The Eternal Relationships in the Godhead

Fundamental Truth Concerning the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Word, the Eternal Life, and the Eternal Sonship

With Special Reference to the Teachings of F. E. Raven, J. Taylor, Sr., and C. A. Coates

R. A. Huebner

Present Truth Publishers
825 Harmony Road
Jackson NJ 08527 USA
Web site: www.presenttruthpublishers.com
Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to D. Ryan for certain editing and proofreading, and to T. J. Knapp and D. Wandelt for certain proofreading.

Present Truth Publishers
825 Harmony Rd
Jackson NJ 08527 USA

Made and printed in USA
April, 1997
## Table of Contents

### Part 1: Doctrine Concerning The Eternal Relationships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preface</td>
<td>The Reasoning Upon Which the Denial of the Eternal Sonship is Based</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Raven-Taylor System of Inscrutability</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 2: Some Characteristics of the Divine Persons</td>
<td>The Characteristic Actions of the Persons of the Trinity</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Father, Son and Spirit Always Act in Unity</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For in Him All the Fulness [of the Godhead] Was Pleased to Dwell: Col. 1:19</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 3: The Humiliation of Christ (Phil. 2:5-8)</td>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 4: The Union of the Two Natures</td>
<td>Christ’s Holy Humanity</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Impeccable One</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 5: The Temptations and the Lord’s Omniscience</td>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 6: The Eternal Spirit Sent by the Father and the Son</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Spirit Was Sent</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Word “Eternal” Spirit</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 7: The Eternal Word</td>
<td>Christ in John</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Word</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>And the Word Became Flesh</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 8: The Only-begotten Son</td>
<td>The Glory as of an Only-begotten With a Father</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F. E. Raven Denied the Eternal Sonship</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Bosom of the Father</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Only-begotten Son</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 9: The Son Came Out from the Father and Does Whatever He Sees the Father Do</td>
<td>The Son Came Out from the Father</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Son Does Whatever He Sees the Father Do</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 10: The Father Sent the Son</td>
<td>If “Sent” Implies Inferiority of the Sent One, Then the</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use of “Divine Persons,” “I,” and “Me” Undermines the Godhead</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Sent One from the Father</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 11: The Father, the Son, and We</td>
<td></td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 12: The Abandonment on the Cross and Communion with the Father</td>
<td></td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 13: The Son Glorified as Man</td>
<td></td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 1: The Ravenistic Branch of the Denial of The Eternal Relationships</td>
<td>F. E. Raven</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>James Taylor, Sr.</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C. A. Coates (1862-1945)</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Did C. A. Coates Reaffirm the Eternal Sonship of Christ Before He Died?</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 2: F. E. Raven’s Apollinarian Doctrine ........................................... 83
The Person of the Christ, by F. E. Raven ............................................. 83
Divine Attributes and The Second Man, by W. T. Whybrow ...................... 87
The truth of Christ’s Person: Is It Taught by Mr. F. E. Raven? By W. T. Whybrow ...................... 91
F. E. R. Heterodox on the Person of the Christ, by William Kelly .................... 98
F. E. Raven, James Taylor, Sr., C. A. Coates, and J. B. Stoney were Apollinarians ........ 100
FER Denied that Christ Had A Human Soul and Spirit .................................. 100
James Taylor, Sr., Also Denied That Christ Had a Human Soul and Spirit ............... 103
C. A. Coates Also Denied That Christ Had A Human Soul and Spirit .................... 104
J. B. Stoney Became an Apollinarian Also ........................................ 104
Some Implications of Apollinarianism ............................................ 105
Appendix 3: F. E. Raven’s Mystical Worship of the False God, or, “The Service of God” ............... 109
“The Service of God” ................................................................. 109
Thoughts on Worship and the Lord’s Supper, Mainly from J. N. Darby ................. 111
Appendix: 4: John MacArthur Jr.’s Attack on the Trinity ..................................... 117
Part 2: The Separation From F. E. Raven and His Supporters
Chapter 1: Survey of What Led to the Separation from Evil ......................... 123
Introduction .................................................................................. 123
Survey of the History Leading to the June, 1890 Separation ............................... 125
Chapter 2: Letters and Papers Before the Division on June 29, 1890 ................. 135
Letters .................................................................................. 135
Papers .................................................................................. 145
Eternal Life and Righteousness, by W. T. Whybrow .................................. 156
A Letter, by P. A. Humphrey, January 22, 1890 ........................................ 158
Present Troubles, by Charles Stanley, Jan. 30, 1890 ..................................... 163
“Be Not Deceived,” by P. A. Humphreys, May 1890 .................................... 169
Chapter 3: The Bexhill/Greenwich Correspondence ....................................... 179
Preliminaries ........................................................................ 179
The Letters ........................................................................ 181
Bexhill’ Competency Denigrated .................................................... 186
Chapter 4: F. E. Raven’s Paper on Eternal Life ......................................... 189
Eternal Life, July 3, 1890 ................................................................ 189
“I Come Quickly: Hold Fast What Thou Hast, That no One Take Thy Crown” by P. A. Humphreys, August 1890 ................................................................. 192
Chapter 5: Some of F. E. Raven’s Letters Subsequent to the Division ............... 197
Chapter 6: Some Papers Against F. E. Raven Just After the Division ............... 213
Remarks, by A. H. Burton, Sept. 1890 ............................................... 213
Reflections on the Park Street Notice, by A. H. Burton, Oct. 1890 ................. 217
Brief Statement of F. E. R.’s Doctrines, and Their Effect in Bristol, 1890; To Those Who Love our Lord Jesus Christ in Sincerity .................................................. 219
Possession and Experience, by P. A. Humphreys ...................................... 239
Chapter 7: F. E. Raven’s Lie Regarding What He Had Written About the Babe in the Manger ............... 250
Scripture Index ........................................................................ 251
Subject Index ................................................................................................. 260

Supplement of Facsimile Papers ................................................................. 269

Heard, . . . seen, . . . handled, W. J. Lowe S1

Faith and New Birth, W. J. Lowe S2

Remarks on Eternal Life and divine Righteousness, B. F. Pinkerton S3

The New Development, W. Kelly S4

To the Brothers H. C. Anstey, J. B. Stoney and C. H. Mackintosh, C. Brockhaus, Phil. Thielman, Emil Donges, H. C. Voorhoeve S5

A Letter, H. H. Snell S6


A Few Remarks on Recent Doctrines Contained in “Notes of Readings Held in the United States and Canada, Revised by F.E.R., F.G.B.” S8

“What Think Ye of Christ?” H. H. Frost S9

An Appeal to the Saints in Fellowship with Mr. Raven, H. C. Voorhoeve, Jr. S10
While our subject is broader than the eternal Sonship of Christ, we may notice here the spread of the denial of this fundamental, essential truth of Christianity among those considered to be evangelical. The eternal Sonship is denied by the widely known Dr. John MacArthur, for example. The indifference to this evil denial by the so-called evangelical community (and evangelical publishers of books which propagate this), and by some fundamentalists, is appalling.

While I hold to the eternal relationships in the Godhead, I reject the metaphysical speculations about ‘the eternal generation of the Son,’ ‘begotten before all worlds,’ ‘eternal procession’ of either the Son or the Spirit, or any thought of subordination within the Godhead. The notion that when one rejects “eternal generation of the Son,” therefore he must also reject the eternal Sonship, is absurd. The eternal Sonship is not dependent on metaphysical speculations based on misunderstanding of certain Scriptures and confusion about “only begotten Son.”

It may be that there are those who deny the eternal Sonship that do not deny other eternal relationships. That is merely inconsistency on their part -- for the basis, the reasoning, on which the eternal Sonship is denied, is the foundation on which all eternal relationships are ultimately based. When the eternal relationship of Father and Son are taken out of the sphere of divine revelation and into the arena of man’s logic, that same logic applies to all the relationships -- and logically results in no such thing as eternal relationships. This will be seen later.

The denial of the eternal Sonship is, then, a part of our broader subject, the denial of all eternal relationships in the Godhead. This assault upon the Trinity was comprehensively carried on by three persons, whose teachings shall be noticed: F. E. Raven, James Taylor, Sr., and C. A. Coates. They were connected with the so-called “brethren movement.” In 1888, F. E. Raven began to publicly deviate from truth and to deny the eternal Sonship. In 1898 he wrote: “Exc lusives” was a term applied by neutrals and those who, while not imbibing it, do not judge it and would not separate from persons fellowshiping with them. They hold fellowship with those who do hold it. They must not receive those who hold fundamentally evil teaching.

By 1899, F. E. Raven had taught a complete system that denied the eternal relationships. In 1898 he wrote:

1. It is sufficient for our purpose here to say that metaphysics is philosophy that is concerned with the nature of reality and being, seeking to explain them.


3. Open-Brethren have their problems with such subjects as Christ’s peccability and kenosis.

4. The history of these things is fully documented in Precious Truths Revived and Defended Through J. N. Darby, Volume Two, Defense of Truth, 1845-1850, available from the publisher.
the notice of an abuse in using labels to stigmatize a holy separation from evil unto the Lord.

Sometimes I have seen in English periodicals the Ravenites called “the exclusive brethren.” Actually, such writers call them Taylorites. Since there are many who regard themselves as holding to exclusive principles, and reject these Raven/Taylor people, is it objective, intelligent and fair to equate the terms “exclusives” and “Taylorites”? It raises the question that this may not not be mere ignorance but rather an agenda to stigmatize those who profess to practice rejection of evil in fellowship, taming them with the label, Taylorites.

At any rate, the three persons named are chief propagators of the system of the denial of the eternal relationships in the Godhead. The character of such teaching is antichrist. As we consider the truth of these divine relationships, may God give us increased apprehension and worship. Of course, we grow in our understanding, though we know that these divine relationships are infinite and cannot be measured by man’s mind. It is just this lust of the spirit, unjudged in the professed followers of Christ, that seeks to bring the truth of Christ’s Person within the range of man’s understanding, i.e., within the measure of his mind, as we shall see in Chapter 1. Note that the mind is superior to what it can analyze. Thus, the eternal relationships are reduced to something finite subjected to the measure of man’s mind.

My desire is that as we consider our subject, our understanding may be enlarged and our worship increased. — and that we may reject any fellowship with any evil concerning these matters.

Parts One and Two. The reader will note that Part One does not contain a chapter on the subject of the Son as the Eternal Life. This is because Part Two, which traces the doctrinal deviations of F. E. Raven preceding the godly separation from him and his supporters, deals with that matter, as do also Part 2, Chapters 4-6.

Possession and Experience, by P. A. Humphreys. This paper appears on p. 239. After the text was fixed, it occurred to me that this paper was probably written in the fall of 1888 -- in which case it is placed out of order herein.

Use of Braces. What has been placed within braces { } is what I have added into quotations, etc., for clarification, or added as a footnote to something quoted.

A bundle of myrrh is my beloved unto me;

He shall pass the night between my breasts (S. of S. 1:13).

May the Blessed One whose hand left the myrrh on the latch (S. of S. 5:4, 5), the token of His love unto death, even the death of the cross, the mark of which is in that hand -- and whose hands we shall yet see; may He be ever increasingly precious to our hearts, and be enthroned in the seat of our affections all the night long, until we see Him face to face. Meanwhile, as we await His return, our hearts affection will be manifested in resisting every attack on His Person and work -- and in separation from evil unto the Lord!
Whosoever goes forward and abides not in the doctrine of the Christ has not God. He that abides in the doctrine, he has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and brings not this doctrine, do not receive him into [the] house, and greet him not; for he who greets him partakes in his wicked works (2 John 9, 10).

The Reasoning Upon Which the Denial of the Eternal Sonship is Based

The denial that the Son of God was eternally the Son is rooted in the mind of the flesh reasoning from human circumstances to the divine relationships of Father, Son and Spirit. It is imposing upon the Scripture revelation of these relationships the limitations of the human experience of the human relationship of father and son -- and insisting that the human must be true of the divine. What is at work in this is the pretension of the human mind to make out of what is really the eternal, divine relationships merely relationships in time. Thus, one of the Trinity, and who knows which one of Them, became the Father as a consequence of another divine Person becoming the Son (and who knows which One) at the time of the incarnation. Another One became the Holy Spirit. And so the mind of the flesh, having transmuted the divine, eternal relationships in the Godhead into merely temporal relationships, is now able to scrutinize those relationships. Those relationships can thus be measured by the mind of man. The mind of man is a superior thing to what it can scrutinize because it is capable of scrutinizing them. Thus the mind of man, in effect, is superior to those relationships. The truth is that the relationships of Father, Son and Spirit are not analogous in that limited way to human relationships.

In the 18th century the Wesleyan Methodist commentator, Adam Clarke, denied the eternal Sonship by reasoning thus:

This doctrine I reject for the following reasons:

1st. I have not been able to find any express declaration in the Scriptures concerning it.

2ndly. If Christ be the Son of God as to his Divine nature, then he cannot be eternal; for son implies a father; and father implies, in reference to son, precedence in time, if not in nature too. Father and son imply the idea of generation; and generation implies a time in which it was effected, and time also antecedent to such generation.

3rdly. If Christ be the Son of God, as to his Divine nature, then the Father is of necessity prior, consequently superior to him.

4thly. Again, if this Divine nature were begotten of the Father, then it must be in time; i.e., there was a period in which it did not exist, and a period when it began to exist. This destroys the eternity of our blessed Lord, and robs him at once of His godhead.

5thly. To say that he was begotten from all eternity, is, in my opinion, absurd; and the phrase eternal Son is a positive self-contradiction. ETERNITY is that which had no beginning, nor stands in any reference to TIME. Son supposes time, generation, and father; and time also antecedent to such generation. Therefore the conjunction of these two terms, Son and eternity is absolutely impossible, as they imply essentially different and opposite ideas.

