believed, can be taught us in every Passage of Scripture: besides, it is not Fact, that the Holy Ghost is neglected, and the expressing mentioning of him omitted in all the apostolic Salutations in Epistles. It is otherways in St. *John's* Salutation of the Seven Churches of *Asia*; *Grace be unto you from him which is, and which was, and which is to come, and from the seven Spirits, which are before his Throne**. By which we must understand the one Spirit of God, here called *the seven Spirits before the Throne*, according to the mystical Style of this Book, denoting the Fulness and Multiplicity of his Gifts, with a particular Regard to the seven Churches of *Asia*, to whom he writes. The Holy Ghost is also mentioned in the Salutation, in the first Epistle of *Peter*; *Elect according to the Foreknowledge of God the Father,*

* Rev. i. 4.

ther, through Sanctification of the Spirit, and sprinkling of the Blood of Jesus Christ, Grace unto you and Peace be multiplied: where all the three Persons are distinctly mentioned, if so be this is supposed to be included as a Part of the Salutation in this Epistle; if not, then there is no divine Person mentioned at all in it, and so it will unluckily prove too much, that there is no divine Person in the Godhead at all, if the Reasoning hold good, that all who are to be owned for divine Persons, must be mentioned in the Salutations in all the Epistles.

Again, it is objected, That the Holy Ghost himself is represented in Scripture, as worshipping the Deity, and therefore he cannot be himself the supreme God, and the Object of Worship: and for this, the words of the Apostle are alledged, where it is said, that * *The Spirit maketh Intercession for the Saints.* But we are not to understand the Intercession of the Spirit for the Saints, as if he stood in the place of an Advocate or Mediator for Sinners; for there is but one Mediator between God and Man, the Man Christ Jesus; but the Intercession which the Spirit makes for us, is, by his Grace working powerfully in us, helping our Infirmities, and teaching us what to pray for as we ought to do, as the Apostle himself explains it; † *The Holy Ghost exciting and raising these Groanings in our Soul,* when he inspires us with the Spirit of Prayer and Supplication, is

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called

* Rom. viii. 27.

† Ver. 26.

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called his interceding for us, because it is by his Grace that we are enabled to plead so earnestly and fervently with God. But tho' that Worship of devout Prayer and Supplication be the effect of the Spirit in our Hearts, enabling us to direct it to God, as the Object of it, yet the Act of Worship thus directed by the Believer towards God, as its Object, by the Assistance of the Spirit, is Worship and Homage paid by us to God, and not Worship paid by the Spirit. So far from it, that this divine Energy of the Spirit on our Hearts, putting them into so heavenly and spiritual a Frame, is rather a Demonstration and Proof of his proper Divinity, and Claim which he has to be the Object of the highest Acts of Worship himself, than an Evidence that he is upon the level with the dependent Creature, who pays Homage and Worship to any Being superior to himself.

It is also objected, that the Holy Ghost is said to be given and sent by the Father and Son, and that he is resisted and quenched; all which import Inferiority and Imperfection, and therefore he is not properly a divine Person. To which I answer, That frequently in Scripture, the Gifts and Graces of the Spirit are, by a Metonymy, call'd the Spirit, because they are the Effects of the Spirit, and wrought by him, especially those extraordinary Gifts, which were necessary for the Propagation of the Gospel, in the first Age of Christianity; these are sometimes called the Spirit, and the Holy Spirit: hence, the Spirit is said to be
poured

*poured forth**; and 'tis said, *that the Holy Ghost fell on all them that heard the Word†*; and, this is called *the Gift of the Holy Ghost*. That these Gifts of the Spirit should be said to be given, quenched, resisted, does no more infer the Inferiority of the Holy Ghost, than if they were the immediate Effects of the Person of the Father, they would infer his Inferiority. But sometimes the Spirit is said to be given, where the word *Spirit* is not taken metonymically, but denotes the Person of the Spirit, and not his Gifts, Graces, and Effects only; and yet, notwithstanding, we can't with any shadow of Reason infer his Inferiority, either to the Father or Son, by whom he is given or sent; for his being given or sent does not import any natural Inferiority, or Subjection of the Spirit to the Father or Son, but only denotes the Subserviency of the part the Holy Ghost acts, which he voluntarily undertook in the Oeconomy of Salvation, as the Applier of the Grace designed by the Father, and purchased by the Son, to the part which these other Persons act, in that same method of Grace; which does not in the least derogate from, but is perfectly consistent with, his original and natural Equality with the two other divine Persons. Thus, I have prov'd the Divinity of the Holy Ghost from this, that he is considered in Scripture, as the Object of supreme divine Worship, and that it is accordingly therein ascribed to him.

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* Acts ii. 17.

† x. 44, 45.

There is only one thing which I would further observe, concerning this divine Person, the Holy Ghost; and that is, his personal Property, by which he is distinguished from the Father and the Son. As the Son is begotten of the Father, so the Holy Ghost proceedeth from the Father and the Son; which Procession seems to denote to us, the different way by which the Godhead subsists in the Holy Ghost, which distinguishes him, as a distinct Person from the other two, and what it farther imports, neither Men nor Angels can fully comprehend. Nor is it safe to determine, whether his Procession from the Father has the same Influence upon, and affects in the same way, the manner of his Subsistence, as his Procession from the Son, or whether he proceeds from the Father by the Son, or from the Father and the Son; these, and such like Questions, I shall not inquire into, as having more of Curiosity in them than Use. The great thing which we are narrowly to regard, is, the personal Distinction between the Holy Ghost and the rest of the divine Persons, denoted and signified to us by this Term, Procession; but as to the particular manner how the Holy Ghost subsists, differently from the Father and Son, and how the Procession of the Holy Ghost differs from the Son's being begotten, is not to be comprehended by any finite Being: only the manner in which the Godhead subsists in the Holy Ghost, lays a foundation for his personal Properties being expressed to us by

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Procession, rather than being *Begotten*, or *Begetting*, which are the personal Properties, by which the Father and the Son are distinguished from the Holy Ghost, and one another.

Thus I have gone thro' this important Subject of the Holy Trinity, and proved the distinct Personality of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and the proper and supreme Deity of the second and third Persons, and their absolute Equality with the first, in all divine Perfections and Glory; from whence we might draw many useful Inferences for our Instruction: but, in particular, let us briefly observe, from what has been said, the Difference between Natural and Reveal'd Religion. Natural Religion goes no farther than to teach the Being and Existence of the Deity, and such Duties as are deducible from the Light of Nature; but is utterly at a loss to discover to us the Method of Reconciliation of Sinners to the offended Deity. Reveal'd Religion discovers to us the Nature of the Deity farther, as subsisting in three Persons, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; the Knowledge and Belief of which, is absolutely necessary to Salvation. Here is the very Sum and Substance of Christianity, to subject ourselves to and to adore the Godhead, as subsisting in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The Method of Grace, as reveal'd in the Scriptures, requires our ascribing that personal Glory to each of the Sacred Three, according to the
different

different Parts they are represented to act, in the Oeconomy of Salvation : The Father is to be adored as the Contriver of this blessed Scheme of Salvation, *who so loved the World, as to send his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting Life.* The Son is to be adored as the Person in the Deity, who purchased, by his Death and Suffering, all that Grace and Glory which is necessary to make us compleatly and eternally happy ; the infinite Dignity of whose Person derived a sufficient Value to all he did, in the room and for the sake of rebellious Sinners. A personal Glory is to be ascribed to the Holy Ghost, from the Consideration of those Displays of infinite Power, Wisdom, Goodness and other Perfections, which discover themselves in the Application of that Grace and Glory to the Souls of Men by him, which was designed for them by the Father, and purchased by the Son. He is to be acknowledged by us as he who begins, carries on, and completes the Work of Grace in the Souls of Believers. In a word, the Sum of the Christian Religion lies in this, to dedicate ourselves to the Father, as our Covenant God in Christ ; to the Son, as the Mediator, Head, and Surety of the Covenant ; and to the Holy Ghost, by whom we are made Partakers of the Blessings promised in the Covenant ; and not to do this, is to cast off the Profession of Christianity, renounce our Baptism, and to return to a State of Heathenism : for
on

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on that very account are we baptized in the Name of these Sacred Three, and initiated Christians, by that Rite, and thereby distinguished from the heathen World, by owning these sacred Three for our God, from the Consideration of the several Benefits which redound to us, from the different Parts which each of them act in the Method of Salvation and Grace.



LETTERS





LETTERS *to the* AUTHOR,
on the Subject of the TRINI-
TY; *with his* ANSWER.

LETTER I.

REVEREND SIR, *C—i, May 27, 1735.*

I Was pleased when I heard you had entered into the Debate about the famous Verse, 1 *John* v. 7. Had your Lectures been on any other Day of the Week, I could have attended, and received from your own Mouth, what new Light you was capable of communicating about this matter: But as that was impracticable, I presume a Person of your candid and generous Disposition will excuse me, if I address you directly with some Suspicions, which after all I have met with, abide by me; in hopes you will be so kind, as to attempt the Removal of them in a Letter; which I shall receive with pleasure.

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Upon

‘ Upon this Occasion, I think it proper to
 ‘ declare to you,

‘ 1. That it is not out of any Prejudice a-
 ‘ gainst the Sense of the Text in debate, that
 ‘ makes me suspicious of it. Whether the
 ‘ Text be genuine or spurious, it decides no-
 ‘ thing (in my apprehension) between the
 ‘ *Unitarians* and *Trinitarians*, in their disputed
 ‘ Points: It saith not, (nor indeed doth any
 ‘ other Text in the Bible) that the Father,
 ‘ Son, and Holy Ghost, are three Persons, and
 ‘ one God; it is indeed supposed to say, that
 ‘ they are, or agree in some *one thing*; which
 ‘ Expression seems manifestly to refer to their
 ‘ Testimony or Record, not their Deity or
 ‘ Substance. Nor doth their being supposed
 ‘ to *bear Record*, prove them to be three Per-
 ‘ sons, or intelligent Agents; because the Spirit,
 ‘ the Water, and the Blood, are in the next
 ‘ Verse said to *bear Record*; and yet are not
 ‘ pretended to be three intelligent Agents. In
 ‘ short, as it neither calls the Witnesses *three*
 ‘ *Persons*, nor one God; the Unitarians have
 ‘ nothing to fear, nor the Trinitarians ought
 ‘ to hope from it.

‘ 2. I observe, that it is impossible to come
 ‘ to any absolute Certainty, how St. *John*
 ‘ wrote in this Epistle; because the *Auto-*
 ‘ *graphs* of the Apostles are, by the Injuries
 ‘ of Time, long since perished: so that with
 ‘ reference to these critical Enquiries, we must
 ‘ be content with the highest Probability and
 ‘ Likelihood. These things may therefore
 ‘ be

' be calmly debated by learned Men, without
 ' any Prejudice to the common Faith; which
 ' doth not stand upon any single Text, but
 ' upon the collected Sense of all the Texts that
 ' treat upon the Subject.

' 3. I observe, that since the *Autographs* are
 ' perished, we have no way of coming at the
 ' Knowledge of what the Apostles writ, but
 ' by the Quotations of those Christian Writers
 ' who lived nearest their Times; or by the
 ' Manuscripts which succeeding Christians took
 ' care to transcribe from those *Autographs*, and
 ' with pious Care conveyed down to us: but
 ' then, if either, or especially if both these
 ' Principles fail us in our Enquiries after any
 ' particular Text, it will render the Credit and
 ' Authority of it very suspicious.

' 4. I observe, that this disputed Text doth
 ' not appear to be quoted in the genuine
 ' Writings of any one *Greek* Father, or Chri-
 ' stian Writer, between the Apostles time, and
 ' the times of the *Nicene* Council, in the
 ' fourth Century; so that it cannot be proved
 ' from any of them who had seen the *Auto-*
 ' *graphs* or first Copies, that it was in them:
 ' and one may justly wonder that so capital a
 ' Text, as this is supposed to be, in so funda-
 ' mental a Doctrine, (which had been in that
 ' time disputed frequently,) should never be
 ' quoted, if it had been genuine. But it may be
 ' pretended, that tho' the *Greek* Fathers have
 ' not quoted it; yet *Tertullian* and *Cyprian*,
 ' two *Latin* Fathers, who lived in the third

‘ Century, are supposed to have quoted it. To
 ‘ which it is said, that the Words in *Tertullian*,
 ‘ [*Qui tres unum sunt,*] are not mentioned by
 ‘ him as a Quotation, but as an Assertion of his
 ‘ own. Or if they be supposed to allude to any
 ‘ Text, they may as well be supposed to allude
 ‘ to the Conclusion of the eighth as the seventh
 ‘ Verse.

