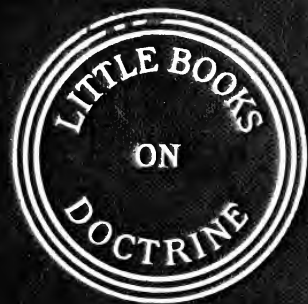


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# OUR LORD AND MASTER

A BRIEF STUDY OF THE  
CLAIMS OF JESUS CHRIST

BY

REV. JESSE BOWMAN YOUNG, D. D.

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## FOREWORD.

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SOME of the reasons why the Lord Jesus is regarded as worthy of the highest honor on earth and in heaven are herewith suggested, with brevity, and from a standpoint which needs to be freshly occupied. In making this presentation we hold in abeyance, of choice, many of the stock arguments which have been in vogue as upholding the doctrine of the Divinity of our Lord, and we emphasize others which, in view of our own age and in connection with the needs of the younger generation of inquirers into Biblical truth, may wisely be brought into bolder relief. It has not been forgotten in dealing with this lofty theme that the most convincing proofs of the superhuman relations and gracious power of Jesus Christ are

available only to those who love and obey him. While this argument from human experience is most comforting and satisfying, yet in an age of doubt and in a time when assaults are being made upon the Master's claims from many sides, even the devoutest Christian believer may need to be reassured by a consideration of some of the facts and proofs which will re-enforce, supplement, and give new buttresses to, his faith. Some of these other proofs are herein restated, with the hope and prayer that they may glorify and honor the King.

JESSE BOWMAN YOUNG.

WALNUT HILLS, CINCINNATI, OHIO.



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# OUR LORD AND MASTER.

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## ¶ 1. A VITAL QUESTION.

One question, asked from time to time through the centuries, and uppermost in theological inquiry to-day, goes to the very heart of the Christian faith, "Is Jesus Christ Divine?" The relation of this question to other central teachings of the gospel, such as atonement, forgiveness, worship, and world-wide evangelization; its direct and inevitable bearing upon human belief, experience, character, and conduct; and the foremost place which it has occupied in the thought and researches and deliberations of the Church in every age, indicate the scope and significance of the subject thus brought to view. If the Christ of the Gospels is in

any full and proper sense divine, possessing jurisdiction over the human race, and entitled not only to our gratitude and love, but to our worship, then it would seem to be of inestimable importance that we should secure a clear apprehension of the facts in the case, and act in accord with them; not merely in order to cherish an intelligent belief, but that we may be able to state lucidly and convincingly the reasons on which our faith is erected. Even a well instructed child in a Christian household ought to be able to give, off-hand, the reasons why our Lord is adored, obeyed, and enthroned in human hearts as the One who is mighty to save.

The subject thus brought to view, it may be frankly acknowledged, is vast and manifold in its range and relations. The divinity of Christ is a theme which has occupied the minds and subsidized the pens of the greatest theologians of the ages; hundreds of volumes have been written upon it; every com-

plete work on Christian theology has given ample space to its consideration; it is recognized by friend and foe alike as having a fundamental relation to the whole system of Christianity; belief in it divides off the orthodox world from those who may—without offense and for the lack of a more convenient term—be styled heterodox, who accept Jesus as a religious genius, as perhaps the greatest of teachers, but who regard him as simply and only a man. The vital character of the discussion may therefore be taken for granted.

This thesis may be presented and argued from many standpoints; in a brief, modern, and suggestive presentation of the case we need to single out from the variety of facts and arguments which support the doctrine a few which by their timeliness, their connection with the intellectual temper of our age, their simplicity and directness, can not be evaded or reasonably denied. Such a statement, indeed, is required by the widespread

conviction which is evident in our day that to each generation of Christian believers there is due a fresh putting of its beliefs, set forth in its own language, and couched as far as possible in untechnical terms. While this principle is particularly true of the arguments in support of the evidences of Christianity, it has its application also to the cardinal doctrines of the Bible, and when rightly applied it will often demonstrate the fact that objections and difficulties which appear in our time as affecting these doctrines are in large measure relieved, and sometimes entirely obviated, by a modern statement of the truth in the case. The difficulties may be found to inhere, not in the substance of the doctrines, but in the form in which these elements of theology have sometimes been enshrined.

## ¶ 2. MODERN METHODS NEEDED.

We need not take it for granted, in such a discussion as this, that the old arguments

are obsolete. The old phraseology is not necessarily untrue; it is simply archaic; in its method, spirit, and form it belongs to another time. The old-fashioned lines of proof in regard, for instance, to this doctrine under discussion, placed great stress upon alleged Trinitarian distinctions in the Deity to be found in the Old Testament,—such as the utterance of the Creator, “Let us make man in our image” (Gen. i, 26), and the supposed appearances of our Lord as the “Angel of the Covenant” to the patriarchs and prophets, in anticipation of his final incarnation; the types and ceremonies of the Jewish law as foreshadowing his coming; the literal application of scores of “proof-texts,” taken from various parts of the Old Testament, to the life and ministry of our Lord; the miracles which he wrought, the prophecies which he exemplified, the titles which he bore, the Divine attributes which he exercised, and the Divine actions which he performed. Upon these chiefly,

and somewhat in the order thus outlined, the argument for our Lord's supreme Divinity was grounded.

We need not attempt in this connection to define the intrinsic or relative importance of these arguments as they may be reviewed in the light of the new knowledge which now floods the world and as judged by the critical methods which have won for themselves an assured standing in Bible-studying circles everywhere. The question is rather one of emphasis; of the relative place to be given this argument or that; of the order in which the different truths shall be marshaled in order to be most convincing. And yet it may be honestly acknowledged that certain methods and arguments which were convincing and satisfactory in other ages are hardly cogent to-day. It does not, however, follow that the truths themselves have been undermined; they may simply need to be restated and to be enforced and substantiated by better processes of reasoning and more mod-



ern proofs. We believe that this line of discussion finds a particularly impressive illustration in the doctrine now in view. In studying it we begin at a different place from that at which the fathers began; we put the stress on other phases of the truth than those which they emphasized; we have a very different perspective, personal, historical, and theological, from theirs; and we see the facts illuminated with greater light than did they. Hence, without ignoring the old arguments, we may rejoice in the new visions of truth granted to us to-day.

### ¶ 3. GOD'S UNITY FUNDAMENTAL.

Further, we may escape much perplexity if we cease to puzzle ourselves with certain insoluble problems connected with the Divine Being, such as theologians have tried in vain to make clear by the terms "hypostatic union," "person," "eternal generation," and other words of that sort. At the very start we may guard ourselves against

error by reflecting on the unmistakable fact that one of the fundamental truths of the Bible is the unity of God. We can afford to put the emphasis in this connection just where the Savior himself placed it when he cited the passage (Deut. vi, 4; Mark xii, 29), "The Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength." The same truth was taught by St. Paul, as evidenced by his words (1 Tim. i, 17), "Now unto the King eternal, incorruptible, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever;" and (1 Tim. vi, 15) where he portrays the Almighty as "the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords." In view of the clear teachings of Scripture on this subject, no man should allow himself to be diverted by doctrinal complexities, or speculative ambiguities, or mediæval definitions from the fundamental fact of the Divine Unity.

It is a foolish and an inexcusable thing for

Christians to become so confused in their conceptions of the Deity as to fancy for a moment that there are three Gods, instead of One; and yet we venture to intimate that many have grown up in orthodox Churches with that pagan idea taking full possession of their minds, largely in consequence of a misapprehension and a mistaken use of the term Person, as employed by theologians to define the distinction between the "Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit;" and furthermore, in view of a vain attempt to formulate, speculatively, this distinction into a satisfying doctrine of the Trinity. For our present purposes there is little need of any such attempt. It will more nearly meet our current needs if we may clearly set forth the unmistakable judgment of our Lord himself, of his disciples, and of the Church since his day, pertaining to his authority, rank, and place in the scale of being, without befogging our minds with the technical phases of theological speculation or attempt-

ing to unfold the inner life of Deity by a system of metaphysical guesswork. The Gospel question is not, "What think ye of the doctrine of the Trinity?" but rather, "What think ye of Christ?"

#### ¶ 4. CHRIST'S MATCHLESS CHARACTER.

In aiming at an honest and assured answer to the question, Is Christ Divine? we may wisely begin by a consideration of himself, as he stands before the centuries, the most commanding figure in all history, the type and the embodiment of the moral ideals that have given character to Christendom, a matchless personality. We need not for the purposes of the moment stop to discuss questions pertaining to prophecy, or miracles, or inspiration; we are face to face with One who is fairer than the children of men and altogether lovely, and in his presence these questions drop into abeyance as though conscious of their ineptitude. Here is One who, born in obscurity, and reared in toil and

poverty, and executed as a criminal early in his thirties, is to-day the moral Master of the modern world, dominating our civilization, deciding ethical standards, exerting even in pagan lands a vivifying and transforming influence upon human character, standing at the head of a great army enlisted for the conquest of the globe in his name, and everywhere renewing by his Word and example the higher life of mankind. Who in all the ages is worthy to take place by his side?

