

*Human Personality of
the Man Christ Jesus
Denied by*

*F. E. Raven and T. H. Reynolds:
Heretics and Heterodox*

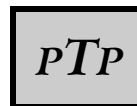
*Quotation from J. N. Darby
Concerning the
Human Personality of the Christ*

*Heresy
as to the
Person of Christ*

W. S. Flett

*Heterodoxy
Ancient and Modern
on the
Personality of the Lord Jesus Christ*

J. Hennessy



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Part 1:
Quotation from J. N. Darby
Concerning the
Human Personality of the Christ

In Part 1, some extracts are taken from my *An Affirmation of: the Divine-Human Personality of the Person of Christ*, where the matter of Christ's human personality is dealt with at length) and serve here as introductory material for the two papers in Parts 2 and 3.¹

When weighing the substance of these two papers, let us not forget how the apostle Paul set out the implications of an evil doctrine in proof of its evil (1 Cor. 15).

F. E. Raven's Denial of
the Personal Humanity of Christ

It bears repeating that the manhood of Christ means that He had a human spirit, and a human soul -- with a human will, and a human "I" (*ego*) -- and a human body. This the Son took into His Person in the incarnation, yet there was but one Person. "Ego" means "I." If there is no "I" there is no human personality. F. E. Raven denied that Christ had human personality:

As J. Hennessy brings out in the paper in Part 3:

. . . but F.E.R.'s answer to "Why He is not personally man?" involves another heresy.

He is personally the Son. You cannot have two personalities in One {F. E. Raven quoted}.

To own Christ to be personally man necessitated for him {for F. E. Raven} "two personalities," because he obtruded his own mentality into what was too high for him.

1. Present Truth Publishers also has *The Collected writings of A. C. Ord* which contains excellent examinations of the various glories of Christ, contra F. E. Raven; and *The Eternal Relationships in the Godhead*, which contains both a detailed history of the Ravenite division, an exposition of the major doctrines concerning Christ's Person, which were perverted by F. E. Raven, and duplicated copies of many papers refuting FER,

Yes, it is evil mentalism regarding Christ's Person that denies Him human personality. It is the inscrutable incarnation that prevented there being two separate personalities in the Person of Christ, for that would mean two persons. The mind cannot understand this, though faith receives it. In Him there is the union of the divine and the human. Humanity entered into His person. To deny that there is human personality in the person of Christ is to deny that humanity entered into His Person.

T. H. Reynold's Denial of
the Personal Humanity of Christ

J. Hennessy pointed out this:

In the *Synopsis* {written by J. N. Darby} we read, "His complete person (5, 18).

² Let the reader note the presentation of the Lord's divine person on earth, *assuming to be what he was not*, according to these teachers, who deny to Him a human "I." T.H.R. wrote (Letter of December 3rd, 1895, circulated in Dublin):

The blessed Lord could say "I" as God -- before Abraham was "I" am. He could say "I" as Man -- "I will put my trust in Him (God)," but when we ask who was the conscious "I" the answer is, the Son of God speaking as Man on earth.

Thus the blessed Lord is represented as personating a human "I"!! . . .

Where is the Man Christ Jesus in this "I"? This is F.E.R. and T.H.R.'s Christ! The doctrine involves the denial of Jesus Christ come in the flesh (2 John 2:7), for it denies Him to be a perfect human *person*.³

This statement in the letter by THR is quoted also in N. Noel's *History* where he condemned it, writing:

That Christ was God, possessing an *impersonal humanity*, became the Christ of Mr. Raven, as well as of his lieutenants.⁴

And this evil teaching by THR, which asserts an impersonal humanity (no ego, or "I") in Christ's person has been circulating, among persons who surely ought to know better, ever since THR made that evil statement. Next, we will see that years before, J. N. Darby had characterized this very teaching with the words, "they have no true Christ at all," and, "heresy."

This statement by THR is treated in another paper by J. Hennessy on p. 32 below. It is clear that THR learned the evil denial of human personality in "the

2. *Synopsis* 5:12; also *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 29:101.}

3. *An Answer to . . . What is Ravenism?* pp. 22, 23.

4. *The History of the Brethren* 2:547.

man Christ Jesus” from his evil mentor, F. E. Raven. In effect, THR’s statement denies the union of God and man in Christ’s Person.

The reader should have taken note that THR’s denial of human personality in Christ came from F. E. Raven.⁵

J. N. Darby’s Affirmation of the Personal Humanity of Christ

Note that in the following quotation JND is dealing with the view that Christ had a body, a soul, a spirit, and a human will, but “without a human personality or ego,” in the material that he quoted, which has been bold-faced, and pronounces that to be “no true Christ at all.” Moreover, note that he called it “heresy.”

But as I am on this point, I add, they have no true Christ at all. I read,

How such human nature, as body, soul, and spirit, including a human will, could be held in personal union with the divine, so that this humanity was complete, without a human personality or ego,⁶ we cannot understand, but we believe it is a mystery revealed for faith.

Where {is that mystery revealed for faith}? Why does the blessed Lord say, “Not my will but thine?” Why does He say, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” if there was no ego, no human personality? Why does Hebrews quote, “will I sing praise,” and “will put my trust in him,” “behold I and the children which God hath given me,” if there was no I (ego)? Why does He say, “My God and your God, my Father and your Father” (not our), if there was no personality? And this last remark, that Christ never says “our” with His disciples, I borrow from a European minister of some note, thoroughly imbued with the German system, where it is at home, not borrowed, and itself spoiled, as it is at Mercersburg. And this last statement, that Christ had no human personality, no ego,⁷ which is really heresy (though God and man were united in one person), and the mere folly of man attempting to fathom the mystery of His Person, when He has said, “No man knoweth the Son, but the Father,” is found in the Article of one by no means the worst of their doctors.⁸

So, JND affirmed that Christ had human personality, human *ego*, i.e., “I.” On p. 9, below, the reader will find Dr. Flett’s comments on this quotation, and on p. 40 those of J. Hennessy.

In the above quotation of JND, I have boldfaced what JND quoted from

5. The reader may obtain an examination of the many fundamentally evil doctrines propounded by FER in my *Eternal Relationships in the Godhead*, available from the publisher.

6. {Take note that JND is refuting the idea that Christ had no human ego (“I”).}

7. {Take note that JND equates the human personality of Christ with an ego, i.e., an “I” .}

8. *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 29:212.

someone else. The statement that he quoted he denounced as “heresy” and “they have no true Christ at all.”

It appears that T. H. Reynold’s statement and/or his denial of human personality in Christ has been circulating for *many* years, and is presently being insisted on. And so JND’s charge concerning the heresy of no human personality in Christ is reversed; to charge with heresy those who affirm that there was human personality (i.e., ego) in Christ’s person is *sure proof that the evil doctrine remains*. Support for the statement by T. H. Reynolds fits in well with a blinding to the plain words of J. N. Darby, quoted above, and to others quoted in *An Affirmation of: The Divine-Human Personality in the Person of Christ*.

The boldfaced quotation to which JND responded contains the doctrine presently being circulated. Concerning that doctrine JND stated:

And this last statement, that Christ had no human personality, no ego, which is really heresy (though God and man were united in one person), and the mere folly of man attempting to fathom the mystery of His Person . . .

The reader will see from this that JND held that personality is expressed by the “ego,” which is, of course, “I.” Elsewhere, speaking of self-consciousness, he remarked:

As regards personality, the conscious “I” is personality . . .⁹

This is true also of the man Christ Jesus.

The moment you deny personality in the Man Christ Jesus you run into a thousand difficulties and errors. What is really denied is Christ’s individuality as a man, as it is in terms elsewhere.¹⁰

Without that human personality there is no “the man Christ Jesus.” Without that human personality there is no manhood taken into the Son’s person. Without that human personality there never was God and man in one Person.

This human “I,” this human personality, of the Person of Christ is denied by THR, and others, to this day. Concerning the divine-human personality of Christ, the reader may find help in *An Affirmation of: The Divine-Human Personality of the Person of Christ*, available from the publisher. The two papers that follow herein add to that collection of the affirmation of the human personality of Christ by opposers of F. E. Raven and THR.

The human mind is not capable of understanding how the union of the divine and the human in the Person of Christ can be so, yet one Person. The human mind cannot understand how there can be divine-human personality in the God-

9. *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 32:43.

10. *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 29:212.

man, yet one Person. Faith acknowledges these things.

* * * * *

How wondrous the glories that meet
In Jesus, and from His face shine,
His love is eternal and sweet,
'Tis human, 'tis also divine!
His glory - not only God's Son -
In manhood He had his full part -
And the union of both joined in one
Form the fountain of love in His heart.

From *Little Flock Hymn Book*, 1881, first two verses of #61 (this hymn was removed from the Ravenite revised hymn book of 1903, by the editor, T. H. Reynolds).

R. A. Huebner, March, 2004

Part2:
*Heresy
 as to the
 Person of Christ*

W. S. Flett

. . . The lump -- the mass -- has been leavened with error down to the very core. Nothing short of the absolute repudiation and thorough abandonment of the System of the late F.E.R., as a system, root, stem, and branch, would be of any avail. This attempt to cover over a few sores on the surface, in order to save appearances, will not do. The constitution as such is incurably bad. The Lord's voice to every heart true to Him *there*, is "Get thee out." "Come out from among them and be separate." Those obedient to His call, after having purged themselves, so as to be vessels meet for the Master's use, may, thus broken, humbled, and repentant, surely seek the face of Him whose mercy endureth for ever, and reach a spot where they may find others (whom deep exercise of soul, and strong crying and tears in His presence have brought to the same spiritual point) *before* them there, waiting on God, wanting no will but His, and apart from all party spirit, word, or work. To such a feeble, emptied, lowly few, for whom to live is Christ, He would be found more than enough, and being attracted to Himself alone, would be led to act on His principles, and be guided into His path, no matter what the failure and ruin may be. But to remain in such a System, under any pretext, for every one who faces the gravity of the situation, is dishonoring to the Lord that bought him, and provoking Him to jealousy.

Much that God abhors has already been incontestably laid at the door of this Teaching, but the worst has now to be sheeted home. Faithfulness to Him, who is our all, and to whom we owe all, demands that special attention be drawn, however sad and regrettable the necessity for it, to the most serious matter of all -- to more than *error* -- to positive heresy, and heresy of the most horrible kind, namely, as to the Person of our adorable Lord, Jesus Christ. Apathy in such a case becomes traitorous, not to say, criminal. Loyalty to the Blessed One, who is dearer to every true Christian than life itself, forbids neutrality or compromise when that which touches Him is in question. He that is not *with* Christ is *against* Him when the integrity of His Person is attacked as to His personal humanity on the one hand and His eternal Wordship on the other.

Let it be distinctly understood that we do not pretend to explain or define the inscrutable Person of the Christ. No finite mind can fathom or solve the great mystery of the *manner* in which both the Godhead and the manhood -- the Divine nature and the human nature -- are *united* in the One Person of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are content to abide by the Scriptural form of sound words, and adhere to what is revealed in the language of the Holy Spirit. But, while making no pretension to explain what, by the highest human intellect, is unexplainable, and transcends the creature's ken, it is, nevertheless, quite within our province to test the rightness or the wrongness of any attempted explanation by another, and compare it with Scripture. This, we feel, it our duty to do, as God enables us, conscious of our liability to unwittingly err, however careful, and, in consequence, our own need of constant dependence on Him.