The idea of an “eternal generation” of the Son, held by many orthodox persons, I do not accept either, rejecting it as metaphysical speculation. It appears to be an attempt to explain the words “begotten” and only-begotten,” words which we will consider in some detail later.

To this we may add a comment here upon the miserable complaint that the words “eternal Sonship” do not appear in Scripture. Well, “trinity” does not appear either, and antitrinitarians point that out. The word “substitution” does not appear in the Scripture in connection with the Lord’s

---

work of atonement, for another example among numbers that could be cited. It is the thing meant by the words that is not wanted, and where other teachings that are wanted are described by a word or phrase that is not found in Scripture, then there is no objection. Moreover, objectors to the eternal relationships are not really entitled to the use of the word “Trinity.” In the 1828 edition of Noah Webster’s First Edition of an American Dictionary of the English Language, under the word “Trinity” we read:

In theology, the union of three persons in one Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

There are objectors to the eternal relationships that want to be regarded as holding to a trinity of Persons in the Godhead, but with their relationships unknowable. This merely gives some invalid show of non-heresy and attempts avoidance of Tritheism (three distinct Gods). Moreover, on the basis of the above reasoning, they are not entitled to speak of divine Persons because the human word “person” does not allow me, as a human being, a Trinitarian relationship with two other persons. I, as a person, am separate from all other persons. How then apply this human word to those in the Godhead? Now, I do not object to the word Person being applied to those in the Godhead, but if the objection to the eternal relationships based on the use of the words Son and Father is valid, then the use of the word Person is not valid as applied to the divine Persons. We will consider this at some length in Chapter 10, where we will also consider the Father’s and the Spirit’s use of the word “I” as bearing on this issue.

The objections based on the words Father and Son reflect the mentality of the Pharisees who knew that the Christ would be David’s son. Our Lord asked them:

How then does David in Spirit call him Lord, saying, The Lord said to my Lord, Sit on my right hand until I put thine enemies under thy feet? If therefore David call him Lord, how is he his son? (Matt. 22:43, 44).

They knew something about Messiah on the human side but failed concerning the divine side. Their thoughts, being controlled by the human, entailed dire consequences.

In this paper we will deal with the evil idea that while there has eternally existed three divine Persons, the relationships of Father, Son and Spirit only refer to what these three Persons became in time. This teaching involves what is called the “temporal Sonship” or “incarnational Sonship” to distinguish it from the truth concerning the divine, eternal relationships. We may call it “the temporal relationships of God.” It involves far more than just the denial of the eternal Sonship.

The Raven-Taylor System of Inscrutability

The Exclusion of Manhood
From Christ’s Person

F. E. Raven’s (FER) attack on Christ’s Person did not begin with the denial of the eternal Sonship. It began with deviation concerning eternal life and the fact that the Son was eternally in His Person the Eternal Life and subsequently (1895) the Apollinarian idea that the deity filled the function of the immaterial part of Christ’s humanity. What this means is that Christ had no human soul and spirit but that the deity supplied that function. This is the old heresy known as Apollinarianism. See Appendix two for more elaboration concerning this and the consequences of this fundamentally evil teaching. FER developed his attack on Christ’s Person, denying that He was eternally the Word (1890), and that He was eternally the Son (1898). Thus, he laid the basic ground-work of the system of the denial of any eternal relationships in the Godhead.

The Apollinarianism, i.e., that Christ had no human soul and spirit, required a new meaning regarding the use of the word “Person” in connection with Christ. “The Person of Christ” is an expression that included the union in Him of the divine and human natures. The Eternal Son took manhood into His Person. The Person did not change. There remained but one Person. There was not, as a consequence of this union of the human and divine, two persons. But two persons is what FER willfully professed to see would result from the union of the human and the divine. So he generated a new form of speech to designate the Apollinarian Christ in which there is no human soul and spirit — in which there is no union. He said:

❖ in Person He is God, in condition He is man;
❖ a divine Person in manhood.

This is the distinguishing Ravenistic mode of speech. Note carefully that FER’s use of “Person” is radically different. He restricted the use of the word “Person,” when used in reference to Christ, to apply to the deity only. Thus, the manhood in the Lord Jesus was not taken into the Person. In this scheme there is no union of the human and divine, which is what prohibits there being two persons. Christ, then, amounts to the deity (the Person) of the Son, being encased in a human body, the Person being the “spirit” of that body. It follows from this that at the death of Christ the incarnation dissolved — for He was no longer in the condition of man — the divine Person was no longer in manhood. The truth is that at the death of Christ the human soul and spirit remained united to the deity, while the body lay in death. Thus the incarnation remained untouched. But in this Apollinarian system, there was no human soul and spirit
united to the deity, and so the spirit dismissed at the cross must necessarily have been only the deity. It follows that death dissolved the incarnation. Moreover, the true meaning of this is that the resurrection of Christ is not what Scripture speaks of as resurrection -- it was another incarnation of an Apollinarian type.

**Is the Son, As Man, Scrutable?**

Besides the perversion of the word “Person” by FER, James Taylor, Sr., the successor to FER in the line of perversion regarding the eternal relationships in the Godhead, concluded that the word “inscrutable” must not be used about Christ as touching His manhood, or as touching Sonship. Having been taught by FER that Sonship was not eternal, he said that the Person was “inscrutable.” What does this mean? In the system we are reviewing, there are two major parts:

- there are no known eternal relationships; what is eternal is defined as the sphere of the “inscrutable”;
- the relationships spoken of in Scripture all commenced in time and are not part of the sphere of the “inscrutable” (the eternal).

James Taylor, Sr., (JT) wrote:

> The creature is not capable of looking at the Deity in its abstract form and relations {how does he know there are such relations in deity?}; he cannot think in terms of infinitude, but only in finite terms. Hence God, while ever the same, has come in grace into the creature’s realm and has presented Himself in terms that appeal to the creatures mind and understanding.

Here is a clear indication that he regarded the relationships of Father and Son as “finite.” These relationships, he claims, commenced in time and were not eternal. It moves the eternal relationships from the inscrutable to scrutatable time relationships; from the infinite to the finite. The finite can be scrutinized -- analyzed by the mind of man. Let us look at two Scriptures that well illustrate how what we have been considering about “Person” and “inscrutability” is applied. First, Matt. 11:27:

> All things have been delivered to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son but the Father, but he to whom the Son may be pleased to reveal {him}.

Concerning this Scripture, JT wrote:

> Then while the Person of the Son is in view in Matthew 11:27 and while He, of course, has part in the Deity, yet He is speaking of Himself as He then was -- He was inscrutable save to the Father (1932).

> . . . the inscrutability of our Lord’s Person referred to in Matthew 11:27 (1932).

> It is a question of the Person, as over against the Father, for He says, “No one knows the Son” . . . He is not as to His Person, a subject of revelation; as a man here He is to be known (1941).

This is a sample of the characteristic way in which these teachers of evil doctrine express themselves. Note that, in effect, this divides the Person. The dividing of the Person comes out so clearly in their views of the Lord’s death, which results in a dissolution of the incarnation. When these writers say “Person,” they restrict the word “Person” to what He is as deity, which they define as inscrutable, in contrast to the relationship of Father and Son which are relationships begun in time. The truth is that the Son took humanity into His Person, and Matt. 11:27 refers to His Person as God and man united in one Person, as does Luke 10:22. Writing in accordance with the truth that the Son took manhood into His Person, JND said:

> But the divine glory of His being is maintained and secured, when He became incarnate, by the incomprehensibility of His Person.

C. A. Coates, commenting on Luke 10:22, said:

> The Son is so great that no one can know Him but the

---


> It helps, I think, to bear in mind that revelation is for finite minds -- no man can take in the form of God . . . .

Is the issue really about taking in the form of God? But you should be able to see that he thinks he can “take in” the relationships that are revealed. They can be measured by James Taylor, Sr.’s mind, because he says they only began to exist in time, that is, outside the inscrutable, as defined by him.

---

11. In Appendix 2 we see how the Apollinarism of F. E. Raven, JT, and C. A. Coates dissolves the incarnation -- which is the final dividing of the Person. As another example, we read:

> F.L.H. Have you not said that we are not great enough to consider Jesus as God and Man at the same time?

> J.T. That is quite true: we are not great enough to take in the two ideas at once (*Ministry of James Taylor* 50:180).

We must consider the Lord Jesus as God and man at the same time. Every human way, word and work of His had a divine spring in it -- and could not have been done without that union in Him of the two natures. The statements we have just looked at are an expression of Apollinarism. See an article in Appendix 2 by W. Kelly on viewing Christ as God and man.

12. In *Ministry by J. Taylor* 50:215, we read:

> C.N. Just as the condition He took in manhood made no difference whatever as to His Person, so this position of subjection does not affect this {1 Cor. 15:28}.

> J.T. It does not alter His Person at all; that is inscrutable. The person of Christ is inscrutable; no one knows Him but the Father.

We can see from this how he expects the adepts in this system to understand that by “the person of Christ is inscrutable,” he means just what C.N. said, that the condition he took in manhood made no difference in the Person. It is Apollinarian.

Father . . . If One in the form of God comes into manhood, there must be that about Him which is inscrutable. It is our great theme of praise that no one knows the Son but the Father; we should not like to think that we could compass the Son. Then, no one knows the Father but the Son, “and he to whomsoever the Son is pleased to reveal him.” It is a matter of the Son’s personal favor and pleasure to reveal the Father. The Lord delights to put in the hearts of His saints the knowledge of the Father as He knows Him. If we know the Father at all we know Him as the Son knows Him . . . .

In Matt. 11:27 and Luke 10:22 we are told that the Father has delivered all things to the Son. It is the Son in manhood that is thus spoken of. And since the Son reveals the Father, it is as man He revealed Him. Why should what lies between these two things, namely, “no one knows the Son but the Father,” mean something else than the Son in manhood? -- except that the fact destroys their notion that the Son as man is inscrutable. The inscrutability of the Son in manhood upsets the inscrutable/not-inscrutable division necessary for this system of denial of eternal relationships. They determined to get rid of Christ’s true humanity, and having perverted it into a false Christ, what is left is in the sphere of their scrutability, subject to their minds’ analysis; and this false god is the object of their worship! The truth is that we have in Matt. 11:27 and Luke 10:22 a statement that the Person of the Son in manhood is inscrutable! In one of his replies to Ravenism, A. C. Ord wrote:

But again and again we are reminded in the Scriptures, that what is infinite and illimitable lies hid in His blessed Person, for there dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily (Col. 2:9); so that all the vain speculations now current among brethren, and among the ritualistic and rationalistic leaders of thought in the Establishment, only involve them in a labyrinth of error. For the subject transcends the powers of the human understanding, which is sure to fail in the attempt to resolve it.

Though He is rejected by man because of His humiliation (in Matt. 11) -- for the pride of man is “offended” by the lowly guise and form of manhood which He has assumed -- He bows to His Father, who hides these things from the wise and prudent, and reveals them unto babes; and we there learn that so glorious and profound is this mystery of His Person, that it is inexplicable to man. But what is most remarkable, and shows how, on account of His humiliation, His sacred character is guarded, it is not so affirmed of the Father; for while it is said that no man or creature “knoweth the Son but the Father,” it is permitted to us by the indwelling of the Spirit to know the Father. “Neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son wills (βουλήσης) to reveal Him.” There is not in the Father that complex glory which exists in the Person of the Son become man, but pure and simple divine character and nature, which could be revealed and made known by the Son. “No man hath seen God at any time: the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him” (cp. John 1:18, 14:8, 9, 16:25, 17:6, 25, 26). Hence the glory of the Son who became man, and in consequence exposed Himself to be scrutinized and treated with indignity by the wretched ingratitude of the heart of man, for whose sake He humbled Himself, is safeguarded by the inscrutability which surrounds it. And so jealous is the Holy Ghost, by whom the Gospels are indited, on this subject, that the same truth is repeated still more emphatically in Luke 10:22: “All things are delivered to Me of My Father; and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.” The difference of the language here observable is remarkable; it is not only “no man knoweth the Son, but the Father,” but no man knoweth (τις έστιν ὁ υἱὸς) who the Son is but the Father,” that is, not only His Person cannot be fathomed, but the manner of His existence is wholly incomprehensible to the human understanding.

Who, for instance, can form an idea of the effect of the presence, action, and power of the Holy Ghost in that human nature, the Seed of the woman conceived of the Virgin by His power? For though it was “the Seed of the woman,” and conceived of her according to the promise, and thus of her nature and substance, the action of the Spirit was such, in the miraculous conception of that holy humanity [Luke 1:35], that the angel says that that Holy Thing born of her could, on this account (as well as in His own higher nature), bear the title of the Son of God. Thus all His human life was in the power of the Holy Ghost, infinitely beyond His marvelous action on saints in earlier days. This explains how, in the sacrificial aspect of His giving up Himself to death, it is said by the apostle Paul in Heb. 9, that He, “through the Eternal Spirit, offered Himself without spot to God”; for the Holy Ghost acts in being Himself, in an infinite way, the power of those motives and feelings, which led Him to devote Himself thus for the glory of God, in His death. So again we read, “He was led of the Spirit into the wilderness” to be “tempted of the devil,” and “Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee” (Luke 4).