The sinlessness of his life gives him absolute uniqueness, while the virtues and graces which he embodied make him a pattern for the race. Some of his qualities—humility, meekness, forgiving love, compassion for the outcast and the lost—were hardly known until he revealed them by his example; and they were never known at all in union with courage, heroic fortitude, commanding leadership, world-wide enterprise, and supreme wisdom, such as he manifested. His perfect

life contains in it all possible human perfections blended and correlated, the courage of the soldier, the fortitude of the martyr, the dignity of the commander, the simplicity of the child, the tenderness of womanhood, the majesty of the King. In his thirty years of obscurity and labor at Nazareth, and in the three years of his public ministry, he illustrated all the virtues that can adorn human character, in their fullness and fruition.

As a teacher he dealt with the greatest of questions,—the nature of God, the doctrine of prayer, the problems of sin, forgiveness, death, immortality,—problems which still stagger and baffle men, even the wisest of our race; but he did not once falter or show sign of hesitation or doubt. Only once he said, “I do not know,”—when talking of the time when he himself was to come in judgment. As to all other matters in the moral and religious world he spoke and acted as though he had absolute command of all

truth, as though all the wisdom of time and of eternity were in his reach. And to-day, although nearly nineteen centuries have elapsed since he walked the earth, no man has gone beyond what he taught in regard to these critical problems of human duty and destiny. Indeed, if we turn away from what he said concerning these topics we are left to grope in darkness, without help and without hope. Taken all in all, he stands before us as the sanest, most harmonious, discerning, wise, and courageous human soul ever known, the greatest of teachers and reformers, the gentlest, most considerate, and loving of friends, and the flower of mankind!

¶ 5. SUPREME TEACHER, PERFECT EX-  
AMPLE.

At the very outset of our inquiry we may pertinently ask what Jesus believed and taught concerning himself. What claims did he make in his own behalf? Did this Man know who he was? Were his own character

and consciousness and mission clear to himself? Did he speak assuredly concerning his own nature? Is his testimony in his own behalf compatible with the notion that he was a man like other men, only with an intenser religious consciousness? Did he assume an attitude with regard to both man and God that no mere man would dare to take? Can his own words with regard to his authority and mission be rationally construed except on the hypothesis that he was of another order of Being? What attitude did he take in relation to the race? What authority did he assume over men? Did he exhibit characteristics which—notwithstanding his genuine manhood—place him in a category by himself alone, apart from all other men in any age or land? These are some of the questions which must be faced and answered in the task before us. And all who recognize the perfect poise of his nature, and who appreciate his unparalleled insight into human motives and his mastery



of all moral and religious questions, ought to be willing candidly to weigh his judgments, his testimonies, and his claims as embodied in his own words, assuredly reckoning that what he said was true.

There are two facts to be borne in mind in advance of the consideration of our Lord's declarations about himself. The first is this: He is recognized on all sides as the supreme ethical teacher of the ages. More and more the moralities, the laws, and the institutions of the world are being built upon the foundation which he laid. The moral and religious ideals which are now regarded by the best judges as the noblest that have ever been cherished, are, it is conceded on all sides, the fruit of his character and his teachings. It would be easy to show that many skeptics, who deny his Divinity, are quick to acknowledge this fact. Two or three citations may serve to justify this statement. Lecky, the rationalistic historian, concedes that "in the character and example of Christ

is an enduring principle of regeneration." John Stuart Mill, philosopher, critic, agnostic, testifies: "Everything which is excellent in ethics may be brought within the sayings of Christ without doing violence to the language. He is . . . the ideal representative and guide of humanity." And, not to multiply witnesses, Renan declares that "the person of Jesus is at the highest summit of human greatness."

The second point to be noted in this preliminary statement is this: Jesus Christ stands before the world as its only perfect model of character. In this respect he has no parallel. The saints and heroes who have lived since his day confess that their excellencies were due to his influence, example, and grace. He is taken by all critics and students, of all shades of belief and unbelief, as the perfect Man, the exemplar of all human graces and perfections. The child, the youth, the man, the laborer, the teacher, the preacher, the sufferer, the tempted, the ruler,

and the subject, all find in his life and teachings their highest models.

It is in view of these two almost universally acknowledged truths—his supreme station as a moral Teacher and Guide, and his matchless perfection as a Man—that we propose to examine his claims as embodied in his own words. What did this Teacher, on whose utterances the best ideals and the wisest institutions are now builded, whose moral teachings are the basis of ethics throughout Christendom, teach concerning himself? Further, what did this perfect Man, who claimed that none of his enemies could convict him of sin, and that he always did the things which were pleasing to his Father, testify concerning his own Being, relationship, authority, and power? If he is the greatest of all teachers, then his teachings about himself ought at least to be placed on the same platform with his other utterances. If he was the perfect Man, intellectually, morally, religiously, then he told

the truth about himself, as well as about other things. With this prefatory statement before us we are ready now to consider his claims as embodied in his own words.

### ¶ 6. WHAT DID HE CLAIM?

There are five of these claims which will for our purposes here suffice, as they involve all others that he made.

1. He assumed the right to pardon sinners. When he healed the man sick of the palsy, as recorded in the ninth of Matthew, he told the people that one aim of his miracle was that they might "know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins." Is not the act of pardoning a Divine prerogative? Has any one less than the Divine Being been endowed with this royal privilege? In all human governments the pardoning prerogative belongs to the supreme ruler, the chief executive; no one else dares for a moment to assume it. Did Paul

ever pretend to pardon a sinner? The right to proclaim absolution, claimed by priestly authority, is not by any means this supreme function of which we are writing, which is claimed by our Lord alone. Let this fact, then, come clearly before the mind, that Jesus of Nazareth claimed to exercise this Divine prerogative, the pardoning power in the government of the universe. That claim, standing alone, would mean a great deal, but it does not stand by itself. It is supplemented and enlarged by other claims.

2. One of these is involved in his great invitation (Matt. xi, 28, 29), wherein he offers soul-rest to all laboring and heavy-laden ones who will come unto him. That he daily justifies this promise is proof of his superhuman authority and power. Of all those who have ever spoken as messengers of heaven he is the only one who has made such an offer. His invitation in any other mouth but his own would be but mockery; coming from him, and backed by the testi-

mony of countless myriads, who declare that they have come to him, and that they have found him as good as his word, the claim forms another link in the chain of Divine logic which proclaims him to the world as the Omnipotent Savior. If he can and does give rest to the soul of the penitent, the tempted, the sorrowing, the forlorn, the poverty-stricken, must he not be more than a mere man?

3. A further claim that he makes sets him forth as the supreme Judge. In the twenty-fifth of Matthew he pictures himself on "the throne of his glory," deciding the final destiny of all men. In St. John's Gospel (v, 29) he says, "The Father hath committed all judgment unto the Son." In assuming this title of Judge, and in picturing himself as performing the functions of that office on the throne of the universe, he puts a vast distance between himself and even the greatest of his followers. He assumes that he possesses a degree of knowledge, of jus-

tice, and of authority which, taken alone, involves the use of the adjectives Infinite and Divine. Who can judge the motives, the hearts, the lives of all men, and fairly assign to them their destiny in the eternal world, unless he possesses omniscience, perfect goodness, unerring justice, and almighty power? When, therefore, our Lord assumes to be the Judge of the human race he claims a Divine office and rank which forbid his classification with even the greatest of men.

4. Still another fact remains for us to note here: He declared himself to be the Son of God. He was, it is to be acknowledged, chary of assuming this title during his ministry, although several times he distinctly did so. But at his trial before the Jewish Sanhedrin (Matt. xxvi, 63, 64; Mark xiv, 61, 62; Luke xxii, 67-71), when the high priest said, "I adjure thee by the living God, art thou the Christ, the Son of God?" the reply came without hesitation, "I am." Our Lord must have known that this claim would

be understood as blasphemy, and that it would lead to the cross. Under these circumstances, then, under the sanction of an oath, and in the face of death, he said, "I am the Son of God." It would be idle for any one to allege that this expression meant no more than simply the declaration that He was, like any devout, believing man, "a son of God." If he did not mean to assume the very highest relations to the Supreme Being and make himself appear in a unique sense the representation and embodiment of Deity to men, then his words mean nothing at all. To the Jewish Sanhedrin, to his disciples afterward, and to the Church in all ages, this final testimony which he made in his own behalf meant that he was asserting a Divine relationship, authority, and jurisdiction.

5. A final claim, made by Jesus Christ in his farewell utterances to his disciples, may be indicated as transcending even the tremendous ones which have already been briefly



outlined. It is found in the Gospel of John, chapters xiv-xvi, in connection with the provisions which the Master is there announcing for the support of his Church after his departure from the earth. In several passages he emphasizes his promise that the Holy Spirit, in new power and with larger gifts than were ever known by human beings in former times, shall be bestowed upon his followers. When these various covenants are brought together they give us a fresh impression of the regal prerogatives which our Lord assumes in declaring them. Look at them :

“I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth. . . . The Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you. . . . When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the

Spirit of truth that proceedeth from the Father, he shall bear witness of me. . . . It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send him unto you." (John xiv, 16, 26; xv, 26; xvi, 7.)