I. -- Heresy with Respect to Christ as Man

You cannot read the "Quemerford Notes" for 1895, without coming face to face with what fundamentally destroys the truth of our Lord's proper humanity to the injury of His blessed Person. A statement correctly expressing the truth of Christ's Person is referred to on page 132, namely, Christ is God and Christ is Man, one Christ." F.E.R. ¹¹ answered:

Yes, but you must be careful how you take up an expression like that. In Person He is God, in condition He is Man.

Mark how this ascribes all the *personality* to His Godhead, but none to Him as man, nothing but *condition*, and what he understood by "condition" is plain from the following:

But your person exists when you are not in human condition in flesh and blood (p.184).

Thus, you see, he owns *personality* of us as men, but not of the Lord as *man*. Moreover, note how all the rest of *us* (our constitution) except personality he calls "human condition in flesh and blood," and this is just what he means when he says of Christ:

In Person He is God, in condition He is man.

The "Person" is all in what He is as God, and what He is as man, is simply "condition," i e., "flesh and blood," which is what he defines "condition" to be. Do not suppose we are making an ado about nothing, or that there is any doubt of the fact that this heresy of the impersonal manhood was really taught. Those, who heard F.E.R. commit himself, knew perfectly well what he meant and what his words involved, which makes their acquiescence in it so strange. The

11. {F. E. Raven.}

following question is proof of this:

Why is He not personally man? (p. 132).

That was the doctrine taught, and they were aware of it. What did this amount to? In plain language, that Christ can say “I” as God, but He cannot say “I” as man. Is there such a thing as true man-hood that is not personal? We appeal to every child of God, to every true Christian. Is that the Christ you know, love, and adore? Is that the Christ who was crucified for you? Did not a true man, though more than man, pour out His soul unto death for you? Is the man Christ Jesus condition only? Is He not true man as well as true God in one ever blessed Person, who said, “I thirst” as *man* as truly as He said “I am” as God?

To show that we are not exaggerating the momentousness of the issue, we reproduce what is said in J.N.D.’s “Christological Pantheism” concerning the same impersonal-manhood-heresy, when taught elsewhere, so that its gravity may be weighed dispassionately:

But, as I am on this point, I add, they have no true Christ at all. I read,

How such human nature, as body, soul, and spirit, including a human will, could be held in personal union with the Divine, so that this humanity was complete without a human personality, or ego, we cannot understand, but we believe it is a mystery revealed for faith.

Where {is that mystery revealed to faith}? Why does the Blessed Lord say, ‘Not My will .but Thine?’ Why does He say, ‘My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?’ if there is no ego, no human personality? ‘Why does Hebrews quote, ‘Will I sing praise,’ and ‘I will put My trust in Him’; ‘Behold I and the children whom God hath given Me,’ if there was no I (ego)? Why does He say ‘My God and your God, My Father and your Father’ (not our) if there was no personality? This last statement that Christ had no human personality, no ego, is really heresy (though God and man were united in one person) and the mere folly of man attempting to fathom the mystery of His Person, when He has said, ‘No man knoweth the Son but the Father’ . . . The simple faith that Jesus was God and man in one person can be easily accepted as plain and vital truth, but the moment you deny personality in the man Christ Jesus, you run into a thousand difficulties and errors. What is really denied is Christ’s individuality as man.

This is explicit enough, and, observe what the false doctrine of the impersonality of Christ’s manhood actually implies! It is to have “no true Christ at all.” It is “*really heresy*.” In short, it is a *false* Christ. It is useless to shut their eyes to this, and F.E.R.’s doctrine, remember, on this point alone, was still worse, because he did not even believe in the humanity of Christ being “held in personal union with the Divine,” while the other did. Behold where this system has got to! Heresy that amounts to giving us a false Christ, and taking the true One from us, has been made light of, not to say palliated, nay, even sought to be justified.

Nor is this all. It is not only the impersonal humanity (and we have seen how bad that is), but F.E.R.’s answer to “Why He is not personally man?” involves another heresy.

He is personally the Son. You cannot have two personalities in One.

To own Christ to be personally man necessitated for him “two personalities,” because he obtruded his own mentality into what was too high for him. Being “personally the Son,” shut out for him the truth of what Christ is as *man*, so exclusively did the whole personality of the blessed Lord consist in his mind of His *Godhead*. This led him not only to deny that He was personally man, which was one heresy, but also to deny that God and man were united in the One Person of Christ, which is another heresy, equally grave. He could not be ignorant that two *natures* in one *Person* -- the Divine and the human -- not two *personalities*, is the truth of the Christ as held by Christians according to the Scriptures. Now, to call the unity of God and man in the One Person of the Lord Jesus Christ “nonsense” is as much heresy as to deny that He is personally man. We do not pretend to *know* in that sense, but the Father knows the *Son*, and the Spirit knows the *manner* in which the manhood is in union with the Godhead, -- the human nature with the Divine -- and *how* they are so united in the *one* Person of Christ, that He could speak and act personally as *God*, and speak and act personally as *man*, without, though two *natures*, there being two {distinct, separate} personalities, or, as we have been taught, “two natures in one person for ever.” Abide by Scripture, and there is no difficulty. The Spirit in the Written Word shows Christ *saving* “I and My Father are one,” as *God*, and “I am among you as one that serveth” as *man*, yet the One Person, not *two* {distinct, separate} personalities. The same is true when a question of what He does. Take Him in the boat. He is *asleep* as *man*, and calms the raging waves as *God* -- still not two {distinct, separate} personalities. The very Jesus who slept was the One who quelled the tempest, or God and Man in One Person in that boat. No human mind can tell *how*, but there is the *fact*. The same is as evident at the grave of Lazarus. “Jesus *wept*” as man, and raised Lazarus as *God*. Were there two {distinct, separate} personalities? No. Christ man and Christ God, not two Christs, but one.

Then F.E.R. had to make the Deity of Christ take the place of what the spirit and the soul do in you or me. Consequently, Godhead enshrined in an impersonal body of flesh and blood constituted his Christ! This involved a third heresy as to the humanity of Christ, the reproduction of the very old one of Apollinaris, the Younger, Bishop of Laodicea, as far back as 362. He maintained that the Logos, or Divine nature, in Christ took the place of the rational human soul or mind. This was condemned as heresy at the Council of Constantinople (381) on the ground that it denied the true human nature of Christ, and its author was regarded as an anti-Christ, though he had his followers, and became the founder of a sect. If this was heresy in Apollinaris, it was heresy in F.E.R.

When it was said:

We say of man, he is a tripartite creature, body, soul, and spirit. The Lord was . . . You do not contend against His manhood?

F.E.R. replied:

No, but you might be near error there. You get on dangerous ground in applying such things to the Lord. He is a Divine Person in manhood (p. 135).

This ought to have opened all eyes. He had no hesitation in applying “body” to the Lord, why did he call it “near error” and “dangerous ground” to apply “soul” and “spirit” to Him as well? Does not the “error” consist in the refusal to do it? Is the “danger” not in shrinking from the application? There was something awfully wrong when a professed Christian and reputed teacher could not say of his Lord, that, as to His manhood, He had a soul and spirit as truly as he had a body. This should not have been allowed to pass. The error so obviously at the bottom of thus so distinctly declining to own the full truth of Christ’s real humanity ought to have been unmasked, brought home, and dealt with. Without discussing this point further, we refer to page 135 as to the “spirit,” and page 144 as to the “soul,” as clearly showing that *Deity* took the place of both these with respect to the “man Christ Jesus,” as far as the Christ F.E.R. owned was concerned.

True, F.E.R. is no longer here; he has gone where he knows the truth of all now. But his System remains, his followers cling to what he taught, and the present leaders were as much involved in these heresies as F.E.R. himself. Their utterances in that very Reading abundantly testify to that fact. For example:

T.H.R. ¹² -- ‘A body hast Thou prepared Me.’ Who is ‘Me?’ ‘Who was it who became man? Did He, the Son, become as to Person anything different from what He was before? (p. 133).

A.H. -- But He became what He was not before.

T.H.R. -- Yes, but *who* became it? Let anyone ask that question. Who was *He*? Who humbled Himself? (p. 134).

F.H.B. -- ‘As the children were partakers of flesh and blood He also Himself likewise took part of the same.’ ‘He!’ Who was ‘He?’

Observe, there is not a whisper about a “soul” or a “spirit” as man. A “body prepared” or “flesh and blood,” but nought else except the “Son,” the “Me,” and the “He,” as a Divine Person! Perfectly true He partook of “flesh and blood,” and that He assumed the “body prepared for Him,” but was that a complete man? Had He not soul and spirit as well as body? Could Christ say

“My spirit” unless He had one? or, “Now is My soul troubled,” unless He had a soul? Or, “not My will,” unless He had a will? All these the Lord had as man, irrespective of what He was as the *Divine* Son. For these aiders and abettors of F.E.R.’s false doctrine, it is clear they do not hold the complete Christ of God’s inspired Word. Their Christ is the *Divine* Son incased, so to speak, in an impersonal casket of “flesh and blood,” or “body prepared,” everything that would imply personality as *man*, such as soul and spirit, being left out, and His Godhead alone made to constitute the *Person*. That the full truth of what Christ became is absent from these men’s conception of the Lord is very evident from their own language. T.H.R. asked,

Did He, the Son, become as to Person anything different to what He was before?

This is the denial of His *personal* manhood. As to what He *was*, that is the truth; as to what He *became*, it is heresy. As to His Person as God, He was as much God after incarnation as before it. He could not become anything as to that. It is what He was and ever *will be*. But He *became a human* Person, in addition to what He *was*, in *union* with the *Divine* Person. When brought face to face with this, by some one saying,

But He became what He was not before,

T.H.R. was obliged to say

Yes,

but qualified it out of existence by the words,

But who became it?

-- a total begging of the question, and just no answer at all. It was not the “Who,” but what that “Who” became, and he will not face it. His false {fundamentally evil} doctrine will not allow him. Now, what does the *denial* that He “*became*, as to Person, anything *different*” amount to? As to what He *was* is one thing; as to what He *became* is another. To deny that He *become* personally anything but what He was, the Divine Son, is to make the Blessed Lord just God in an *impersonal body*, and to say that He did not become *Son of Man*, which is just

- (1) the heresy of the impersonal manhood,
- (2) that of the denial of God and *Man* in one *Person*, and
- (3) that of *Godhead* supplying the place of all that implies *personality* in Christ’s *humanity*.

Now any one of these is sufficient to brand the person, who holds it, as an anti-Christ. The Son of Man He never was before He *became* flesh, and the term “Son” from that time is as applicable to Him as Son of Man as to Him as “Son of God,” while “personality” is as true of the “Son” in one case as the other, yet

12. {This is T. H. Reynolds, the ardent supporter of F. E. Raven, whose evil statement concerning the Lord’s use of “I” is quoted on p. 2, above.}

not two Persons, but God and Man in the One Person. The truth of the complex Person is what these men do not believe in, and evade. The revealed facts are plain enough in Scripture for faith to bow to.