This was signified of old in the type when the fine flour was mingled, as well as anointed with oil. We have pointed out the activity of the Spirit of God from the earliest moment in John the Baptist; how then can we limit His energy, and the effect of His all-pervading presence thus specially marked, in the case of our Lord Himself? Before the scene in the temple, even from His infancy, we read what could not be said of another, He was “filled with wisdom.” Now wisdom is not only knowledge, but the power or capacity of adjusting the relations of things, or using knowledge rightly. Where can we find another who could tell us what was addressed to Him at the moment of His birth? “I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said

14. [This is his Apollinarian mode of speech learned from F. E. Raven.]
15. Outline of Luke (readings during the years 1929-1931), p. 125

17. Thus is rebuked the slighting allusion to this passage contained in the words, Retiring behind the oft-quoted phrase, “No man knoweth the Son, but the Father” (Voice to the Faithful, January, 1891, page 15).

And the dangerous claim to distinguish, in this incomprehensible mystery, the human from the divine (page 17), now put forth by so many of these teachers.
unto me, Thou art My Son; this day have I begotten Thee. Ask of Me, and I shall give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession” (Psa. 2:7, 8). We have seen (The Manifestation of the Divine Nature) in Psa. 22 how the sense of conscious relationship, confidence, and hope was expressed by the Lord when He was upon His mother’s breasts; but this goes even farther, for He declares how He was addressed as Son and heir by the Father, on the day of His birth, and what was then pledged to Him, and on what ground.

Of Him alone, in contrast with all others, it is said, “He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto Him” (John 3:34). A prophet might communicate messages which were given to him, but at other times he spake as other ordinary men; whilst Jesus spake only and always the words of God, and nothing else, just because He was God, and spake always by the Spirit of God. If He cast out devils, it was by the finger of God, and by the Spirit of God (Matt. 12:28); but He could also whilst on earth confer on others the power of doing the same and working miracles, to impart which is the prerogative of God alone (Luke 9:1; Mark 6:7). What above all marks the import of the passage, that none knows who the Son is but the Father (Luke 10:22), is the statement in Colossians, twice repeated, that in Him all the fullness of the Godhead is pleased to dwell {Col. 1:19; 2:9}. Not only this, but “in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily” {Col. 2:9}. This statement, true of Him when on earth, is generally supposed to express that He is God incarnate; but far more than this is contained in it. He is corporeally the center of the presence and action of all the divine Persons. He is the Son in His own Person. He manifests perfectly the Father in all His blessed nature; for He can say, “I and My Father are one,” and, “He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father.” And all the energies and working of the Holy Ghost, in the scene of evil that surrounded Him, proceeded from Himself as their center. This is expressed in the Revelation, when He is said to be, both now and in the future, possessor of the seven Spirits of God (originally seen before the throne, and subsequently sent forth into all the earth), first in the address to the church at Sardis, and afterwards when seen as the Lamb that had been slain, in the midst of the throne, with seven horns and seven eyes, emblematic of the fullness of divine intelligence, and of active power which He wields in all the universe (Rev. 1:4; 4:5).

It is important to observe, that in both the passages which specially speak of the Lord before the assumption of humanity, and subsequently to His becoming man, His divine personality is always maintained. Nor did He take another personality by becoming man. It is one and the same Person that Scripture presents to us throughout. In Heb. 10, “Then said I, Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God”; “A body hast Thou prepared Me.” The statement, “In the volume of the book it is written of Me,” comprises all that He fulfilled, after that He had taken as well as in taking the body prepared for Him. In what follows we read, “But this man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God.” In Phil. 2 He who is subsistent in the form and glory of God, empties Himself; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbles Himself. The divine personality is not lost by His becoming man, but is marked or distinguished even then, by these acts ascribed to Him. Hence He carried with Him the infinite sense of what He was, and what He came to do. “Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God.” And the result of His intervention never falls below the height of this infinite purpose and presence, as is distinctly shown in His still humbling Himself, and fulfilling what was written in these eternal counsels concerning Him. At no moment of His life, from His birth, when He takes the body prepared for Him, to His giving it up on the cross, could this be wanting. 20

In connection with the denial of the eternal relationships of Father, Son and Spirit, James Taylor, Sr. fastened on the perfectly good and usable word “inscrutability” and made it a code-word for the system. The same infidel, rationalistic process as is evidenced in the Ravenistic, Apollinarian explanation of the incarnation is at work in the denial of the eternal relationships. Apollinarianism seeks to bring the incarnation within the range of analysis by the mind of man. Using JT’s notion about inscrutability concerning the eternal relationships, these men have removed the eternal relationships from the sphere of inscrutability into the sphere of scrutability by their minds. The consequence is that these relationships are made temporal and scrutatable by the mind of man. They have made their own minds the measure of these relationships. They have morally sunk down to the measure of the mind of man in these divine matters. Having pretended to understand the incarnation (via

18. “The Father” has been wrongly introduced here (A. V.); for the πάρευξις or “fullness” refers to the Godhead, i.e. all the persons subsisting in the divine glory. It expresses the complacency of which the Person of Christ is both the object and the subject; so that instead of being some inferior or subordinate person because He became Man, it is exactly the reverse. The Godhead has been pleased to magnify His Person, by making His human form His dwelling-place, the channel of His expression and display, and His death the means of the reconciliation to itself of the whole scene which has been defiled by sin, as well as of ourselves, i.e. persons, who are now brought nigh. The word ευδόκησεν (was pleased) being in the past tense shows that the former extends to His Person and life when on earth.

19. Mr. Raven may see only the exhibition of infancy in its helplessness; for Scripture calls Him, the babe, “God with us,” and the child “the mighty God,” i.e. far more than saying “God was in the babe,” for God has dwelt in man in the prophets of old by His Spirit, or now, as the apostle John tell us, in us (1 John 4), but never before or in any other were God and man united.

(continued...)
Apollinarianism), they pretend to understand these relationships and measure them by human fathers and sons. What they are really doing is judging of what these relationships ought to be by reasoning upon them from the human to the divine relationships. It is actually infidelity regarding the eternal relationships just as infidelity in the case of the incarnation. It is not trust in God's revelation but trust in their own reasonings.

And he smote among the men of Beth-shemesh, because they had looked into the ark of Jehovah . . . (1 Sam. 6:19).

It was not enough for them to have gazed upon the ark. No, they had to look into it. They had to scrutinize it. There was the Ark of the Covenant, the acacia wood (speaking of His humanity) enclosed in the pure gold (His Deity). In it we see the two materials, but one Ark. And in our beloved's pathway there there never was a human word, there never was a human work, that had not the infinite value of the gold in it, though it be a human word and work. The divine imparted infinite value and glory to all that He spoke and did as man. All partook of the value and glory of what He was as Son in the Godhead. No one else's humanity was ever united to deity; and we are not to explain Him by the measure of our minds.

The truth is that the union in Him of the human and the divine is indeed inscrutable. And so is it with the eternal relationships of Father, Son, and Spirit. They are not scrutinizable, not finite, though we in our measure know these persons and enjoy all that has flowed from their actions in connection with the revelation of the Father, Son, and Spirit, in Christianity. Instead of this we are invited to 'enjoy' what the minds of FER, JT, and CAC have scrutinized and finite-tized for us.

**The Denial Has Antichrist Character**

The denial of the eternal, divine relationships in the Godhead is not the confession of the truth regarding the Trinity, and the manifestation of the eternal Father in the eternal Son, by the power of the eternal Spirit. It is a denial of the Father and the Son. The fact that a relationship in time is held by such does not set aside the fact of the denial.

He is the antichrist who denies the Father and the Son. Whoever denies the Son has not the Father either; he who confesses the Son has the Father also (1 John 2:22, 23). This the Antichrist of prophecy will do. Meanwhile, the Christian is warned that "whoever denies it has that antichrist character. Moreover, the Apostle John wrote:

Whoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God (1 John 4:15). 

**The Consequences of the Denial**

The denial of the eternal, divine relationships in the Godhead, and asserting that the relationships began in time, in connection with the incarnation, means this:

1. Someone gave some examples of what the meaning of the denial of the eternal relationships means (which could be vastly multiplied):

   In the beginning was a Divine Person, Who afterwards acquired the name of Word among the saints (John 1:1).

   And the Divine Person Who was afterwards known as the Word, became flesh (John 1:14).

   No man hath seen God at any time; the Divine Person who became the only-begotten Son by incarnation, and moved into the bosom of the Divine Person who became the Father, He hath declared Him (John 1:18).

   Thus, the declarations of Scripture cannot really be trusted.

2. We do not know which Person became the Son, which the Father, and which the Spirit. The manifestation of the Father in the Son, by the power of the Spirit is not the manifestation of the Godhead. What is of Godhead does not enter into the relationships. It is not the display of particular Persons in the Godhead. Thus, there is no revelation of God.

3. What the Son declared only began some 2000 years ago.

4. The love of God shown in the Son is a temporal love:

   {The eternal Sonship} is of immense import, because I have not the Father's love sending the Son out of heaven, if I have not Him as Son before born into the world . . . I lose all that the Son is if He is only so as incarnate, and you have lost all the love of the Father in sending the Son as well.  

   The entire character of the love is lowered to something temporal. It falsifies the eternal love expressed by the Father in sending the Son. It is a falsification of what is in the Trinity and true of the relationships.

5. His Sonship is reduced to something like the sonship of the saints. This dishonors the Father and the Son:

   He who honors not the Son, honors not the Father who has sent Him (John 5:23).

6. In the work on the cross, the Son has imparted the infinite value of His Person and His relationship to the Father to the work. If in His Person He is not "the Son of His love" eternally, the character of the work is changed.

7. Since it is not possible to know from Scripture that there are relationships in deity, the tendency of this teaching is to Trinitism; so, perhaps there really is no Trinity but rather three Gods -- a triad.

   Christianity is gone.

Chapter 2

Some Characteristics of the Divine Persons

Briefly stated, the truth concerning the Trinity is this:

- there is only one God;
- the Father, Son and Spirit are each one of them God, as such;
- and that the Father, Son and Spirit are each distinct Persons, eternally so, as Father, Son and Spirit.

The OT witnessed to the unity of God, though we may see hints that God was more than one Person; and the New Testament witnesses to the fact that the one God is three Persons: Father, Son and Spirit.

The OT does not enter into proofs of the existence of God and neither does the NT enter into proofs of the Trinity. The Trinity is not discovered by reason, nor provable thereby. It is a matter of God revealing Himself.

The Characteristic Actions of the Persons of the Trinity

The Father

The Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world (1 John 4:14). The Son reveals to us the Father (Matt.11:27; Luke 10:22). By the Holy Ghost believers cry Abba Father (Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6). The Father revealed as a distinct person of the Godhead, this was new truth to the disciples; hence they asked the Lord to teach them to pray as John taught his disciples. The answer to their request was that prayer commencing “Father,” in Luke 11, and “Our Father” in Matt. 6. Since it is the Son who reveals the Father, till He came the Father as such was not made known to God’s saints upon earth. Philip’s request demonstrates how new the teaching of the Father really was (John 14:8) even after the disciples had been taught to pray to Him who was seeking worshipers to worship Him in spirit and in truth (John 4:23). Subsequently they experienced what it was for Christians to have access through Christ by one Spirit unto the Father (Eph. 2:18), and to give Him thanks who has made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light (Col. 1:12). Further, the Father was not, and is not, a Person unknown to His children. No one of us has seen Him. None of the disciples saw Him. But in seeing Christ they saw the Father, and thus learnt from the ways, the words, the thoughts of the Son what they had need to learn about the Father, to whom He was going, and in whose house He would prepare for them an abode (John 14:2-7). Further, His love can be enjoyed, if the needful conditions are complied with (John 14:21, 23), and His name the Son declared, and would declare, that the love wherewith the Father had loved Him should be in His people, and He in them (John 17:26).

Ways of grace characterize the Father. Throughout all the period between the fall and the incarnation He had been working (John 5:17); and He gave to the Son power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as the

The New Testament gives a further glimpse of the Father, though we may see hints that God was more than one Person; and the New Testament witnesses to the fact that the one God is three Persons: Father, Son and Spirit. The characteristic actions of each of the divine Persons is in accordance with, and flows from, Their respective distinction of Persons as eternal Father, Son and Spirit in the Godhead.
Father had given him (John 17:2). Amongst such were the disciples, and all who should believe on Him (John 17:6, 9), through their word. Quickening power, too, in grace is a marked characteristic of the Father’s present ways, who Himself judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son, that all should honor the Son even as they honor the Father (John 5:21, 23). Meanwhile His will is, that every one that seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, should have everlasting life (John 6:39, 40); and none who have it, and are therefore proved to be Christ’s sheep, can ever be lost, for none can pluck them out of His Father’s hand (John 10:29). And that all this should be known and enjoyed by His children, He has given the other Comforter, even the Holy Ghost to be with us for ever (John 14:16).

Working, in grace, sending the Son, raising up the dead and quickening them, these are part of the Father’s ways; and if sharing in the effects of such grace we call on Him, who, without respect of persons, judgeth according to every man’s work, the exhortation comes to each one of us to pass the time of our sojourning here in fear (1 Pet. 1:17), and to be in subjection to the Father of spirits, as become His children (Hebrews 12:7, 9).

The Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, and our Father too, this brings before us the thought of relationship formed by birth. The Father of the Lord Jesus Christ He is, because He was conceived of the Holy Ghost. Our Father He is, speaking of saints, because we are born of the Holy Ghost . . . In addition to this, He is viewed as Father in a very different light. He is Father, as the origin of all things (Eph. 4:6), and the source of all glory (Eph 1:17), of mercies 2 Cor. 1:3), and of lights (James 1:17); but this, which is connected with creatorship, is quite distinct from the relationship in which He pleased to stand and believe on Him, that which is of the world does not.