‘ It ought also to be observed, that the
 ‘ Author of the Treatise of *the Baptism of*
 ‘ *Hereticks*, bound up with *Cyprian’s Works*,
 ‘ and supposed by *Dupin*, a cotemporary
 ‘ Writer, hath this remarkable Passage; [St.
 ‘ *John* teaching us in his Epistle, concerning
 ‘ our Lord, saith, *This is he who came by Water*
 ‘ *and Blood, even Jesus Christ; not by Water*
 ‘ *only, but by Water and Blood; and ’tis the*
 ‘ *Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit*
 ‘ *is Truth; for there are three that bear re-*
 ‘ *cord, the Spirit, the Water, and the Blood:*]
 ‘ From which it appears, that the sixth and
 ‘ eighth Verses were connected in his Copy;
 ‘ and that which is now call’d the seventh
 ‘ Verse, did not then appear. It remains, to
 ‘ consider how *Cyprian* is supposed to quote it.
 ‘ Now, concerning this, we are told by *Fac-*
 ‘ *cundus*, a Writer of the *African Church*,
 ‘ about the beginning of the sixth Century;
 ‘ that *Cyprian* in this manner explain’d that
 ‘ which is now the eighth Verse; by the
 ‘ Spirit meaning the Father, by the Water
 ‘ the Holy Ghost, and by the Blood meaning
 ‘ the Son, as did *Facundus* himself; who
 ‘ men-

' mentions nothing of that which is now the
 ' seventh Verse, but only mentions it as a Gloss
 ' upon what is now the eighth; and from
 ' such Glosses as these, it is most probable that
 ' it came to be inserted in the Margin of the
 ' Copies, or the Interlineations. So that the
 ' Fathers, whether *Greek* or *Latin*, give no
 ' Evidence of its being in their Copies, to the
 ' fourth Century: and by what Authority
 ' it came in after, is uncertain.

' 5. But if the Fathers give no Evidence of
 ' this Text, let us consider what the Manu-
 ' scripts, which the Care of the Christian
 ' Church hath conveyed down to us, say of
 ' this matter. And here it is to be observed,
 ' that amongst the great numbers of Manu-
 ' scripts which the Christian Church hath at
 ' this time in her Possession, not one of them
 ' is known to have this disputed Verse in the
 ' Text, except one in *Ireland*. But it cannot
 ' be reasonable, that one Copy should establish
 ' an authentick Reading; especially when it
 ' differs from all the other known Manuscripts
 ' in the Christian World. But to this it is
 ' objected, That those wicked Wretches, the
 ' *Arians*, had stol'n the Verse out of the Text.
 ' Now, supposing this to be true, as many
 ' pious Men have very gravely asserted; the
 ' next Question is, why have not the stupid
 ' *Athanasians* put it in again? They have
 ' had the quiet Possession of the Church and
 ' World, and of all the Manuscripts in it, for this
 ' 1200 Years; nay, all the Manuscripts that
 ' are

' are now in being have been wrote by them.
 ' Why did not they take care to restore the
 ' Verse to its proper place in the Text? Why
 ' do they not show us all the Manuscripts,
 ' with the disputed Verse in its right Situa-
 ' tion? What a Reflection is this upon the
 ' Fidelity of the Orthodox of the intermedi-
 ' ate Ages, who have taken no honest Care to
 ' restore the Text?

' They have indeed done what pious Fraud
 ' could do about it. They shew us Authors
 ' that quote it, but no Manuscripts that have
 ' it. They have interlined the Text with a
 ' different hand in some Manuscripts. They
 ' have put it as a Marginal Note, or Gloss, a-
 ' gainst what is now the eighth Verse in others;
 ' and yet we do not know of any one Manu-
 ' script that hath it in its place, save that at
 ' *Dublin*. And I am apt to think there would
 ' not be so many zealous for the Verse, if they
 ' were honestly told that it was only supported
 ' by one Manuscript, but contradicted by all
 ' the rest.

' Thus have I laid before you my Suspi-
 ' cions, as plainly as I could; if you are so
 ' happy as to remove them, I will acknow-
 ' ledge my Gratitude as openly as I have done
 ' my Doubts: and I am, in the mean time,
 ' (with good Wishes of Success to you in finding
 ' out the Truth,)

Yours, in all due Respects.

ANSWER to LETTER I,

REVEREND SIR, *Nottingham, June 6. 1735.*

I Received yours, wherein you are pleased to honour me so far, as to desire the Communication of what Light I can give in the Points you mention in your Letter. It is but little Light, that you can expect from me; but I think myself bound to give an Account of the Faith I profess; and shall, with all Freedom, give you my Sentiments on the Points, you write to me about: and do desire to be set right, if in any thing I happen to be mistaken. And I'm sorry, that it does not so fall out, that you could attend the Lecture, that you might have an Opportunity to judge of my Doctrine, and that I might have the Benefit of your Remarks.

Sir, in the first Paragraph of your Letter, you say, that that Text in the first of *John 5. 7.* in your apprehension decides nothing between the *Unitarians* and *Trinitarians* in their disputed Points; in which I must beg leave to differ from you: for, supposing that Text to be genuine, I think it determines the whole Affair; for, in my apprehension, we have in it plainly a Trinity of Persons in the Unity of the divine Essence; for it asserts that there are three Witnesses in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and that these Three are One. Now, that these three are

8 ANSWER to LETTER I.

three distinct Witnesses, proves to me, that they are three distinct Persons; for Witnessing, when it is attributed or affirmed of any thing in a proper Sense, is an Argument that that thing is a Person; for Persons only can witness in a proper Sense: Now, if it can be made out, that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are capable of bearing Witness, in a proper Sense, it will evidently follow, that these three are three Persons. Now, as to the Father, I suppose you will grant, that he is capable of bearing Witness in a proper Sense; therefore I shall not attempt to prove it. The only Controversy then, is with respect to the Word, and the Holy Ghost. As to the first, that the Word is capable of bearing Witness in a proper Sense, to me appears plain from the first Chapter of *John's Gospel* and third Verse; where *all things are said to be made by him, and that without him was not any thing made that was made*: For sure it is easier to bear witness, than to make all things. And that the Holy Ghost is capable of bearing witness in a proper Sense, seems also plain to me from this, that we are baptized in his Name; for in whose Name we are baptized, we are by that sacred Rite initiated to his Worship and Service, which must suppose him a Person. *Ananias* also is said to have lyed to the Holy Ghost; and *Acts* xiii. 2. the Holy Ghost said, *Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the Work whereto I have called them*. Thus we see, that the Word and Holy Ghost are capable of bearing Witness in a proper Sense;

Sense; and therefore, when Witnessing is affirmed of them, it is an Argument of their being Persons. 'Tis true, Witnessing is affirmed of the three that bear record on Earth; but the Case differs widely with respect to them, for they are not capable of witnessing in a proper, but in a figurative Sense; and therefore witnessing, tho' affirmed of them in a figurative Sense, is no Argument of their being Persons. And the very manner, in which the three Witnesses on Earth emit their Testimony, shews that they do not witness in a proper Sense; whereas the manner, in which the three Witnesses in Heaven emit their Testimony, shews that they witness in a proper Sense as Persons; as might be made out easily, if there was Place for it in a Missive.

The Unity of the Essence of those three Persons seems also to me to be taught in the latter Clause of the Verse; where it is expressly said, *That these three are one*; nor does it at all come up to the Force of the Expression, *οἱ τρεῖς ἐν ἑσσι*, to understand it of a Unity of Consent; for *εἰμι* never signifies *consensio*, except where *εἰς το* is joined with it; so far as I know. Besides, if the Apostle had designed to express the same Unity in both these sorts of Witnesses, *to wit*, a Unity only of Consent in Testimony, it is absolutely impossible to account for so remarkable a Variation of the Phrase in the two Verses, to say of the Witnesses in Heaven, that they *are one*; and of the Witnesses on Earth only, that they *agree in one*.

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II. In your second Paragraph, you observe, That it is impossible to come to any absolute Certainty, how St. *John* wrote in this Epistle; because the *Autographs* of the Apostles are by the Injuries of Time long since perished. This, Sir, to me appears to be an Assertion so shocking, that I can't help expressing my Wonder, that you should affirm it! For it gives up the Cause intirely to the Deists; for, if the *Autographs* of the Apostles being perished, supersedes absolute Certainty, with respect to that particular Text of St. *John*, how it was wrote, the *Autographs* of all the sacred Penmen being perished, must equally, by the same Parity of Reason, supersede absolute Certainty with respect to the whole divine Revelation, how it was wrote by them; and consequently there is not so much as one Text in all the Word of God, that we can be absolutely certain of, what it either affirms or denies; because the *Autographs* of all the sacred Penmen are perished. In that Case, the common Faith founded upon the whole Word of God, and the collected Sense gathered from particular Texts, which treat upon all the various Subjects in Divinity, are as precarious, and stand upon as uncertain a Bottom, as the Sense of this particular Text does. This, Sir, I am confident, on second Thoughts you'll retract; it gives such a Handle to the Deists: for if once you grant them this, that the *Autograph*, wherein any particular Text was wrote, being perished, renders us absolutely un-

ANSWER to LETTER I. II

uncertain, or puts us into a Condition that we can have no absolute Certainty how that Text was wrote, and consequently what sense it bears, they'll easily be able to prove against you, that all the *Autographs*, wherein all the Texts of divine Revelation were wrote, are perished, and consequently, that you can't know how they were wrote, nor what sense any of them bears.

III. You observe in the next place, that since the *Autographs* are perished, we have no way of coming at the Knowledge of what the Apostles wrote, but by the Quotations of those Christian Writers who lived nearest their Times, or by the Manuscripts, which succeeding Christians took care to transcribe from those *Autographs*, and with pious care conveyed down to us. These, according to you, are the only two Methods left us now, of coming at the Knowledge of what the Apostles wrote: and in the close of the Paragraph you insinuate, that, if these Methods do not fail in our Inquiries after any particular Text, the Credit and Authority of it will remain without Suspicion; which seems to me to be a Contradiction of what you had asserted in the preceeding Paragraph; where you affirm, That since the *Autographs* are lost, it is impossible to know, with any absolute certainty, how the Apostles wrote. And yet you propose here, two Methods, which, if they do not fail us in our Inquiries after a particular Text, are capable to take away all Suspicion of the Credit and Authority of
of

of it. Pray, Sir, let me know how to make these things consist and stand together? Forgive me also, that I use the freedom to say, that I think you have mis'd it, when you affirm, that there are but two ways by which we can come at the Knowledge of what the Apostles wrote in their *Autographs*; to wit, by the Quotations of Christian Writers, and the Manuscripts, which succeeding Christians took care to transcribe from these *Autographs*. I think I can help you to a Third, and that more effectual and universally beneficial Method to Mankind, than any of the other two; and that is, not only by Manuscripts being handed down by the pious care of preceeding Ages, but also, by printed Copies being handed down to succeeding Ages, which is the way that the Church has been furnished with the Knowledge of what was written in the *Autographs* of the Apostles, for many hundred Years past: and if that Method had been known a thousand Years sooner, there would have been no Ground left for this Controversy. And in my Opinion, the printed *Greek* Copies of the Scriptures, which we have, especially those which are most correct, are of greater Credit and Authority a great deal, than the most ancient Manuscripts now extant; because, when they were first published, they were with great Care and Pains compared with a vast variety of Manuscripts, wherewith the World then abounded, tho' they are now buried in the Ruins of Time; which is more than

than can be proved of any particular Manuscript now extant. I suppose, when you pitch upon that as a Method for us to come to the Knowledge of what the Apostles wrote in their *Autographs*; to wit, by succeeding Christians their handing down Manuscripts, which they took care to transcribe from those *Autographs*, you mean Manuscripts transcribed from those *Autographs*, mediately at second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth or ninth hand, &c. and not such Manuscripts, as were transcribed from them immediately at first hand: for if you mean the last, the Method proposed must needs fail; for there is not a Manuscript now extant in the World, whereof there is sufficient Evidence, that it was transcribed from the *Autographs* of the sacred Penmen immediately.

IV. In the fourth Paragraph, you endeavour to weaken the Authority of this Text, because it is not quoted in the genuine Writings of any *Greek* Father. To me, this Argument has no weight, because many of the Writings of the *Greek* Fathers are quite lost: and I can instance several of them too, who wrote particularly on this Epistle, which are lost; which, if they had survived the Ruins of Time, it can't be proved, but this Text would have been found in them, which must be proved before the Argument can have any weight. Nor, in my opinion is it any just Objection against this Text, that we have not the particular Testimony of any, who had

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seen the *Autograph* of the Apostle that it was in it: for that Argument would stand with equal Force, if it had any, against all the rest of the divine Revelation; and we should come poorly off with the *Deists*, if we had no other Arguments to prove the authentic Authority of the Scriptures, but what are taken from the immediate Testimony of those, who had the happiness to see the original *Autographs* of the sacred Penmen; and why that should be required with respect to this Text, more than with respect to the rest of divine Revelation, in order to establish its Authenticness, I can't account for; unless we have a mind at any rate to cast off this Text, tho' the whole divine Revelation should go after it. As to these words in *Tertullian*, *Qui tres unum sunt*, they are so expressly the same with the latter Clause of the seventh Verse, that I can't but think, for that reason, that *Tertullian* is making a reference to it; and if a reference be not allowed here to that Verse, it will be hard to prove a reference in any other case; except where it is ushered in with a *Thus saith the Lord*: and 'tis well if even that prove a reference with some Persons, in some particular cases. As to their being a reference to the eighth Verse, I think that can't well be supposed; for *Tertullian* is not at all speaking of the Unity of the Water, Blood and Spirit, mentioned in the eighth Verse, but of the Unity of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, mentioned in the seventh Verse. And as to that