At a glance one notes here that our Lord associates himself with the Father in the promise to bestow the Spirit of truth upon his disciples, and in convicting power upon the world. This utterance goes so far in its assumptions of heavenly authority beyond any which mortals might dream of asserting that we marvel how it can be fairly faced by any honest denier of the doctrine now under consideration. Jesus of Nazareth, after all other declarations of his ministry involving his supreme rank, now in so many words arrogates to himself the right to give the Holy Spirit in answer to prayer; he plainly asserts that his jurisdiction includes the ministry of the Comforter. What angel, patriarch, prophet, or apostle ever, in his most daring and tran-

scendent hours, even for a moment ventured to think of making such a claim? Were any other man who ever lived to make a promise like that which Jesus uttered in the above passages we would decide at once, and rightly too, that he was out of his senses, or else that he was a blasphemous pretender. The authority to impart the highest spiritual blessings; to send forth the Comforter from the skies on his mission of awakening, quickening, tuition and consolation into human hearts; to administer, as from the throne of the universe, the vast resources of grace, and literally to pour them out upon 'needy men and nations,—who possesses this supreme right? To whom alone does it belong? Who owns and orders the administration of the Divine Spirit? Who has authority to hear and answer prayer for his descent? When we consider with candor these questions and what they involve, and then reflect upon the unqualified promise which our Lord makes in the case, we stand face to face with one

of the unique prerogatives which he assumed, and which no other mortal ever dared lay claim to.

### ¶ 7. THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

The only way by which this argument may be evaded is to deny the authority of the Fourth Gospel, from which the words just cited are taken. There is no rational escape, however, in that direction. Those who are determined to break the force of the claim urged above can not escape from the dilemma in which the facts involve them by rejecting this Gospel as not written by John or discrediting it as an anonymous production of the second century. It may hardly be wise to spend any time just here with such objectors, but it is worth while to assure those who are not familiar with the "Johannine" discussion that the great Biblical scholars of to-day, the men who have devoted years to the unraveling of the subtle and difficult problems connected with the Fourth Gospel,

are more and more convinced that it was written by St. John. For more than half a century a fierce battle has been waged in regard to this Gospel, but for the past fifteen or twenty years the gains of the conservatives have been vast; most of the recent works bearing on the case, written by Beyschlag, Sanday, Westcott, Ezra Abbot, George P. Fisher, H. R. Reynolds, Godet, Weiss, Lightfoot, Ewald, and Luthardt—have fully traversed every objection that has been made to the belief of the ages that St. John, the beloved disciple, wrote this Gospel; not a fact, argument, or assertion bearing on the problem has been neglected, with this assured result in the outcome of the investigation, that year by year, as more light has been directed toward that Gospel, as additional scholars have grappled with its problems, as the external and internal evidences have been freshly examined and tested by all the critical methods of our time, the conviction has become more clear and profound that this age-long faith in the Johan-

nine authorship of that Book is based on facts which can not be shaken. Indeed, Dr. Charles A. Briggs, a leader in the ranks of modern Biblical criticism, says that the vindication of the Johanneic authorship is "the grandest critical achievement of our century;" Matthew Arnold suggests that the man who follows the thesis of Baur and others that this Gospel is "entirely unhistorical" evinces thereby a conclusive sign that he lacks "real critical insight;"\* and the verdict of the great German professor, Heinrich Ewald, written after he had given the whole question a careful and complete investigation, has become the conviction of multitudes who have, with more or less care, studied the Johannine problems: "That John is really the author of this Gospel, and that no other planned or interpreted it, than he who at all times is named as its author, can not be doubted or denied; . . . every argument from every quarter to which we can look,

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\* *Literature and Dogma*, p. 152.

every trace and record, combine together to render any serious doubt upon the question absolutely impossible." We are not, therefore, evading any issue which needs to be candidly faced when we place before the reader these claims of the Master cited from the Fourth Gospel. The Christian believer has as sure a warranty for his faith in the validity and historicity of this Gospel as for his faith in the three Synoptic Gospels, so called, which precede it.

Now the case is before us so far as his own witness-bearing is concerned; it speaks for itself, and needs no advocate or interpreter. Jesus of Nazareth—the sinless Man, and the wisest of moral teachers—claimed that he could forgive sins and give rest to all perturbed and needy souls; he declared himself to be the Supreme Judge of men, and in a unique sense the Son of God; and he crowned these revelations of his supremacy in the universe by pledging to his disciples the bestowment of the Holy Spirit in response to their

supplications? We submit that these asserted prerogatives of Jesus Christ, which are infinitely beyond the reach of man, must be fairly considered by those who in any fashion profess to call him Master. They are declarations which can not with candor be evaded; they look us in the eye as we open the Gospels. What shall be done with the testimony of this Man, spoken at various times during his ministry, with the avowed purpose of giving his disciples a true conception of his rightful rank and his jurisdiction over them? With what sort of consistency can an honest man to-day call Jesus the greatest of teachers, the most remarkable of all religious geniuses, the one Man who, beyond all his fellows, was most closely allied to God, without at the same time accepting the testimony which this Teacher gives as to his own place and power in the moral universe? He had matchless insight into other hearts—did he not know his own? He knew how to estimate the real and relative rank of all



around him; the believing and the doubting, the humble and the proud, the royal and the beggarly souls were all open to his scrutiny. Did he not know, without question, where he himself belonged? Is not his testimony about his own character and his relation to men as clear as the sunshine? This testimony, illuminated by the light which nearly nineteen Christian centuries have thrown upon it, can it be reasonably interpreted otherwise than in accord with the words of that ancient chant, sung in many ages and lands from time immemorial, "Thou art the King of glory, O Christ?"

#### ¶ 8. IS HE TO BE WORSHIPED?

A further truth to be considered may be fitly mated with those which have just passed in review before us, namely: Our Lord has been worshiped as Divine ever since he left the earth. Even while he was here below there was paid to him occasionally a kind of homage which was at least akin to that which

is due to Almighty God. The New Testament is full of illustrations of this truth. Some of them may be noted. We have hardly space to comment upon them.

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In Matt. ii, 11, we read that the Wise Men, when they saw the child Jesus, "fell down and worshiped him." Were this the only instance of such honor accorded to Jesus Christ we might hesitate about building any doctrine upon it, for we do not know how much these Magi knew about Jesus, or what facilities they had for obtaining the truth. It is worth while, however, to consider this first instance of worship paid to our Lord, while yet "an infant of days," as a prelude of other ascriptions of Divine homage which he received.

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Near the opening of his ministry (as recorded in Matt. viii, 2) we find a leper cast-

ing himself at the feet of Jesus: "There came a certain leper, and worshiped him." The man was not rebuked, nor was his touch disdained. The Master recognized and honored his faith by healing the leprosy, with which he was dying. In the next chapter, Jairus, the ruler of the synagogue, "came and worshiped him, and said, My daughter is even now dead; but come and lay thy hand upon her and she shall live." Once more the act of worship was requited by an act of healing, in which the dead girl was brought to life again. In the same Gospel (xiv, 33) we find this record in connection with the miracle whereby the Savior walked upon the waters, and rescued sinking Peter from drowning, "And they that were in the boat worshiped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God." Later in the same record (Matt. xv, 21-28; Mark vii, 24-30), the Syrophenician woman approached the Savior in behalf of her demoniac daughter, pursued him into the house, "fell at his

feet, and worshiped him, saying, Lord, help me!" Instead of disclaiming her worship, the Lord honored her confidence, cured her daughter, and said, "O woman, great is thy faith!"

Another typical instance is in association with the cure of the man born blind. After the healed man had been cast out of the synagogue by the Jews, we read (John ix, 35-38):

**"Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and finding him, he said, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, And who is he, Lord, that I may believe on him? Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and he it is that speaketh with thee. And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshiped him."**

Again, there seems to have been in the heart of the demoniac of Gadara some subtle instinct, even in his demented condition, suggesting to him that Jesus was an object of worship, for Mark (v, 6) tells us that "seeing Jesus afar off he ran and worshiped him." In this case before any word of homage could be uttered he was over-

powered by the demoniacal influence, and he jeered and blasphemed instead of worshipping.

### ¶ 9. THE PENITENT MALEFACTOR.

There is a final instance of this sort which occurred when our Lord was dying, and which is worthy of enlargement and comment in this connection—the prayer of the penitent transgressor (Luke xxiii, 39-43). That incident alone, taking it in all its suggestions and lessons, and weighing it fairly, contains abundant proof that the dying man believed that Jesus Christ was in some unique sense a Divine King who had an undisputed dominion somewhere beyond the grave; and that furthermore the Lord understood this to be the meaning of the prayer, and in that sense answered the petition, assuming a jurisdiction over “the world to come” which can not be defined by any other term except the word divine. Let us consider the scene.

The Master is dying on the cross, with two other condemned men suffering a similar penalty, one on either hand.