**The Son**

Of the Son we also read. He reveals the Father (Matt. 11:27); He has declared God (John 1:18). As Son He quickens souls. As Son He will Judge all creatures (John 5:21, 22). As incarnate He is the expression and measure of God’s love towards the world (John 3:16), and seeing Him the disciples saw the Father (John 14:9). As Son He is subject to His Father (John 5:19; 6:39, 40; 17:1); though equal with the Father, and one with the Father (John 17:5; 10:30), being Himself Jehovah (John 8:58; 12:41). Besides this He is the way to the Father, the truth, and the life (John 14:6), as well as the light of men (John 1:4). Of His work, creation witnesses; for as Jehovah He made all the worlds, and upholds all things by the word of His power (Heb. 1:3). Having life in Himself, He quickens, and is the resurrection and the life (John 11:25). As the light of men (John 1:4), those who believe on Him shall not abide in darkness (John 12:46); and they that follow him shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life (John 8:12).

Besides His work in creating (Col. 1:16), we learn of His work in connection with atonement and redemption. This introduces the subject of His death. He who is the Son of God died, and gave Himself for us, as the apostle writes, addressing Christians (Gal. 2:20); and because of His death to glorify His Father, love from the Father flows out in especial manner towards Him, the Son (John 10:17). By His precious blood shed on the cross the church has been purchased (Acts 20:28), and the man who apostatizes from Christianity, treads under foot the Son of God (Heb. 10:29); counting the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, to be an unholy thing. By His death the world has been purchased, and all men in it are therefore His property (Matt. 13:44; 2 Pet. 2:1; Jude, 4). In His death and its results the saints have an interest (John 11:51, 52), and creation likewise (Rom. 8:19-21; Eph. 1:14; Rev. 5:13). Declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by resurrection of the dead (Rom. 1:4), His present place on high attests His divinity (Heb. 1:3), and His very attitude on the throne of God witnesses of the abiding efficacy and finished character of His atoning, work (Heb. 10:12-14).

On high He still ministers to His people, as Shepherd and Bishop, and the washer of their feet, as often as is needed (John 13), and is occupied in service with God the Father for them, both as High Priest before God (Heb. 4:14), and as Advocate with the Father (1 John 2:1). Nor will His personal service to His people cease, when His advocacy on their behalf shall be no longer needed; for making, them sit down to meat, He will gird Himself, and come forth and serve them (Luke 12:37). Meanwhile He has gone to prepare a
place for them in His Father’s house (John 14:2), 22 and He 
cheers His people, and comforts them individually by the 
way (Acts 7:56; 18:9; 23:11), till He comes into the air to 
receive them to Himself, thus delivering them from the wrath 
to come 23 (John 14:3; 1 Thess. 1:10; 4:16, 17; Rev. 3:10), 
previous to His coming with His saints to execute judgment 
on the ungodly, and to establish the kingdom of God in 
power on the earth (2 Thess. 1:7, 8; Jude, 14, 15; Rev. 
19:15); for He must reign till He hath put all His enemies 
under His feet, after which He will deliver up the kingdom 
to God, even the Father, that God may be all in all (1 Cor. 
15:24-28). With this the special acts of the Son, as such, 
cease, as far as Revelation has made them known to us.

Revealing the Father, ministering to wretched creatures in 
all the depth of their need temporal and spiritual, dying to 
make atonement, serving His saints, executing divine 
judgment, and reigning in power, so as to put down all that 
is opposed to God in the universe, and then delivering up the 
kingship to God, even the Father, such is a brief, cursory 
glance at His ways and actions, by whom the worlds were 
made and who is appointed heir of all things, the eternal Son, 
and God’s Son born in time as well.

The Spirit

Of the Holy Ghost we read. Men are born of Him (John 
3:5). Saints are led by Him (Rom. 8:14), and are instructed 
in God’s mind through that written word, revealed to apostles 
and prophets; some of whom were empowered to 
communicate God’s mind in words which the Holy Ghost 
taught (1 Cor. 2:12, 13), as well as to work miracles in the 
attestation of the truth they proclaimed (Heb. 2:4). Seen in 
a bodily shape like a dove at the baptism of the Lord (Matt. 
3:16; John 1:33), He is not now made manifest to outward 
eyes (John 14:17); but His actions are manifested by their 
results, and His presence in the church distinctly proved by 
His power, whether in grace or in judgment (John 3:8; 1 
Cor. 12:7-11; Acts 5:3-5, 9, 10). His coming to earth was 
made evident when poured out on the day of Pentecost (Acts 
2), and the extent to which the blessing from His coming was 
to proceed, was learnt by His ways in the house of Cornelius 
(Acts 10). Multitudes on the day of Pentecost bore witness 
that something unheard of before had taken place. The 
company who went with Peter to Cornelius were 
eyewitnesses, that on the Gentiles, too, was poured out the 
gift of the Holy Ghost (Acts 10:45). And Simon Magus 
confessed that the spirit was working, a power so different, 
but so superior to that with which he had been so familiar 
(Acts 8:13, 18, 19).

Sent by the Father (John 14:16, 26), and by the Son from 
the Father (John 15:26; 16:7), He came to dwell on earth in 
the assembly of God, formed by His presence into God’s 
habitation (Eph. 2:22), and house (1 Tim. 3:15), and Temple 
(2 Cor. 6:16); and by His action He formed the body of 
Christ as well (1 Cor. 12:13). He came to dwell with the 
disciples forever, to teach them all things, to witness for 
Christ to the world, and to guide the disciples into all the 
truth (John 14, 15, 16). Dwelling, too, in God’s saints 
individually, He is to them the seal, the earnest, the union 
(2 Cor. 1:22); so that they can look forward to the day of 
redemption (Eph. 5:30), await the redemption of the 
purchased possession (Eph. 1:14), and know all things, being 
taught of Him (1 John 2:20-27). Dwelling in them, their 
offices are His temples, and their quickening {from the dead} 
will be the sure consequence (1 Cor. 6:19; Rom. 8:11, where read because, not by). In the saints He witnesses to them of 
their relationship to God as His sons (Gal. 4:6), and He sheds 
abroad in their hearts God’s love towards them (Rom. 5:5). 
To the world, He by His presence, demonstrates its sin in 
having rejected the Lord Jesus Christ, witnesses to it of 
righteousness, in that the crucified One has gone to His own, 
or, (perhaps,) to the Father; and certifies of judgment, 
inasmuch as the Prince of this world is clearly judged (John 
16:8-11).

As the Person of the Godhead down here, He directs the 
work of God on earth; (Acts 8:29, 39; 10:19, 20; 13:3, 4; 
15:28; 16:6, 7; 21:4); witnesses Himself of Christ, and 
gives power to God’s servants to bear witness also to Christ 
(Acts 18:5). So while the Lord Himself is concerned for His 
servants, and encourages them individually, the Holy Ghost 
it is who directs as to the fields of labor, and the instruments 
that He will use for special service upon earth. Further, by 
His presence on earth forming the house or assembly of God, 
there is in consequence a within and a without, (1 Cor. 5:12, 
13; Col. 4:5); the bounds of the former, being conterminous 
with that of the assembly viewed as embracing all professing 
Christians. Besides this, on earth, in the assembly the Spirit 
with the Bride, in response to the Lord’s announcement that 
He is the morning star, invites Him to come to take away His 
Bride, with whom whilst she is here, the Spirit is associated 
(Rev. 22:17). Thus the Holy Ghost works on souls, dwells 
in saints, and in the assembly, or house, directs the work on 
earth, fits each instrument for its service, and awaits with the 
Bride the coming of Christ to take her away, ere divine 
judgment is executed on world, which has crucified God’s 
Son, and rejected all overtures of God’s grace. After 
the removal of the Bride, the Spirit will work afresh, to 
prepare hearts to serve God, and to witness for the Lamb 
in the interval between the rapture of the church, and the 
appearing of the Lord Jesus with all His heavenly saints 
(Rev. 12:11, 17), preparing too, a remnant of Jews of Israel 
also as a whole, and a company of Gentile to welcome the 
Lord’s return (Rev. 14:1, 7), preparatory to His being 
poured out on Israel (Ezek. 37:14), and on all flesh (Joel 
2:28). With this, the distinctive teaching about the Holy 
Ghost’s work terminates. ◆

22. {His entry there made the place ready.}
23. {The wrath to come may refer to the eternal wrath, rather.}
The Father, Son and Spirit
Always Act in Unity

The characteristic actions of the divine Persons always reflect the unity that is inherent in the Godhead. The divine Persons have ever acted in unity from creation to Christ’s glorification and the sending of the Spirit. This includes the operations of the Spirit consequent upon being sent here. Let us consider some examples of this.

- **Creation.** Creation is attributed to the Son (John 1; Col. 1; Heb. 1). As the Word (John 1:1-3) He expresses what God is; and thus, in accordance with what He is in His divine Person as the Word, He created the universe, with the earth, to enter it and express what God is. God made the worlds by Him (Heb. 1:2); through Him (John 1:3). It was God that created (Gen. 1:1; Eph. 3:9) and thus the Father, Son and Spirit acted in creation. See also Rom. 11:36; 1 Cor. 8:6; Rev. 4:11.

- **Incarnation.** Psalm 2:7; Matt. 1:20; Luke 1:35;

- **Baptism.** The Trinity is seen at Christ’s baptism (Matt. 3).

- **Temptation.** After He was anointed with the Holy Spirit we read:

  But Jesus, full of [the] Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan, and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness forty days (Luke 4:1).

  No doubt He was always led of the Spirit, but here we are told that He was so led forty days in the wilderness. If He had sinned, it would have been because He saw the Father sin:

  The Son can do nothing of himself save what ever he sees the Father doing (John 5:20).

  Of course, He was impeccable. The temptation (testing) was to show that the pure gold was there in the acid test. The denial of this defiles and divides His Person into two persons.

- **Words.**

  For he whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God gives not the Spirit by measure (John 3:34).

  . . . I do nothing of myself, but as the Father has taught me I speak these things (John 8:28).

  The words which I speak unto you I do not speak from myself; but the Father who abides in me, he does the works (John 14:10).

  The words which thou hast given me I have given them (John 17:8).

- **Works.**

  . . . for the works which the Father has given me that I should complete them, the works themselves which I do, bear witness concerning me (John 5:36).

  I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day (John 9:4).

  The works which I do in my Father’s name, these bear witness of me (John 10:25; cp. v. 37).

  . . . but the Father who abides in me, he does the works (John 14:10).

  I have glorified thee on the earth, I have completed the work thou gavest me that I should do it (John 17:4).


- **Gethsemane.** He earnestly prayed that if it was possible the cup might pass from Him (Luke 22:39-45). This was not possible. But it was consonant with, necessarily in accordance with, the perfection of His Person so to shrink from being made sin. Such is the Holy One who knew no sin. It would have been a defect in holiness not to so shrink from the horror of being made sin. He did the Father’s will.

- **Cross, Death and Resurrection.**

  On this account the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I might take it again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have authority to lay it down and I have authority to take it again. I have received this commandment of my Father (John 10:17, 18).

  . . . his Son (come of David’s seed according to flesh, marked out Son of God in power, according to [the] Spirit of holiness, by resurrection of [the] dead) (Rom. 1:3, 4).

  . . . Christ has been raised up from among [the] dead by the glory of the Father (Rom. 6:4).

  . . . who by the eternal Spirit offered himself spotless to God (Heb. 9:14).

- **Glorification.**

  If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall glorify him immediately (John 13:32).


- **Sending of the Spirit.**
But when the Comforter is come, Whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes forth from with the Father, he shall bear witness concerning me (John 15:26; cp. 16:7).

Having therefore been exalted by the right hand of God, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this which ye behold and hear (Acts 2:32).

- **Salvation.**
  As thou hast given him authority over all flesh, that [as to] all that thou hast given to him, he should give them life eternal (John 17:3).

- **Access.**
  For through him we have both access by one Spirit to the Father (Eph. 2:18).

- **The Spirit's Words and Works.**
  But when he is come, the Spirit of truth, he shall guide you into all the truth: for he shall not speak from himself; but whatsoever he shall hear he shall speak (John 16:13; cp. Acts 8:29; 13:2; 16:7).

---

**For in Him All the Fulness [of the Godhead] Was Pleased to Dwell**  
Col. 1:19

Regarding Col. 1:19, J. N. Darby wrote:

> Every correction of scripture is of moment. I beg to suggest one, the occasion for which it appears to me exceedingly mars the sense. I refer to the expression “It pleased [the Father] that in him should all fulness dwell.” The English reader may see upon the face of it, that the word “Father” is put in by our translators. This is extremely bad theology, depriving us of the development of glory in the Person of our most blessed Lord. “All the fulness was pleased to dwell in him.” In its present reading it is merely the pleasure of the Father about the Son, which I apprehend to be a mischievous derogation from the divine glory of the Son, to deprive us of the revelation of the Trinity known in the Person of our most blessed Lord. “All the fulness was pleased to dwell in him.” In its present reading it is merely the pleasure of the Father about the Son, which I apprehend to be a mischievous derogation from the divine glory of the Son, to deprive us of the revelation of the Trinity known in the Person of our most blessed Lord. “All the fulness was pleased to dwell in him.” In its present reading it is merely the pleasure of the Father about the Son, which I apprehend to be a mischievous derogation from the divine glory of the Son, to deprive us of the revelation of the Trinity known in the Person of our most blessed Lord. “All the fulness was pleased to dwell in him.” In its present reading it is merely the pleasure of the Father about the Son, which I apprehend to be a mischievous derogation from the divine glory of the Son, to deprive us of the revelation of the Trinity known in the Person of our most blessed Lord. “All the fulness was pleased to dwell in him.” In its present reading it is merely the pleasure of the Father about the Son, which I apprehend to be a mischievous derogation from the divine glory of the Son, to deprive us of the revelation of the Trinity known in the Person of our most blessed Lord. “All the fulness was pleased to dwell in him.” In its present reading it is merely the pleasure of the Father about the Son, which I apprehend to be a mischievous derogation from the divine glory of the Son, to deprive us of the revelation of the Trinity known in the Person of our most blessed Lord. “All the fulness was pleased to dwell in him.” In its present reading it is merely the pleasure of the Father about the Son, which I apprehend to be a mischievous derogation from the divine glory of the Son, to deprive us of the revelation of the Trinity known in the Person of our most blessed Lord. “All the fulness was pleased to dwell in him.”