- (a) Christ came out as a *Divine* Person simply, or God, and nothing else;
- (b) At the incarnation, He *became* what He was not before, a *complex* Person -- God and *Man* in one and the same Person; and
- (c) He went back to glory a *complex* Person -- *God* as much as ever, but *Man* besides, yet one complex Person, the Christ, and to continue so for ever.

Did not the angels recognize the difference when they saw a true glorified *Man* take His place on the throne of God in addition to the Divine Son only, that left the glory to become a babe in Bethlehem's manger? Have they ever cleared themselves of these horrors? No, and they are eating like a canker all the time they are vainly trying to cover them up. God is not mocked, and the sooner there is repentance in dust and ashes, and a complete expulsion of the evil, the better. How could the Spirit of God go on with that which has such deplorable heresies, unpurged out, in their midst? This as to the manhood, but there is

II. -- Heresy as to His Divine Person

Not much need be said on this, because it is so clearly and incontrovertibly demonstrated by reference to "Weston Notes," 1897:

Becoming a Man, He becomes the Logos (p. 127).

This is blasphemy, pure and simple, quite as much as if he said "Becoming a man, He *becomes God*." The Logos is a title {a name} of Christ as God -- a Divine title {name} -- something He could not *become*, but *was* essentially and eternally. "In the beginning was the Word" (John 1:1). There never was a time when He was not the Word. This is the *eternity* of the Word, and as true as the eternity of the Son. Hence, to talk of *becoming* the Word in time is heresy -- deadly heresy -- as to His blessed Person, and affects His *Divine* glory, as the other His true humanity. There is no such thought or expression in Scripture as "becoming the Logos." It is, "And the Logos became flesh" (John 1:14). He who was already the Logos from all eternity became *flesh* in time, not became the Word. That is false doctrine, and the flattest contradiction of the truth of His Person. This has often been drawn attention to. Has there ever been repentance or confession? No. On the contrary; it was sought to be defended and justified, which only aggravated the case. It has never been repented of, nor purged out to this day, and the co-defenders are in the same condemnation as F.E.R. himself. Not all the false reasoning in the world, nor all the cunningly-devised fables about *standpoints*, that have been invented, can make "was" mean

"become." The simplest soul can see that. From no point of view, Apostolic or otherwise, can "becoming the Logos" be made anything but *heresy*. It is no good citing orthodox statements by F.E.R. on other points, such as Christ's Deity or Eternal Sonship, &c. The heresy in this case consists in saying "He *becomes* the Logos." Then, to refer to "attendants on the Word" (Luke 1), or "handling the Word of Life" (1 John 1) only-shows how hard pressed they are for an excuse of what is inexcusable. That is, the Word *after* He *became* flesh just the opposite of "*becoming* the Word." A favorite illustration made to do service here, by some who had got beyond their depth, is to represent someone saying, "I knew Mrs. So-and-so when she was a child." The reply is, "No, she was *Miss* somebody then, and only became *Mrs.* when she was married." The irreverence of using this to explain the mystery of Christ's complex Person in the "Word made flesh" is plain. on the face of it, but how it makes F.E.R.'s heterodox expression, "Becoming a man, He becomes the Logos," any less heresy than it is, is difficult to conceive, for, interpreted according to that formula, it would be "Becoming *Mrs.* So-and-so, she becomes *Miss* somebody," the folly of which is manifest to all. God forbid we should apply it to the Christ we love and worship!

Thus the threefold heresy as to our Lord's true *manhood* on the one hand, and the blasphemy as to His *Divine* glory on the other, have been taught, defended, and are now covered up in the midst of this System, evil beyond remedy, and demanding no fellowship with, but a purging from it, on the part of all who would walk with God and please the Lord. Those involved in it may abuse the one who exposes and brings it into the light. They are welcome. The evil speaking we are used to, but the false doctrine we will denounce and call on every godly soul too denounce it with us, to separate from those who propagate and sanction it, and refuse to allow themselves to be contaminated with it. Are these deplorable heresies to be covered up that others may be infected by them and the piety of their propagators vaunted to make them acceptable? Far be the thought. The Christ of this system is not the true Christ of Scripture, but a false Christ, and the whole thing is false from center to circumference. The subtleties, fallacies, and perverse ingenuity which are had resource to in order to lull awakened consciences into contentedness with evil are fearful to contemplate. May God deliver from it. He alone can.

MAY 1905

W.S.F.

Part 3

Heterodoxy

Ancient and Modern

on the

Personality of the Lord Jesus Christ

J. Hennessy

In addition to F.E.R.'s paper, "The Person of the Christ," which has demanded a vindication of the faith once delivered to the saints on vital truth; also "Some Letters of F.E.R.," commented on by Mr. Rule, reprinted verbatim, I have quoted from F.E.R.'s papers, "Eternal Life," "The Knowledge of the Father and the Son," "Sonship -- Readings at Newport, Monmouth," revised by F.E.R. and T.H.R., Letters of F.E.R., June 29th, 1889, July 3rd, 1890, November 2nd, 1890, November 28th, 1890; Letter of September, 1891, to Mr. Oliphant, all known and of unquestioned authenticity. Letters of T. H. Reynolds dated August 21st and December 3rd, 1895, written in defense of Mr. Raven's doctrine of no human personality in Christ -- one in reply to Dutch Brethren. and one in reply to Irish Brethren -- both printed by Gibbs, Dublin.

Dublin, August 30th, 1909.

Dear _____,

F.E.R.'s paper, "The Person of The Christ," I stated teaches fundamental error. So much do I feel the gravity of F.E.R.'s doctrine that I purpose, if the Lord will, putting into the hands of saints, who may not be too prejudiced to read it, an examination of the doctrine of these papers.

The truth, from the first, and till the deflection of F.E.R from what Brethren held and taught as to the Person of Christ, has been expressed by our beloved deceased brother and teacher J.N.D. (see *Collected Writings* 10, 15, 23, 29, *Synopsis* 3, or *Letters* 1:337, from which I quote).

I would add that so deep is my conviction of man's incapacity in this matter, and that it is outside the teaching of the Spirit to wish to define the manner of the union of divinity and humanity in Jesus, that I am quite ready to suppose that even while desiring to avoid it, I may have fallen into it, and thus have spoken in a mistaken way in something

which I have said to you.

That He was truly man, Son of Man, dependent on God as such, and without sin in that condition of dependence, truly God in all His ineffable perfection, this I hold I trust, dearer than life. To define everything is what I do not pretend to do. "No man knoweth the Son but the Father." If I find anything which weakens one or the other of these truths, or which dishonors Him who is their subject, I shall oppose it with all my might as God may call me to do so.

May God grant you to believe all which the Word teaches with regard to Him -- Jesus. It is our food and sustenance to understand all which the Spirit has given us to understand, and not to seek to define that which God does not call upon us to define, but to adore on the one hand, and to feed on the other, and to love in every way according to the grace of the Holy Spirit.

It is truly grievous to witness, in the writings of F.E.R., teachings, that, if imbibed, corrupt the thoughts of those who love the Lord from simplicity towards Christ (2 Cor. 11:1-4).

I am, yours in Him,

J. H.

I have omitted and added a few words in this letter.

The Doctrine of the Person of Christ

The Holy Spirit has written (1 Tim. 3:16),

Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh.

That the blessed Lord was a real man, in flesh and blood, is as essential to Christianity as that He was God. This lies at the root and is the essence of Christianity, and a blessed truth it is, unspeakably so to us, as human beings, that is a sinless man, He was a true man, body and soul, and, one might add, spirit. This was called in question by heresy as soon as His deity was (J.N.D., *Collected Writings* 29:324).

Again, J.N.D. wrote:

Now I repeat that there may be no mistake, I hold His being truly a man, in flesh and blood, and with a human soul as well as a body, to be vital truth; nor do I think it is half enough taught or believed that He was a true man, while a sinless and holy man (*Collected Writings* 23:478).

It is of vital importance to think rightly of Christ. The Lord's question to the religious leaders of His people Israel manifested this, while it also disclosed their ignorance of the constitution of His person (Matt. 22). They acknowledged His human personality (Son of David); they were silent as to His divine personality (David's Lord). The Lord's questions to His disciples,

Whom do men say I the Son of Man am? {Matt. 16:13}.

But whom say ye that I am? {Matt. 16:15}

shows that the Lord looks for and expects a true conception and confession of His Person from His own.

Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God {Matt. 16:16}.

The

I,

The Son of Man,

was also

the Son of the living God.

Thus a divinely-taught knowledge, that “the Christ” was both God and Man, was expressed in their confession. The evidence of a perfect human personality was present in His Person, day and night, asleep and awake, during the time of their association with Him. The evidence of His divine personality was manifest in the exercise of divine attributes constantly before their eyes, however slow their apprehension of it.

What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?
{Mark 4:41}

after one miracle.

Of a truth Thou art the Son of God (Matt. 14:33),

after another miracle.

How solemn and affecting are the Lord’s feelings, communicating them from the throne of God?

I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot; so then because thou art neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of My mouth (Rev. 3:16).

Who has an ear to hear what the Spirit saith?

If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha (1 Cor. 16:22).

Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity (Eph. 6:24).

The purpose of the blessed God in sending His beloved Son was to bring those who received Him into the enjoyment of Eternal Life -- life which was with the Father -- and, in order to this, His beloved Son manifested it on earth in His life, in His words, and His works. He became man, and by His death, bearing the judgment due to sin, He thus removed the hindrance to this divine desire and object. The testimony of the Holy Ghost is to this life with the Father, and to its manifestation on earth, and to its communication to those who believe on God’s Son, constituting them now the children of God (John 1:12), as born of the Spirit, and sealed by the Spirit; enabled to cry, Abba Father (Rom. 8:15, 16;

Gal. 4:6; Eph. 1:13). The Holy Ghost affirms that the possession of eternal life brings now, in this world, into fellowship with the Father and with the Son, and the fact and effect is thus stated:

The life was manifested . . . that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ,

and,

these things write we unto you *that your joy may be full* (1 John 1:1-4).

Its possession is thus characterized by the Lord:

As Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him. And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent (John 17:3).

The Holy Ghost has been sent from the Father and from His rejected, ascended, and glorified Son, to witness to Him, and to constitute those who receive Him, His witnesses, while absent, to His person -- living, dying, risen, ascended, and glorified (John 14:23; 15:2, 26, 27; 16:12-14). This witnessing to His beloved Son is the purpose of God now, on earth, and this by the presence of the Holy Ghost, *in* and *with* His people (John 14:17). The Lord said,

He shall testify of Me, and ye also shall bear witness because ye have been with Me from the beginning {John 15:26, 27}.

To be a witness necessarily implies the possession and knowledge of the Father and the Son now; therefore the relegating it to a future out-of-the-world time would frustrate God’s object.

As Thou hast sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world (John 17:18).