“A crown of thorns on that dishonored head!  
Those hands that healed the sick now pierced  
with nails!  
Those feet that wandered homeless through the  
world  
Now crossed, and bleeding, and at rest forever!”

As Jesus hung there in humiliation and pain there came to his ears a single melodious note to vary the unceasing babble of jeers and curses which smote his burdened heart—a strain of prayer from the parched lips of one of the dying malefactors. This penitent robber saw over the cross the inscription, “Jesus the King;” he heard the scribes crying out, “He saved others, himself he can not save;” he listened to the prayer which the Master had uttered in behalf of his murderers, “Father, forgive them, they know not what they do;” and out of these scattered fragments of truth he built up a

structure of faith that will be beautiful forever. He got hold of the idea that Jesus was a King,—he inferred that his empire must be beyond death, somewhere in eternity, and with that faith he cried, “Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.”

Under these circumstances, had Jesus Christ been a mere man, or simply a superhuman creature, endowed with angelic prerogatives, common honesty would have required him to say, “I have no kingdom beyond the grave, I am a mortal like thyself;” or, “I am limited in my administration; I have no authority after death.” But not in this way does he answer the malefactor. He gives instant and unhesitating response to the dying man; he answers as one ought to answer who is superior to pain, and disease, and time, and death, and all things mortal and human. His words are the words of a Divine King—worthy of the Lord of lords and the King of kings: “Verily I say unto

thee: To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." And then, as Mrs. Browning has quaintly said:

"Death upon his face  
Is rather shine than shade,  
A tender shine by looks belovéd made.  
He seemeth dying in a quiet place,  
And less by iron wounds in hands and feet  
Than heartbroke by new joy too sudden and  
sweet."

We can not understand how any fair-minded student can fail to see in the prayer of this crucified robber unmistakable proof of his faith in the Divine authority of Jesus of Nazareth; or fail to find in the answer which the Savior gave to the prayer an unquestionable token of the prerogatives of Deity which it implies.

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After the resurrection the women to whom he revealed himself (Matt. xxviii, 9) "came and took hold of his feet and worshiped him." Soon afterwards in the same



chapter we read of the eleven disciples on the mountain in Galilee, that "when they saw Jesus they worshiped him." In immediate connection with this exhibition of their faith, adoration, and loyalty, he uttered his commission, in which he said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth. Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." In the closing verses of St. Luke's Gospel we find the record made, that immediately after the ascension his disciples "worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and were continually in the temple, blessing God."

#### ¶ 10. NEVER DISCLAIMED WORSHIP.

It ought to be said, as to these incidents quoted, that in no case did Jesus disclaim any of the honors accorded him. Very different from the attitude of the Savior was the manner of Peter when (Acts x, 25) Cornelius the centurion "fell down and worshiped him" as though he were a god.

or a supernatural being of some higher order than man. Peter instantly "raised him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man." A similar instance occurred in the life of the Apostle to the Gentiles, as recorded in Acts xiv, 11-18. The mercurial people at Lystra, in view of a healing wrought by the two missionaries, cried out, "The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men. And they called Barnabas Jupiter, and Paul Mercury." Then, when the priest of Jupiter and the people would have offered sacrifices to them as unto the gods, "Barnabas and Paul rent their garments, and cried out: Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you; . . . turn from these vain things unto the living God!"

Furthermore, John, on Patmos, amazed and awe-stricken with the things that had been revealed to him, sets forth the same lesson. Hear his own words, Rev. xix, 9, 10:

**"And he saith unto me, These are true words of God. And I fell down before his feet to worship him. And he saith unto me, See thou do it not: I am a fellow-servant**

with thee, and with thy brethren that hold the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the word of prophecy.”

And again, Rev. xxii, 8 :

“And I, John, am he that heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which showed me these things. And he saith unto me, See thou do it not: I am a fellow-servant with thee and with thy brethren the prophets, and with them which keep the words of this Book: worship God.”

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Now, is it not clear that if Jesus Christ had been merely man he ought in all candor and honesty to have done just as this angel did, and just as Peter did, and just as Paul and Barnabas did, when Divine honors were rendered to them? He ought instantly to have disclaimed them, and instructed men to render these supreme honors to God only. Instead of making the slightest disclaimer, however, he accepted worship as his due; he acted as though he was receiving only what it was the bounden duty of man to give,—such manifestations of

gratitude, trust, loyalty, homage, and adoration as belong to the supreme God. In this policy he was consistent with his own utterance, that "men ought to honor the Son even as they honor the Father." Surely these instances of worship paid to the Savior ought to help to substantiate his claims to supreme Divinity.

These multiplied instances show us that our Lord, even during his career of poverty and humiliation, was accustomed to accept acts of homage and worship without in any manner disclaiming them.

#### ¶ 11. A SEEMING EXCEPTION.

Possibly some may judge that the case of the rich young ruler affords an exception. As this is absolutely the only disclaimer of any sort which is credited to the Master during his whole ministry it deserves careful attention. We believe that a close examination will show that the disclaimer is only an apparent one. The young man came run-

ning, knelt at the feet of Christ (Matt. xix, 16-29; Mark x, 17-30; Luke xviii, 18-23) and cried out, "Good Master, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?" The Lord discerned the secrets of this yearning but wealth-loving heart, and strove first to bring him to scrutinize his own motives and take a look inward, by asking, "Why callest thou me good? None is good save one, even God." That is: "What reason have you for this epithet? Do you know what it involves? Are you ready in fact to acknowledge me as Lord? Do you really believe what you say? Are you prepared to obey my word, and do my will, and accept my law as the expression of the Supreme Good? What standard of goodness have you in your mind?" The words of the Savior seem to have been intended to lead the inquirer to consider what his own language really involved, and to help him to a perception of what is really good. It may be also suggested that this young man was not ready at that moment for the higher

instruction which Christ gave to others in regard to his prerogatives and rank. At any rate, it is well to recollect that this is the only place in the whole Gospel history where anything like a disclaimer of highest honors can be found in the words of our Lord. This one difficult passage, therefore, is not to be taken as counteracting and contradicting the scores of passages in which he makes demands and utters claims which involve the consciousness on his part of possessing supreme authority over all men; especially as the Master by his command, immediately following the seeming disclaimer, assumed regal supremacy over the inquiring man, and took the attitude of One who is without question the Arbiter of human destiny.

#### ¶ 12. EXAMPLE OF APOSTOLIC CHURCH.

A further question arises, however: Was Christ also worshiped by the apostolic Church? After he was taken out of sight and touch, did his followers continue to honor

him with that full measure of reverence, service, and worship which is due to Deity? It will be easy to answer this question briefly but conclusively.

After the ascension of the Savior, we find recorded early in the Book of Acts an instance of worship offered to him. The eleven disciples, in the meeting which they held, sought his guidance and decision in their work of filling up their number to twelve. Who can reasonably doubt that the prayer contained in Acts i, 24, 25, was offered to the glorified Savior? Read the passage, and judge:

“And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, show of these two the one whom thou hast chosen, to take the place in this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas fell away, that he might go to his own place.”

Dr. Whedon's comment on this prayer is so terse and suggestive as to demand quotation:

“Was this prayer offered to Christ? He claims the prerogative of searching hearts. (Rev. ii, 23.) He was the true chooser of apostles. And he was customarily

addressed, especially in Luke's Gospel, by the title *Lord*; and is styled *Lord Jesus* in verse 21. The probabilities, then, are that the ascended Jesus was here invoked."

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The dying words of Stephen involve the same truth. When about to depart, he prayed to the Savior not to lay the sins of his enemies "to their charge," and then commended his soul to the care of the Son of man. The record represents him (Acts vii, 59) in the midst of the stoning, as "calling upon the Lord, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." This appeal, made by a dying man, in the extremity of danger and need, sinking in the midst of a persecuting crowd of foes, who were stoning him to death, indicates the invincible faith of the man who made it. Such a prayer could not have been spoken under such circumstances unless the man who uttered it had been a believer in the Divinity of the Savior. His act was an act of worship, if there is one upon record.



Not to multiply instances, we turn to an incident in the life of St. Paul, recorded by himself in one of his undisputed epistles, 2 Cor. xii, 7-9 :

“And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.”

Can there be a reasonable doubt in a candid mind concerning the facts in this bit of history? Did not the apostle take his greatest trials in prayer to the Lord Jesus? Did he not regard the Savior, therefore, as a proper object of worship?

Closely accordant with the doctrine of this passage is his teaching in Phil. ii, 9-11, where Paul, after dwelling upon the humiliation of Christ, “even unto death,” says:

“Wherefore, God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: 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.”

If these utterances do not indicate the conviction and belief of Paul that Jesus was in such sense divine as to be properly an object of worship—then what do they mean? The truth is that the assumption of the Divinity of the Savior underlies the whole structure of Paul’s work as an apostle, and is underneath all his writings. This pivotal truth is not only clearly asserted, but taken for granted; and, interwoven with argument, allegory, illustration, quotation, appeal, and exhortation, we find everywhere his fundamental belief in Jesus Christ as the Son of God and as the Divine Savior.