It was the pleasure of the Fulness to dwell in Christ here below. The “fulness” refers to the completeness of the Godhead. In Col. 1:19 we read of the pleasure that it be so and in Col. 2:9 we read of the fact that all the fulness dwelt in Him bodily. Of course, in incarnation, the Son thereby entered a new relationship as man, taking thus a dependent place, as we may reverently say. And we may say that He thus took a subordinate place while we ever contemplate Him with profound reverence. Sometimes it is spoken of as an “inferior” place. If that means a dependent, subordinate place, it is well. However, it is possible to adequately and sufficiently describe the place He took in the form of a servant with the words “dependent” and “subordinate”; and therefore the use of the word inferiority can be avoided, thus eliminating applying to Him who is God over all, blessed forever, any erroneous connotation which may, in some minds, attach to the word inferior.

And so, as man, **all** the fulness dwelt in Him. This involves what He said, namely, that the Father dwelt in Him...
and He in the Father. Necessarily, then, the Father, Son and Spirit must always act in unity, one in will and purpose, though distinct in Persons and acting characteristically in accordance with those distinctions. Thus, in Christ, here below, we have manifested in Him the works of the Trinity in accordance with Their divine, essential relationships.

And we Christians have the Spirit of God indwelling us.

And the Holy Ghost (besides my having life from God, and so being a partaker of the divine nature) is the power in me (morally as well as in power of apprehension) by which I apprehend and enter into communion with God, with the Father and the Son; while this presence of the Holy Ghost secures in my feebleness the truth and purity of that communion, because any inconsistency grieves Him; and He works in the conscience by the revelation of God, though not then in communion. 25◆

The Holy Ghost is present, and reveals the Father’s love and Christ Himself to us, and thus the Holy Ghost is the power in us, and the Father and the Son are they with whom we have fellowship; and this is the reason why we do not pray to the Holy Ghost. His place, in the ways of grace, is to be in us; the Father and the Son are the objects, by His revelation of them, before the soul. 26◆

Chapter 3: The humiliation of Christ

The Humiliation of Christ

(Phil. 2:5-8)

The mind that is to be in Christians “[was] also in Christ Jesus.” This does not mean that this mind was only present in manhood. It was present in the eternal Son, in glory, before the incarnation.

There are two major steps of humiliation in what has been called a seven-fold descent. The first was the exercise of the humble mind in His pre-incarnation state; the second was when here in holy manhood.

Concerning the first step in this humiliation of the eternal Son, we read:

. . . I came out from God. I came out from the Father, and have come into the world . . . (John 16:27, 28).

For I came down from heaven, not that I should do my will, but the will of him that has sent me (John 6:37).

The doctrine of the Trinity in such divine relationship is essential truth. Love ever existed in the Godhead. That is where love comes from and here we see a humility of mind in the eternal Son. Humility in the Godhead! Think of that! So in the first immense step He humbled Himself in taking manhood into union with His Person. W. Kelly wrote:

First, it was humiliation for Him to become a servant and a man; next, being man He humbled Himself as far as death in His obedience (the blessed converse of Adam’s disobedience unto death).

Thus J. N. Darby wrote:

The thing I find in Christ exactly opposed to the first Adam and to our flesh is that He humbled Himself -- emptied Himself. First, He made Himself of no reputation, and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death.

There has been many a detractor of the glory of Christ, concerning this humbling, who, reasoning upon the Son’s emptying Himself, have given expression to the infidelity in their hearts by claiming that this emptying involved, as

Robert Anderson exposes it:

But the Kenosis [emptying] of this new theology betokens not Divine grace but human misfortune. It is not the humiliation of Christ, but His degradation. It is not that He became man, but that He sank to the level of a Jew of that age. Not that while “knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands and that He was come from God and was going to God,” [John 13:3] He humbled Himself; but that knowing nothing more than His contemporaries, His mind was warped by prejudice and ignorance.

Thus, opposed to His statements, as recorded by inspiration in the gospels, their wicked hearts of unbelief seek to get rid of them, while still laying claim to being Christians. Very evidently, such have not the humble mind which was in Himself. Instead of honestly labeling Him a fraud, they wish to maintain a credibility as Christians, modern and enlightened, and to maintain their supposed ability to scrutinize Him Who no man knows (Luke 10:22), keeping their ‘Christian positions and posts.’ Instead, then, of having the humble mind found in Him, they exalt themselves into a position of superiority to the Son when here in manhood, to correct Him.

The Lord certainly did not divest Himself of omnipresence:

And no one has gone up into heaven, save he who came down out of heaven, the Son of man who is in heaven (John 3:13).

While here on earth in the servant’s form, He says that He is in heaven; not of course as man, for as man He was in one place. Yet He was in heaven -- for He was omnipresent God. Nathaniel (John 1:47-50) was stunned to discover omniscience in Jesus of Nazareth, for surely omnipresence, and omniscience necessarily must be found in the same blessed One -- as well as omnipotence also. Moreover, while man here below He was corporeally where the Fulness of the Godhead dwelt (Col. 2:9).

We assert, then, that the emptying involves not one loss

27. Observe that here we have the Father also, as such, before the Son came into the world. The relation of Father and Son was, and is, eternal.
The essential being of Godhead cannot change, as is evident -- the Absolute, as men speak -- and whatever His humiliation, all the fullness of the Godhead (theotetos) dwelt in Him bodily. His emptying Himself (elenenose) applied to the morphe (form). He was in the status, condition of Godhead, of which, not to speak of outward glory, will and acting from His own will (though one with the Father, see John 5) was proper and essential. But the full purpose of His will in free devotedness, and always so, was to give up His own will, and this according to eternal counsels; Psalm 40.

It was not a loveling, to whom it is evil to have a will of its own, who had none -- that would have been nothing; nothingness was the place of nothingness. But He who in His essence could will, gives up His place, or condition as such, and says "Lo, I come to do thy will." It was a divine act, always so, but a divine act of kenosis (making empty). He was thus relative to the Father, not only as Son but as Servant -- an immense truth! He gave up, not Godhead -- that could not be -- but the status and position of it, and came not to do His own will, but the will of Him that sent Him.

Man answered to this place according to the counsels and glory of God, as the angels, the obedient administrators of power, witnesses of a sustained creation, but he who had been made in God's image, and now fallen, was in the condition to be the sphere of the display of all God's moral glory, mercy, grace, righteousness, above all, love, for God is Love; in a word -- redemption. Christ was a Man. And now, in the same perfectness, He takes no will, not even of man, not even to eat when He was hungry -- He lives by every word out of the mouth of God. He humbles Himself and is obedient even unto death, and that of the Cross -- no resistance -- no escape, though legions of angels would be ready at His call. He perseveres in submitting to all -- a tested obedience, even to death. Not merely obedience in peace, as Adam innocent might, or an Angel (though doubtless they must feel the ruin) but tested obedience, even to death. Not merely obedience in state not as to nature. It was His will to take the form of man, take the place of servant, of the carrying out the Father's will, as Son in manhood. This is the essence of the emptying Himself. This does not, and cannot, change His omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence. Though Son in manhood, subject to the Father's will, He was God over all, blessed forever (Rom. 9:5). Yea, though a babe in the manger, the universe subsisted by the continuous upholding by Himself (Col. 1:17). When they spit in His face, that spit maintained its course by Himself, the sustainer of the universe. When He lay on the cross, oh my soul, and those hammers described their arc in the air, the mighty God was there sustaining centripetal and centrifugal forces, sustaining the hammers in the arc, sustaining the very breath in the nostrils of His creatures doing this. The great God, the kinsman Redeemer, had come, emptying Himself, subservient to the Father's will; Him in Whom dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily (Col. 2:9).

The humanity was prepared by God:

Then there is the great central truth: "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire": "Mine ears hast thou digged!" "He taketh away the first that he may establish the second." Christ came to do God's will. Everything

31. We will keep in mind that the Persons of the Godhead are one in will and purpose while distinct in Person.
32. Notes and Comments 2:166. Also Collected Writings 32:420.
centers in Christ. All blessing is connected with relationship to Christ, whether outcast reprobates (Gentiles), or God’s people who had broken the covenant. All is set aside; and Christ, who says “Lo, I come to do thy will,” becomes everything.

“My ears hast thou digged” is not the same thing as is spoken of in Isa. 50, “He waketh mine ear.” It has a peculiar character. He is offering Himself before He came. In Philippians 2 we read that He becomes a man, taking the form of a servant, having ears, doing nothing but what He was told, listening to every word that came out of God’s mouth. “By every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God doth man live.” He had ears to receive it. Christ had no desire to do anything different from God’s will. God’s will was His motive. Never to stir but as another will guide you is perfectness as a man. Christ waited for the expression of His Father’s will before doing anything. Christ on earth was in the form of a servant. How did He get there? By putting off all the glory of having a will-offering Himself before He came. It was His will to come: His love brought Him. “Lo, I come to do thy will.” This was will, but it was the Father’s will. He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. He told His disciples, in going forth, to say, “Peace, and if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it; if not, it shall turn to you again.” So it was with Him. He was obedient, because He offered Himself to obey. There was nothing but obedience (power, of course, in Him): He is in the place of perfect obedience. The first word is not from God, “Do you go,” but from Christ, “Lo, I come.” In the counsels of God it was written in the book. This gives us a knowledge of Christ, His intercourse with God, before He came. Here is Christ, the divine person, the source of all the blessing, taking the place of obedience. He is the Servant now! What is He doing for us? Bringing out God to us, to our eye. He has brought God right down to our heart.

J. N. Darby wrote:

But the gospel of John gives us large communications on this humiliation of Christ. His Godhead shines in every page of all gospels, but John, as everyone knows, in a peculiar way gives us the Person of Christ -- the Word made flesh. Now I have remarked elsewhere the fact of the way in which He is everywhere One with the Father, yet receives all. But it is the direct expression of the truth we are studying -- He is God, He is one with the Father, He is I Am. Everywhere He speaks to His Father on a divine footing of unity: “I have glorified thee, now glorify me.” But He has taken the form of a Servant, never “now I will glorify Myself.” “My Father is greater than I”; “Father, glorify thou me” -- yet it was a glory He had -- “along with thee (the Father) before the world was.” “Thou hast given him power over all flesh” -- “I receive whoever comes, for I came not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me.” He finishes the work the Father gave Him to do -- it is the Father that sent Him; so John 8:26. But it is in this chapter the Lord says: “Before Abraham was, I am,” which the Jews well understood.

In a word His path was “that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father hath given me commandment, so I do.” His divine nature and Godhead shine throughout, but He receives everything -- is sent -- and has taken the relative place of reciprocity and subjection. John 5 has a peculiar character in this respect, and presented at first some difficulty to my mind. “As the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, so the Son quickeneth whom he will”; “My Father worketh hitherto and I work,” as the apostle notes, from the Jewish consciousness, making Himself equal with God. But in verse 19 He at once takes the place He is come into. “The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do.” “Whatsoever he doeth, these doeth the Son likewise,” and quickening comes as part of this -- “The Father loves the Son and shows him all.” But He, though He acts with the same divine power as the Father, yet is shown all -- does nothing of Himself; and in verse 26 He hath given to the Son to have life in Himself, i.e. the Son in the form of a Servant down here, and given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is Son of man. So that we know that it is in this humbled state that this applies.

Thus it becomes the clearest exposition of this unspeakable truth, the result of that, when in the form of God, He emptied Himself -- His own act -- divine all through, at every moment. How true it remains, “No man knows the Son but the Father”; but we adore Him. He is not ashamed to call us brethren, for now we are all of one.

But the point my mind rests on is the emptying of Himself; the rest is consequence, however blessed; Psalm 45:6, 7, and Hebrews 1:8, 9. Christ emptied Himself, taking upon Him the form of a Servant. Our best delight will be to be hidden behind Him and see Him have all the glory. It is interesting to see that whatever depth the Person of the Lord may give to this, the blessing itself, which has its very character from its adaptation to our state, is enjoyed by the simplest faith, and the more simple the more it is enjoyed. Christ dwelling in our hearts by faith is enjoyed by him in whom He dwells, not by him who can explain it, though it be true it must be enjoyed in order to be able to explain it.

But this humbling of Christ by Himself is divine love, and in exercise -- we know God by it. It is Himself in activity, yet in giving Himself up in this unspeakable way. In the Father God remains in essential Godhead; in the Son, one with Him in the exercise of it: coming down to serve, the Object in which we know God and see the Father. God is objectively before us in the Spirit’s power, operative power in us to be able to apprehend, and have the love shed abroad in our hearts so that we
dwell in God and God in us. 37

The Lord Jesus humbled Himself unto death, even the death of the cross -- where God was triumphantly glorified. No man knows the Son, yet He lets us see that He is that which no man knows. Who could say but there “God is known in death”? Is it not there love, God’s love is known, never known really till known there? Yet it is weakness, and, as to His place as man, the very end of man. But in Himself God is known in love by His being down here with sinful men -- by that love reaching even to us. He made Himself of no reputation, emptied Himself -- not that He could be other than God -- there is the mystery -- but as to the form of God He did. Hence having taken the form of a servant, He is always such -- receives all. Even when He takes the kingdom, He goes a long journey to receive a kingdom [Luke 19], and, when by His perfection in power He has subdued all, He gives it up to God even the Father (1 Cor. 15). He gives up His own spirit when the time comes, but recommends it to His Father -- raises up the temple of His body, but is raised by the glory of the Father -- grows in wisdom, speaks what He knows, but He is the wisdom of God; He can do nothing of Himself -- is obedient, but He is the power of God, and quickens too whom He will; created all things and upholds them by the word of His power. And this was His perfection, with the whole power of evil against Him, never to go out of the path of dependence and obedience -- never to use power by His will. Thus He bound the strong man as in the wilderness -- in death how much more even -- He could have had, even in dependence, more than twelve legions of angels, but it would not have been obedience fulfilling the Scriptures.