F.E.R. writes thus --

Suppose a Christian dies, what is the effect of death on him? He goes nearer to his blessings. Suppose it possible for a saint to die in the millennium, he will go away from his blessing. The blessings and privileges God has given to me are completely outside this world of sense (whatever may be said about it). The highest of these lies in the knowledge of God Himself. I merely lay down these two principles. The greatest privilege you can possibly have consists in the knowledge of God as He has been pleased to reveal Himself in His Son, and the blessings peculiar to the Son are outside this world of sense altogether. -- F.E.R. at Quemerford, July, 1889 (*The Knowledge of the Father and the Son*, pp. 4-7).

In thus teaching, F.E.R. is consistent with his doctrine of eternal life as a future condition.

The Root of F.E.R.'s Christology Is, Eternal Life, A Condition

Novelty of doctrine, and brevity of language in stating it, constitute a difficulty which many have experienced in apprehending Mr. Raven's theory of "Eternal Life." First, he denies "eternal life" to be a *vital* principle. Second, he affirms "eternal life" to be a condition. Third, he gives new birth as a foundation for "eternal life" thus: --

(1) Eternal life for us is not simply a "vital principle," but a new man. (*Some Letters*, p. 8).

(2) "Eternal life" is a *condition*, but existing and expressed in such a way in a person that it can be said of Him "*He is it.*" (*Some Letters*, p. 2).

If I think of Him as the Eternal Life, I think of Him as the glorious Man, (*Some Letters*, p. 3).

I believe it to be a term indicating a condition which, according to the counsels of God, was to characterize man (*Some Letters*, p. 4).

The only time that it is predicated of Christ that He is Eternal Life is in 1 John 5:20, and then He is presented as the One who has come through water and blood, is thus separated entirely by death from the first man, and *is before God as the last Adam, the Second Man in the virtue and power of redemption* (*Some Letters*, p. 5).

I believe Eternal Life to be what He is now as man -- in a word, I believe eternal life to mean a new man in a new sphere for man. Hence I conclude that eternal life is a truth that is connected with man, whether in Christ or in us (*Some Letters*, p. 11).

It must be remembered that for us eternal life consists in a new man and not simply a new vitality. It is a new *creation* in us by the quickening power of God (*Eternal Life*, p. 7).

New Birth:

I have no question for a moment that a soul is spiritually alive as the result of new birth; still new birth is only a foundation, and is not necessarily in itself the reception of Christ (*Some Letters*, p. 8).

I do not regard new birth and quickening as equivalent. In the first I believe a new foundation is laid by the Spirit in man through the Word, while quickening is that a soul is made to live spiritually in the life and relationship of the Second Man. In a word, quickening is the equivalent of 'new creation,' and the result of it is that the believer has passed out of death into life (*Some Letters*, p. 9).

I.e. New birth is only, in Christianity, according to F.E.R., the spiritual life of an Old Testament saint. Compare John 1:12, 13, for the truth as given by the Holy Ghost.

But as many as received Him to them gave He power to become the sons (Tekna -- children) of God, even to them that believe on His name, which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God (1 John 5:1).

Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? (1 John 5:4, 5).

F.E.R.'s theory of eternal life compels him to deny it to new birth in Christianity.

F.E.R.'s New Birth Without Eternal Life

F.E.R.'s confessed new and recent conception of "eternal life" as a *future impersonal human condition* necessitated excluding Christ from new birth. It seems almost incredible that, with the inspired First Epistle of John accepted and believed, any teacher could propound that new birth gave spiritual life, in Christianity, without the reception of Christ; or that any Christian should accept such doctrine, seeing the Holy Ghost has written,

He that believeth on the Son of God hath witness in himself; he that believeth not God hath made Him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of His Son; and this is the record [witness], that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life, *and he that hath not the Son hath not life* (1 John 5:10-12).

Again, the Lord affirms,

Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood *ye have no life in you* (John 6:53).

F.E.R. thus describes the development in his mind of this new conception of eternal life: --

At the time of the Witney (1888) meeting I was a learner, rather than a teacher, though I cannot say there were many from whom I got help. *It was becoming clear to me* that the term 'eternal life' meant for us a wholly new order of relationship, object, knowledge, and blessing, etc., as well as a new being suited to it outside this scene of sight and sense, and that this has been brought to light in the Son having become man, and further that it had its full revelation as an actual condition in, and for man in Him as the risen and glorified man (*Letter*, November 21st, 1890).

What is a "condition"? A lexicographer defines it thus: "A particular mode of being applied to external circumstances -- to the body, to the mind and things. The circumstance of a being or thing at any given time."

"Condition" necessarily implies the existence of the person or thing it is a

condition of. If used properly “eternal life,” as a condition, would apply to the character of the spiritual life of a believer now, as well and as truly as to the state of a believer when in his permanent sphere glorified. The *circumstances* of the spiritual life differ; therefore to use and apply the term “eternal life” to a future condition in which that life is enjoyed, and exclude it from the present is to misuse language, and hence the perplexity of many readers of F.E.R.’s paper, *Eternal Life*. J. S. Mill, though an infidel, wrote what rebukes the wrong use of terms: --

I take my stand upon the acknowledged principle of logic and morality, that when we mean different things we have no right to call them by the same name.

F.E.R.’s doctrine of no human “I” in Christ would exclude the *manifestation of a perfect Man*. Human personality was essential to a human life in Him. F.E.R. excludes the *manifestation* of a divine life in Him also.

The Holy Spirit has written (1 Tim. 3:16),

Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness, God was manifest in the flesh.

F.E.R. has written (*Some Letters*, p. 8):

In His own person He was of course Eternal Life, the Second Man, when here in the days of His flesh, and was manifested as such to the apostles, but the manifestation was *veiled* by the part He had taken in the responsible life of man on earth.

If eternal life was “essentially,” “eternally” in the Son, as God, both in time and in eternity, which F.E.R. affirms, then it follows that, in order to *veil* that life which was essentially in God the Son, no divine characteristic of His life with the Father was manifested to the world. God *veiled to all except* the apostles! We ask, Do not the four Gospels record the manifestation of divine life as well as attributes in Christ to the world? The manifestation is not of divine *glory* to all. That was a privilege given to Peter, James and John on the Mount of Transfiguration (2 Pet. 1:16, 18). The word “manifest” (phaneroo) in the original, is defined by Greek lexicons, “Make manifest, bring to light; disclose, show forth, make known.” Scripture affirms the *manifestation* of God and of eternal life. F.E.R.’s doctrine would require the flesh to be veiled to all except apostles, for God was *manifest in what was visible* -- the flesh, and so was also eternal life. The thoughtful reader will see that F.E.R.’s doctrine of no human Person in Christ precludes a *real human life* from being manifested as well as “a life divine below.” The denial of manifestation of eternal life to *men* is the denial of the manifestation of God in Christ, for it is by His life (words and works in life, and love in death) that God was manifested.

He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father {John 14:9},

whoever the “he” may be.

God was in Christ reconciling the world {2 Cor. 5:19}.

-- If God was not manifest in the life of Christ -- even if F.E.R. acknowledged Christ to be a human *Person*, which he does not -- if only a perfect human life was manifested no responsibility attaches to man. The Lord said,

If I had not come and spoken unto them they had not had sin, but now they have no cloak for their sin {John 15:22}.

He that hateth Me hateth My Father also. If I had not done among them the works which no other man did, they had not had sin, but now they have both seen and hated both Me and My Father {John 15:23, 24}.

Challenged by the High Priest, Jesus answered him,

I spake openly to the world, I ever taught in the Synagogues, and in the Temple whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing. Why askest thou Me? Ask them which heard Me what I have said unto them; behold they know what I said (John 18:20-22).

The manifestation of God was to men, was not merely to His apostles, but to all. The manifestation of a perfect human life could not be the manifestation of God, that is, of a divine life, and Scripture affirms that the eternal life that was with the Father, before Christ became a man, *was manifested when* He became a man, and how? Certainly by, and in, His life before men. Seeing that eternal life before its manifestation was a divine person’s life, the Son’s with the Father, its manifestation did not cease in its divine character in a divine person on earth. F.E.R. only allows Christ’s life on earth to be *consonant* with eternal life (*Letters*, p. 3). One of the solemn and serious considerations involved in his doctrine of eternal life is the denial of this blessed characteristic of Christ’s life on earth.

The gospel of John presents to us a divine Person come down here -- God manifest in this world; a marvellous fact upon which all man’s history depends. In John it is God Himself, as God, who in a man shows Himself to men having come as a man (J.N.D., *Notes on John’s Gospel*, p. 3).

F.E.R.’s Proofs

Any reflecting reader must observe that F.E.R.’s proofs of his confessedly novel doctrine of eternal life, a doctrine which involves the person of Christ and Christianity, mainly consist of dogmatic assertions, and on a mental psychology, which is the product of his imagination. F.E.R. defends his doctrine of Christ’s impersonal humanity (*The Person of the Christ*, p. 1) thus:

In what I have to say I adhere therefore to two points that had been in question, which are these. (1) As to whether Christ is ever viewed in Scripture as man distinct and apart from what He is as God. (2) As to whether the truth of His person consists in the union in Him of God and

man; a favorite formula with those so holding is “God and Man one Christ.”

F.E.R.’s contention is, that Christ is *viewed* in Scripture as Man, distinct and *apart* from what He is as God, that is, though He is not a human *person*, the human mind can view Him as if He was such -- a divine Person assuming human condition, and, that the truth of His Person is not expressed in the formula, “God and Man one Christ.” There could not be the *union* of God and man in Christ, unless He was a human person as well as a divine person. The denial of the union is the denial of the human personality in Christ.

F.E.R. affirms

that the denial of the first is, while claiming to maintain orthodoxy, destructive of Christianity in its real power;

and the assertion of the second is *derogatory* and *dishonoring* to the Son, and,

both the denial and the assertion are contrary to the teaching of Scripture.

But, if Christ subsists as “God and Man” in any real sense, the assertion of the first, and the denial of the second are fundamental errors, and vitally affect not alone His person, but also His atoning death, His living priesthood, Christ as our Manna, and Christ as Head of the Church, which is His body, God’s oath to David, the Resurrection of Christ, the existence of the Gospel, as well as the doctrine of eternal life. The doctrinal basis of Mr. R.’s doctrine is that Christ, at incarnation, took the *first man’s condition* of humanity -- but an impersonal one, which was “not commensurate with the spiritual being” (*Some Letters*, pp. 7, 8, 12). Therefore its inadequacy and incompetency to exhibit eternal life, and consequently the necessity *that that condition* should be *laid aside*, and moreover, that from *that condition of humanity*

Christ was wholly separated by death, in order to be eternal life -- a new man

-- and to accomplish reconciliation, it had to be

terminated judicially in the cross, in the Man Christ Jesus (*The Person*, p. 2).

What follows this ending of Christ’s incarnate impersonal humanity? Mr. R. teaches that a risen and glorified Christ is as to His humanity a *new creation, a new man*, which he affirms equally of Christ and of us (*Some Letters*, p. 5; *Eternal Life*, by F.E.R., p. 7). In His incarnate humanity Christ was the “*old*,” in contrast to the “*new*,” which He *now* is (*Eternal Life*, p. 3; *The Person*, p. 2).