Mistake

Mistake which some fell into afterwards, that the eighth Verse, is speaking of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, under the mystical Names of Water, Blood, and Spirit, it was not known in *Tertullian's* time; and therefore he could not refer to it as such. As to your Citation from the Author of the Baptism of Heretics, the Difficulty will quite vanish, if you'll but do him the same justice that you do *Tertullian*, and say, that he is but giving his own opinion the whole way from these words, *For there are three*, &c. and not making a reference to the eighth Verse. And I must say, you have more reason to do so in his case than in *Tertullian's*; for *Tertullian*, where he begins his reference to the seventh Verse, he has the Words of it streight forward, without passing any, but it is not so with the Author of that Treatise: and therefore it can't be presumed with so much reason, that he refers to the eighth, as it may that *Tertullian* does to that part of the seventh. 'Tis true, there are some Copies which want these words, *in Earth*, which he passes by, as you cite him. In that case, he may be allowed indeed, to be making a reference to the eighth Verse, immediately after the sixth; but then it is a Proof, that the Copy he had before him was a very incorrect one: and on that supposition it may be allowed to want the seventh Verse altogether. But his passing from the sixth Verse immediately to the eighth, is of it self no Proof, that even his Copy wanted the seventh Verse; for he is speaking

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speaking only of the Witnesses on Earth, and the sixth and eighth Verses only were on that supposition, pertinent to his purpose: and he had no occasion to mention the seventh Verse, tho' it had been in his Copy, because it speaks of the heavenly Witnesses, and therefore not to his purpose; which is no more than what you and I have both done in citing of Texts. But granting that this seventh Verse was indeed, not in his Copy; pray, what does that prove? It proves no more than that his Copy was defective, as some more also are allowed to be. It will never prove that this seventh Verse did not then appear, in other more perfect Copies even at that time, when this Author is said to flourish; for *Cyprian*, his supposed Cotemporary, expressly cites this Text; and that with the solemnity of a *Thus saith the Lord*, in his Book *De unitate eccles.* Cap. 4: *ad finem*; where speaking before of St. *John*, he has these express words; *And again it is written of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, These Three are One.* Here *Cyprian* tells us; that this is written; and therefore must be a part of divine Revelation, according to him. Now it is no where written in all the Scripture, but in this seventh Verse, of the Father, Son, and Spirit, that these Three are One: therefore *Cyprian* is speaking of that Verse, and asserts it to be a part of divine Revelation. Nor does *Facundus* contradict this, that *Cyprian* cited these words, *The Father, Son and Spirit, These Three are One*, as a part
of

of divine Revelation; but confirms it, as much as he confirms, That *Cyprian* cited the tenth Chapter of *John*, thirtieth Verse, immediately before it, *That the Father and Son are one*. For *Facundus* expressly says, that St. *Cyprian*, Bishop of *Carthage*, expresseth himself thus, The Lord saith, *I and my Father are one*, (which refers to the tenth Chapter of *John*, thirtieth Verse.) Immediately after, *Facundus* says, that St. *Cyprian* saith, *And again it is written of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, these Three are One*, (which refers to the 7th Verse; and no where else.) So that *Facundus* confirms it, that he cited them both, as Parts of the divine Canon. 'Tis true, *Facundus* was mistaken with respect to the Tract; where *Cyprian* cites these Words, which were not in his Book about the Trinity, as *Facundus* has it, but that of the Unity of the Church, as I hinted above. *Facundus* also blundered egregiously; in fathering that mystical Interpretation of the 8th Verse upon St. *Cyprian*, as if he understood the three Witnesses on Earth to be the Father, Son; and Holy Ghost; for that was none of his. And it was never known in the Church 'till *Augustine's* Time, which was at least an hundred and fifty Years after *Cyprian's* reference to the foresaid Text of the 7th Verse; and therefore could not come in as that mystical Gloss upon the 8th Verse, as you apprehend: and one may as soon conclude from that Passage of *Facundus*, that the 10th Chapter of *John*, 30 Verse, is not genuine

Scripture, but a Gloss on this 8th Verse, as that this 7th Verse is so. For *Facundus* has of both these Texts these express Words, “ That
 “ St. *John*, in his Epistle, says of the Father,
 “ Son, and Holy Ghost, that there are Three
 “ which bear Record on Earth, the Spirit,
 “ the Water, and the Blood ; and these Three
 “ are One ; by the Spirit signifying the Fa-
 “ ther, by the Water the Holy Spirit, and by
 “ the Blood the Son : which Testimony, says
 “ he, St. *Cyprian*, Bishop of *Carthage*, un-
 “ derstood of the Father, Son, and Holy Spi-
 “ rit ; when, in an Epistle or Book, he wrote
 “ of the Trinity, he expresses himself thus ;
 “ The Lord saith, I and my Father are One ;
 “ and again it is written of the Father, Son,
 “ and Holy Spirit, These Three are One.” So
 that, according to *Facundus*, *Cyprian* under-
 stood both these Texts, *John* x. 30. and 1
John v. 7. to denote the same Witnesses, which
 are expressed in the 8th Verse. But there is
 not the least Ground for this Notion of *Facundus*
 in all *Cyprian’s* Works ; far less from
 these two Texts, which he cites from him,
 mistaking the true Book, where they are
 found. But *Facundus* was willing, if he could,
 to shelter himself in that mystical Sense, he
 put on the 8th Verse, under the Protection
 of *Cyprian’s* Authority ; but he had no Coun-
 tenance for it from him, nor from any other
 Father before St. *Augustine*.

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V. In your fifth Paragraph, you endeavour to lessen the Authority of this Text from this Consideration, That, among the great number of Manuscripts, which the Christian Church hath at this time in her Possession, not one of them is known to have this disputed Verse in the Text, except one in *Ireland*. But, you say, it can't be reasonable, that one Copy should establish an authentic Reading, especially when it differs from all the other known Manuscripts in the Christian World. Now here, Sir, you seem to me to be in a very great Mistake, that you imagine, that those who contend for the authentic Authority of this Text in dispute, are for establishing its Authority upon the single Manuscript in *Ireland*. I own, that would be unreasonable indeed: But the Authority of that Text, as it stands in the correct printed Copies, which the Christian Church is possessed of at this day, is founded on that Multitude of Manuscripts, both *Greek* and *Latin*, of the most ancient and perfect kind, which were extant in the World, tho' they are now lost, at that time, when the first Copies of the Scriptures were published in Print, and compared with vast Multitudes of *Greek* Manuscripts, which had this Text. If we were left to furnish out a Copy of the Scriptures from the Manuscripts that are only extant at this day, if it could be at all possible, yet at least it would be much more difficult to do it now, than it was, when Printing was first invented, when there

was a far greater number of Manuscripts extant, and that too more correct, than the Generality of Manuscripts now extant are. For those *Greek* Manuscripts that have been preserved for these three or four hundred Years past, were not so much preserved for the sake of their Usefulness, as their Antiquity; because the Church, since that Period, had abundance of printed Copies, which might be got at a cheaper Rate; and also which were fitter for use. And hence it comes to pass, that there are more incorrect and deficient Manuscripts a great deal than correct ones, at least *Greek*; and still the ancients they are, they are the more incorrect, which those who preserved them did not regard, because they consulted Antiquity chiefly. And it is easily accounted for, why the ancientest are the most incorrect; because the ancientest Manuscripts now extant, were either written a little before that general Correction of manuscript Copies, made by *Charles* the Great; or at least a little before that Correction, made by the Doctors of the *Sorbonne*, in the tenth Century; in which Periods the Copies of the Bible were very much corrupted: but those Manuscripts, that were written after these Corrections, are observed to be much more perfect and free of Faults. I shall take no notice of that Inaccuracy, which you have dropt into inadvertently, as I suppose; where you say in general, “That, among the great Number of Manuscripts, which the Christian Church hath at
“ this

“ this time in her Possession, not one of them
 “ is known to have this disputed Verse in the
 “ Text, except that in *Ireland* ;” making no
 Difference between *Greek* and other Manuscripts : for you can’t but know, that there
 are a great Plenty of *Latin* Manuscripts that
 have it ; but, I suppose, you mean *Greek* Ma-
 nuscripts ; and I pass it as such. But I can’t
 so easily pass the injurious, and, in my opi-
 nion, unjust Reflections, which you cast on
 those, who are commonly called Orthodox,
 in opposition to the erroneous *Arians*, in
 charging them with not restoring this Text,
 and on that account as guilty of Infidelity ; I
 say, I can’t but reckon this an injurious and
 unjust Reflection, when I consider, there is no
 Period that the Christian Church ever was in,
 wherein it can be proved, that their Ancestors
 had been so careless of them, that they
 had not handed down to them a sufficient
 Number of correct Manuscripts, or printed
 Copies in the original Languages of the Scrip-
 tures ; and that for these several hundred Years
 last past, they choose rather to hand down printed
 Copies, than Manuscripts, I think is no
 Impeachment of their Fidelity ; since the first
 is of incomparably greater Usefulness than the
 last. The learned and pious *Athanasians* have
 given great Proof of their Fidelity in this re-
 spect in various Periods of the Church restor-
 ing the true Reading of the Text. This was
 done by *Charles* the Great, in the eighth Cen-
 tury, and this Text kept in ; when, with pi-

ous Care, and great Diligence, that Prince, by the Assistance of many learned Men skill'd in the Languages, restored the Copies of the Bible, which had been much corrupted. There was also a great deal of Pains spent by the Doctors of the *Sorbonne*, the most learned Body of Men then in *Europe*; tho', perhaps, you'll reckon them stupid *Atkanasians*: I say, they spent a great deal of Pains faithfully to correct the Copies of the Bible in their time, when this Text also was kept in; and particularly we have an Account of one of those Manuscripts, which were called Corrections of the Text of the Bible, extant in the Library of the *Sorbonne* at this day. *That stupid Fellow Erasmus*, to speak in your Stile, took care to restore this Text, in his third Edition of the New Testament, after it had been unjustly left out by him in two former Editions. *Stephanus* also spent a great deal of Pains in this Work. So that it is an unjust Charge against the *Atkanasians*, that they have not taken care to furnish the Church, from Age to Age, with a sufficient Number of *Greek* Copies, that were correct; and particularly that that they have not taken care to preserve this Text; for it needed not to be restored, for it was always owned by the Catholic Church as authentic Scripture, from the very Apostles Days, without ever being questioned so much as by the *Arians* themselves, when it was alledged against them by the *Orthodox*, before the two last Centuries. You have a strange
 Assertion,

Affertion, about the middle of this Paragraph, that all the Manuscripts, that are now in being, were wrote by the *Athanasians*: I suppose, you mean all the *Greek* Manuscripts. I shall reckon myself exceedingly obliged to you, if you'll show me sufficient Evidence for that Affertion: I suppose the World is very much in the Dark about the Character of the Persons, who wrote them; for any thing that is known, they may have been *Arians*; and if I should say they were *Heathens*, you will find it hard to disprove it. As to those Manuscripts which have this Text interlin'd, it was very fit, that after the Mistake was discovered in omitting that Text, it should be helped, either by the same Hand, or another, rather than that the Copy should be so defective, as to want it altogether; especially if the Copy had been transcribed from another Copy that wanted it; or if it had been carelessly omitted, if it was transcribed from a Copy that had it. As to the Honesty of it, in informing the Public, that the printed Copies, which we have, that have this Text, are only supported by the Authority of one *Greek* Manuscript; I am of Opinion, that it would be so far from being honest, that it would be a downright Falshood; since we know certainly, that there were a great Multitude of *Greek* Manuscripts extant in the World, that had this Text, to support these Copies, when they were first published; nor is their Authority impaired by it now, that they are lost; or else, pray,

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what shall become of the Authority of these *Greek* Manuscripts, which are at present extant in the World, since the Copies from whence they were taken are lost?

Thus, Sir, I have laid before you what to me removes all the Difficulties about this Text, that you have raised. If these Arguments do not appear to you in the same Light, pray, be so kind as to show me, wherein they are defective: And I shall acknowledge it with all Gratitude. Wishing you Success in finding out the Truth, and a hearty Desire to embrace it, when it is discovered. I am,

S I R,

Your humble Servant,

J. A. SLOSS.

LET-



L E T T E R I I .

REVEREND SIR,

C—1, July 1. 1735.

‘ YOUR’S of the 6th came safe to hand
 ‘ on the 14th, for which I return you
 ‘ my Thanks, not only for the Freedom of
 ‘ your Remarks, but also the Pleasure you give
 ‘ me in hoping for your future Correspondence.
 ‘ I therefore apply my self immediately to the
 ‘ Consideration of the Matter in debate.