But what an emptying that was when He who was God could come into death, though suffering, though obeying, bring all that God was in His moral perfection into death, and then when it was needed, in man’s extremity through sin, in man’s weakness, in the place of Satan’s power, there glorify it -- love, righteousness, majesty, truth, all found glorified there. God is glorified in Him, yet it was in death, and because it was death in all it meant for God; but it was all the power of love, i.e., God, in the emptying. 38

The emptying involved being made sin (2 Cor. 5:21), God dealing with the issue root (sin) and branch (“bore our sins in His own body on the tree” (1 Pet. 2:24). God must be glorified in His nature regarding the outrage of sin against His majesty and nature. The emptying involved glorifying the Father. Anticipating the accomplishment of that God-glorifying work on the cross, He prayed:

I have glorified thee on the earth, I have completed the work which thou gavest me that I should do it (John 16:17).

In that work, God in the essence of His divine being was proclaimed: God is light and God is love. What He is was told out. “It was death in all it meant for God.” It required that the Son empty Himself. This emptying of Himself has exhibited the glory of God before His created intelligences. And that manhood our Lord will maintain forever. We shall see Him as He is. We shall see the marks in His hands, feet and side, those memorials of the unspeakable depth to which that emptying took Him. We shall see Him Who is God and man in one Person, yea, a lamb as it had been slain, standing (Rev. 5): Who prevailed so as to open the book, and loose the seven seals thereof, for the Father has committed all judgment into the hands of the Son.

We close with an extract regarding Mark 13:32: “But of that day or of that hour no one knows, neither the angels who are in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father.” This Scripture, as all, is perfect in its place; but a false textual criticism has placed it also into Matthew in modern translations, where it does not belong.

And as Son of man Christ is to receive the kingdom and reign. All the emphasis is upon his manhood. And, as {J. G.} Bellett would say, morally this is perfect too, for in that consideration there cannot but be remembrance of the humbled empty condition He assumed in becoming man, the servant-form and the servant-place He took for God’s glory. Now Mark it is especially whose province it is to present the Son of God in His service, Christ as the true servant. And in his gospel alone, as has often been noticed, that last element in our verse, “neither the Son but the Father,” is to be found. Are we then not to see in it just such an added moral touch as is suited to the presentation of Him which that gospel was divinely designed to give, and find assistance in understanding it from that very fact? How strong and beautiful an expression of the true servant character there is here then in this abnegation of concern as to what properly lies with the Father to make good. “The servant knoweth not what his lord doeth.” It was more than the form of a servant Christ assumed in becoming man. The spirit and qualities proper to that position He showed forth to perfection in the humble path of dependence and obedience He trod. Fittingly from such a servant in such a path comes this disclaimer of knowledge of a matter not belonging to His sphere as such. The kingdom he is to receive in the capacity of a servant . . . What wonder then, if of the day and hour of its advent, the One who chooses to consider Himself less Heir-apparent than Heir-appointed disavows the knowledge. “Not mine to give” in one case said the Lord. “Not mine to know” in effect He says here. Entire moral perfection. 39

38. Notes and Comments 2:78.
The gospel of Luke presents the Lord Jesus in the perfection of His manhood. That is not to say that we do not see perfect manhood in Him in the other gospels. There is a special emphasis of it in Luke. Hence, in the genealogy in Luke 3 we see the tracing back to Adam. And only in this Gospel do we have recorded the perfection of His boyhood (Luke 3:41-52). As in the other Gospels, we see Him praying, but it is emphasized in Luke -- showing Him in the dependent place He took as man. This gospel is filled with the lovely features that bring out so preciously Himself as perfect man. He grew from holy infancy to holy boyhood to holy adulthood. At every instant the eye of the Father rested upon Him with infinite delight and satisfaction.

It was the Father who prepared the humanity for Him (Heb. 10:5). How evil it would be to think that the Father prepared for His Son a humanity capable of sinning against Him!

The divine Persons act in unity, so we learn that the Father prepared, but in Luke 1:35 we learn of the mighty operation of the Holy Spirit in the incarnation of the Son. Here He is called “[the] Holy Spirit.” Note that very carefully. There is no “the,” indicating the characteristic of the action. It is Holy Spirit action. It is Holy Spirit action. And what kind of action is that? Why, that that humanity is characterized by holiness. Thus that humanity is “the holy thing.” The humanity of Christ is holy.

Adam held humanity in innocence before the fall. By innocence we mean ignorance of evil. After the fall he held humanity in a fallen state. But Christ’s humanity was holy. It had not the taint of sin acquired in the fall; nor was it innocent. Mere innocence might have implied capability of falling, as in Adam’s case.

Christ’s humanity was holy. While innocence means ignorance of evil, holy humanity repulses evil. Holy humanity was fully and unalterably separated from evil unto God. This is the state of humanity that the Father had prepared for the Son and which was brought forth by the overshadowing power of the Highest. The humanity came from Mary, but the operation of the Holy Spirit caused the incarnation and gave character to that humanity so that we read those wondrous words, “the holy thing.” The Lord Jesus was “the holy thing which shall be born.” This speaks of His humanity.

There are several reasons why the Lord Jesus could not sin. It is not only because He is God; His humanity is holy humanity. Holy humanity does not, and cannot, sin. The humanity taken by the Son was humanity morally suitable to the union of the human and divine in Him. The truth is that He took holy humanity into His Person -- and we shall consider much more about that great truth as we proceed. So, in Person He is God and man. He is not capable of sinning now, and yet in the glory He is still man. He now has humanity in a holy state and in a glorified state. But He never was capable of sinning. This has been called the impeccability of Christ, although some who accept this think that He was impeccable because He was God. While that is true, it is well to see that He was also impeccable because of the holy state of His humanity. But there is more blessed truth involved, namely the union of the two natures, the human and divine, in Him.
The Impeccable One

. . . who did no sin (1 Peter 2:22); . . . who knew not sin (2 Cor. 5:21).
. . . in Him sin is not (1 John 3:5).
. . . but also said that God was his own Father, making himself equal with God. Jesus therefore answered and said to them, Verily, verily, I say to you, The Son can do nothing of himself save whatever he sees the Father doing: for whatever things he does, these things also the Son does in like manner. For the Father loves the Son and shows him all things which he himself does . . . (John 5:18-20).
I do nothing of myself, but as the Father has taught me I speak these things (John 8:28).

All the words and works and ways of the Lord Jesus are accomplished at the direction of the Father, in the power of the Holy Spirit. Not a thing that He said or did is an exception to this:

But I have the witness [that is] greater than [that] of John; for the works which the Father has given me that I should complete them, the works themselves which I do, bear witness concerning me that the Father has sent me. And the Father who has sent me himself has borne witness concerning me (John 5:36, 37; cf. 12:49, 50).

Am I so long a time with you, and thou hast not known me, Philip? He that has seen me has seen the Father; and how sayest thou, Shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words which I speak to you I do not speak from myself; but the Father who abides in me, he does the works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father in me; but if not, believe me for the works' sake themselves (John 14:9-11).

Thus, one of the things that the Father gave Him to do was to be tempted in the wilderness, and prevail. He was about to enter on His public service and the Spirit came upon Him and abode upon Him; and the open heavens declared Him as God's "beloved Son" (Matt. 3:16, 17). This beloved One did everything as directed by the Father, in the power of the Spirit. Hence we read:

Then Jesus was carried up into the wilderness by the Spirit to be tempted of the devil (Matt. 4:1).

It was the Father's thought. He brought upon the scene great David's greater Son. For 40 centuries the defiant champion of the Philistines cried: "Give me a man . . .," and here He is. He reached into his bag and drew forth one of five smooth stones -- smooth in the running water (the Spirit; cf. John 7:38, 39) -- Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy; inspired of God, wrought by the Spirit. Count them. He reached into the bag and brought forth Deuteronomy, the book that so strongly presses obedience, responded to the champion of the Philistines, and pierced through his forehead. His forehead!

Satan was the covering cherub, attendant upon the throne of God:

Thou, who sealest up the measure of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty . . . Thou wast the anointed covering cherub, and I had set thee [so] . . . Thou wast perfect in thy ways, from the day that thou wast created, till unrighteousness was found in thee (Ezek. 28:12-15).

Here was one at the pinnacle of intelligence, but the quotation from the book of obedience laid that intelligence, and all its craft, low. Then (at the cross) He ran upon him and with his sword, the power of death, and annulled him who had the power of death:

Since therefore the children partake of blood and flesh, he also, in like manner, took part in the same, that through death he might annul him who has the might of death, that is, the devil; and might set free all those who through fear of death through the whole of their life were subject to bondage (Heb. 2:14, 15).

This is my Beloved, my impeccable Beloved. Is He your impeccable Beloved too? Do not desire a Christ to be like yourself in your sinful tendencies.

The Union of the Human and the Divine in One Person

In the incarnation the Son took humanity into His Person:

. . . The Son's taking humanity into union with His Deity. 40

There are not two persons in Christ. His humanity never had an independent existence apart from that union in Him. That is, He did not unite with another person so that Christ was thereby two persons. Christ is one Person, with a human spirit, and, soul, and body, and will. And so when He died on the cross, the body lay in death while the human spirit and soul remained united to the deity. Thus was the incarnation maintained while His body lay in death -- for if He had no human soul and spirit, then death would have been the dissolving of the incarnation. Actually, it is absurd to speak of His death if there was no human spirit and soul (as in the ancient evil of Apollinarianism). It would be better described as a dis-incarnation. And in such a case the resurrection would not have been what Scripture calls resurrection but rather another incarnation, which is not another (cp. Gal. 1:6, 7).

The fact that in Christ there is the union of the human and divine in Him has a most important bearing on the issue of whether or not Christ could have sinned. Persons wish to escape from the consequences of their doctrine that Christ

could have sinned. When pressed concerning what would happen, they hide behind the saying, ‘He did not sin, so why speculate?’ I suggest that they cannot face the consequences of their doctrine. As to calling it “speculation,” that is a vain attempt to divert attention from the fact that Scripture has spoken (not speculated) on what happens to a sinner:

For the wages of sin [is] death (Rom. 6:23).
. . . it is the portion of men once to die, and after this judgment (Heb. 9:27).
. . . fear rather him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell (Matt. 10:28).

It is quite clear why such hide behind the word “speculation.” But are the above three texts speculation? Hear this Wesleyan:

There is no profit in debating the question as to whether He could have failed and what the results would have been. The truth is that in the consciousness of Christ, He was really tempted. 41

Hear these Open Brethren (others would repudiate it):

Question 342 INCAPABLE OF SIN?

Occasionally we hear in prayer or ministry that our Lord was not only sinless, but ‘incapable of sin.’ As this expression might appear to reflect on his true humanity (his deity is not in question) would you say that it is a term best not used?

Fifty years ago, C. F. Hogg began an answer to a question such as this in the following way:

Testimony is borne that the Lord did no sin, that in Him was no sin. These are statements of fact. The question whether He could have sinned is purely hypothetical, and is barely removed, if at all, from mere curiosity.

Although I agree with his opinion . . . 42

In 1 Cor. 15:12-19 we see the apostle Paul drawing out the implications, effects, and results of a teaching. Certainly cries of “speculation,” “hypothetical” and “mere curiosity” would not have deterred him from doing so. Such cries are but ploys to avoid facing the implications, effects, and results of the teaching that Christ could have sinned. As an illustration, suppose a professed Christian refused to believe the devil was a personal being. You then ask him how could have sinned. But Christ is not two persons. There is one person but two natures. The Son took humanity into His Person.

The fact is that when the Son took manhood, He did not unite with, say, Israel ben Jehudah, another person. The humanity of the Lord Jesus did not have an independent existence apart from the incarnation. It cannot have an existence apart from the union of the human and divine unless the humanity is another person. If He had sinned, the humanity could not be split off and go to hell unless His humanity was another person. In that case Christ would have been two people. So, the doctrine that Christ could have sinned, coupled with what Scripture says happens to sinners, leads directly to the notion that Christ was two persons and that these persons could be separated so that one of these two persons would go to hell. This is not speculation. It is the evil meaning implicit in the doctrine that Christ could have sinned.

The fact is, then, that the teaching that Christ could have sinned is evil and absurd. Its direct tendency is to divide His Person. It is a false Christ, not the Christ Who died for sinners. The union of the human and the divine in one Person means that Christ could not sin. An objector wrote:

God cannot sin, neither can He be tempted with evil. NEITHER CAN GOD DIE (1 Tim. 6:16) -- yet Jesus Christ, fully God, did die. Why? Because He was also man. His humanity was subject to death. Death was a possibility to Him. And so also the possibility as a man to choose to sin.

Christ was not “subject to death.” He was not mortal, i.e., having in Himself a necessity to die -- though He was capable of dying. 43 Death was an act of obedience (besides being voluntary) to the Father’s command (John 10:18). He was capable of dying but no necessity to die was part of His humanity. Death is the wages of sin (Rom. 6:23); though, of course, He was capable of being a sinner’s substitute.