F.E.R. wrote: --

June 29th, 1889. Then, again, as to life, he says: Christ never ceased to be the exhibition of eternal life, from a babe in the manger to the throne of the Father. *Think of a helpless infant being the exhibition of eternal life,*

whatever might be there. Infancy, and all connected with it, does not find place in John. It is simply there ‘the Word became flesh.’ The fact is, there is a tendency to lose sight of the truth, that, as well as being eternal life, Jesus was God, and exercising Divine prerogatives down here. ‘The Word was God,’ and further, in taking part *in human life down here (the life to which sin attached) He took part in that which IN HIM was brought to AN END* judicially in death, and this assuredly was not eternal life.

I beg the reader to note that F.E.R.’s doctrine of the Person of Christ, which he states began to be formed in his mind at the time of the Witney meeting (1888), was briefly but plainly propounded in June, 1889. This fact is important, though overlooked by many in judging of its refusal in 1890. Christ’s personality is seriously involved. **First** of all, it denies the *union* of God and man in Him. **Second**, if Christ be not a human *Person* His death was not that of our *substitute*, for we required a personal substitute to bear the judgment for us. “Condition” is not a person, and F.E.R. maintains that *personality exclusively* pertains to the Son, *as God* (p. 3 of *The Person*). **Third**, it affirms Christ as “Manna” is not a person to feed on, *but an impersonal side* of a person, and that *on this side alone* He “is placed within the reach of our appropriation.” **Fourth**, that union with Christ is not union with a person; and that Christ, as Head of the Church, is not a person. Union with His Person is declared an “error” (*The Person*, p. 3). **Fifth**, that Christ in death did not lay down a personal life, but only a human condition, for His Person, being exclusively divine, could not die. **Sixth**, according to F.E.R.’s doctrine Christ’s present human condition is a “new creation,” “a new man.” It follows, He is disqualified from being our High Priest, for in His present humanity He cannot be touched with the feelings of our infirmities. In His present humanity He was not tempted; He did not suffer, for the “old” is ended, according to F.E.R.’s idea of His humanity, as “*new*.” The truth and comfort for us of His priesthood depends on the certainty of His incarnate humanity; having been raised from the dead, and still subsisting in heaven. Having suffered for our sins under the judgment of God, He, in the greatness of His love to His Father and to us, laid down His life, which was the separation of soul from body. His precious blood (the life, Lev. 17:11-14) was shed in making atonement. His resurrection was the re-union of soul and body. This the Lord repeatedly affirmed, and ocularily demonstrated, after His resurrection, to His assembled disciples (Luke 24; John 20). The *same* Jesus that died was buried and rose again; on the truth and reality of which depends the gospel (1 Cor. 15). **Seventh**, that Christ’s prayers to God were not those of a *human person*, if He had only had an impersonal condition of humanity; even His strong crying and tears in Gethsemane were not a human person’s. But was it not a human person who said, “Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit”? Was it not, we ask F.E.R.’s fellowship, a human person who anticipated death, when He kneeled down and prayed saying, “O My Father, if it be possible,” if Thou be willing, “remove this cup from Me; nevertheless, not My will, but

Thine be done”? When there appeared an angel from heaven strengthening Him, was it a human person or was it only a divine person that the angel was strengthening?

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was) the root (God), and offspring (man) of David” (Rev. 22: 16). The one “I” is both. A moment’s reflection on the above scriptures will suffice to settle the union of God and man in Christ. The subject is Christ. “What think ye of Christ? Whose Son is He?” “Son” is a person; “Lord” is a person. Of “Christ” two things are testified to -- He is Son of David, a man, a human person; He is David’s Lord, God, a divine Person, but it is of *one* Christ, who stood before the Pharisees, that both are affirmed. “Christ” is the personal name of Him who is both, and He is one Christ. In the next chapter, He again uses the term “Christ” as a personal name. “One is your Master, even Christ” (Matt. 23:8). A person of necessity, for only of a person could it be affirmed “One is your Master.” Personality cannot be excluded from the term in Greek or Hebrew. “Christ,” Messiah the Prince (Dan. 9th 25, 26). “Christ pleased not Himself.” “The judgment seat of Christ.” “Christ both died and rose (revived), that He might be Lord both of the dead and the living.” “Christ died for sinners.” “While we were yet sinners Christ died for us.” “That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith.” “Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it.” “The sufferings of Christ.” “The precious blood of Christ.” “When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall we appear with Him in glory.” “Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel,” etc. Two facts are established by the testimony of Scripture -- “Christ” is a term applied by the Lord to Himself as Son of David, and David’s Lord (God and Man, one Christ), and Christ is a personal name, not limited to His office. “Messiah” when official. “Christ” is a person, even as “Queen,” “Doctor,” “Colonel” are persons, which F.E.R. overlooks in his effort to denude the term “Christ” of personality (*vide The Person of the Christ*, p. 4).

The Lord recognizes the name “Christ” as that which covers His person as both the Son of Man and Son of the living God. “Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?” “But whom say ye that I am?” “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” “On this rock I will build My Church” (Matt. 16). The Church is built on a person; not on a condition, as F.E.R. teaches. Again,

God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power, who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with Him (Acts 10:38).

We ask, Was it not a human person “God was with”? even “the Man Christ Jesus” (1 Tim. 2:5), of whom Scripture affirms what is a blessed reality.

In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily (Col. 2:9).

The Constitution of the Finite Mind

F.E.R. offers no proof from Scripture for an impersonal human nature in Christ. The proof he advances is based on an *assumed* incapacity in the human mind to unite singly apprehended thoughts in one complex one, and, as a consequence, the inability to think of Christ as God and Man, in union, “one Christ.” Is this so? If this theory of mental psychology were true the revelation of God in three persons would be useless, for if we could not, after having apprehended each Person in the Godhead -- Father, Son and Holy Ghost -- singly, if the finite mind is so constituted that it cannot unite these three single conceptions in one concept “*at one and the same time*,” under one denominative term, “God,” it follows it cannot have a thought of God, as He is now revealed in the Scriptures -- Father, Son and Holy Spirit. In fact, we could not be Christians; we must be Tritheists, for consecutive thoughts, if not united in one simultaneous one, would leave us such. F.E.R. writes of Christ having a place as man “Godward.” What is his conception of the term “man” applied to Christ? He writes: --

The Person “is the Son.” “The person is ever viewed as acting in regard to His form or condition,” divine or human. The truth of a divine person assuming a human condition, the Word becoming flesh, and in such wise that He can be viewed objectively as man I believe (“The Person {of the Christ, 1895},” p. 3).

So that F.E.R.’s conception of Christ as “Man” is that He, without being a human person, has assumed a condition of humanity, in which “the Person is ever *viewed as acting*” (“The Person,” p. 3) a human part without being a “man,” while constantly using the term. This is his idea of incarnation “*in such wise*,” that in this manner, just as we read of the Lord assuming a human form when He conversed with Abraham and Manoah (Gen. 18; Judges 14). In principle F.E.R.’s conception of Christ as “Man” differs little, if at all, from a Theophany, i.e. a detachable human condition without being a human person.

In order to maintain his doctrine of eternal life, F.E.R. adopted an old heresy that denied to Christ human personality. His Christology is thus formulated. Christ is a term descriptive of a divine person (that is, the Son), who, in becoming incarnate, assumed a condition of humanity, without human personality, serving the divine person as a temporary clothing *to act in*, while on earth, and, at death, *laid it aside, ended it, terminated it*, judicially in the cross, but in a glorified condition *is “a new man,” a new creation*, in contrast to the “old” which He had as born in the flesh, but in which, according to F.E.R., He exists no longer but in a totally new human condition, a created one suited to what He ever was as out of heaven, and thus He is said to be Eternal Life (see “Eternal Life,” pp. 3, 7; “Some Letters,” pp. 13, 14).

The force of “after the flesh” -- Christ after the flesh -- in 2 Cor. 5:16 is not the flesh terminated in Christ, else what would His own words, after He arose

from the dead, mean?

A spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see Me have. And when He had thus spoken He showed them His hands and His feet.

If the force of after (*κατα*) was *in* (*εν*) it would follow that the apostle knew no one in flesh -- "henceforth know we no man." Therefore "*after*" cannot mean the end of Christ's humanity, else it would include all men. See the Lord's use of "after the flesh" (John 8:15), and the difference between "*in* the flesh" and "*after* the flesh" (2 Cor. 10:3). It means the order of condition and relationship which Christ's rejection and death put an end to. The knowledge of Christ is a new order, "If any man be in Christ," a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17). "In Christ" there is neither Greek or Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free; Christ is all and in all (Col. 3:10, 11).

F.E.R. assumes that God, at man's creation, constituted him mentally incapable of uniting several singly apprehended conceptions or thoughts in one complex one, which is a new psychology, contrary to fact and experiences. He writes: --

The two thoughts (of God and man) are wholly distinct conceptions which cannot be grasped at one and the same time by any finite mind.

Now these two thoughts, though realized in one person, must be separately and distinctly apprehended -- the one presents God, the other man.

While the last statement is true, the former one is not, for if the human mind cannot unite two thoughts, when separately and distinctly apprehended, in one, it can only have *at any given time* Christ as God, and *at another given time* Christ as Man, and, if it cannot unite the two in one complex one, it follows of necessity that it must at one time think of Him as a Deist may, and at another as a Unitarian may, for if the two thoughts are realized in one Person *they must be united to be realized at one and the same time*. *Successive* thoughts, unless united in one *simultaneous* one, do not, and cannot give a thought of Christ as He now subsists (since He became Man), *if He is in any sense* God and Man. Christ asleep in the hinder part of the ship on a pillow is a man; Christ rebuking the wind and saying to the sea, "Peace be still," is God (Mark 4). He is one Christ, God and Man, and the *fact* is realized in one person by the finite mind.

What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?

He is truly the God-Man -- a term refused by F.E.R. and T.H.R. on his behalf. If F.E.R.'s statement was a fact, that the finite mind is constituted as he asserts, it would follow that no one would be a Christian, because God is one God but revealed in three Persons -- the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. And when the finite mind receives in faith the revelation of God, apprehending separately and distinctly the personality of each, it unites the three thoughts in one complex one, under one denominative term "God"; if not, it could not have a true thought of God as He subsists, and is now revealed in Scripture -- Father, Son and Holy

Ghost, one God. The incapacity of mind, alleged by F.E.R., would result in Tritheism. The term "man" is a complex conception. We think of his constitution, first of his body, then of his soul; we unite them under one term, "man," otherwise we could not think of him as a complete being as he exists on earth. In fact what is denied, with a doctrinal object, to the finite mind is a constant exercise of it, viz., uniting single thoughts and conceptions in one complex one. For example, Flock, Church, Congregation, Army, Navy, Parliament, and such like, are complex conceptions made up of single ones united by the mind. A flock is not one sheep, but a number which the finite mind finds no difficulty in uniting under one term. So of the term "church" when used as a congregation, etc.