1. ‘ I observed, That supposing this Text
 ‘ to be genuine, it did not decide any thing in
 ‘ the Debate between the *Unitarians* and the
 ‘ *Tritarians*, because it doth not say, (nei-
 ‘ ther doth any other Text) that the Three
 ‘ that witness, are three Persons and one God ;
 ‘ but only says, that these Three are One, or
 ‘ *iv*. I therefore thought that it might have
 ‘ referred to the Unity of Testimony, as *Calvin*,
 ‘ *Beza*, and other Reformers have done be-
 ‘ fore me. In opposition to this, you say, the
 ‘ Text hath in it, plainly, a Trinity of Persons
 ‘ in the Unity of the divine Essence: and you
 ‘ endeavour to prove it by an Induction of
 ‘ Particulars. You take it for granted that the
 ‘ *Father* is a Person, or intelligent Agent,
 ‘ (which is the Sense, in which I shall always
 ‘ use

' use the Word in this Debate.) You then
 ' attempt to shew, that the *Word* is a Person,
 ' because he made the World. And that the
 ' *Holy Ghost* is a Person, because we are bap-
 ' tized in his Name. *And he said, separate*
 ' *Paul and Barnabas. Acts xiii. i.* Now, to
 ' all this I observe, That I wonder you did
 ' not see, that by what you have here ad-
 ' vanced, you have not contradicted my Pro-
 ' position at all: which was this; That nei-
 ' ther this Text, (nor any other) did say, that
 ' they were three Persons, and one God.
 ' Whereas, all that you have said, amounts
 ' only to this; That you have brought other
 ' Texts, which you think, proves them to be
 ' three Persons, (or intelligent Agents;) but then
 ' you have not attempted to bring any Text to
 ' prove, that these three intelligent Agents are
 ' *one God*; who are always in Holy Scriptures re-
 ' presented as one Spirit, or one intelligent A-
 ' gent: and so he is, in all the Systems of Divini-
 ' ty, that I believe you or I ever saw. And when
 ' he either is spoken of, or is spoken to, or
 ' ever speaks of himself, 'tis in the Singular
 ' Personal Pronouns. The *Arians*, indeed,
 ' declare as freely as you, that they believe the
 ' Father, Son and Holy Ghost, to be three
 ' Persons, or three intelligent Agents; but then
 ' they deny that these are ever called in Scrip-
 ' ture the *one God*. This is the true point of
 ' Difficulty which you have over-looked. I
 ' had said that witnessing could not prove them
 ' Persons, because the same Term is without
 ' any

any Variation applied to the earthly Wit-
 nesses, as to the heavenly; which yet were
 not pretended by you to be Persons. To
 evade the force of this Observation, you
 have formed a distinction of proper and im-
 proper Witnessing; without any Foundation
 from the Text it self, which useth the
 same word μαρτυροῦντες for them both; and
 pretend that the three Witnesses in Heaven,
 as they are called, did emit their Testimony
 in the same proper manner; but the other,
 improperly. Now, this I apprehend you
 will find a difficulty to clear up. The Fa-
 ther, indeed, bore witness to our Lord Jesus,
 and by an audible Voice from Heaven: but
 when and where did the *Logos*, or Word, as
 a distinct Person from the Father, emit his
 testimony in the same proper manner? And
 then tell me, whether the Holy Ghost, as a
 another distinct Person or intelligent Agent,
 both from the Father and the Son, did ever
 emit his testimony in the same audible and
 proper manner. And when the Holy Ghost
 said, *Separate me Paul and Barnabas*,—
 pray tell me, whether this was pronounced
 by a Person or intelligent Agent, in an au-
 dible manner, as the Father spoke from Hea-
 ven; or whether it only means, that the Pro-
 phets and Preachers at that time at *Antioch*,
 gave this Direction concerning *Paul* and *Bar-
 nabas*, from a divine Impulse or Impression
 on their Minds. So that your Distinction
 seems altogether useless, since, of all the six
 Wit-

‘ Witnesses supposed to be here produced, not
 ‘ any two of them appear to emit their testi-
 ‘ mony in the same manner.

‘ You further say, that the Unity of Essence
 ‘ seems to be taught by the latter Clause, where
 ‘ it is supposed to be said, that these three are
 ‘ One, or *ἓν*. To which I answer, one *What?*
 ‘ It cannot signify one God, one Nature, one
 ‘ Essence, one Substance, or one Deity; and
 ‘ that, for this plain reason; because, tho’
 ‘ the *English* Adjective *one*, which in our Lan-
 ‘ guage knows no Variation of Genders, is ap-
 ‘ plicable to any of these Substantives: yet the
 ‘ *Greek* Word *ἓν*, which is of the Neuter Gender,
 ‘ cannot agree with any of the forementioned
 ‘ Substantives, which are either Masculines or
 ‘ Feminines. Nor do I know any other Name
 ‘ or Appellation of Deity in the Neuter Gen-
 ‘ der, with which it might agree. And I must
 ‘ also observe, that upon *Calvin’s* Hypothesis,
 ‘ there is a Substantive of the Neuter Gender,
 ‘ and that is, *μαρτύριον*, which will agree with
 ‘ *ἓν*; which Thought the Apostle might pos-
 ‘ sibly have in his eye. You tell me that *εἰμι*
 ‘ never signifies *consentio*, but when joined with
 ‘ *εἰς τὸ*. To which, I think I might safely
 ‘ answer; 1. Nor then neither, except in a fi-
 ‘ gurative or metaphorical manner of speaking.
 ‘ But 2. I answer, your Criticism is erroneous
 ‘ and without Foundation, which will appear,
 ‘ if you compare *John* x. 30, with *John* xvii.
 ‘ 11, 21, 22. In *John* x. 30. our Saviour
 ‘ saith, *I and my Father ἓν ἐσμεν*, not *εἰς τὸ*;
 ‘ and

‘ and yet it must signify Unity of Intention
 ‘ and Design, not an Unity of Essence or Be-
 ‘ ing ; because, *John* xvii. 11, 21, 22. he
 ‘ prays that his Disciples $\epsilon\nu \omega\sigma\iota$, might be one,
 ‘ as they were ; 21. that they might be one $\epsilon\nu$
 ‘ $\omega\sigma\iota$, as thou Father art in me, and I in
 ‘ thee, that they also $\epsilon\nu \omega\sigma\iota\nu$ in us ; 22. that
 ‘ $\omega\sigma\iota\nu \epsilon\nu$, that they may be one, as we are one.
 ‘ From all which Passages it follows, that as
 ‘ our Saviour did not pray that his Disciples
 ‘ should be of the same Nature, Essence, and
 ‘ Substance, one with another ; nor that they
 ‘ should be of the same Nature, Essence and
 ‘ Substance with the Father and him ; but yet
 ‘ that the Disciples might be one, as they were
 ‘ one, and that they might be one in them :
 ‘ It plainly follows, that the Unity spoken of
 ‘ in these Verses, hath no reference to Unity of
 ‘ Nature, Essence, or Substance ; but to Unity
 ‘ of Affection, Intention, or Design, tho’ they
 ‘ have not $\epsilon\iota\varsigma \tau\omicron$ joined with any of them.
 ‘ You conclude this Paragraph by observing,
 ‘ that had the Apostle designed to signify only
 ‘ Unity of Testimony, there would not have
 ‘ been so remarkable a Variation in the ending
 ‘ of the Verses ; the one Verse saying, *These*
 ‘ *Three are One* $\epsilon\nu \epsilon\sigma\iota$, the other Verse saying,
 ‘ *Three agree in One*, $\epsilon\iota\varsigma \tau\omicron \epsilon\nu \epsilon\sigma\iota$. To which
 ‘ I answer, That I wonder you did not see that
 ‘ this is begging the thing in question : the de-
 ‘ sign of all my Arguments being to prove, that
 ‘ the 7th Verse is not authentic, and conse-
 ‘ quently no Variation : or if the 7th Verse be
 ‘ allowed,

' allowed, yet nothing can be concluded be-
 ' cause the *Complutensian* Edition, which pre-
 ' tends to the best Authorities, concludes the
 ' 7th Verse with *εἰς τὸ ἐν ἑσσι*, as the 8th Verse
 ' doth, which you allow to signify Consent of
 ' testimony; and that nothing can be made of
 ' this supposed Variation; it appearing from
 ' what has been said above, that *ἐν ὧσι* signi-
 ' fies Unity of Consent, as well as *εἰς τὸ*.

2. My next Paragraph you fall heavy upon,
 ' as if I had given up the Cause of the Authority
 ' of the Scripture to the *Deists*; which is an
 ' unrighteous Censure: for tho' I still say, we
 ' can have no *absolute Certainty* of what St.
 ' *John*, or the other New-Testament Writers
 ' have wrote, because we cannot see their *Au-*
 ' *tographs*; yet have we sufficient Evidence to
 ' believe their Doctrine, and that, such as
 ' leaves no just ground of Suspicion. And if
 ' you cannot find, upon second Thoughts, a
 ' Medium between absolute Certainty and just
 ' Cause of Doubting, I will give you an in-
 ' stance next time. You should have con-
 ' sidered, that the historical Proof of former
 ' Facts, never pretended to absolute Certainty;
 ' and that but few of the Sciences have it.
 ' 'Tis enough to establish a just Belief of for-
 ' mer Facts, that the Evidence be such as ex-
 ' cludes any reasonable grounds of Suspicion;
 ' which upon my Principles may be found,
 ' tho' scarce upon your's, as I shall shew under
 ' the next Head.

3. I said, since the *Autographs* are perished, we have no way of coming at the Knowledge of what the Apostles wrote, but by the Quotation of the Christian Writers between that time and our's, and by the Copies of those Writings which they have conveyed down to us. And I dare appeal to the common sense of Mankind, whether this be not the most proper way of proving former Facts; that the Persons who lived nearest those times down to our own, have acknowledged the Facts, and that Copies of those Writings wherein these Facts were contain'd, were conveyed down to us. On the other hand, if we have any Suspicion concerning any Article in an ancient Record, have we any properer way of arguing than to say, that ancient Writers, who had occasion to treat upon the Subject, never mentioned it; and that the Copies conveyed down to us have it not.

But you have kindly helped me to another more effectual and universally beneficial Method than those I mentioned, (and which I suppose was designed to give me absolute Certainty.) The Method you propose is, to prove the Contents of the old Record by Copies printed 14 or 1500 Years after the Record was first written. You indeed suppose these printed Copies to have had Vouchers agreeable to them at the time, tho' you don't pretend that they have any now. So that neither the Care of the Christians nor the Care of divine Providence, hath preserved
any

‘ any such Voucher to us. That this Method of
 ‘ Certainty may be set in a full Light, I will
 ‘ suppose you engaged with a Deist. He will,
 ‘ no doubt, ask you, how you prove the Text
 ‘ authentick. You will tell him, from the
 ‘ printed Copies, which the Church hath in
 ‘ her Possession. He will then ask you, which
 ‘ printed Copies he must judge by; for he
 ‘ will say, that in two Editions of *Aldus*, in
 ‘ two Editions of *Wolfius*, in *Simon Colin*, all
 ‘ above 200 Years old, the Text is wanted.
 ‘ That in the *Syriack* of *Trostius*, the *Arabick*
 ‘ of *Erpenius*, and the *Ethiopick* Version, it
 ‘ is wanted; and in all *Luther’s* Bibles, printed
 ‘ in his Life-time, *cum multis aliis*. You would
 ‘ however say, he must be guided by the most
 ‘ correct printed Copies; whereupon he would
 ‘ no doubt ask, whether the Compilers of
 ‘ those Copies, which you call most correct,
 ‘ had any Inspiration, or at least second Sight,
 ‘ by which they were rendered more capable
 ‘ of knowing what the Apostles writ, than the
 ‘ Compilers of the Copies that differ from
 ‘ you. And if you could not say this, you
 ‘ would be forced to return to my two Me-
 ‘ thods, and acknowledge with me, that the
 ‘ printed Copies deserve no Credit, but as wit-
 ‘ nessed to by the Fathers and Manuscripts;
 ‘ and I should gladly receive you upon your
 ‘ Return.

‘ But it is now time to return your Compli-
 ‘ ment, and to tell you, that it is such Schemes
 ‘ as these, first to load Christianity with a Mul-
 ‘ titude

' titude of absurd and unintelligible Notions ;
 ' and then place the Evidence of it upon printed
 ' Editions, without Vouchers subsisting, that
 ' gives the *Deists* all their Advantage.

' You conclude thus; That when I pitch
 ' upon Manuscripts as a Method for us to
 ' come at the Knowledge of what the Apostles
 ' writ, you suppose I must mean Manuscripts
 ' which were transcribed at 2d, 3d, 4th,---9th,
 ' and not such Manuscripts as were written
 ' from the *Autographs* immediately. For
 ' you say, there is not a Manuscript now ex-
 ' tant in the World, whereof there is suffi-
 ' cient Evidence to affirm, that it was imme-
 ' diately transcribed from the *Autographs*.
 ' To all which I answer, first, we have Manu-
 ' scripts now in the World which have sub-
 ' sisted against the decays of Time; at least
 ' three fourths of the Duration between us and
 ' the Apostles ; such as the *Alexandrian* and
 ' the *Vatican*, which yet have not the Text.
 ' So that since these were wrote while the *Au-*
 ' *tographs* might subsist; I have as much rea-
 ' son to say, they were wrote from the *Auto-*
 ' *graphs* or compared with them, as you to say
 ' the contrary. But further, I observe, that
 ' tho' the Manuscripts we now have, should
 ' have been taken from 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9th
 ' hand, yet these are preferable to your printed
 ' Books, 14 or 1500 Years after the *Auto-*
 ' *graphs*. Besides, these are the only Vouchers
 ' which divine Providence hath transmitted
 ' down to us, by which to judge of what the
 ' Apostles

‘ Apostles wrote : and therefore preferable to
 ‘ your printed Copies, which have no Credit,
 ‘ as I have shewn above, unless confirmed by
 ‘ these Vouchers.

‘ But I had like to have forgot to extricate
 ‘ my self out of a Contradiction in which you
 ‘ would fain have entangled me. But this is
 ‘ done, in part, above. For if you allow that
 ‘ there may be sufficient ground of Credibility
 ‘ concerning a former Fact, which yet doth
 ‘ not arise to absolute Certainty, then what I
 ‘ have said is no Contradiction.