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The Book of Revelation abounds with instances of Divine worship paid to the glorified Lord. St. John tells us (Rev. v, 12, 13) that he heard “the voice of thousands of thousands” round about the throne,

“Saying with a great voice, Worthy is the Lamb that hath been slain to receive the power, and riches, and wisdom, and might, and honor and glory, and blessing. And every created thing which is in the heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and on the sea, and all things that are in them, heard I saying, Unto him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb, be the blessing, and the honor, and the glory, and the dominion, for ever and ever.”

Again (Rev. vii, 9, 10), St. John gives us another vision embodying the same doctrine:

“After these things I saw, and behold, a great multitude, which no man could number, out of every nation, and of all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, arrayed in white robes, and palms in their hands; and they cry with a great voice, saying, Salvation unto our God who sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb.”

In a later passage he declares (Rev. xi, 15) that he heard great voices in heaven, which said, “The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.” Near the close of the book (Rev. xxii, 1, 3), he speaks again, and again, concerning the “throne of God, and of the Lamb,” in a way which indicates beyond question his con-

ception of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, as One whose rightful place in the universe is on the throne, crowned and sceptered with the supreme honors of the Godhead, and accepting as his rightful due the praises and worship of the heavenly hosts.

¶ 13. NEW TESTAMENT TERM, "WORSHIP."

The question might arise in some minds, however, whether the term *worship*, as used in the Gospels and in other books in the New Testament in connection with acts of homage paid to Jesus Christ, is the same word which is used in describing the Divine honors ascribed in other places as due to God as our Father. This is very easily answered.

We have already cited a dozen instances in which it is recorded in the Gospels that Jesus was "worshipped" at various times during his ministry on earth. The original term in each of these cases is the chief word translated *worship* in the New Testament,—

*proskunéo* (προσκυνέω); it is used more than sixty times. It is the term used by Satan in his temptation of Christ, "If thou wilt *worship* me, all shall be thine." It is the term found in the command, quoted by the Savior, "Thou shalt *worship* the Lord thy God." The Master also uses this word, and its derivatives, in his conversation with the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well, recorded in John iv, 20-24. Nine times in the space of these four verses the word *worship*, or *worshiper*, occurs in this conversation, and each time this term is the one which is used. Literally meaning the act of kneeling or outward obeisance, it was used in the classics, and it came to be used in the New Testament, to express the highest adoration which the human soul can pay to the Divine Being. Out of all instances of its employment in the entire New Testament there can not be found more than two or three in which the term is obviously used in an accommodated sense to express

profound respect such as might be due from a subject to a king, or from a slave to his master.

This is the term which is employed to define the acts of veneration, the appeals, the homage, the prayers, the praises offered to the Savior, alike while he was on earth, by those who came seeking help at his hand, by his disciples in view of his marvelous works, on land and sea, by his endangered followers, in critical periods of distress and danger, and by the heavenly hosts, as witnessed by St. John and set forth in the Book of Revelation. There is no stronger term whereby the sacred writers can define the act and express the obligation of worship.

There are many other passages in the New Testament fraught with the truth under consideration, and we have had to pass by for the time the wonderfully rich and fruitful teachings to be found in Hebrews, except that we recall the fact that it is ex-

pressly taught in the first chapter of that Epistle, that the heavenly proclamation which ushered the "Firstborn" into the world was this command, "Let all the angels of God worship him!"

#### ¶ 14. THE PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANS.

Another pertinent question may arise here in some minds: What impression did the early Christian believers, the immediate successors to the apostolic Church, and those who came after them, form concerning the character and claims of our Lord? They were in touch with men who by one or two removes had seen and heard the personal followers of the Master; an uninterrupted current of apostolic testimony and instruction, custom and example, flowed all about them; what did they think of, how did they feel toward, Him who had founded the new faith? Rescued, many of them, from the worship of idols, saved from the vices and degradations of paganism—what convictions did they

cherish in regard to the authority of the great Teacher? If the worship of Jesus Christ is idolatry, if it is but one way out of many whereby honors due only to the Deity are paid to a creature, these converts were in a condition to recognize that fact at once. Were they taught simply to revere him as an example, to follow him as a Teacher, and to love him as a Friend, but not to render him any higher honors? This would seem to be the conclusion of those who claim that what they call the "simplicity of the early Gospel" was soon perverted by teachers who imported into it the Jewish doctrine of the Logos, and certain philosophic teachings from Greece, out of which grew the present orthodox doctrine of the Divinity of Jesus Christ.

It is impossible to determine how any candid student of ecclesiastical history can manufacture such a conclusion out of the unquestionable facts in the case. That there was a mutual effect wrought—a play and counter-play of forces, convictions, beliefs,



and customs, a common clash of ideas—when the two civilizations (the new one originating in the Gospel, and the old one long identified with the life of the Roman Empire) came together, and that each set of opposing forces modified and affected the other to a greater or less degree, no one can doubt; but that the pivotal teachings of the apostles as to the authority and Divine rank of the Master, and his rightful title to supreme homage, suffered any material change in transmissal, no one has any historical ground for believing.

The truth is that teachings and faith of the second and third centuries do not vary in this regard from those which were in vogue during the lifetime of Paul, and which are embodied in his unquestioned Epistles. It would be easy to justify this statement by elaborate citations, had we the space. One or two must suffice. One proof of the belief and practice of the post-apostolic Church, familiar to all students of Church history,

comes to light in the correspondence of a celebrated Roman official, a friend of the Emperor Trajan, Pliny the Younger, whose *Epistles* constitute one of the most interesting and significant relics of ancient Roman literature. Some of these letters, written to Trajan by Pliny while serving as proprætor in Bithynia, in Asia Minor, A. D. 112, are devoted to his report of certain investigations which he had been carrying on in regard to the Christians in that province. He tells the emperor that these people are accustomed, according to their own confessions, to assemble before daybreak on a certain day, and to sing, alternately or responsively, among themselves "hymns to Christ as God." This testimony, coming from a man who was trying to suppress the new faith, is irrefragable.

About twenty years later the Emperor Hadrian in a letter records among his impressions gained during a visit to Egypt that the people of Alexandria were divided in their worship—"by many Serapis is worshiped, by

multitudes Christ is adored." Thirty years after this the Greek satirist, Lucian, ridicules the new faith in this manner: "The Christians are still worshiping that great man who was gibbeted in Palestine." About the same time the ablest opponent of Christianity in that old world, Celsus, assails the followers of Christ on the ground of their idolatry. He castigates them with his lampooning wit because, as he suggests, they are worshiping a corpse, the body of a crucified man. Similar charges were brought against the early Christians on every side, year after year, and they found record even in the rough cartoons of that age. Some of our readers have seen, perhaps, a reproduction of the rude carving found in 1857 among the ruins of the Palatine Palace in Rome. The sketch represents a human body, surmounted by an ass's head, and nailed to a cross, before which a man bows with a gesture of adoration. Underneath is the inscription in Greek: *Alexamenos adores his God.*

These testimonies from the enemies of the Christian religion, based on the evident belief and invincible customs of the early Church, are of the most valuable kind, as indicating to us the truth that the faith of the apostles in the Deity of our Lord was not changed as it was handed down from one generation to another. This witness borne by the foes of the faith is made all the more impressive when we consider that the Christian writers of that early age do not deny the accusation that Christians worship Jesus Christ; they accept the charge as true, and proceed to justify their custom as the highest of obligations. Indeed, it would seem that the one single item in the Christian's creed in those primitive days embodied his faith in the Lord Jesus as in the highest sense the Divine Savior.

This faith is pathetically involved in the prayers of the martyrs, age after age. Pages of their testimony might be transcribed to show that in the hour of their examination

by torture, and when they were torn with wild beasts, given into the hands of the executioners, and devoted to indescribable death-agonies, their dying cries were appeals to their Lord as One who was mighty to save. Read their utterances, and decide from these whether or not the martyrs believed with all their hearts that Jesus Christ is entitled to worship: "Deliver me, O Christ; I suffer in thy name;" "O Christ, thou Son of God, deliver thy servants;" "Thanks to thee, O Christ; for thee do I suffer thus;" "Preserve my soul, guard my spirit, that I be not ashamed; O Christ, I pray thee, grant me power of endurance." These are some of the expiring utterances of the men who loved the Master more than they loved life, and who were willing to die rather than recant their faith or deny their Lord. Surely no exposition of their testimony is needed in order to assure us that they believed absolutely in the supreme dignity and power of their Redeemer.

In view, then, of the data which the early centuries afford, can there be any possible question as to the place which Jesus Christ held in the thoughts and beliefs, hearts and lives of his followers?

### ¶ 15. EARLY CHRISTIAN HYMNS.

From still another field abundant proofs can be cited to establish the place which the Redeemer has occupied in human thought throughout the ages—the realm of poetry and hymnody. The poets are rightly called seers; their province is vision; they are gifted with the power to see, and are endowed with the faculty to unfold, truths which are invisible to ordinary eyes. Their ministry in our own time as interpreters of the significance of nature has been revolutionary in its influence on English literature and on our views of the material world. After scientists have unfolded the structure and functions of bird and bee and blossom and sea and mountain, it yet remains for the poet to go forth by the

shore and through the woods and over the hills, and tell his story in verse, in order that men may know the real significance of these things and man's relation to them. The mission of the poet as a seer of religious truth, as a discerner of the real meaning of Scripture, as an unfolders of human faith, duty, and destiny, has not yet been fully realized.