It is an ordinary operation of the human mind, so constant that it is not observed till attention is directed to it.

John Locke ("On the Human Understanding," Book 2, chap. 12), writes thus:

As single ideas are observed to exist in several combinations united together, so the mind has power to consider several of them united together as one idea, and that not only as they are united in external objects, but as itself has joined ideas thus made up of several simple ones put together I call complex.

Thomson ("Laws of Thought") writes: --

Notions formed from several objects are called conceptions, as being produced by the power which the mind possesses of taking several things together (Part 1, of Conceptions).

Taylor ("Elements of Thought") writes: --

The power of the mind to decompose its conceptions and to combine the elements of them at its pleasure is called the faculty of imagination.

Dugald Stewart writes: --

But we have, moreover, the power of modifying our conceptions, by combining the parts of different ones together so as to form new wholes of our own creation ("Elements," chaps. 3, 4).

"God's Oath"

F.E.R.'s doctrine of the old and new humanity in Christ would nullify God's oath to David, and, be it noted, that it is essential to his doctrine of eternal life to depreciate Christ's born humanity. In 2 Sam. 7, Psa. 89, Acts 2, Psa. 16, the Holy Spirit distinctly teaches God's oath to David requires Christ's *born* humanity.

I have made a covenant with My chosen; I have sworn unto David My servant, *Thy seed* will I establish for ever, and will build up thy throne to

all generations. Selah.

The Holy, Ghost, by the mouth of Peter, applies “thy seed” to Christ, and to Christ *risen* from the dead, and establishes that it is to the Christ that was *born* and descended from David’s loins that God’s oath applies, consequently, a Christ, not born, but created “a new man,” would not be David’s seed, and God’s oath would be frustrated. Scripture teaches it as essential that His humanity, as born of Mary, should see no corruption, and that, after His death, His soul and body should be reunited.

This *same* Jesus *whom ye have* crucified is made both Lord and Christ,

and *this risen and glorified*. At Corinth some teachers denied the resurrection of the body without realizing its consequences. It involved Christ’s resurrection and the gospel itself. The Holy Spirit by the mouth of the apostle points out its result. F.E.R.’s doctrine of *the old humanity terminated and the new humanity created*, involves serious consequences, and, it may follow, as a moral sequence, that the gospel, according to 1 Cor. 15, will be eventually given up by those that receive his theory of eternal life. On opening the Acts of the Apostles we find what is insisted on is the resurrection of the same Jesus that was buried, who showed Himself alive after His passion by many infallible proofs. In choosing one to take the place of Judas, we read,

Wherefore of these men which accompanied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning at the baptism of John *unto the same day that He was taken up from us*, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of His resurrection.

Peter charged the Jews with killing the Prince of Life, “whom God raised from the dead, whereof we are witnesses.” *The Prince of Life killed was the Prince of Life raised*. His human personality and personal identity are both asserted.

The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, *whom ye slew and hanged on a tree*.

And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus.

They did not witness to a new man, a new created man, but to the same Jesus whose body was laid in Joseph’s tomb. We read (Acts 2),

Ye men of Israel, hear these words. Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know; Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and fore-knowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain; *whom* God had raised up, having loosened the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be holden of it. For David speaketh concerning Him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for He is on my right hand, that I should not be moved, therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover

also my flesh shall rest in hope; because Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell {hades}, neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; Thou shalt make me full of joy with Thy countenance. Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is, both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God hath sworn with an oath to him, *that of the fruit of his loins*, according to the flesh, He would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that His soul was not left in hell {hades}, neither *His flesh* did see corruption. *This Jesus* hath God raised up, whereof we are all witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens, but he saith himself, The Lord saith unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, until I make Thy foes Thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made *that same Jesus whom ye have crucified*, both Lord and Christ.

The Lord Himself, after His resurrection, emphatically verified, to His assembled disciples, the identity of His humanity and personality.

It is I Myself.

Having shed His precious blood in making atonement, He said,

Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself: handle Me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see Me have. And when He had thus spoken He showed them His hands and feet (Luke 24).

And, eight days after, He said to Thomas,

Reach hither thy finger and behold My hands, and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into My side, and be not faithless but believing (John 20).

We ask any Christian, Could the Lord give greater proof of the *non-termination* of His *incarnate* humanity, or of His human personality? for soul and body constitute a human person, and their re-union, after death (which was their separation), constituted His resurrection. Our humanity, because of sin, must undergo a change (1 Cor. 15). *We* must be new created to be after the image of Christ -- this corruptible must put on incorruption. Was Christ’s humanity (*incarnate*) corruptible? Was it subject to decay or death? The Lord laid down His life; He gave up His spirit, not of necessity, but of grace and voluntarily. “I lay it down of Myself” (John 10:18). The lesson of the transfiguration seems lost on F.E.R. His eternal life doctrine clouds it, but the potentialities of Christ’s incarnate humanity *on the Mount* of Transfiguration proves it was not the old but the new man’s. Matt. 17, Mark 9, Luke 9, “He was transfigured before them.” “When they were awoke they saw His glory.” He was transfigured without passing through death. Will any one say, with F.E.R., that Christ’s born humanity was not intended for heaven. F.E.R.’s doctrine affirms it was not suitable.

The Gospel of Christ

Further, the doctrine of the *termination* of Christ's incarnate humanity overthrows the gospel, because it denies the resurrection of the Christ that died. It gives a *new man*, a new created man in lieu of the resurrection of the Christ that died. *Risen* does not apply in the doctrine propounded by F.E.R., for what has risen must be what was buried, according to 1 Cor. 15., otherwise we are in our sins; but what was buried *was terminated* according to F.E.R.'s doctrine. Therefore Christ after (by "after" F.E.R. means "in") the flesh was not raised. It is essential to the existence of the gospel that the *same* Christ, as to His humanity, *who died*, was the Christ that *was buried*, and that the Christ who was buried *was raised* the third day according to the Scriptures; and this was according to the fact. Now the Holy Ghost warns us that the hearts of the simple may be deceived by good words and fair speeches, and He also gives a protecting testimony, viz., that what is contrary to the revealed doctrine we have received is the characteristic of deceptive teaching (Rom.16:17, 18). A moment's reflection will leave no doubt that the Christ who *died*, *was buried*, and *rose* again, was a human *person*. His humanity united to His Godhead is that which gives His death its infinitely efficacious value, in meeting the righteous claims of God's government against sin and responsible sinners, and thus enables God to proclaim forgiveness and insures salvation to every one that with the heart believes in the Saviour, and with the mouth confesses Him Lord (Rom. 10). I pray the reader to study 1 Cor. 15:20:

Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless you have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that *Christ died* for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that *He* was buried, and that *He* rose again the third day; and that *He* was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve, after that *He* was seen of above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that *He* was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all *He* was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time.

If Christ had *only* a divine personality, as F.E.R. teaches, could it be recorded by the Holy Spirit that *He died, was buried, rose again*? Scripture insists on the resurrection of a human person, but the denial of human personality to Christ makes resurrection inapplicable to Him.

The Priesthood of Christ

Without a human personality Christ would be without the qualification ascribed to Him in Scripture as our High Priest. Could any believing reader of Heb.2 and 4 fail to see that Christ is a human person.

What is man that Thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that Thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; Thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of Thy hands. Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet, for in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him; but now we see not yet all things put under him, but we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour, that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

Who tasted death? Was it a human person? F.E.R. and T.H.R. say no; it was a condition of humanity. "I will put my trust in Him." Was it a human person that put his trust in Jehovah, or a divine person, speaking as if a human person? This is the solemn consideration for any soul that accepts F.E.R.'s teaching.

Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a faithful and merciful High Priest in things pertaining to God to make reconciliation for the sins of the people; for in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted.

Does not the Holy Ghost plainly teach that it is a human person that suffered, that was tempted, that is able to succor?

The Mediator and Substitute

In becoming a man the Lord of Glory laid aside, not His divinity, or divine personality, but its *status*. So in dying He did not terminate His humanity or human personality, but its *status* -- "as after the flesh." Because He was God and Man, in person, He was qualified to be the Daysman between us (both God and Man, Job 9:33), a Mediator between God and man, and gave Himself (a Person) a ransom for all (1 Tim. 2:5, 6). Could it be affirmed of a divine person who had no human personality that He gave Himself a ransom? But this is what F.E.R.'s doctrine of an impersonal humanity, of no human "I" in the Person of Christ, involves.

An impersonal humanity in Christ deprives us of a personal substitute; of One bearing our deserved judgment.

Now this, call it by what word you please, was one person put in the place of another, and then in such sort taking the sins and their consequences on Himself as that they should not come at all upon the person who was himself guilty in judgment for penal consequences. This substitution is as

certain a truth as Scripture can afford, that is, one person standing in another's place, bearing his sins in His own body on the tree, bruised for them instead of the guilty, who is healed by the other taking the stripes (*The Place of Sacrifice in the Ways of God*, J.N.D.'s last words, Croydon, March 25th, 1882).

The Constitution of Christ's Person

In lieu of the *union* of God and man in the Person of Christ, which is the doctrine of Scripture, F.E.R. and T.H.R. substitute a divine person and two natures; one impersonal (without a human "I"), the other personal and exclusively "I," and *thus* constituting His Person. His Person otherwise, with them, must exist in *addition* to the two natures. It is either a Person of two natures, or a Person and two natures. Which? T.H.R. (Letter to the Dutch brethren, August 21st, 1895, C. H. Gibbs, Dublin), in defense of F.E.R., wrote thus: --

Mr. R. "has said that in Christ there was the divine and human nature, but objects to the expression 'the union of God and man,' as making two personalities in the Lord" (Letter to H. C. Voorhoeve, jun., The Hague, Holland, page 4).

Again, T.H.R. (in reply to W.R.E. and the late Mr. R. Scott (letter of December 3rd, 1895, Gibbs, Dublin), wrote thus: --

"Opposed to this is put forward the statement of the Athanasian Creed, 'God and man one Christ,' and by W.R.E.'s explanations of the Person of Christ, which are most dishonoring, such as the human nature in personal union with the Godhead (p. 6) -- 'the God-man,' an irreverent expression." W.R.E. says (page 12), "The union now in Him of Deity and humanity constitutes one Person, the Christ of God." On this T.H.R. exclaims, "Can anything be more derogatory to the Son of God than saying He is a constituted Person?" Again, he writes: -- "I add a line as to Mr. Scott's paper. He says that the truth of the Person of Christ consists in the visible and abiding union in Him of both natures, divine and human. Mr. Scott evidently takes this to be identical with the term 'union of God and man,' but it is not so. F.E.R. holds as firmly as Mr. Scott the union in Him of the divine and human natures, but in *whom?*"

Let not the reader be deceived by the subtlety displayed in the use of the term "nature." Nature has been defined as "the sum of the qualities and attributes which make a thing what it is, as distinct from others -- as angel, man, cow, or anything else." F.E.R. and T.H.R., in their revised notes of a reading at Newport, July 4th, 1896, affirm:

You cannot talk of the nature of a thing till the thing itself is there ("Sonship," p. 16).