‘ 4. In this Paragraph I had endeavoured to
 ‘ weaken the Authority of this Verse, because
 ‘ it is not found in the Quotations of any of the
 ‘ antient *Greek* Fathers, tho’ treating frequently
 ‘ upon the same Subject ; and this you do not
 ‘ contradict ; saying that the Argument is to
 ‘ you of no great weight : thus the Fox said by
 ‘ the Grapes that they were sour, when he could
 ‘ not reach them. The Reason you give for
 ‘ your Assertion is, that several of their Wri-
 ‘ tings, and some upon this Epistle, are lost ;
 ‘ which, had they survived the Injuries of
 ‘ Time, it cannot be proved but that this Text
 ‘ might have been found in them. To which
 ‘ I might answer, that since they have not sur-
 ‘ vived the Injuries of Time, neither can it be
 ‘ proved that the Verse would have been found
 ‘ in them. Besides, I further add a remark-
 ‘ able Observation, which to me sets the mat-
 ‘ ter beyond dispute, out of *Dupin*, 2 vol.
 ‘ *Canon*. p.78. That whereas none of the *Greek*
 ‘ Fathers

Fathers left, do mention it; *Dydimus* of *Alexandria*, and *Oecumenius*, who have both commented upon the first Epistle of *John*, do not in the least mention it: which is to me a strong Presumption either that they did not know it, or did not believe it genuine; and this I leave to your farther Consideration.

We next come to the *Latin* Fathers; of which you produce *Tertullian*; as a Voucher for the 7th Verse, because he said *These three are One*, which are now the Conclusion of the 7th. To which I answer, that this is no good Evidence that he had any Reference to the 7th Verse, since the *Complutensian* Edition, which pretends to the best Authorities, and is confirmed by 8 of *Barberini's Roman Manuscripts*, concludes the seventh Verse in the same manner as the eighth is now concluded; so that we cannot prove he had a Reference to the 7th Verse.

You then come to the Testimony of *Cyprian*, upon which I had said two things to weaken it. First, that it is not likely that *Cyprian* had this in his Copy, because the Author *de Baptismo Hæreticorum*, a cotemporary Writer with *Cyprian*, never quotes it, but joins what is now the 8th Verse immediately to the 6th. You tell me, indeed, that he confined himself to the Witnesses on Earth, but did not meddle with the heavenly Witnesses. To which I answer, that this Writer mentions the *Spirit, the Water, and Blood*, as all the Witnesses that *St. John* men-

‘ tioned ; and therefore your making a Di-
 ‘ stinction between heavenly Witneses and
 ‘ Witneses on Earth, is only begging the
 ‘ question, it being the thing in debate between
 ‘ us, whether this be an Interpolation or not.

‘ You further call this Author’s, an incor-
 ‘ rect Copy ; but by what Inspiration or se-
 ‘ cond sight you prove it less correct than Cy-
 ‘ prian’s, you have not told me. And really,
 ‘ you make the Text an *Ignis fatuus*, or *Will*
 ‘ *with Wisp*, in thus playing fast and loose in
 ‘ the Copies of the same Age, and that while
 ‘ the *Autographs* of the Apostles might be con-
 ‘ sulted, and so furnish the Deists with Objec-
 ‘ tions.

‘ Another thing I had said to weaken the
 ‘ Authority of *Cyprian’s* Testimony is, that
 ‘ *Facundus*, a Writer of the *African* Church,
 ‘ having given a Mystical Interpretation of the
 ‘ 8th Verse, and applied it to the Trinity, tells
 ‘ us expressly, that *Cyprian* did the same, and
 ‘ understood what St. *John* said of the *Spirit*,
 ‘ *the Water, and the Blood*, to be meant of the
 ‘ Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. And there-
 ‘ fore, tho’ you find fault with some of *Facun-*
 ‘ *du’s* Blunders, yet the point will come to
 ‘ this at last, whether we at this distance, or
 ‘ *Facundus*, so much nearer, knew *Cyprian’s*
 ‘ Mind better ?

‘ However, I cannot but take notice that
 ‘ this Mystical Interpretation of what we call
 ‘ the 8th Verse, and which continued so long
 ‘ among the Fathers of the *Latin* Church, is

‘ a strong Presumption that they did not ac-
 ‘ knowledge the 7th Verse, because it would
 ‘ have been weak to have mentioned a Mysti-
 ‘ cal Interpretation of a Text, for the Proof of
 ‘ an important Doctrine, if there had been
 ‘ such a literal Assertion of it as the 7th is sup-
 ‘ posed to be. Besides, it would really reduce
 ‘ the Witnesses from 6 to 3. To this we may
 ‘ add, what Father *Simon* observes, *Crit. Hist.*
 ‘ *of the Text of the New Test.* Part 2d. p. 2.
 ‘ concerning some Manuscripts he had con-
 ‘ sulted, where he tells us, that against these
 ‘ words, ὅτι τρεῖς εἰσιν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες ἐν τῇ γῆ
 ‘ τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ τὸ ὕδωρ καὶ τὸ αἷμα, there is
 ‘ this Remark, τῦλέστι τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον καὶ ὁ πα-
 ‘ τὴρ καὶ αὐτὸς ἐαυτοῦ, by which we may perceive
 ‘ that the Author of this Remark understood
 ‘ that the Holy Spirit, the Father, and the
 ‘ Son, were signified by the three Witnesses,
 ‘ *the Spirit, the Water, and the Blood.* In the
 ‘ same Copy he tells us, that over against those
 ‘ words, καὶ οἱ τρεῖς εἰς τὸ ἐν εἰσι this Note is ad-
 ‘ ded, τῦλέστι μία θεότης εἰς θεός, that is, one
 ‘ Deity, one God. Now to me it seems plain,
 ‘ that had there been such a positive Assertion
 ‘ as you suppose the 7th Verse to be, there
 ‘ would have been no occasion for such Re-
 ‘ marks being made in the Margin; and it is
 ‘ not improbable, but that from such marginal
 ‘ Notes, it crept into the Text.

‘ But I come now to the 5th Paragraph;
 ‘ where, in order to weaken the Authority of
 ‘ the Text, I had observed that it is said to be

wanting in all the *Greek* Manuscripts now
 remaining, except one in *Ireland*. And the
 Truth of this you don't deny; but you pre-
 tend that you don't offer to establish the Text
 upon one Manuscript, but upon the correct
 printed Copies which the Christian Church is
 in possession of: which printed Copies were
 founded upon a Multitude of *Greek* and *La-
 tin* Manuscripts, which were extant when the
Greek Testament was first printed, (some-
 what above 200 Years ago) but it seems are
 now lost. Nay, you pretend that the Chri-
 stians, who have only preserved Manuscripts
 without the Text, did it only for the sake of
 Antiquity, not Usefulness.

But these Sentences, which contain a num-
 ber of fine Cobwebs of your own spinning,
 deserve some Remarks; because they fix upon
 the *Athanasians* most fully, the charge of
 Stupidity, which I had only jocosely ascribed
 to them.

1. What Stupidity is this to imagine the Text
 should be proved authentick, by Copies prin-
 ted 14 or 1500 Years after the Epistle was
 written, without any Vouchers of the inter-
 mediate Ages remaining?

2. What Stupidity is it, that when they
 had given us a printed Copy, different in this
 respect from so many others, they did not
 preserve those correct Copies, as you call
 them, to be Vouchers of the Authenticity
 of their own Editions?

3. What

‘ 3. What a stupid Taste for Antiquity do
 ‘ you represent them having, that after they
 ‘ had (we will suppose) given their Children
 ‘ their most correct Manuscripts (which
 ‘ should have been Vouchers to their Editions)
 ‘ to make Kites of, or to cover Drum-heads,
 ‘ they should only preserve, for the sake of
 ‘ Antiquity, Copies that contradicted them?
 ‘ Had they possessed a just Taste for Antiqui-
 ‘ ty, they would certainly have preserved the
 ‘ most correct, and not the worst: But enough
 ‘ of this, I only jocosely used the word *stupid*,
 ‘ but you have gravely proved it upon them.

‘ Farther, you tell me, that we have no
 ‘ Manuscripts older than a little before *Charles*
 ‘ the Great, or the Correction of the Doctors
 ‘ of the *Sorbonne*; whereas you cannot but
 ‘ know, that the *Vatican*, the *Alexandrian*,
 ‘ and that of *Beza*, are supposed many Cen-
 ‘ turies older than the first of your Dates, and
 ‘ yet without the Text.

‘ You next seem to lay mighty Strefs upon
 ‘ the Labours of the learned Orthodox, who
 ‘ have given correct Copies of the New Testa-
 ‘ ment, both in *Charles* the Great’s time, and
 ‘ by the *Sorbonne* Doctors. To which I an-
 ‘ swer; Where are there Vouchers? We are
 ‘ told, that the learned Dr. *Bentley* hath by
 ‘ him, at this time, 20 *Latin* Copies of the
 ‘ New Testament, which, one with another,
 ‘ make up 1000 Years a-piece; and yet it is
 ‘ not pretended, that this Verse is in any one
 ‘ of them. So that by what Authority the

‘ Divines of *Charles*, or the *Sorbonne* Doc-
 ‘ tors, corrected their Copies, we know not.

‘ Further I observe, that mere Learning is
 ‘ not the only Qualification necessary for cor-
 ‘ recting Manuscripts; for there is Honesty
 ‘ and Integrity necessary, and a true Courage
 ‘ that dares to separate the Chaff from the
 ‘ Wheat, and to tell the Truth against popular
 ‘ Opinions.

‘ And truly those learned Men, who had
 ‘ received into their Church-Offices a Creed,
 ‘ under the Name *Athanasius*, tho’ not heard
 ‘ of in the Christian World, till Centuries
 ‘ after he was rotten; a Creed, that damns one
 ‘ half of the Christian Church, and confounds
 ‘ the rest: No wonder, that they should upon
 ‘ small Evidence receive a Verse that seems so
 ‘ favourable to it.

‘ Nay, they who stood with their Mouths
 ‘ open to receive all the Corruptions and Su-
 ‘ perstitions of Popery, and particularly Tran-
 ‘ substantiation, (a thing as like the former,
 ‘ as one Egg is like another;) I am afraid,
 ‘ discover too little critical Judgment and Ca-
 ‘ pacity, to be much depended on, in an Af-
 ‘ fair of this nature. You then mention *E-*
 ‘ *rasmus*, who having printed one or two Edi-
 ‘ tions, wherein he left out the Text upon the
 ‘ Authority of the Manuscripts he had by him,
 ‘ afterwards inserted it on the Credit of an
 ‘ *English* Copy. But the true Reason (as he
 ‘ tells us) of the Alteration upon so slender an
 ‘ Authority, which he suspected had been
 ‘ formed

formed upon the Credit of the *Latin* Copies, was, that he might remove all Occasion of Calumny. *James Lopez Stunica* had charged him with *Arianism*, for leaving out the Text; whereupon the poor Man knowing, that *Arian* was a fatal Name, and as certainly expos'd a Man to be knock'd on the head, as if they had called him a *Mad Dog*, added it to his next Edition.

You also mention the Labours of *Stephanus*, who, however learned and industrious he was, yet seems not over-honest, when he inserted the Verse, tho' it is now well known that he had not one *Greek* Manuscript that authorized him to do it. I thank you for candidly excusing my Inadvertence, for I meant *Greek* Manuscripts; tho', I presume, that the thing is true concerning all the *Latin* ones extant before your Corrections, as appears from Dr. *Bentley's* Collection.

And by the like Candour, you might have understood when I said the *Athanasians* had the full Possession of all Power, and all the Manuscripts for near 1200 Years; I did not trouble myself who were the *Amanuenses*, whether Heathen or Orthodox. And therefore, I still think the Text of no Value; which neither the Care of Christians, nor the Care of divine Providence, have convey'd down to us, in the *Greek* Manuscripts that are yet preserv'd.

You tell me, it never was questioned by the *Arians* themselves, when it was alledged
 ' against

' against them by the Orthodox in their Dis-
 ' putes with them, and that they never had
 ' the Impudence to deny it till the Age before
 ' the last. To which I answer; 1. That I
 ' am amazed at this Rhodomontade. You
 ' know very well, that it never was urged a-
 ' gainst them for the four first Centuries, and
 ' therefore could not be objected to. And if
 ' it was objected against them afterwards, the
 ' Orthodox, who have carefully destroyed
 ' their Writings, have not left us an Opportu-
 ' nity of knowing what they said against it.
 ' 2. As to succeeding Ages, 'tis not improbable,
 ' but that the Terrors of this World might
 ' hinder Men from speaking their Minds free-
 ' ly: however, from the time you speak of,
 ' they have not been the only Persons who
 ' had the Impudence to question it. Many
 ' of the first Editors of the printed Copies left
 ' it out; tho' orthodox. *Luther* disown'd it.
 ' *Calvin* and *Beza* took away the Sting: And
 ' it hath been sufficiently handled since, and
 ' a Wound given the Credit of it, not like to
 ' be heal'd in haste.

' To conclude; tho' you pretend that there
 ' were a great many Manuscripts, both *Greek*
 ' and *Latin*, to vouch the printed Books when
 ' they were first published; yet since you have
 ' lost them all, I think you deserve to be
 ' chastised for your Negligence, and lose your
 ' Text into the bargain.