Perhaps it may be sufficient here on this point to say that the hymn-books of the Christian centuries, taken *en masse*, may be a better index of the theology of the Church than technical works of the theologians. At any rate, who can really know the truths of the Bible until he has studied them in song? Who can understand the New Testament until he has read what the poets have done in interpreting its characters and picturing its incidents? We are warranted, therefore, in asking what the great singers have thought of Jesus Christ? What have they seen in him? What are their teachings concerning

his title and place? Of course, the answer to these questions, fully given, would require volumes, instead of a few pages. Our treatment of this phase of the question must be brief and suggestive, and must deal with but one single section of the vast field opened to view; namely, that which contains tributes which without any question are directed to our Lord as possessing the attributes and jurisdiction of Deity. Multitudes of other hymns and poems glorifying him as Teacher and Friend abound, but they lie just now beyond our scope.

But little material is found to illustrate this thesis in the very early Christian centuries, except the historical testimony, found in various places, that the Christians were accustomed to praise the Savior in their services as Divine. Caius, a Greek author, writing early in the third century, speaks of the psalms and odes then in vogue, "written by the faithful, hymns to the Christ, the Word of God, calling him God." One of these, by



Clement of Alexandria, who died in A. D. 220, has been preserved, and translated into various tongues, and is still in use. Two stanzas from a familiar version may illustrate its tone and teaching:

Shepherd of tender youth,  
Guiding in love and truth  
Through devious ways;  
Christ, our triumphant King,  
We come thy name to sing,  
Hither our children bring  
To shout thy praise.

Ever be thou our Guide,  
Our Shepherd and our Pride,  
Our Staff and Song:  
Jesus, thou Christ of God,  
By thy perennial Word  
Lead us where thou has trod,  
Make our faith strong.

This beautiful hymn may serve to emphasize the testimony of a writer, quoted by the Church historian, Eusebius, who declared that "the psalms and hymns of the brethren, from the earliest days of Christianity which

had been written by the faithful, all celebrate Christ, the Word of God, proclaiming his Divinity.”

From St. Ambrose, born A. D. 340, came scores of blessed hymns, all of them saturated with vital Christian truths. From one of them—that which is known in the Latin tongue by its first line, *Splendor Paternæ gloriæ*, we take a single stanza, which evinces the faith which he cherished in the Lord of glory:

Thou brightness of the Father's ray,  
True Light of light, and Day of day,  
Light's fountain and eternal spring,  
Thou Morn the morn illumining!  
Glide in, thou very Sun divine;  
With everlasting brightness shine;  
And shed abroad on every sense  
The Spirit's light and influence.

There was in use in Spain in the fifth century a collection of vespers, prayers, and hymns, known as the Mozarabic Breviary, from which we cite a stanza which closes one

of its most characteristic chants. As translated by Ellerton the lines are as follows:

Almighty Christ, to thee our voices sing ;  
Glory for evermore to thee we bring  
An endless Hallelujah.

Perhaps there can not be found a more typical instance of the truth which we are exemplifying than one that is furnished in a hymn written by the Venerable Bede, who lived A. D. 672-735. It will be remembered that his glorious death occurred in his monastic cell just as he had finished his translation of the Gospel of John into Anglo-Saxon. Then he uttered the ancient phrase, "Glory be unto the Father, and unto the Son, and unto the Holy Ghost," and with the last word his tongue faltered, his breath failed, and his spirit was with God. From his Hymn on the Ascension these lines will help us determine what his inmost belief was as to the jurisdiction and heavenly station of Jesus:

A hymn of glory let us sing :  
New hymns throughout the world shall  
ring ;

By a new way none ever trod,  
Christ mounteth to the throne of God.

May our affections thither tend,  
And thither constantly ascend,  
Where seated on the Father's throne,  
Thee, reigning in the heavens, we own!

A single additional citation from mediæval hymnody must suffice. It comes from the masterpiece of Latin religious poetry, "Dies Iræ," written by Thomas of Celano, a saintly monk, about A. D. 1250. Its awful majesty has won for it a matchless place among the poems of mediæval times. Taken throughout, it is a description of the final judgment, and a plea for mercy addressed to the Judge. Even to those who are not familiar with the language in which it is written, the poem in the original has a wonderful solemnity, grandeur, and moving power. We venture to cite one of the Latin stanzas:

*Rex tremendæ majestatis,  
Qui salvandos salvas gratis,  
Salva me, fons pietatis!*

From Dean Alford's translation we quote the above stanza and two additional ones done into English, as suggesting the spirit and character of the whole :

King of awful majesty,  
Saving sinners graciously,  
Fount of mercy, save thou me !

Thou just Judge of wrath severe,  
Grant my sins remission here,  
Ere thy reckoning day appear.

Lord, thine ear in mercy bow,  
Broken is my heart and low :  
Guard of my last end be thou !

In that day, that mournful day,  
When to judgment wakes our clay,  
Show me mercy, Lord, I pray !

Who can doubt, with these citations before him, that this belief in the Deity of our Lord had its origin, not in post-apostolic ages, foisted in by perverted teachers, by means of Church councils and philosophic speculations, but in the first preaching of the Gospel by our Lord and his immediate followers, and that

it has always had the foremost place in the hymns, prayers, devotions, creeds, and inner life of Christian believers?

¶ 16. WITNESS OF MODERN POETS.

Were we to begin to cite from the treasures of modern hymnology the songs which are in form as well as spirit hymns of praise to our Lord, and which are unquestionable recognitions of his Divinity, we would not know where to stop. Great volumes are packed with glorious hymns of this character. Poets, even, who are not considered to be fully orthodox in this regard, when they sing of him utter words of sublimest adoration; as, for example, Whittier:

O Lord and Master of us all,  
Whate'er our name or sign,  
We own thy sway, we hear thy call,  
We test our lives by thine!

Three citations, from hymns but little known in our ordinary hymn-books, may serve

as types of many hundreds. Take this, for instance, from Frances Ridley Havergal:

In thee all fullness dwelleth,  
All grace and power divine;  
The glory that excelleth,  
O Son of God, is thine.  
We worship thee, we bless thee,  
To thee, O Christ, we sing;  
We praise thee and confess thee  
Our holy Lord and King.

William Morley Punshon is widely known because of his eloquent sermons and lectures, but his poetry is not often read. Some of his religious poems, however, are full of melody and fervor. These lines from "A Hymn for Sunday Evening" afford another illustration of what we have been urging—the predominance in modern hymnology of appeals and songs directed immediately to Christ as to One who hears and answers prayer:

When sinks the sun behind the hill,  
When all the weary wheels stand still;

When by our bed the loved ones weep,  
 And death-dews o'er the forehead creep,  
 And vain is help or hope from men;  
 Jesus, our Lord, receive us then!

Taking still a further specimen, we find in it the very essence of the truth we are considering. William Pennfather, an Englishman, is the author of this utterance of prayer and praise:

Jesus, stand among us in thy risen power!  
 Let this time of worship be a hallowed hour.  
 Breathe the Holy Spirit into every heart:  
 Bid the fears and sorrows from each soul depart.  
 Thus, with quickened footsteps, we'll pursue the  
 way,  
 Watching for the dawning of th' Eternal Day!

F. W. Faber shall be our last witness from the world of hymnology. We cite from his hymn beginning "Jesus is God," the closing stanza, which is a didactic setting forth of the doctrine in question:

Jesus is God! let sorrow come,  
 And pain, and every ill;  
 All are worth while, for all are means  
 His glory to fulfill;



Worth while a thousand years of life,  
To speak one little word,  
If only by our faith we own  
The Godhead of our Lord!

Had we space to cite from some of the leading poets, aside from those who have written hymns, it would not be difficult to show their view of Jesus Christ. Tennyson, for instance, opens his greatest poem with the apostrophe:

Strong Son of God, immortal Love,  
Whom we, that have not seen thy face,  
By faith, and faith alone, embrace,  
Believing where we can not prove;—

Thou seemest human and Divine,  
The highest, holiest manhood, thou;  
Our wills are ours, we know not how;  
Our wills are ours, to make them thine.

Our little systems have their day;  
They have their day and cease to be;  
They are but broken lights of thee.  
And thou, O Lord, art more than they.

By the side of this citation could be placed many scores of passages replete with the un-

questioning Christian faith of the poet. Who that studies his writings can doubt the sincerity and the depth of his attachment to the Master and the Word? And who has any doubt what Vision it was which inspired his soul at the last when, almost with expiring breath, he sang his swan-song, "Crossing the Bar," closing with the lines:

"I hope to see my Pilot face to face  
When I have crossed the bar."