Nevertheless, discarding their own affirmation, both tell us that a human nature

was in Christ without the thing itself, that it is the nature of, viz., a human person. Human nature (when a person is in question and not an abstraction) requires a human person whose nature it is. But they witness against themselves by denying human personality to the human nature of Christ. They affirm you cannot talk of the nature of a thing till the thing itself (i.e., in this case, the human person) is there; yet they do so, and this to support their doctrine. They make human nature in Christ a thing only, not a person. On the other hand they make divine nature a person, i.e., the only "I" in Christ, thus deceiving their unsuspecting readers, if not themselves, by writing of *human* nature, yet excluding what it is the nature of, viz., a human person. If they used the term "nature," as they were bound to do, they would have to acknowledge the union in Christ's Person of God and man, i.e., of two natures equally personal though great the mystery of Godliness. But the defense of false doctrine is generally characterized by the fallacious use of terms. If T.H.R. used the term "nature," as he and F.E.R. define it, their doctrine would be overthrown. But they deny to one nature what they admit in the other, viz., personality. If they consistently used the term "nature" then they should give us *two personal* or two impersonal natures "in *whom?*" They would then have either a true Christ, or a person and two impersonal natures added to Him! We ask, What is their constitution of the Christ of God? Truly the legs of the lame are not equal! T. H. Reynolds has revised hymns in use and excluded No. 61 from J.N.D.'s Revised Edition of 1881. Why? Is it because it did not accord with his doctrine? It reads:

How wondrous the glories that meet
 In Jesus, and from His face shine!
 His love is eternal and sweet,
 'Tis human, 'tis also divine!
 His glory -- not only God's Son --
 In manhood He had His full part --
 And the union of both join'd in one,
 Form the fountain of love in His heart.

It has been truly stated,

The moment you deny personality in the Man Christ Jesus you run into a thousand difficulties and errors.

In reply to Mr. Sen, J.N.D. wrote: --

But here is one who was in the form of God, the very *status* and condition of divinity, and takes another form, and goes down to death, ever the same divine person, never proved more so than in His humiliation, but who became something (was made flesh). 'The Word became flesh,' did not cease to be the Word, but was what it was not before -- became something, and subsequently took manhood into divine glory.

Now all this (Sen's doctrine) is the denial of a true Christ in both parts of

His being, i.e., the divine and human --

His whole person (*Collected Writings* 15:251; *Notes and Comments* 2:392).

In the Synopsis we read, "His complete person" (v., 18). Let the reader note the presentation of the Lord's divine person on earth, *assuming to be what He was not*, according to these teachers, who deny to Him a human "I." T.H.R. wrote (Letter of December 3rd, 1895, circulated in Dublin):

The blessed Lord could say "I" as God -- before Abraham was "I" am. He could say "I" as Man -- "I will put My trust in Him (God)," but when we ask who was the conscious "I" the answer is, the Son of God speaking as Man on earth.

Thus the blessed Lord is represented as personating a human "I"!! The late Canon Liddon, a Ritualist (Bampton Lectures, on our Lord's divinity), had recourse to this expedient to meet the objections of a Rationalist, who judged the *union* of God and man in the Person of Christ "an unintelligible wonder." The Canon expresses F.E.R.'s and T.H.R.'s idea of His humanity thus:

A vesture which He folds round His person; in it He represents, He pleads. His human life is not a distinct self, but a living robe which, as it was created, was wrapped round His eternal personality.

Where is the Man Christ Jesus in this "I"? This is F.E.R. and T.H.R.'s Christ! The doctrine involves the denial of Jesus Christ come in the flesh (2 John 2:7), for it denies Him to be a perfect human *person*.

The Misuse of "Abstract Thought"

Professor Sedgwick writes ("Studies of the University of Cambridge"): --

It is by the imagination, more perhaps than by any other faculty of the soul, that man is raised above the beast. Beasts have senses in common with ourselves, and often in higher perfection, but of the imagination they offer no single trace. These higher attributes of the soul confer in it a creative energy.

F.E.R. wrote ("Some Letters," page 16) of Mr. {A. H.} Rule,

Certainly he reads Scripture in a different way to what I do. He seems unable or unwilling to seize an abstract thought.

I have before me two letters (October 2nd, 1891), printed and circulated by Mr. Raven, one from J. S. Oliphant to him calling his attention to a "most objectionable sentence" as to Christ, as the last Adam and the Second Man, thus:

To F.E.R., -- You add, "But I believe that He was always such in the council, and *I could almost say in the presence of God*, and we find many

allusions to this in the Old Testament (Psa. 8). J.S.O.¹³ adds: But the sentence, "*I could almost say*" shows a want of Scripture basis for the thought. Why not say, "Scripture teaches," and then it has the authority of the Word of God? As it stands it bears the meaning that you are venturing on speculation, and then what you do say looks like what Chater is refuting on your behalf, namely, that man or humanity existed in some shape or form before the incarnation, though the Person always existed of course.

To this F.E.R. replied:

The idea that man or manhood or humanity had any existence in fact in Christ until the Word became flesh never entered my thoughts, and I do not believe that any sentence of mine, *read in its connection* and without bias, could fairly bear such a conclusion.

Let the reader compare F.E.R.'s statement. First, his definition of eternal life. He writes:

I conclude that eternal life is a truth which is connected with man *whether in Christ or in us*.

I believe eternal life to be the life of man according to the purpose of God, and what has come out fully in Christ in resurrection.

In a word, I believe eternal life to mean a new man in a new sphere for man ("Some Letters," page 11).

This is quite plain. "*Whether in Christ or in us*" eternal life is a new man. And F.E.R., in his paper ("Eternal Life," page 7), declares that it is "*a new creation in us*." Second, F.E.R.'s reiterated declaration, that eternal life was "*ever in the Son*," was "*eternally*," was "*essentially*" in the Son, "*an integral part of His Person*" ("Some Letters," pp. 4, 7, 8).

I believe it to be a term indicating a condition which according to the counsel of God was to characterize man. That which was to characterize man was what had been in the Son eternally with the Father ("Some Letters," p. 4).

Again, he declares that what was "*eternally*," "*essentially*" in the Son, and an *integral part of His Person*, was not in His person on earth. He writes: --

Eternal life when Christ was here was still with the Father ("Some Letters," p. 3).

Again, he declares that what was an integral part of His Person was distinct from His Person.

It is distinct from what He was in His own Person, and had ever been ("Some Letters," p. 12).

Thus "imagination" creates it for His Person, and in His Person, and then

13. {J. S. Oliphant.}

excludes it from His Person both in time and eternity! And finally, while thus creating and uncreating, separates His life on earth from His Person.

If we apprehend eternal life to consist in a condition of heavenly relationship and being, such as was ever in the Son, we can readily see, that if He takes part in man's responsible life on earth the two things must be distinct ("Some Letters," p. 3).

All this exercise of "abstract thought" is the exercise of "imagination," which writers of fiction, such as poets, and others, indulge in, but which is evil when applied to Christ's Person. It is the result of a false conception of eternal life. The statement, in plain English, of this speculation is its refutation. Our minds, in reading the Gospels, would require to be kaleidoscopic to view Christ as F.E.R.'s doctrine requires, and abstract from and add to His incarnate condition, His Person, and finally exclude His Person from it. Look at Him asleep in the ship! They awake Him; He commands the wind, and says to the sea, "Peace, be still." He is God and Man in His Person -- His blessed and adorable Person (Mark 4:35-41). Again in the record in the Gospel of Matthew, chap. 14:22, 23, we see how the disciples were taught to see in Jesus the *union* of God and man. In the record in Mark 4, their apprehension of Him, at the manifestation of His divinity in commanding the sea, evoked from their minds, "What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?" He was a perfect man asleep, yet God manifest awake. In Matthew's record of another manifestation of His divinity, when He walked on the water, bearing Peter on it into the ship, and the wind ceased, they were lead in their conception of Him further. "They worshiped Him saying, Of a truth Thou art the Son of God."

Heretical Objections to the Union of God and Man in Christ's Person

Of Apollinaris the younger, Bishop of Laodicea, in Syria (A.D. 375), a man thoroughly trained in the study of ancient Greek literature, Neander writes ("Church History" 4:98, Bohn):

The great effort of this teacher was again to suppress the doctrine of a perfect human nature taken up into indissoluble union with the divine Logos.

Two beings persisting in their completeness, he conceived, could not be united into one whole.

Athanasius, in opposition to Apollinaris, wrote: -- "How could Christ represent for us the pattern of a holy life after which we ought to strive, if His nature was not entirely homogenous with ours? He could not redeem human nature in its completeness unless He had Himself assumed all parts of which it consists" (Vol. 4:98, 104).

A Greek theologian, John Damascene (A.D. 750), formally propounded an impersonal human nature in Christ. "He thought that to the divine nature alone pertained the power of constituting personality" ("Dorner's Doctrine of the Person of Christ," Division 2, vol. 1., p. 210).

Of Peter Lombard (a Latin theologian), Dr. Dorner writes: -- "According to the view which Lombard seems finally to adopt, God did not become objectively a man, in Christ, but the humanity of God had an existence solely in the representations and notions of the human mind -- representations and notions which He intended to take such a form. God clothed Himself objectively with the garment of humanity in order to appear as man."

"The proposition of Lombard that God did not become anything through incarnation that He was not before, differs in reality very little from that. The incarnation effected, posited nothing -- that it was strictly speaking a mere Theophany" (p. 319).

This theory prevailed before the Reformation. Luther opposed it (*vide* Dorner's "Doctrine of the Person of Christ"). Edward Irving adopted this theory of an impersonal humanity in Christ in order to evade the legitimate consequences of his doctrine of Christ's fallen, sinful human nature. He wrote:

Such persons as have not reflected on the subject must bear in mind that the only person in Christ is the person of the Son of God, whose identity doth not change by becoming man. Remember that He is one person in two natures, and that His person was the Son of God before He became man ("On the human nature of Christ," 1830, pp. 3, 25, 29, 44).

Irving reasoned that though Christ had a fallen human nature He could not be charged with sin, as only a *person* could sin, and He was not a human *person*, having only an impersonal humanity. Dr. John Owen ("Christologia," 1679), writing against those in his day who denied the union of God and man in Christ's Person, says:

This union the ancient Church affirmed to be made (*κδιαιρετως*), with a distinction of natures, but without division of them by separate subsistences; (*αδυυχυτως*), without mixture or confusion; (*ατρεπωως*), without any change in the Person of the Son of God which the divine nature is not subject unto; (*αχωριως*), without separation or distance; (*ασωδω*), substantially, because it was of two substances or essences in the self-same person, in opposition to all accidental union, as the fulness of the Godhead dwelt in Him bodily" (*vide* Theoderet and Evagrius, Ecclesiastical History, p. 300, Bohns).