' Thus

Thus I have considered what is material
 in your Letter, and being yet unsatisfy'd, I
 must desire your further Assistance, and am,
 notwithstanding these Debates,

Your affectionate Friend and Brother,

J. P.

P. S. That I may shew you the Necessi-
 ty of preserving Vouchers of modern Re-
 lations of ancient Facts, suffer me to tell
 you a Story I was an Ear-witness of, at the
 Assizes not long since at your Town.

A certain trading Company were incorpo-
 rated by a Charter, in the Reign of *Charles* the
 Second, with a Number of By-Laws drawn
 up for their Management, by the then Lord
 Chancellor and the two Chief Justices. The
 original Charter and By-Laws were burnt in
 the Fire of *London*: however, the Company
 sued one of their Members for acting con-
 trary to their Laws. Upon which the Judge
 ask'd them, how they proved that the Copy
 they produced in Court, did agree with the
 Original? But they not being capable of
 doing this, he directed a Nonsuit against them.

Your Sagacity will easily see the Applica-
 bleness of this Story to the Case before us;
 and that it is against the common Sense of
 Mankind, to receive Relations of former
 Facts without authentick Vouchers.

AN-

ANSWER to LETTER II.

REVEREND SIR,

Nottingham, July 7th, 1735.

I Received your's of the first Instant, last night; wherein I observe in the general, that there are a great many new Points brought in as Subject of Debate, which tend only to embarass the Affair under present Consideration. These I shall leave to be spoke to after we have settled the Points in your first Letter. I did expect in your Reply, that you would either have owned the force of the Arguments I advanced, or confined your self to discover the weakness of them: but in place of this, you introduce new Points; some of them quite alien from the purpose of clearing those mentioned in your first Letter, which I shall take no notice of at present, but consider your Reply only, in so far as there is any thing in it, that pretends to weaken the force of my Arguments, I laid before you in my last; which I reckon the properest Method for avoiding Confusion, and bringing the Matter to some Point.

On the first Paragraph I observe, that instead of disproving my Arguments, whereby I shew, that the three Witnesses their bearing Witness in a proper sense, is an Argument of their being three distinct Persons, you very gravely,

gravely, but without any shadow of Truth, tell me, that I prove the Word and Holy Spirit's being Persons from other Texts, and not from this ; whereas, if you'll look a little more narrowly to my Arguments, you'll see, that it is not their distinct Personality that I prove from these Texts ; tho' these Texts are capable of proving even that also ; but I do not use them for that purpose : all the use that I make of these Texts is to prove, that the Son and Holy Ghost are capable of witnessing in a proper sense ; and on that account I prove from this 7th Verse, wherein they are called three Witnesses, that therefore they must be three Persons ; because whatever witnesseth in a proper sense, must be a Person : and therefore what I said on that Point, not only contradicts what you assert, That in that Text the Trinity of divine Persons is not taught, but also proves the contrary of what you assert on that Head.

You complain, that I do not prove the three Persons of the Trinity to be one God, from other Texts. This would be to wander, as you have done, from the Point in hand. My Business, in answer to your Letter, Paragraph first, was to prove, that these three Persons are one God from this Text, not from any others : for the Controversy was, whether that Text taught a Trinity of Persons in one divine Essence, on supposition that it was authentick Scripture. It may be easily proved also from other Texts ; but pray, let us discuss
this

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this Point first, and bring it to some Issue; whether it be proved from this Text, before we debate, whether it can be proved from others or not; otherways we shall jumble and confound things, without knowing where we are.

I can't help laughing at the Reason you give; why my distinction of proper and improper witnessing hath no Foundation; because say you, the same Word is used for them both. Did ever Mortal hear, that there was any Foundation for that Distinction of a proper or improper Sense, where the same Word was not used? 'Tis the using the same Word, and that only, that lays the foundation for that Distinction: and yet with a great deal of sage Wisdom, you give it for a Reason, why the Distinction hath no Foundation.

You apprehend that it will be difficult to me to prove, that the *Λογος*, the second Person of the Trinity, did emit his Testimony in a proper sense, as a distinct Person from the Father. I apprehend there is no difficulty in it at all: the Lord Jesus Christ, as God, did emit his Testimony in a proper sense; and bore witness to himself as Mediator; and God incarnate, at the Martyrdom of *Stephen*; *Acts viii: 55, 56.* *shewing himself in sensible Majesty, standing at the right Hand of God in all the splendor of divine Glory.* Again he appeared to *John* in the *Isle Patmos*; there he heard this eternal Word speak behind him with a Voice as loud as a Trumpet, saying, *I am the first and the last.*
Rev:

Rev. i. 17. The Holy Ghost, the third Person of the Trinity emitted his Testimony in a proper sense, as a distinct Person, and bore record to the divine Mission of Christ, by descending upon him immediately after his Baptism, as *John* gives an account in the first Chap. of his Gospel, ver. 32, 33. and again, by his coming down upon the Apostles in a visible Form; *Acts* i. and ii.

You endeavour to prove that the three Persons are not one God, one Substance; because you know of no Substantive in the neuter Gender that agrees with $\epsilon\upsilon$. I think I can help you to one, and that is $\rho\eta\mu\alpha$, *res*, or *substantia*; or if you please, $\epsilon\upsilon\ \rho\eta\mu\alpha\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\upsilon$, the one self-existent Substance or Being. Pray give me an Instance where $\epsilon\iota\mu\iota$ with $\epsilon\iota\varsigma\ \tau\omicron$ signifies *consentio* in a figurative sense, and what the Figure alluded to is.

You say, my Criticism is without Foundation, because Christ prays that the Saints $\omega\sigma\iota\nu\ \epsilon\upsilon$, as I and my Father $\epsilon\upsilon\ \epsilon\sigma\mu\epsilon\nu$. But allow me to tell you, you are out in your Critics, and your Criticism is stark nought; because $\kappa\alpha\theta\omega\varsigma$ translated *as*, does not signify Equality always, and Similitude in the same manner; but signifies sometimes, any sort of Analogy, and the Likeness must be determined according to the nature of the Subject. And here our Saviour prays, that the Saints may be $\epsilon\upsilon\ \sigma\omega\mu\alpha$, one Mystical Body, compleated by their being all gathered to himself in due time and order,

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order, as truly as he and his Father are *ἑν ᾧ ἦσαν* *το οὐν*, one self-existent Being or Substance.

I'm surprized to see you say, in the End of this Paragraph, that when I say; That, if the Apostle had designed to signify only a Unity of Testimony, there would not have been so remarkable a Variation of the Phrase in the two Verses; the one Verse saying, *These Three are One*; the other only, *They agree in One*. I say, I am surprized, that you should say, that in this I beg the Question, since you yourself made the Supposition in the Beginning of this Paragraph, that the Text was genuine; and on that Supposition, which you yourself made, I argue, that if it be genuine, as you suppose it to be; then that remarkable Variation of the Phrase proves in the one a Unity of Essence, in the other a Unity only of Consent. This is such an Oversight, as I cannot account for; all your Arguments in this Paragraph suppose the Genuineness of the Text; therefore I was to suppose it also in my Reasoning; nor does it signify any thing that incorrect Copies read the two Verses the same way.

You complain, that I censure you unjustly, because I say, you give up the Cause to the Deist, when you say, that we can have no absolute Certainty of what the sacred Penmen wrote. This, I still think, is a just Censure, and to coin a Distinction betwixt absolute Certainty, and such as excludes all manner of doubt, is a desperate Expedient to help out at

a Pinch, as you seem to be in here. I must own, I have neither Logicks nor Metaphysicks enough to understand that Evidence that lies between absolute Certainty, and that wherein all manner of reasonable Doubt and Suspicion is excluded: absolute Certainty is called so for that very reason; that it excludes all manner of Doubt. I would also here give you a hint of a Contradiction; that you involved your self in, in this Paragraph; that you affirm, that the historical Proof of former Facts can have no absolute Certainty, nor never pretend to it; and yet in the beginning of the second Paragraph of your first Letter, you say, that if the *Autographs* had been preserved, we might have had absolute Certainty of what was wrote in them; for you give it as the reason, why we have not absolute Certainty, because they are lost: so that according to the second Paragraph of your first Letter; it is possible for us to have absolute Certainty of a former Fact by historical Proof; and according to the second Paragraph of this Letter, it is impossible, and there is no pretending to it. But these little Inconsistencies are but Trifles, when a Man stands in absolute need of them, to help him out at a dead lift.

You tell me in the third Paragraph, that the printed Copies have no Credit, but in so far as they have the Manuscripts which are at present in the World vouching them. This, I can by no means assent to; for if they had Vouchers, when they were at first printed, as

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I hinted before in my last, they stand in no need of Vouchers now: nay, the Manuscripts now extant, stand more in need of Vouchers, than the printed Copies; because, when these Copies were first printed, they were compared with a vast variety of Manuscripts; which can't be proved of the Manuscripts now extant, that they were so nicely compared with such a multitude of Manuscripts, when they were wrote.

I would point out to you another Inconsistency in the end of your fourth Paragraph, where you endeavour to prove by the *Complutensian* Edition, which you own to have pretences to the best Authority, and which also you own has the advantage of being confirmed by eight of *Barbarine's Roman* Manuscripts, that *Tertullian* could not have a reference to the seventh Verse; because it concludes the seventh the same way as the eighth; not thinking, that if its Authority is admitted as the best, it destroys all your Arguments concerning the seventh Verse's being spurious. You were not aware of this: but perhaps, tho' it may have Authority against *Tertullian*, yet it loses its Authority, when it is brought to prove the Genuineness of the seventh Verse, as to the bulk of it. Sincerity and Impartiality is a great Mean to arrive at the Knowledge of the Truth.

You have a very bold Assertion, when you come to the Testimony of *Cyprian*, where you with confidence affirm, that the *Autographs* of the Apostles might be consulted in
his

his age. I shall reckon my self much indebted to you, if you'll shew me sufficient Proof of that: but however confidently you assert it, I as little expect Satisfaction from you in this, as I had from you with respect to the point of their being *Athanasians* who wrote the Manuscripts that are now extant, tho' you asserted that also with equal assurance. As your Answer with respect to that was, that you did not trouble your self who were the *Amanuenses*; as you call them; whether they were Heathens or Orthodox; because, I suppose you despair of finding it out: so I don't question, but your Answer to me in this, will be much like it; that you don't trouble your self about it, when the *Autographs* of the Apostles perished; or how long they survived. But betwixt you and I, I think it unworthy of any Man that pretends to Letters, to assert things with so much Confidence, *and take the trouble of writing* them to others, and yet to be at no pains, *to take no trouble* to make what he says good.

Thus, Sir, I have endeavoured to take off what you have offered to weaken my Arguments, in my Answer to your first Letter, at least in the first four Paragraphs. As to the fifth, you shall have a Return to it next Week; but if you have nothing stronger to advance, I am not like to be persuaded, but my Answer to your first Letter takes off all the Objections that you raised in it against this Text: and as far as I can understand, you either are

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not, or at least pretend not, to be satisfied with my Arguments neither: and since the matter is like to rest there, the best way, in my Judgment, is to refer the matter to the Judgment of Mankind; and let us publish your Letters to me, with my Answer to you; since we are both confident we are in the right. As to that Mistake about your mentioning Manuscripts in general, instead of *Greek* Manuscripts, because you acknowledge it, I consent that it shall not be published; but as to the rest, since you are not conscious of any Mistake, nor convinced of any Error in what you have wrote, I don't see that you need be against publishing of this Affair; which is all at present, from

Your Most Affectionate Friend,

and Humble Servant,

J. SLOSS.

REVEREND

REVEREND SIR,

LAST Week, I was a little engaged, and had not so much time to write you so full an Answer as I inclin'd, to your last Letter; and shall therefore touch at some other things in it. In the fifth Page, you suppose me engaged with a *Deist*; and you put an Objection in his Mouth, which he might urge against me, (*viz.*) you bring him in, asking which Copies he must judge by, as correct, since there are so many that want this Text? To which, you are so kind as to make an Answer for me; but don't hit the Answer that I would make him: for, in place of telling him, as you suppose, that those only were to be reckoned correct, that were witnessed to by the Fathers and Manuscripts now extant, I would tell him, that those are the correct Copies, that were witnessed to by the correct Manuscripts that were extant at the time, when the correct Copies were first printed, that had this Text; whereof there were great plenty at that time, tho' they are now lost; yet not so many either as you apprehend: and their being now lost, as I hinted before, does not impair their credit more, than it impairs the credit of those Manuscripts that are now extant, tho' the Manuscripts from which they were transcribed, are now lost. This you have not sufficiently

attended to, otherways it would have saved you the trouble of all you have written in this fifth Page, and it would have saved me the trouble of repeating this again. You say, in the latter end of your first Page, second Letter, that the Divine Being, when ever he speaks of himself, it is in the singular personal Pronouns: I desire you may but look to *Gen. i. 26.* and *Gen. iii. 22.* and you'll see what Truth there is in that Assertion.

You have another bold Assertion which you cannot prove, in the end of this fifth Page; that the *Alexandrian* and *Vatican* Copies have subsisted three fourths of the time betwixt us and the Apostles. But this is no new thing with you; if you could prove it, you would do a piece of singular Service to the World: but I don't question but you'll fail in this, as you have done in other things.