43. This matter is considered at length in Precious Truths Revived and Defended Through J. N. Darby, Volume Two, Defense of Truth, 1845-1850, available from the publisher.
The fact that Christ could die, in obedience to the Father’s will, is not analogous in the least. The fact that Christ died does not defile or divide the Person. When Christ died the human soul and spirit remained united to the deity. On the other hand, the result of the doctrine that Christ could have sinned is to divide the Person. This evil teaching means that the human soul and spirit would be divided off from the deity. Now, when Christ died, the Person remained undivided. While His body lay in the tomb, the soul and spirit of His manhood remained united to the deity. Thus, the death did not dissolve the incarnation because the soul and spirit remained united to the deity. Sinning would have both defiled and divided Him into two persons. The writer has manufactured a totally false analogy that heinously libels Christ, the Holy One of God. Weigh it: he thinks Christ could have chosen to sin!

Concerning the misuse of God not being “tempted with evil,” I reply with a quotation from W. Kelly, who, commenting on James 1:13-15, wrote:

The Epistle then turns from our holy trials to our unholy ones, and shows their source to be, not in God, but in sinful man. “Let none when tempted say, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted by evils, and himself tempteth none. But each is tempted when by his own lust drawn away and enticed; then lust having conceived bringeth forth sin; and sin when completed giveth birth to death” (vers. 13-15).

The distinctness is evident when we read on the one hand that God tempted or tried Abraham (Gen. 22:1, and Heb. 11:17), and on the other that Israel tempted God (Psa. 78:18, 41, 56, compared with Ex. 17:7). Never does God tempt any one to evil, but He may and does so bring out their faith and fidelity; but it is alas! too sadly common for His people to tempt Him by doubts of His mercy and active care. Hence the word in Deut. 6:16, “Ye shall not tempt Jehovah your God,” the Lord’s answer to the devil suggesting that He should cast Himself down from the pinnacle of the temple on the strength of Psa. 91:11. But the Lord utterly refuses to test God, as if His protection were doubtful in the path of obedience. God is not to be tempted by evils, any more than He so tempts.

The evil temptation comes from within man, though Satan may act on him, for he ever evilly tempts to evil. So it was man at the beginning was tempted when his nature was not evil; but instead of repelling it as the Lord did, he allowed and received it; so that henceforth the race was contaminated like its fallen head. The precise contrast is seen in Christ, to Whom the prince of the world came at the end, and had nothing in Him then any more than when first tempted. But it is wholly different with us, conceived in sin and shaped in iniquity as we are naturally, though now by grace born anew. Therefore have we an altogether distinct class and character of temptation, which the Lord had not, as incompatible with His person as with His work. In Him was no lusting against the Spirit, no contrariety in Him, because He was, as no one else could be, the Holy One of God. 44

Whenever I hear someone insist that Christ could have sinned, I feel as incensed over the affront to my Savior as the writer of the following (W. Kelly):

How could any one born of God entertain for one moment the thought of the Lord Jesus failing? Could such a profane dreamer be really supposed to believe that He is the Son of God? All these speculations of men which lower the glory of Jesus simply show that they do not really believe that Jesus is God while a man. They do not know what they mean by such a confession as that He is the Son of God to be honored as the Father. They do not truly believe that He is God Himself as truly as the Father or the Holy Ghost; for His becoming a man detracted nothing from it. He took manhood into union with His deity; but the incarnation in no way lowered the deity, while it raised humanity in His person into union with God. Each nature, however, preserved its own properties. There was no confusion. Each was exactly what it should be -- human nature, and divine nature, each in all its own characteristic excellence, combined, not confounded, in His person. And such was Jesus, Who came to glorify His God and Father, and deliver us from our sins to His glory by redemption through His blood. 45

The doctrine of the peccability of Christ implicitly divides His person. This is fundamental evil.

Christ was not two persons; but, every human act of the Lord Jesus had a divine spring in it, consonant with the fact of the union of the two natures in Him. In an evangelical magazine we see:

But if Jesus Christ did indeed divest himself of the exercise of the divine nature and lived among men in real dependence upon his Father and found his strength and wisdom in a pure humanity empowered by the Holy Spirit, then we can understand that his prayers were real prayers, his decisions were real decisions, his actions and reactions were genuinely human, and he is indeed our example in all things.

How can Christians who believe in two natures in one Person so speak? This is semi-kenoticism. Notice that this writer did not say that in the emptying (Phil. 2:5-8), the Son divested Himself of omnipotence, omnipresence, and omnipresence; He just divested Himself of the exercise of the divine nature. Is it a fact that in the gospels we do not find the exercise of the divine nature in Christ? How can a professed lover of Christ pen such words? He has divided the Person. He is presenting a Christ with a human nature acting apart from the divine nature. By virtue of the union of two natures in one Person, the humanity cannot act apart from, independently of, the deity. Every human act of the Lord Jesus had a divine spring in it, and the value and glory of His Person imparts its infinite value and glory to that act.

44. Exposition of the Epistle of James, in loco.
45. The Bible Treasury, New Series 1:79.
Chapter 5

The Temptations and the Lord’s Omniscience

Was part of the stress of the temptation of Christ the (supposed) idea that He did not know if He would fail or not? I have already cited Peter Cousins in the Harvester, an Open-Brethren periodical. It is evident that he holds both that the Lord did not know if He would fail or not and also that He could have sinned. He wrote:

These considerations have led Gerald Hawthorne, writing in A Bible Commentary for Today, to make an interesting suggestion. “Nevertheless, assuming that it was impossible for Him to sin, because of the nature of His person, yet it is also possible to assume that He did not know that this was the case. Mark 13:32 implies that the Son, in His incarnate role, was not omniscient -- there is at least one thing recorded there which He did not know. If, then, there was one thing He did not know, ignorance of other things was also possible, even this concerning whether or not He could sin... One must never suppose that His victory over temptation was ‘the mere formal consequence of His divine nature.’ Any interpretation of the person of Christ which in any way diminishes the force and genuineness of His temptation cannot be correct.”

From what I know of readers of HARVEST, I have little doubt that they are scriptural in what they believe about the deity of Christ. I have a strong impression that they, along with many other evangelicals, tend not to believe so emphatically in His full humanity. But a scriptural faith will affirm both the deity and the humanity, and will accept the tensions that such a faith entails. So when he attacks the Lord’s holy humanity he also supports the notion that Christ was not omniscient. If you do not agree, then you “tend not to believe so emphatically in his full humanity.” Why, you have a docetic tendency! Well, there seems no end to the ways in which our Lord’s humanity is attacked. I suggest that what is at work is a kenotic tendency, though it is clear that “tendency” is too weak a word.

Of course, not all Open-Brethren hold such teaching, but why do they not exclude such teachers from their fellowship? At any rate, one of them, W. Hoste wrote:

The plainest testimony to the omniscience of Christ is ignored or explained away. Again and again we read: “He knew their thoughts”; “He knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man, for He knew what was in man”; “Neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son”; (the knowledge of the disciple can never approach that of the Teacher, when the lesson is infinite); and, lastly, the unparalleled (except in John 21:17) testimony of the disciples resulting from His wonderful words just uttered. “Now are we sure that Thou knowest all things.” What could be plainer? But all goes for nothing with these men, in face of their theory that “our Lord must have been in the position of not knowing what was coming next in order to resemble us.” But surely what we are called to is to resemble Him, not to drag Him down to resemble us. This same writer refers to this theory as “This marvelous experience of His of not knowing.” It would indeed be marvelous were it true!

I hope what has been written here will enable the Lord’s people to appraise this teaching aright. Let us, however, in closing, quote a few more Scriptures which still further negative this erroneous theory: “Jesus knew from the beginning, who they were that believed not and who should betray Him” (John 6:64); “He knew that His hour was come,” (John 13:1); “Now I tell you before it come, that when it is come to pass ye may believe that I am” (v. 19. John 14:29; see Isa. 41:21-23, 26); and finally, “Jesus knowing all things that should come upon Him” (John 18:4).

Is it not difficult to recognize in the Christ these teachers offer us, “who did not know what was coming next,” the omniscient Christ of the Gospels, “Who knew all things that should come upon Him” and “all things”
That is plain enough. What possible excuse is there for denying His omniscience? There is none, and what is at the bottom of such blatant distortion of Scripture? Why, it is the doctrine that Christ could have sinned. Well did W. Kelly say, “Could such a profane dreamer be really supposed to believe that He is the Son of God?”

Having settled from Scripture that our Lord was omniscient and impeccable (we may be charged with docetic tendencies), we should seek the mind of God concerning Mark 13:32. A lengthy Scripture that our Lord was omniscient and impeccable (we say, “Could such a profane dreamer be really supposed to believe that Christ could have sinned.” Well did W. Kelly say, “Could such a profane dreamer be really supposed to believe that He is the Son of God?”)

That is plain enough. What possible excuse is there for denying His omniscience? There is none, and what is at the bottom of such blatant distortion of Scripture? Why, it is the doctrine that Christ could have sinned. Well did W. Kelly say, “Could such a profane dreamer be really supposed to believe that He is the Son of God?”

Having settled from Scripture that our Lord was omniscient and impeccable (we may be charged with docetic tendencies), we should seek the mind of God concerning Mark 13:32. A lengthy Scripture that our Lord was omniscient and impeccable (we say, “Could such a profane dreamer be really supposed to believe that Christ could have sinned.” Well did W. Kelly say, “Could such a profane dreamer be really supposed to believe that He is the Son of God?”)

That is plain enough. What possible excuse is there for denying His omniscience? There is none, and what is at the bottom of such blatant distortion of Scripture? Why, it is the doctrine that Christ could have sinned. Well did W. Kelly say, “Could such a profane dreamer be really supposed to believe that He is the Son of God?”

Having settled from Scripture that our Lord was omniscient and impeccable (we may be charged with docetic tendencies), we should seek the mind of God concerning Mark 13:32. A lengthy Scripture that our Lord was omniscient and impeccable (we say, “Could such a profane dreamer be really supposed to believe that Christ could have sinned.” Well did W. Kelly say, “Could such a profane dreamer be really supposed to believe that He is the Son of God?”)

That is plain enough. What possible excuse is there for denying His omniscience? There is none, and what is at the bottom of such blatant distortion of Scripture? Why, it is the doctrine that Christ could have sinned. Well did W. Kelly say, “Could such a profane dreamer be really supposed to believe that He is the Son of God?”

Having settled from Scripture that our Lord was omniscient and impeccable (we may be charged with docetic tendencies), we should seek the mind of God concerning Mark 13:32. A lengthy Scripture that our Lord was omniscient and impeccable (we say, “Could such a profane dreamer be really supposed to believe that Christ could have sinned.” Well did W. Kelly say, “Could such a profane dreamer be really supposed to believe that He is the Son of God?”)

That is plain enough. What possible excuse is there for denying His omniscience? There is none, and what is at the bottom of such blatant distortion of Scripture? Why, it is the doctrine that Christ could have sinned. Well did W. Kelly say, “Could such a profane dreamer be really supposed to believe that He is the Son of God?”

Having settled from Scripture that our Lord was omniscient and impeccable (we may be charged with docetic tendencies), we should seek the mind of God concerning Mark 13:32. A lengthy Scripture that our Lord was omniscient and impeccable (we say, “Could such a profane dreamer be really supposed to believe that Christ could have sinned.” Well did W. Kelly say, “Could such a profane dreamer be really supposed to believe that He is the Son of God?”)

That is plain enough. What possible excuse is there for denying His omniscience? There is none, and what is at the bottom of such blatant distortion of Scripture? Why, it is the doctrine that Christ could have sinned. Well did W. Kelly say, “Could such a profane dreamer be really supposed to believe that He is the Son of God?”
To understand the Lord’s assertion, the great matter first of all seems to be not to carry it beyond the matter concerning which He used it. It applies to something special. Where are we authorized to make it general? This disavowal of official cognizance of the precise date of the prophetic crisis is, by the Kenotics, regarded as an unqualified declaration of nescience, which is to be taken as applying wholesale and all round to the whole sphere of our Lord’s consciousness. We are told, “It is the ascription of a real nescience, not of an ignorance operating in one part of His personality and not in the other, nor an ignorance simply assumed for a certain purpose while a real omnipiscience remained latent, nor yet the pseudo-ignorance which meant that, while He knew this thing as He knew all others, He had no commission from His Father to communicate it to others.”

Now, it may be quite legitimate for some to scoff that “a god-man, possessing at one and the same time two wills and two separate kinds of knowledge, and using now this and now that as occasion arises, is at once a figment of theologians and a contradiction in terms.” But, for one who receives the account of the Gospels as inspired of God, the mysterious relation of divine and human, and the presence and activity of each in the sphere of His knowledge, as of all else in Christ’s person, revealed there, cannot be so curtly dismissed for the mere lack of an adequate explanation as to either the inter-operation of, or the connecting link between, the two. The fictitiousness of the theological conception is of little account. To it being a contradiction in terms, one must demur, so long, at least as long as there are no proper terms present for it to contradict. What do we know of essence, personality, or consciousness as applicable to God incarnate to make positive assertions as to Him psychologically? In our own personality even are there not depths enough unsounded? How much more in the one Personality where mystery is superimposed on mystery.