Browning, too, is another witness to the Divine Christ. No student of his works can ignore the spiritual elements in them, his positive and constructive and far-reaching faith. As W. J. Dawson, in his "Quest and Vision," remarks, "It is not too much to say that the greatness of Robert Browning as a poet is in no small measure due to his greatness as a believer." In his "Death in the Desert" these lines are as strenuous and ample in their orthodox convictions as any to be found in the creeds of Christendom:

I say, the acknowledgment of God in Christ  
Accepted by thy reason, solves for thee  
All questions in the earth and out of it.

· · · · ·  
If Christ, as thou affirmest, be of men  
Mere man, the first and best, but nothing more,  
Account him, for reward of what he was,  
Now and forever, wretchedest of all.

· · · · ·  
Call Christ, then, the illimitable God,  
Or lost!

In these profound words the poet has packed the gist of a great Christological discussion now going on in the world. The dilemma thus suggested every agnostic, every denier of the real Divinity of Christ, must face. If Jesus Christ, with his declaration of his own faultlessness, with his boundless assumptions, his claims on the heart and life of all men and of all ages, was not "God manifest in the flesh"—then *what and who was he?* That question demands a satisfactory answer from the lips of those who profess to honor him as the greatest of teachers

and the best of human kind. Could he be what they claim, and nothing more? We have cited generously from the hymn-writers and poets to show their answer to such an inquiry. Their vision and voice declare him to be Divine!

#### ¶ 17. THE WITNESS OF THE PRAYER-BOOK.

A glance at the Book of Common Prayer, or any modification of it as used in Churches which maintain some sort of a ritualistic service, will serve to emphasize still further the truth which we have been unfolding. While the most of the prayers therein found are directed in form to Almighty God, or to God as our Father, yet in all cases they are offered "through Jesus Christ our Lord;" while again and again, in the Litany and elsewhere, supplications are offered directly to the Redeemer. In the *Te Deum laudamus*, for instance, these words are used:

"Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ. . . . Thou sittest at the right hand of God in the glory of the Father. We believe that thou shalt come to be our

Judge. We therefore pray thee, help thy servants whom thou hast redeemed with thy precious blood. Make them to be numbered with thy saints in glory everlasting. O Lord, save thy people and bless thy heritage."

In the solemn strains of the *Gloria in excelsis* this pleading occurs:

"O Lord, the only begotten Son, Jesus Christ; O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us."

In the Litany, believers are taught to pray:

"O God the Son, Redeemer of the world, have mercy upon us miserable sinners. . . . By the mystery of thy holy Incarnation; by thy holy Nativity and Circumcision; by thy Baptism, Fasting, and Temptation; by thine Agony and bloody Sweat; by thy Cross and Passion; by thy precious Death and Burial; by thy glorious Resurrection and Ascension, and by the Coming of the Holy Ghost, Good Lord, deliver us."

The set prayer for the Increase of the Ministry is thus phrased:

"O Lord Jesus Christ, who didst command thy disciples to pray the Lord of the harvest that he would send forth laborers into his harvest; we beseech thee graciously to increase the number of faithful ministers of thy Word and Sacraments, and to send them forth among all nations of men; that perishing souls may be saved, and the bounds of thy blessed kingdom be enlarged."

We have not room for all the Collects which are addressed directly to Christ as the Hearer of prayer. This one, assigned for use on Monday in Whitsun Week, may be taken as an apt instance—one out of many:

“O Lord Jesus Christ, who didst send from the Father the Comforter, even the Spirit of Truth; grant that he may enlighten our minds with the teaching of thy truth, and sanctify our hearts with the power of thy grace, so that evermore abiding in thee we may be found steadfast in faith and holy in life, being conformed unto thine image, who art with the Father and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.”

It needs to be kept in mind that many of these utterances from the English Prayer-book are centuries old; that they antedate our English speech, and appear in the oldest versions as translations from the Greek and the Latin tongues, in which ascriptions of praise and worship by the ancient Church in many lands were offered to the ascended Christ. When we repeat these prayers and collects, therefore, to-day, we are in touch

with apostles, martyrs, and witnesses of other times and lands who adored and worshiped our Savior. The example of the Church in all ages is thus to be cited in support of this belief and habit.

### ¶ 18. THE FACTS FOCUSED.

While this phase of the doctrine of the Divinity of the Lord is familiar to theologians, yet, doubtless, there are many who have simply taken it for granted, and have never come to realize how complete the demonstration is made when all the facts and teaching of the Word are brought to a focus in the case. With these data in view, no one can doubt that immediately after he left the earth men began to worship him as divine. The dying Stephen, the Apostle Paul, the Apostle John, and those whom they instructed, seem to have had no question as to the proper rank which the Savior occupied in heaven, or the share of reverence and homage which was due to him on earth. From the

time of the apostles till this day of grace in which we live he has been unceasingly adored by an increasing number of believers. Those who, while accepting the Lord Jesus as a Guide and Teacher, have yet refused to honor him as in any proper sense Divine, have always made up an inconsiderable proportion of the Christian brotherhood. Only a few, comparatively, among all those who have accepted the Bible as containing a revelation of God's grace to the world, have ever doubted the Divinity of the Savior, who was followed to the skies by growing acclamations of praise and homage and worship.

Moreover, no forms of Christian belief have amounted to much except those phases which have been built upon the fundamental doctrine of his Divinity. Divided as the denominations are in some respects, separated far apart as are the Protestant from the Roman Catholic and the Greek Churches, this central and essential truth, among others, they hold in common, that the Lord Jesus



Christ was not only "truly man," but that he was also "truly God," and that as God he is entitled to the worship, service, loyalty, and honor that are due from man to God. All these Churches, whatever may divide them asunder, are one when they look towards the Sun of righteousness, the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world; and all of them may aptly join in singing Isaac Watts's wonderful hymn:

"Jesus is worthy to receive  
Honor and power Divine;  
And blessings more than we can give  
Be, Lord, forever thine!

The whole creation join in one  
To bless the sacred name  
Of him who sits upon the throne,  
And to adore the Lamb."

### ¶ 19. THE TESTIMONY OF EXPERIENCE.

As we hinted in the preface, there are invincible proofs of the divine care, love, and power of Jesus Christ which are put within the reach of those who trust him.

Countless myriads have, since the days of St. Paul, been able to accord with his testimony, and declare—some of them in the face of martyr fires and other forms of torture inflicted upon them because of their fealty to their Redeemer,—“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.” Such witnesses are found to-day in every land under the skies. They know by personal experience the resources, the tenderness, the authority, the love, the mercy, and the omnipotent power of Jesus. Substantially their creed is a very simple one—about what that of the Roman centurion of Capernaum was: “I believe in the almighty power of Jesus of Nazareth!” They have poured into his listening ear their confession of sin; they have found, at his feet, guidance in perplexity and light in time of impenetrable darkness; they have gone to him with the daily story of their weakness, their trials,

their perils, their temptations; and they have been made conscious of his presence, his help, his sympathy, and his care.

Their knowledge of him as a present, Divine Savior, with whom they hold daily fellowship, is inwrought into their very life; it has become a part of their souls. They know him by a direct act of cognition, and by virtue of a life of communion which has stood the test of all the vicissitudes, dangers, temptations, and sorrows through which they have come. Whatever else they may doubt, of this one truth they have no question,—Jesus Christ is an Almighty Savior. The declaration of the mountaineer, “I know that Jesus Christ is Divine, because he forgave my sins; he saved my soul!” was not only good theology, but good logic.

This Man is the Creator of the new moral life which throbs through the modern world; he is the Maker of saints, ancient and modern, on earth and in heaven. Living witnesses by the million can be found

to testify that he found them in their sins—perhaps living in gross and brutal wickedness or steeped in the savageries of heathen lands; that he forgave them, revealed to them a new life of peace and joy and hope; that he cleansed and renewed them, and built them up into sainthood. Myriads can testify after this fashion: “In ocean storms and on the field of battle; in tropical jungles, with wild beasts on every side; face to face with mobs; in the midst of cannibals; when carrying burdens of responsibility and toil and care which seemed intolerable; when heartbroken with bereavement; when struggling with secret sins and with temptations which took hold on the very foundations of our life, and in manifold other vicissitudes and adventures we have called on the Lord Jesus in prayer for help. While we prayed, we found a strange and blessed calm administered to our quaking hearts. We have realized his presence as surely as though he had appeared visibly to our eyes. His

responses to our cries, his anointing touch, his immediate help, his gracious deliverances wrought in our behalf, and, more than all, the constant supply of grace and peace which he has administered to us in our daily needs, have made him the most real and blessed of friends and comforters. Whatever may be the limitations of our vision and our knowledge, this one thing we know: Jesus Christ is a Friend who sticketh closer than a brother; he is a Counselor of the ignorant and a Helper of the dependent and the needy. We have trusted him and have not been confounded."