You say in your sixth Page, that the Author *de Baptismo Hæreticorum*, mentions the *Spirit, the Water, and the Blood*, as all the Witnesses that St. *John* mentions; which is not fact: for tho' he should omit the positive mentioning of the heavenly Witnesses, that by no means proves, that he says, that St. *John* mentions no other Witnesses than the Witnesses on Earth; nor is it a begging the Question, when I say, that he speaks only of the Witnesses on Earth; it only says, that his omitting the mentioning of the heavenly Witnesses, is no Proof but they might have been mentioned by St. *John* in the seventh Verse.

As to what *Facundus* says of *Cyprian*, that he understood the eighth Verse in a mystical sense, I proved it in my first Letter to be false, and a Mistake in him: but tho' it were true, yet it does not say, but *Facundus* owns that *Cyprian* cited the seventh Verse as a part of divine Revelation. This, *Facundus* owns in express Words, that St. *Cyprian* cited that seventh Verse as a part of the holy Canon, as I proved in my first Letter also. So that whatever *Cyprian's* Opinion was, with respect to the sense of the eighth Verse, whether he took it in a mystical sense or not, it is beyond all doubt, that his Opinion concerning the seventh Verse was, that it was canonical Scripture; for he cites it as such. So that the Controversy concerning the Authority of this Text, its being proved by *Cyprian's* Testimony, does not come to this point at last, as you apprehend, whether we or *Facundus* knew *Cyprian's* Mind best concerning the Sense of the eighth Verse; whether he took it mystically, or explain'd it otherwise: that is so far from determining the matter, that it does not a bit affect the Controversy. The true point comes to this; whether we are to believe *Cyprian*, who expressly tells us, that the Words of the seventh Verse are canonical Scripture, and *Facundus* who confirms it, and the whole Christian Church, *Arians* and Orthodox, from the very days of the Apostles till the Age before the last; or are we to believe the modern *Arians* from *Socinus's* and *Servetus's* time, who are pinched dread-

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fully by this Text, and so prejudiced against it, that they want at any rate to get rid of it; and who, on the sole Authority of a few Manuscripts at present extant, which all the World knows and owns to be incorrect in a multitude of places, deny the Authority of this Text, tho' it had been kept in from age to age, as part of the holy Canon, from the Apostles to this very day, in the bulk of Manuscripts used by Christians: tho' in some particular Manuscripts it might be left out, in some by Fraud, in others by Neglect. This is the true Point that the Controversy comes to; and to turn it upon the point of the Truth or Falseness of *Facundus's* Knowledge of the Mind of *Cyprian*, concerning the Sense of the eighth Verse, is a poor Off-come; and a most pitiful wretched shift to get clear of the force of *Cyprian's* Testimony; and shews to what straits the *Arians* are reduced here. But if that was indeed the Point, and did the Controversy turn here, I do not know what the *Arians* would be able to make of it, tho' the Controversy came to this, whether *Facundus* or we knew *Cyprian's* Mind best, I would fain know, what means, the *Arians* can prove, were in *Facundus's* Power or Possession of knowing *Cyprian's* Mind, three hundred Years after him, that are not in our Power and Possession at this day.

You say, that the mystical Interpretation of the eighth Verse, which continued so long among the Fathers of the *Latin* Church, is a strong

strong Presumption, that they did not acknowledge the seventh Verse. To me it is no Presumption at all, especially since we have express Proof of their citing and acknowledging the seventh Verse, as a Part of the sacred Canon : And tho' that mystical Interpretation, which was a Blunder in those who did so interpret the eighth Verse, reduces the Witnesses to three in place of six ; yet it drops the Witnesses mentioned in the eighth Verse, and not those of the seventh ; so that the Doctrine in the seventh Verse is not hurt by it.

Your first Citation out of Father *Simon* proves no more, than that the Author of the Remark blundered in the Interpretation, he put upon the eighth Verse, as many others did ; and the second is much like unto it, only it shews what the Sense was, that Christians generally had in those Days concerning the three Witnesses the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, that they were *μία θεότης εἰς θεός* ; which is not a great deal to your Advantage ; nor can it be presumed, that these marginal Notes could give rise to the Father's citing the seventh Verse, as a Part of canonical Scripture, eight or nine hundred Years before these marginal Notes were wrote : To imagine this, is absurd to the last degree ; and yet it is what you reckon probable, that these marginal Notes brought this Verse into the Text. And if you'll allow of Father *Simon's* Authority, notwithstanding the Opposition he made to this Text, I can prove from his way of Reasoning, that

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that this Text must be authentic; for he says *Histor. Crit. du Text. du Nov. Test.* p. 112. That we ought not to doubt of the last Chapter of *St. Mark*, because the *Greeks* generally read it in their Churches at this day. Now, if this Reason be good, it holds good equally with respect to this Verse, which is as generally read by them, as any Portion of Scripture.

When you come to the fifth Paragraph, you tell me, as I told you in my first Letter, that I don't establish the Text upon the Authority of one Manuscript, but upon that Multitude of *Greek* and *Latin* Manuscripts, which were extant, when the *Greek* Testament was first printed, tho' many of them are now lost; but you don't offer to shew, that this is an insufficient way of establishing the Authority of a Text; or at all to clear it up, that these printed Copies, which we have, can't have any Authority, since the Vouchers of them are lost: nor do you offer to shew, why the printed Copies, which were faithfully taken from the correctest Manuscripts, which were then extant, when they were first printed, and compared with them, should stand more in need of Vouchers to establish their Authority, than the Manuscripts, at present extant themselves, stand in need of Vouchers to establish their Authority. None of these things you touch at; these seem to be Points too hard for you; and you endeavour to get as handsomely off as you can; and you would seem to make a Retreat laughing, since you can make

no better of it; and you tell me jocosely, that since we have lost these Vouchers, we should be chastised for our Negligence, and lose this Text into the bargain. But setting aside the Wit of this Turn, which, by the by, has not a great deal more in it, than is sufficient to make it pass, tho' it was in its right Place; but, when it is placed in the room of Argument and good Sense, it makes but a very indifferent Figure: in my opinion, it would have done as well in the present Case to have sent an Argument before your Jest, and then they would have done both well together: but a Jest, without good Sense for its Foundation, loses even its own native Beauty.

I have told you, that those Manuscripts, that were preserved, were preserved more for Antiquity than Usefulness. This, you tell me, I pretend; but you don't so much as pretend to refute it. You call what I say in this Point fine Cobwebs of my own spinning; but however fine they are, I wish you would try to sweep them down, by the force of some of your Arguments, if you have any of that kind, that are tougher than these same fine Cobwebs; you'll perhaps find them tough as well as fine.

You tell me, 'tis a Piece of Stupidity to pretend, that a Text should be proved authentic by Copies printed fourteen or fifteen hundred Years after the Epistle was written, without any Vouchers of the intermediate Ages remaining. Sir, I won't be so unmannerly as to say,
that

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that you are stupid in writing this ; perhaps your own Modesty and good Sense may make you think so of yourself, when I inform you, that a Text may be as well proved to be Authentic, by Copies printed or written fourteen or fifteen hundred Years after the Epistle was wrote, altho' the Vouchers of the intermediate Ages do not remain, as it may be proved to be authentic by Manuscripts written five hundred Years after the Epistle was written, when the Vouchers of these Manuscripts for the intermediate five hundred Years are lost ; provided that the Transcribers or Printers for the last ten Ages have been as faithful in printing or transcribing, as the Transcribers of the former five were. So that the correct printed Copies, now in the Possession of Christians, being transcribed faithfully from Manuscripts, which were transcribed faithfully from other Manuscripts, and so on, till at length we come to the *Autographs* themselves ; I say, these printed Copies, thus faithfully containing what the Apostles wrote, as handed down faithfully from Age to Age, by an uninterrupted Succession for fifteen hundred Years, are as capable of conveying to us the Knowledge of what the Apostle wrote, even tho' the Vouchers of those printed Copies, from which they were immediately taken, are lost ; as those Manuscripts, extant at present in the World, which were, as you and some others suppose, written but five hundred Years after the *Autographs*, are capable of conveying the Knowledge

ANSWER to LETTER II. 61

ledge of what the Apostles wrote, especially seeing their Vouchers for the intermediate five hundred Years betwixt the *Autographs* and their being wrote, are also lost.

You charge the *Athanasians* as guilty of Stupidity, for not preserving those correct Manuscripts, from which they took their printed Copies; but you don't consider, that the Charge of Stupidity lies as heavy, if it was just, upon those, who are against this Verse, for not preserving the Vouchers for their Reading. Those Manuscripts, which want the Verse, stand as much in need of Vouchers, and much more; for all the learned World know, that they are more incorrect.

I own with you, that if the *Athanasians* had applied the correct Manuscripts, from which they printed their Copies, to the Uses you mention, to make Kites and cover Drum-heads, it would be hard to vindicate them from the Charge of Stupidity; but since that Supposition can't be proved to be true, the Charge is as false as your Supposition is calumnious and uncharitable. I'll make another Supposition, that in the Judgment of Mankind, I believe, will be reckoned more probable; and that is, that these Manuscripts have been in the divine Providence consumed by accidental Fire, or some other way destroy'd, which it was not in the power of the *Athanasians* to prevent; and this will vindicate them both from the Charge of Stupidity and Neglect. But here I would observe, that the Lord
has,

has, in his holy Providence, it seems, suffered these Manuscripts to be lost, as a Judgment upon the *Arians* of this Day, for their Blasphemy against the Son and Holy Ghost; that this Stumbling-Block is thrown in their way, which their Corruption makes a Handle of, to harden them in their Impiety: for tho' his watchful Providence and Care of his Church has made such Provision, that honest Minds have sufficient Means of knowing the Truth, yet he has not cut off every Handle and Occasion, that obstinate Sinners may improve, or rather misimprove, to harden them against the Truth, to their own Destruction; nor does his Goodness and Mercy oblige him to do it.

You tell me, that I don't deny the Truth of this, that there is but one *Greek* Manuscript at present extant in the World, which has this Text, to wit, that in *Ireland*. This is absolutely false; I do deny it; I can instance more, that have this Text; tho' I did not think fit to take notice of it in my Answer to your first Letter; because the Reading in our correct printed Copies does not so much derive its Authority from those *Greek* Manuscripts now extant in the World, as from the Multitude of *Greek* and *Latin* Manuscripts, which were extant, when these were first printed. And allow me to say, that I can't help thinking it a considerable Piece of Assurance in you to assert a thing, with so much Confidence, that all Men, who are conversant in such Matters,
know

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know the contrary of; to wit, that there is but one *Greek* Manuscript that has this Text extant in the World, and to triumph so much in it. What a strange Figure will this make, if it should be published to the World, that you abett the rest of the abandoned *Arians*, who have lost all Reputation of Honesty, by asserting such notorious Falshoods ?

As to *Dydimus* and *Oecumenius*, whom you refer to my further Consideration, who have commented on this Epistle, and yet speak nothing of this seventh Verse, I would have you to consider once for all, that this negative Evidence is just nothing; and can never have any Weight with any Man of Sense, unless he be under uncommon Prejudice, against such strong positive Proof to the contrary. *Dydimus* wrote, indeed, a Commentary on this Epistle; and yet he does not mention this seventh Verse; and from hence you very weakly conclude, that he did not own it for canonical Scripture: as if every Commentator must be construed to reckon for uncanonical Scripture all those Verses, that he does not think fit to comment upon, but passes them by. This is indeed such stuff, that 'tis irksome to be put to the trouble of refuting it. *Dydimus* does not mention in his Commentary the 6th nor the 8th Verse, more than he does the 7th, nor the 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, nor 13th Verses; will you therefore say, that all these Verses are spurious, and not to be reckoned Canonical for that reason, that he omitted the
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mentioning of them? I hope you won't: but perhaps you are for compounding the matter, and would be ready to let go all these other six Verses, provided that this troublesome seventh Verse could be sent a packing after them. This is from,

S I R, &c.

J. SLOSS.



L E T-



L E T T E R III.

REVEREND SIR,

July 24.

IF you have not finished your Observations
 on my last Letter, before this comes to
 hand, pray try to reduce the Debate into a less
 compass; and therefore tell me whether you
 know of any other *Greek* Manuscripts (besides
 that of *Dublin*) now in being, with the dis-
 puted Verse in it; and 2. Whether you
 can prove that any Editor of the printed
 Copies, ever had any such Manuscripts in
 his possession; who he was, and where he
 had them. The Consideration of these, will
 prevent Digressions for the future. When
 the whole of your Observations are come to
 hand, you shall receive an Answer, tho' not
 the next day after. I am, in the mean
 time,

Your's Affectionately,

J. P.

Pray let me know where you met with
 your Account of *Didymus*, that I may ex-
 amine it for my self.

ANSWER to LETT. II. *and* III.