A late writer, Dr. T. C. Edwards ("Davies Lecture," 1895, "The God-Man"), has thus written: --

All the writers of the New Testament represent Jesus Christ *as a man*, an *individual* man, as well as *the man*, as truly a man as Paul or Peter. They all start with the humanity of Christ, and from it slowly pass to the belief

in His divinity. Personal acts are ascribed to His humanity, such as prayer, which can belong only to a creature. In a word, human nature without personality of some sort would seem impossible and inconceivable. It is like assuming all the separate elements of humanity without the *suppositum* which gives them personal identity and continuance. Scripture, for instance, plainly teaches that Christ had two wills -- a human, as distinct from the divine will -- and that is the doctrine of the Church. If He, being a person, in any real and perfect sense became human, then He became a human person. The incarnation gave a divine person a human personality, but He has not ceased to be a divine person. It is only a change of condition. As the Logos does not cease to exist in the Trinity by becoming Logos incarnate, so He does not cease to be Logos incarnate by becoming Man.

Luther's conception of the human in Christ, united in a completely incomprehensible manner with the Deity so as to form one indivisible person, is contained in his maxim -- 'Finitum capax infiniti,' the infinite person is capable of assuming a human personality.

God the Spirit has written (1 Tim. 3:16),

And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness -- God was manifest in the flesh.

The blessed Lord declared, as to His own Person,

No man knoweth the Son but the Father.

The human mind is not satisfied to accept the revelation of Christ according to the attributes -- divine and human, God and man in union, as revealed in Scripture. It reasons that such would constitute two personalities. In so doing, F.E.R. and T.H.R., in the twentieth, have followed the heretic Apollinaris of the fourth century. Divines considered orthodox as to the deity of the Son have missed the truth of His eternal Sonship and eternal personality.

Dr. Adam Clarke denied the first, failing to distinguish the divine relationship of the Son to the Father from human filiation, and reasoning according to the latter instead of believing the revelation of this blessed relationship as recorded in God's inspired Word. Others, following the fathers instead of Scripture, have adopted speculations of Origen, who propounded a derivative communication of divinity to the Son from the Father, and thus erring as to the Son's *eternal personality*, while maintaining His divinity (*vide* "The Testimony of the Ante-Nicene Fathers to the Divinity of Christ," by Edward Burton, D.D., Oxford, 1829, pp. 346-455). Origen illustrates the consubstantiality of the Son with the Father, and His proceeding from the Father, by a comparison with vapour proceeding from any substance. Dr. Burton does not approve of this speculation, but it is followed by Hooker ("Ecclesiastical Polity"), Bishop Pearson ("On the Creed"), Bishop Beveridge ("On the Thirty-nine Articles"), and more recently by Bishop Browne ("On the Thirty-nine Articles"). Even the celebrated Dutch divine, Herman Witsins, D.D.

(in his "Sacred Dissertations on the Apostles' Creed"), propounded this theory:

By the generation of the Son, then, we understand that act of God by which He has communicated to the Son the same numerical essence which He Himself hath, that the Son may have it in like manner (English Translation, Edinburgh, 1873, vol. i., p. 153).

The Heresy of the Doctrine of No Human "I" in Christ Incarnate

J.N.D., on "Christological Pantheism," has written of it as follows:

As I am on this point, I add they have no true Christ at all. I read (quoting),

How such human nature as body, soul and spirit, including a human will, could be held in personal union with the divine so that the humanity was complete without a human personality or *ego*, we cannot understand, but we believe it is a mystery revealed for faith.

Where? (J.N.D. asks). Why does the blessed Lord say, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" if there was no *ego*, no human personality? Why does the Hebrews quote, "Will I sing praise unto Thee and I will put My trust in Him," "Behold I, and the children which God hath given me," if there was no I, *ego*? Why does He say, "My God and your God; My Father and your Father" (not ours), if there was no human personality? And this last statement that Christ had no human personality, no *ego*, which is really heresy (though God and man were united in one Person), and the mere folly of man attempting to fathom the mystery of His Person when He said, "No man knoweth the Son but the Father," is found in the article by one, by no means the worst, of their doctors.

Again,

I am quite aware of, and accept the ordinary orthodox statement of two natures in one person, though what was at first insisted on as orthodox as to (*hypostasis*), was afterwards condemned and the meaning of the word changed, but the statements. quoted in the text are really monothelite (i.e. only one will in Christ). It shows the danger of these early discussions, . for the simple faith that Jesus was God and man in one Person can be easily *accepted as plain and vital truth*, but the moment you deny personality in the Man Christ Jesus. you run into a thousand difficulties and errors. What is really denied is Christ's individuality as a Man (*Collected Writings* 29:34).

The way in which God and man, in one Person, are united and presented in the blessed Lord in this Epistle (1 John) strikes me more and more, so that it is impossible to separate and apply them distinctly (*Notes and Comments* 6:74).

Also it must be remembered that that which is said, is said when He is

manifested in the flesh, of His complete person man upon earth. Not that we do not, in our mind, separate between the divinity and the humanity, but even in separating them we think of the one person with regard to whom we do so. We say Christ is God, Christ is Man, but it is Christ who is the two. I do not say this theologically, but to draw the reader's attention to the remarkable expression, "All the fulness was pleased to dwell in Him," "All the fulness of the Godhead was found in Christ" (*Synopsis* 5:18).

According to the apostle's injunction (2 John 8-11), so serious an error as denying the Person of Christ a human personality demanded from those who love the Lord, not alone its discernment, but also, on the issue of F.E.R.'s paper, "The Person of the Christ," its rejection with decision. and the teacher of it also. May it please the Lord to give grace to His beloved saints to discern the manifest heresy and plainly and openly refuse it, and thus remove the hindrance to the union in fellowship at the Lord's table which F.E.R.'s doctrine is responsible for the breach of.

The Parting of the Ways on "Vital Truth"

Brethren from the beginning of their testimony have taught and held fast the union in the Person of Christ of God and Man, one Christ, as expressed in the Athanasian Creed, and accepted by all orthodox Christians. Mr. Darby wrote:

The simple faith that Jesus was God and Man in one person can be readily accepted as VITAL TRUTH.

THE UNION of two natures in the blessed Lord I myself adoringly recognize (*Collected Writings* 29:321, 303).

He had true humanity, but UNITED to Godhead (vol. 15:228).

Again, on First Epistle of John,

The way in which God and man are UNITED and presented in the blessed Lord in this Epistle strikes me more and more (*Notes and Comments* 6:74).

The Logos is God, created everything, and the very essence of Christianity is the immediate connection between God and the creature, GOD AND MAN IN ONE PERSON (vol. 10:321).

THE UNION OF GOD AND MAN IN THE PERSON OF CHRIST IS THE CENTER (*Synopsis* 5:203).

In the "Christian Witness," Brethren's earliest periodical, I read of the Son, a divine Person:

HE WAS IN PERSONAL UNION WITH JESUS (vol. 1:87, 1834).

In *The Present Testimony*, edited by the late G. V. Wigram, I read:

WITH GOD THERE IS NO DIFFICULTY IN THE PERFECT SON OF GOD AND SON OF MAN (*man in His perfectness*) BEING ONE (vol. 10:11).

In *The Son of God*, by the late J. G. Bellett, I read:

He took very Man and very God IN ONE PERSON.

I avow with my whole soul the true humanity in His Person.

In the *Voice to the Faithful*, articles on the Gospel of John, by the late J. B. Stoney, I read: --

THE UNION of the Son, a divine person, and the Savior's humanity (vol. 19:97).

I need not adduce the testimony of *The Bible Treasury*," edited by the late William Kelly, as he strenuously opposed F.E.R.'s teaching, vide his paper, "New Development." J.N.D., referring to the Athanasian Creed, God and Man one Christ, wrote: --

I am aware and accept the ordinary orthodox statement of two natures in one person, THE SIMPLE FAITH THAT JESUS WAS GOD AND MAN, IN ONE PERSON, is easily accepted AS PLAIN VITAL TRUTH (*Collected Writings* 29:322).

F.E.R. definitely breaks with Brethren on "Vital Truth." He states:--

As to whether the truth of His Person consists in the union in Him of God and man; a favourite formula with these so holding is, "God and Man one Christ,"

which he characterizes thus:

The second error maintains that the truth of Christ's Person consists in the union in Him of God and man ("The Person," pp. 1, 3).

Again,

I think we should be greatly helped if we go on with patience, not calling each other heretics, but seeking to get the mind of God in His Word, *instead of clinging to stereotyped forms of expression*, that had their value in their day ("Sonship," p. 16).

F.E.R. warns saints against zeal for orthodoxy ("The Person," page 1). J.N.D. says:

It is a great mercy to have orthodoxy professed. By orthodoxy I mean the cardinal truths of the gospel; although, of course, the profession of orthodoxy is not life (*Nine Lectures on First Epistle of John*" p. 71; W. H. Broom, London, 1882).

F.E.R. wrote, July 3rd, 1890:

I absolutely accept the teachings of our deceased brother, Mr. Darby.

Without desiring to question F.E.R.'s honesty or sincerity, it is difficult to reconcile his statement with fact. J.N.D. wrote:

A wondrous and blessed thought! He who had His place with the Father, was made flesh; God's delight down here; God manifest in flesh; grace to man; grace in man; man taken into union with God, in one person, the

pledge of peace on earth. "Glory to God in the highest (*Collected Writings* 30:222).

J.N.D. again:

As to His counsels Christ is the center, and here man has a peculiar place. Wisdom's good pleasure was eternally in Him, and all is to be under His feet. In order that the nature and counsels of God should not be separated (which indeed is impossible, but what was in His counsels in order that it might not be), God became Man, Christ is God made manifest in flesh, the Word made flesh. Thus the divine nature, the expression, of that nature, is found in that which is the object of His counsels -- that which forms their center. Thus Christ is the truth, is the center of all existing relationships; all have reference to Him. We are through Him, for Him, or we are against Him; all subsists by Him. If we are judged it is as His enemies. *He is the life spiritually of all that enjoy the communication of the divine nature*; even as He sustains all that exists. His manifestation brings to light the true position of all things; thus He is the truth. That which is revealed in it (the Word) is the divine expression of that which belongs to the Infinite on the one side, and is expressed in the finite on the other; of that which has the profoundness of the nature of God, from whom all proceeds; with whom and with whose rights all is in relationship, but which is developed -- since it is outside God -- in creation and in the finite. The union of God and man in the Person of Christ is the center -- we may say (now that we know it), the necessary center of all this; and the inspired Word is its expression according to the perfection of God (and we bless God for it), as the Savior is the grand subject of the Scriptures, for said He, "They testify of Me," in human forms. But this Word being divine, being inspired, is the divine expression of the divine nature, persons, and counsels. Nothing that is not inspired in this way can have this place, for none but God can perfectly express or reveal what God is. Hence Infinite in what flows in it, because it is the expression of, and connected with, the depths of the divine nature, and so in its connection infinite, though expressed in a finite sense, and so far finite in expression, and thus adapted to finite man (*Synopsis*, 5:203).

Thou art the everlasting Word,
The Father's only Son;
God manifestly seen and heard,
The heaven's beloved One.
Worthy, O Lamb of God, art Thou,
That every knee to Thee should bow.

{This paper included a lengthy Appendix with FER's 1895 paper, *The Person of the Christ*, and various letters. Almost all of this material appears in *The Eternal Relationships in the Godhead*, available from the publisher, and is omitted here.}