These testimonies come from all quarters, all lands, all classes. From the store and the farm, the office and the shop, the street and the home, the prison and the palace, from kings and from peasants, from cabinet officers and from workers in mines, issues the stream of testimony, bearing its tribute to the existence, the care, the blessed power of the Master. Those who have submitted their

lives to the authority of Christ, who have trusted in him, who have given their services, their adoring love, their deepest loyalty, their highest homage to him, year after year, and are able to testify that they have found his grace sufficient to their utmost needs, are literally representative of all sorts and conditions of men. Typically, therefore, it is the whole human race which cries out in view of the divine character and jurisdiction of Jesus Christ, the Lord from heaven, our Redeemer and King—

“Worship, honor, power and blessing  
Thou art worthy to receive;  
Loudest praises, without ceasing,  
Meet it is for us to give!  
Help, ye bright angelic spirits,  
Bring your sweetest, noblest lays;  
Help to sing our Savior’s merits,  
Help to chant Immanuel’s praise!”

If, then, the apostles taught the Divinity of Jesus Christ; and if the vast majority of Christians who have lived in the world since

their day have, without any hesitation or question, accepted from the heart that truth as a fundamental part of Christian doctrine, who can reasonably reject it? The theory that all these teachers and believers, beginning with those who knew him when on the earth, and reaching through the ages down to our time, could have been mistaken; that the Greek Church, the Roman Catholic Church, the Protestant Churches—almost the whole body of believers, ancient, mediæval, and modern—could have misconceived, misconstrued, and misrepresented the character and authority of the Savior, worshiping him without warrant, putting him in their thoughts and by their teaching where he had no right to be,—namely, on the throne of the universe,—who can rationally support such a preposterous supposition?

#### ¶ 20. CONCLUSION.

A single further suggestion must here suffice: There is no discrepancy between the

doctrine of the Unity of God, and the Divinity of Christ. We are not taught that there are two or three objects of worship; there are not three Divine Beings set forth as worthy of adoration—"The Lord our God is one Lord." We are not bound here to formulate a doctrine of the Trinity which will correlate the truths which we have been studying and make them logically and theologically one. That task we leave for the theological seminary and for teachers of Divinity. It will suit our aim for the time if we agree upon this brief statement of the truth in the case: We worship only one God; he has revealed himself as our Father, yearning over us, providing for us, protecting us with Fatherly care and love; he has revealed his power, grace, wisdom, and forgiving and renewing mercy in the life, the ministry, the character and the divine-human Person of Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord; and also in the ministrations



of his Holy Spirit, the Comforter, so fully, absolutely, and clearly, that in all these revelations, manifestations, relations, and unfoldings of himself to man, he is to be adored and worshiped. It is not incumbent upon us to solve, or even to formulate our notions of, the mystery of these relations. It may suffice for us to realize that we may sing:

Father! beneath thy sheltering wing  
In sweet security we rest,  
And fear no evil earth can bring;  
In life, in death, supremely blest.

And while we worship God as our Father, we do not deprive him of any glory when from the depths of our souls we also sing:

Hosanna to the living Lord!  
Hosanna to the incarnate Word!  
To Christ, Creator, Savior, King,  
Let earth, let heaven, Hosanna sing!

And at the same time we are not doing despite to Him who is great and greatly

to be praised, and whose "greatness is unsearchable," when in the same breath we cry out in adoration and prayer:

Holy Ghost, with light divine,  
Shine upon this heart of mine;  
Chase the shades of night away,  
Turn my darkness into day!

Thus, as Christian hymnology has so abundantly shown in every century, we may not only offer homage to God as our Father, directly, but we may also sing with heart and voice:

Jesus, thou everlasting King,  
Accept the tribute which we bring;  
Accept thy well-deserved renown,  
And wear our praises as thy crown.

#### ¶ 21. APPENDIX.

For many readers the following supplementary matter, setting forth various forms of the orthodox doctrine of the Divinity of our Lord, may be deemed helpful and suggestive, as evidencing the doctrinal mold into

which the truth under consideration fixed itself from ancient times :

### 1. THE APOSTLES' CREED.

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth :

And in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord ; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried ; he descended into hell ; the third day he rose from the dead ; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty ; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

### 2. THE NICENE CREED.

The first Ecumenical Council of the Church, held at Nicæa, in Bithynia, Asia Minor, in the year 325 A. D., formed the first great organized expression of Christian belief as to the central truths of Christianity. Particular attention was paid to the doctrine of the Divinity of the Savior, and the discussions took a wide range ; but the unified

judgment of nearly all the members of the Council found record at last in what became known as the Nicene Creed. This Creed, with some additions to the last article, made in A. D. 381 by the Council of Constantinople, and slightly modified for use by the Western Church, ran substantially as follows, omitting the anathemas which in that far-off age were denounced against those who rejected the orthodox faith :

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things, visible and invisible :

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, Begotten of the Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, Begotten, not made, Being of one substance with the Father; by Whom all things were made; Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made Man, and was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate; He suffered and was buried, and the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.

I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of life; who proceedeth from the Father and the Son; who

with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified; who spake by the prophets:

And I believe in one Catholic and Apostolic Church: I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins; And I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

### 3. THE FIRST AND SECOND ARTICLES OF RELIGION.

The Thirty-nine Articles of Religion of the Anglican Church were adopted by that body in 1571. With some modification adapting certain Articles to the use of believers in this country, the Articles were adopted by the Protestant Episcopal Church in 1801. From these Thirty-nine Articles John Wesley selected twenty-four for use by his Methodist Societies in 1784, when they were about to organize themselves into the Methodist Episcopal Church. That body added, in 1804, an additional Article, and these twenty-five Articles constitute a part of the doctrinal basis of that denomination. The Articles which bear upon the theme discussed in the present volume are as follows, cited from the original

form in the Prayer-book of the Church of England:

ARTICLE I. *Of Faith in the Holy Trinity.*

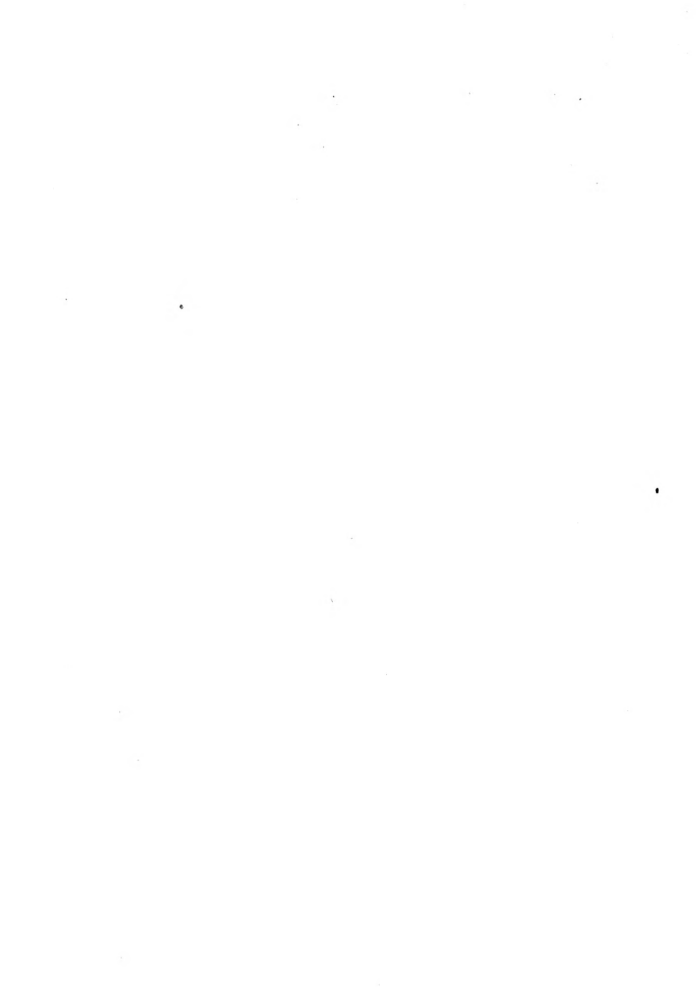
There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body, parts or passions; of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness; the Maker and Preserver of all things, both visible and invisible. And in the unity of this Godhead there be three Persons, of one substance, power, and eternity; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

ARTICLE II. *Of the Word or Son of God, which was made very Man.*

The Son, which is the Word of the Father, begotten from everlasting of the Father, the very and eternal God, and of one substance with the Father, took Man's nature in the womb of the blessed Virgin, of her substance; so that two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the Godhead and Manhood, were joined together in one Person, never to be divided, whereof is one Christ, very God and very Man; who truly suffered, was crucified, dead and buried, to reconcile his Father to us, and to be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for the actual sins of men.

Mr. Wesley, in the version of the Articles which he prepared for use by his followers in this country, edited and modified certain of them. For instance, from the First Article, as cited above in its original form, he omitted the words "or passions," and also the term

“both” preceding the expression “visible and invisible.” He used the word “are” instead of the archaic form “be” in the second sentence. From the Second Article he omitted the expression “begotten from everlasting of the Father,” thus at one stroke eliminating from the doctrinal basis of American Methodism one of the most useless and vexatious of theological controversies, that pertaining to what theologians have called “the eternal Generation of the Son.” The words “of her substance” were also left out, and the third word of the Article, “which,” properly became “who” in his rendering.









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