REVEREND SIR, *Nottingham, Sept. 12, 1735.*

I Have been expecting an Answer for some time past, to my last two Letters. I don't see that my not having finished my Observations on your second Letter, need be any stop to your going on to answer what Observations I have already made upon it, if you have an Answer that is, indeed, satisfying to your self. I have some Remarks that I would further make upon it, which I had not time to insist on in my last. And the first is, concerning the Sense of the word Person, when it is applied to the sacred Three. And indeed, the Mistake you seem to labour under, with respect to that, may justly give you a disadvantageous Notion of that sacred Doctrine of the Trinity: for by a distinct Person in the Trinity you understand, but very unjustly, a distinct intelligent Agent, so as if the Intelligences were multiplied, according to the Plurality of Persons; for you would carefully observe, that altho' each of the three Persons of the Trinity is an intelligent Agent, yet they are not distinct with respect to their Intelligence; for they have one common infinite Intelligence, which is absolutely the same in them all, as it

is

ANSWER to LETT. II. and III. 67

is with respect to all the other essential Perfections of the Deity, each of the different and distinct Persons of the Trinity are possessed of them all, and they are absolutely the same in them all, without any variation. The Father is an intelligent Agent; so is the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and yet they are not three distinct Intelligences; for they have one and the self-same infinite Intelligence in them all. The same may be said of that essential Perfection of the Deity, Omnipotence; the Father is Omnipotent, the Son Omnipotent, and so is the Holy Ghost; yet they are not three Omnipotents; that would make three Gods: and the reason why they are not three Omnipotents, is because Omnipotence is an essential Property; and all the Persons of the Trinity, as they are One in their Essence, so they are absolutely One in all essential Perfections. And that which is the Foundation of their being three Persons, is not any trinal Difference or Distinction either of the Essence, or of any of the essential Perfections of the Deity, as it subsists in the different Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; for both the Essence of the Deity, and all the essential Perfections are the same, absolutely, in all the Three. But the true Foundation of that Difference and Distinction that there is in the three Persons, is laid in the Difference that there is in their personal Characters: by these they become distinct Persons, and not by any Distinction or

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Variation in their Effence or essential Properties, which are absolutely the same in them all.

II. I would observe, that you blame me for overlooking that, which you reckon the chief Point in Controversy, to wit, that these three Witnesses, which now you own to be three Persons, but which in your first Letter you deny'd, or at least deny'd that their bearing record was a Proof of their being Persons, are one God. I readily agree with you in that, that this is the chief Point betwixt the *Unitarians* and *Trinitarians*, whether these three Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be one God; but I did not think, that that was the chief Point betwixt you and I; for that was a thing that was but dropt accidentally in your first Letter; the design of which, was to destroy the Authority of the controverted Text, 1 *John* v. 7. That I took to be the chief Point betwixt us; and the Bulk of my Answer to you related to that Controversy, taking it to be what you wanted chiefly to be satisfied about: and I think it would be more regular to keep close to that Point, till we brought it to some Issue, that either you might be satisfied that that Text was genuine, or that I might have something offered me to convince me that it was spurious; and a Discovery made to me of the weakness of my Answers to your Difficulties about its being

being genuine. But since you are for starting a new Argument and Subject for Controversy, I am not unwilling to offer you my Thoughts on the Subject in debate, betwixt the *Arians* and *Athanasians*. And indeed, I think it may be very easily proved, that the three Persons of the holy Trinity are one God, from this very obvious Argument, That the divine Attributes and Perfections are ascribed to these three Persons in the holy Scriptures, in a variety of places. Now, if there be Three possessed of divine Perfections, these Three must, to a demonstration, be possessed of the divine Essence, otherways the Perfections of the Deity, and its Essence, which is the Foundation of them, may be separated; which is a very gross Absurdity; and consequently, that Revelation that discovers to us, that these Three are possessed of divine Perfections, and for that reason of the divine Essence, teaches us, that these Three are one God; because it teaches us, that they are possessed of the divine Essence, which is, and can be but One. Let us, for clearing this matter, farther instance in an Example; the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal *Logos*, and second Person of the Trinity, has that divine Perfection ascribed to him in Scripture, that he made all things; *John* i. 3. *All things were made by him.* Now it is by the Effects of this Perfection, that we know, that there is any supreme divine Being at all: and as the Light of our Reason teaches us,

that he that created all things is the only supreme God, so the Light of the Scripture, (if indeed it be a divine Revelation) which teaches us, that the *Λογος* did create all things, of consequence teaches us, that he is the supreme God: for that divine Excellency of having a Power to bring things out of nothing to Existence, is a Perfection peculiar to the supreme Deity, and necessarily supposes the Person possessed of it to be, of consequence, possessed of the divine Essence. And since the divine Essence is but One, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is possessed of that Perfection, which is peculiar to the supreme Deity, for that reason must be the supreme God, because he is possessed of the divine Essence and Perfections, which are inseparable from supreme Deity. And therefore, since he is God in a proper sense, that is, the supreme God, he must be one God with the Father; or else there must be two supreme Gods, which is the grossest Absurdity. The same may be proved with respect to the Holy Ghost; but I need not insist upon that, because, if the one be admitted, the Difficulties with respect to the other, will easily disappear.

I had told you, that we have no Manuscripts older than a little before *Charles* the Great, or the Corrections made by the Doctors of the *Sorbonne*; this I am still persuaded of; and you have offered nothing at all to prove that we have any. You tell me, indeed, that

that I can't but know, that the *Vatican*, the *Alexandrian*, and that of *Beza*, are supposed many Centuries older than the first of these Dates; but that is no proof to me at all, what Men suppose, unless they can give some proof of their Suppositions: but a bare Supposition goes a great way with some, when it favours their Opinion.

As to that Collection of *Latin Manuscripts* Doctor *Bentley* has, I never had occasion to peruse them; but I'm abundantly satisfied, that they are not so ancient as you pretend; nor has the World seen any Evidence to believe that they are. 'Tis well known, that there are no scarcity of *Latin Manuscripts*, that have this Text; and unless the Doctor can advance some better proof than his bare Word, his Character will hardly bear one out, to depend merely upon it, in an Affair of this nature.

You fall very foul upon those Divines, that assisted *Charles the Great*, and the Doctors of the *Sorbonne*, in the Corrections they made; I think you treat them very unhandfomley, in questioning their Fidelity, and imputing Dishonesty and want of Integrity to them, without so much as pretending to give one Instance, wherein they discovered the want of these Qualifications so necessary in correcting Manuscripts. I never heard of any, that offered to prove them unfaithful in these Cor-

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rections at that time, when they were made by them ; and it is but a vain Attempt to pretend to do it now ; especially for one to do it, who owns, as you do, that you do not know by what Authority they corrected these Manuscripts. I think you should have had some Knowledge of their Authority in making these Corrections, and that too, that they made them without sufficient Authority, before you ventured to question their Fidelity and Integrity so much ; their receiving a Creed under the Name *Athanasius*, which was so conform to his Doctrine, into their Church Offices, will never prove their want of Integrity, in keeping in this Text in the sacred Canon, if they had sufficient Authority to do it from Manuscripts then extant ; which you own, that you know not, whether they had or not. Nor can I conceive, that it is at all reasonable to think, that their Approbation of the *Athanasian* Doctrine should influence them so far, as to foist in a Text into the sacred Canon without sufficient Authority from Manuscripts ; a Text too, which tho' in one place you insinuate, that it seems very much to favour that Doctrine ; yet, in another place, when you have another Purpose to serve, you say, that it decides nothing in your Apprehension betwixt the *Unitarians* and *Trinitarians* in their disputed Points: a Text, which you say, that the *Unitarians* have nothing to fear from, nor the

the *Trinitarians* any thing to hope from it. Now, how they should be induced to risque their Character in so plain a Falshood, which was in the power of all the Christian World to detect, in whose hands different Manuscripts were universally spread, and that for no Advantage to their Cause; since this, according to you, at least in some places of your Letters, is a Text that they had nothing to hope from; this, I say, to me is altogether inconceivable. One would be ready to think, that if they were to forge and new-coin a Text of their own, to favour any peculiar Opinion they had embraced, they would have fashion'd it in some measure to their purpose, that they might have something to hope from it; but you say, they have nothing to hope from it, and therefore I think, this should free them, in your Opinion at least, who think so, from all Suspicion of forging this Text to favour the *Athanasian* Creed. Did I say, that you think so? I should have said only, that you said so; for it is hard to know what you think, you say, and unsay so fast, just as it serves your purpose.

You seem also to suspect the Fidelity of these Correctors upon this score, that they received the Superstitions of Popery. But I can't at all see, how their falling into these Errors, that prevail'd among them at that time, should incapacitate them for judging, whether a Verse
was

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was univerſally owned by the Chriſtian Church at the time that they made their Corrections, to be part of the divine Canon: ſo far were they from putting in any Verſe to favour their Opinions, that did not belong to the Canon, that was then owned, or taking out any, that made againſt them, that they did faithfully hand down to us thoſe very Texts, that were moſt oppoſite to their Errors, and by which we can prove their erroneous Opinions to be contrary to divine Revelation. If it had been poſſible for them to vitiate the Text, as it was not, ſince the Manuſcripts were diſperſed into ſo many various Hands, it may be moſt reaſonably preſumed, that they would have vitiated thoſe Texts, that detected their Errors; but ſince they have not done that, there is not the leaſt Reaſon to ſuſpect their Fidelity in this matter.

I had ſaid, that this Text was never queſtioned by the *Arians*, when it was alledged againſt them by the Orthodox; and I ſtill adhere to it; nor can any impartial Man think, that *Eugenius* of Carthage, and the other orthodox Biſhops of the *African* Church, could have been ſo ſenſeleſs, as to produce before an *Arian* Prince, as they did this Text before *Huneric* King of the *Vandals*, a Text in ſupport of their Opinion, that either was wanting in the then Manuſcripts, or that had been but inſerted an Age or ſo before; if they had,

had, they would not have failed to have been told of it by their cruel Adversary that *Arian* Prince, and the Divines of his Party. But you say, that they might have objected against this Text as authentic, tho' the Knowledge of it is not come down to our hands. To this I answer, That the Orthodox industriously destroyed any such Writings, wherein the authentic Authority of this Text was denied by the *Arians* at that time, is absolutely groundless, and an empty and mere Supposition, that hath nothing in all the Records of Antiquity to countenance it: nay, the Records of those Times give Demonstration to any unbiassed Man, that the *Arians* in *Huneric's* Time had not the Face to contradict the Authority of this Text, when it was objected against them by a Multitude of *African* Bishops. For some few Years after they had objected this Text, and cited it as a Proof of the *Trinitarian* Doctrine, *Fulgentius* another *African* Bishop, who was summoned by King *Thrasimond* to *Carthage*, to answer those Objections, that the *Arians* had drawn up against the Eternity of the Son of God, and his Equality with the Father; I say, this *African* Bishop cites this very Text as a part of the sacred Canon. In these Circumstances, when he had to do with these cruel, tyrannical and persecuting *Arians*, the utmost Caution was necessary, and the greatest Care to be taken, that no exceptionable Text should be insisted on:

and

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and sure, if this Text had been proven, but a few Years before, by the *Arians*, not to be authentic; if it had been then baffled and objected unto as spurious, *Fulgentius* would never have had the face to urge it again in the *Trinitarian* Cause. But all along down to the very Age before the last, it has been owned by the Christian Church as authentic, without the least Insinuation in all Antiquity, that ever it was questioned as spurious; and there is not one Age almost since the Apostles, but I can give Instances of its being cited in it by one Author or other as genuine Scripture.

I would only further drop one thing, with respect to the Postscript of your last Letter, concerning the Necessity of preserving Vouchers of modern Relations of ancient Facts. The Instance, you give, is by no means parallel with the Case before us; for that trading Company, you speak of, who were incorporated by the King's Charter, upon the burning of the Charter signed by the King, the Company were dissolved, until they had their Charter renewed by him again, which he ought in Justice to have done. But upon the failing of the original *Autographs* of the sacred Penmen, those Copies, that were faithfully taken from them, and exactly transcribed, as far as they were conform to the original *Autographs*, they were of the same Authority with the *Autographs* themselves; nor was it essential to the Copy's being authentic and having its full Authority,

thority, that it should be an *Autograph* Copy, written by the sacred Penmen themselves; as in the other Case it was necessary, that the Charter should have the King's Seal, from which it deriv'd its Authority only; and a Copy in that Case, tho' never so exact and conform to the original Charter, could have no Authority, not being signed, to lay a Foundation for their claiming the Privileges of a Corporation by it: so that you see, there is a manifest Difference betwixt the two Cases, and there is no arguing from the one to the other. Indeed, according to your way of arguing, there is no standing against the Deist, and you give up the Cause intirely to them: for if the want of the original Charter, which according to you stands in place of the *Autographs*, nullifies the Copies, as not having Vouchers, all the Copies in the Christian World of the Holy Scriptures, whether *Greek* and *Latin* Manuscripts, or printed Copies of whatever Language, are void and null, and of no manner of Authority, tho' never so conform to the *Autographs*; because the original *Autographs* their Vouchers are perished. I don't question, but you have Sagacity enough to see, that this leads directly to open Deism.

Sir, I would inform you, in answer to your last, where there are more *Greek* Manuscripts than that in *Ireland*, that have this seventh Verse in the Body of the Text; and also by what Authority, I say, that *Dydimus* omitted

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ted the 6, 8, 9, &c. Verses, as well as the seventh. But I suppose, by this time, you are satisfied of the Truth of it *. And indeed, by the by, I think, you should have known something by some good Authority, what Verses *Dydimus* omitted, before you made an Objection from his omitting the seventh Verse, and laid any Weight upon it; for if he omitted the sixth before, and the eighth, ninth, tenth, &c. Verses after it, there is no room left for objecting against the Authentickness of the seventh, because it is omitted, seeing he omits so many. This is all at present from,

S I R,

Your most obedient,

and very affectionate,

humble Servant,

J. SLOSS.

* There is another *Greek* Manuscript which has this seventh Verse in the Body of the Text, in the King of *Prussia's* Library at *Berlin*.

F I N I S.

Tho: Smallbone

1774.