With the Gospels in our hand will it be claimed that Christ Jesus, even as incarnate, had, and manifested as occasion called for it, His own intrinsic essential knowledge of things, knowledge proper to a divine person, and differing in kind as much as in degree from our knowledge which is always derivative and limited, that at the back of everything this remained intact. As Prof. Orr says, “Behind all human conditionings are still present the undiminished resources of the Godhead. Omiscience, omnipotence, all other divine attributes, are there though not drawn upon save as the Father willed them to be.” Omiscience, present though not drawn upon, quite meets the case of our verse here, “Neither the Son.” The idea of absolute nescience, of an unqualified negation of knowledge cannot be entertained if He who made the statement is to remain for us true God as to His person. Become partaker of flesh and blood, He who would not draw upon His omnipotence in commanding the stones to be made bread for His sustenance as a man, would not either in this case fall back upon what in His omiscience He could not but be cognizant of; but observing in full measure the conditions proper to the humanity He has taken, “the times and seasons which the Father hath set within His own authority,” are left there, and the prerogative of announcing or unveiling them not usurped. In the capacity of Prophet the Son knows not officially of that day and hour.

Further, as the Son, still here in humiliation, though for the future all judgment committed unto Him, and as the God-appointed ruler in that kingdom reserved for Him till the arrival of this unrevealed day and hour, “neither the Son, but the Father” has a moral fitness and congruity all its own. For, in the working out of the divine purposes in regard to that kingdom, it is noteworthy that all is spoken of as carried into execution not by the Lord Jesus Himself; but by God the Father on His behalf. It is no question of Him asserting His disputed rights as divine; but of God the Father establishing Him in righteousness in that place of glory and honor He has so richly earned as man. To man it is, according to God’s counsel, that the world to come is to be subjected. And it is as Son of man Christ is to receive the kingdom and reign. All the emphasis is upon His manhood. And, as Bellett would say, morally this is perfect too, for in that consideration there cannot but be remembrance of the humble, emptied condition He assumed in becoming man, the servant-form and servant-place He took for God’s glory. Now Mark it is especially whose province it is to present the Son of God in His service, Christ as the true Servant. And in His Gospel alone, as has been often noticed, that last element in our verse, “neither the Son but the Father,” is to be found. Are we not then to see in it just such an added moral touch as is suited to the presentation of Him which that Gospel was divinely designed to give, and find assistance in understanding it from that very fact? How strong and beautiful an expression of the true servant-character there is here then in this abnegation of concern as to what properly lies with the Father to make good. “The servant knoweth not what his lord doeth.” It was more than the *form* of a servant Christ assumed in becoming man. The spirit and qualities proper to that position He shewed forth to perfection in the humble path of dependence and obedience He trod. Fittingly from such a servant in such a path comes this disclaimer of knowledge of a matter not belonging to His sphere as such. The kingdom He is to receive in the capacity of a servant. Not by the right and title of what He was as God does He assume control, but on the ground of what He has done, and as the reward of all His toil in that unique path of obedience He trod is He invested by the Father with the administration of all things. All waits on the activity of God the Father for its establishment, and of such things even as the right hand and left hand place of honor in it Christ declares that they are not His to bestow, but are reserved for the Father’s appointment. What wonder then if, of the day and hour of its advent, the One who chooses to consider Himself less Heir-apparent than Heir-appointed disavows the knowledge. “Not mine to give” in this one case said the Lord. “Not mine to know” in effect He says here. Entire moral perfection.
May we not consider that the objection founded on this verse is effectually disposed of by such considerations, or, if difficulty remains, that it may yield to further study on such lines? It does, at all events, appear futile to seek light on it, or elucidation of the profound and mysterious question of how divine and human knowledge are united and were related to each other in the person of Christ in the days of His flesh, along the line of metaphysics or psychology. How much worse to found on this verse, and in this way, a denial of their co-existence! It is quite conceivable that we may never come to know the nature of the connecting link between the divine and human in Christ’s person. His own declaration, “No man knoweth the Son but the Father,” would prepare us for this. Many theories have been constructed to account for the relation between the two, many attempts made to forge an intelligible link between them. It was but to be expected that from the surveillance of theologians this would not long be omitted. Where the word itself had, with its usual disregard for mere mental perplexities, confined its testimony to the bare fact of the two natures in one Person, Christ Jesus, God and man, without concerning itself with explanations of the nature of their relation, dogmatic theology, which considers itself to have been bequeathed the task of thinking out, and construing to intelligence, doctrines implicit in the New Testament, has over and over again essayed to explain such relation. It was characteristic of that working of the human mind upon divine things which we call theology to make the attempt. Yet, the ingenuity of the various conjectures notwithstanding, failure is stamped upon them all.

[J. T.]
Chapter 6

Chapter 6: The Eternal Spirit Sent by the Father and the Son

The Eternal Spirit Sent by the Father and the Son

Introduction

The evil, Ravenite system which says that God ever existed in Trinity, but that in this Trinity there are no known, or knowable, eternal relationships cannot be true. Specifically, the names Father, Son, and Spirit are names taken by divine Persons consequent on the incarnation of one of them. Thus Christ was not eternally the Word, the Son, or the Eternal Life; nor is the Father eternally the Father, nor is the Spirit eternally the Spirit. The Father’s bosom (John 1:18) thus began to exist consequent on the incarnation, and one of the divine Persons, we know not which, moved into that newly generated bosom of another divine Person, we know not which, who had become the Father. Thus, there is no revelation of God, no revelation of the divine Persons. This false god is not the God of Christianity. He is the unknowable god of the Ravenites. It is possible that there are three gods (tritheism) -- for no relationships are known or knowable.

Moreover, the Christ of this system is the Christ of Apollinarus -- i.e., He had no human soul and spirit, but the divine Person filled the function of the human soul and spirit in a human body. Thus, the false trinity is manifested by a false Christ.

Another thing to observe is that the system we are reviewing is not set forth in any comprehensive exposition by its developers. It is a piecemeal thing that has to be drawn together from many writings. There is an advantage to having propounded it piecemeal: the inconsistencies of the system were kept more hidden.

Besides that, new meanings were attached to words with little or no careful clarifications -- and the obfuscation caused by new meanings sometimes led opponents to misunderstand and resulted in a particular objection being invalid. However, the fault lies with those who developed the system. As we begin to examine more closely the subject of the eternal relationships, let us begin with a chapter concerning the Spirit. The reason for doing so is that the Spirit’s place in this system is so blatantly false that it may help us to see the system's thrust more quickly and easily. The subject of the sending of the Spirit shows quite fully where the evil teachings lead.

An objection is often made that the expression “eternal Son” is not found in Scripture. After remembering that words like Trinity, substitution, etc., are also not found in Scripture, but the things meant by those words are found in Scripture, observe that the expression eternal Spirit is found in Scripture:

... Christ, who by the eternal Spirit offered himself spotless to God (Heb. 9:14).

So, if the names of the Persons are only applicable in time, it follows that Spirit is not an eternal name of one Person in the Godhead. Therefore, those who deny the eternal relationships of Father, Son and Spirit have to prevent the expression “eternal Spirit” from meaning exactly that. And a similar mental exercise would have been done also if “eternal Son” had appeared in Scripture. Why so? Because they claim that the name Father implies priority and Sonship implies inferiority and there is no inferiority or priority of existence in Persons in the Godhead (and, of course, it is true that there is no inferiority in the Godhead). So it follows that such objectors would go through a reasoning process to evacuate such an expression as “eternal Spirit” of its true meaning. Taking up the issue of the sending of the Spirit first may help to make more clear the subtlety that is at work.

The Spirit Was Sent

The Son Could not be in the Form of God to be Sent?

The teaching that we are refuting involves itself in a gross contradiction because the Son was “sent” and also the Spirit was “sent.” The Father sent the Spirit (John 14:26) and the Son sent Him also (John 16:7). This sending of the Spirit took place at Pentecost (Luke 24:49; John 7:39; Acts 1:4; Acts 2:33). Moreover, the Spirit was “sent from heaven” (1 Peter 1:12). Keeping those facts before our minds, let us see what is said regarding sending. Here is what C. A. Coates wrote concerning what is implicit in the sending of the Son and the Spirit. Remember, the evil teaching is that the Son was sent after He was already here in incarnation.

Obedience or subjection cannot be rightly connected with Him as in “the form of God”, they belong to the condition which the eternal One took up as coming into the world in a prepared body. And it is as taking this place that He is
the Sent One of the Father. 51 ◇

He was eternally God, but it is as the Son of God in manhood that He is said to be sent and given. Scripture uniformly presents the truth in this way. 52 ◇

In the economy of revelation there is a certain subordination of both the Son and the Spirit; both are regarded as sent and given, and as taking up services given to Them. 53 ◇

Another of those Persons condescended 54 to be sent by the Father and the Son, and to indwell those who believe, 55 ◇

To think of our Lord as in deity being in a place of subjection is derogatory to Him. It is assigning to Him an inferior or subordinate place in Deity, and this is not only contrary to Scripture, but it is inconceivable to any one who believes in His full and true Deity. But as the Sent One He was under authority; He was in a subordinate relation to the One who sent Him. 56 ◇

51. CAC, The Personal and Mediatorial Glory of the Son of God, p. 5.
52. The Personal and Mediatorial Glory of the Son of God, p. 4.
54. Commenting on CAC’s use of the word “condescended,” another wrote:
   Did you notice what C. A. C. says about the Spirit coming into the world? “Another of those Persons condescended to be sent by the Father and the Son.” Page 18. We live and learn. Suppose we ask C. A. C. who told him this? We can but say, “Certainly John did not tell him so.” But why introduce this new idea of the Spirit condescending to come into the world to fill believers? Is it not to try and get over the difficulty of the Father sending the Son in pre-incarnation? You see if the Spirit -- who is co-equal with the Father and Son -- could be sent from Godhead and heaven, so also could the Son. These brothers (they are really evil teachers) are trying to prove that the Son was not sent from Godhead and from heaven, hence, they must do something about the evident fact of the Spirit being sent from heaven and by the other two Persons of the Godhead, so C. A. C. invents the idea that the Spirit condescended to come. The point he is trying to establish is, that one divine Person could not send another co-equal divine Person, hence the idea of the Son first coming into manhood and, being here, was available to be sent, is put out. The evident fact that the Spirit did not become man, yet was sent, absolutely destroys this new theory, so we are told, the Spirit condescended to be sent. Mr. Coates says on page 13, “One shrinks from going a hair’s breadth beyond what Scripture says.” Then he will have to drop this idea of condensation for no such term appears in any part of Scripture (Quartus, The Son, pp. 13, 14).

Moreover, CAC’s privy knowledge of this condescension violates inscrutability, a good word perverted into a slogan word in connection with the denial of the eternal relationships in the Godhead. What the Spirit allegedly did falls within that defined “incredulity” doctrine which we considered in Chapter One. At any rate, CAC is forced to say condescended in order to maintain the system, even if it violates the inscrutability doctrine. 55. Remarks on a Pamphlet by A. J. Pollock, entitled “the Eternal Son,” p. 18. This paper had been reviewed by James Taylor, Sr., who made some suggestions to CAC for correction and improvement (Letters of James Taylor 3:158-164, March 22 - April 14, 1932).

The Spirit Remained in the Form of God, Yet was Sent

If that is what being sent means, then such notions apply to the Spirit who also was sent. But He remains in the form of God! James Taylor, Sr., assured us that the Spirit did not take another form:

The Father and the Spirit have not taken another form, although they have taken an attitude toward men in the economy of grace in keeping with what Christ has taken. 57

Observe that in this system the Father and Spirit did not take another form. 58 Of course they did not. But then it follows inexorably that the alleged “attitude” that the Spirit allegedly took as sent by the Father is this:

- abiding in the form of God, the Spirit took the place of a sent One in subordination;
- and, He was sent from heaven (1 Peter 1:12), not sent after He was here.

On the other hand, the Son being sent is made, by this system, to take place after He had taken manhood -- because being sent implies the taking of the form of man so as to have a place of subordination that was incompatible with the form of God. They tell us that this sending of the divine Person who allegedly became the Son must have taken place in manhood because otherwise to be sent as One who is in the form of God would imply an inferiority in the Trinity. Yet, the fact is that the Spirit was in the form of God when He was sent, and sent from heaven.

Worse still for this system, the Spirit was sent by One who became man and came into the alleged place, of being then sent, afforded Him by these evil teachers. Be sure you understand this important point. The Spirit did not become man, did not take on Himself another form. He remained in the form of God. Let us substitute “the Spirit” in place of “our Lord” in a previous quotation from C. A. Coates thus:

To think of the Spirit as in deity being in the place of subjection is derogatory to Him. It is assigning to Him an inferior or subordinate place in Deity . . . inconceivable to anyone who believes in His full and true Deity.

What is the conclusion from this? Evidently, they are not viewing the Spirit as in deity -- though He abode in the form of God, which is what is meant by deity. How does one get around this blatant contradiction? JT’s remark, born of desperation, is that the Spirit took an “attitude toward men in the economy of grace in keeping with what Christ has taken.” So an obfuscation is introduced by a mystical use of the word “attitude.” But the unyielding and unipliable fact remains: the Spirit was in the form of God when He was sent, and talk

58. Below we shall see that he did, in fact, speak of another form, but let that pass for now.
about taking an “attitude” (JT), and talk about “condescended” (CAC), does not eliminate this truly insurmountable obstacle that the Spirit ever abode in the form of God and yet was sent from heaven. The theory is, then, that One who abode in the form of God took an “attitude” and “condescended” to take a place of subjection -- right in the face of their other statements that there can be no subjection in deity, no subjection of a Person in the form of God.

Here are several more statements which show the inconsistency regarding the fact that the One who allegedly became the Spirit in “the economy of grace” did not become something, as did the Son, to take a subordinate place:

But the Son and the Spirit have been pleased to take a relative place which is not commensurate with Their full personal glory . . . .

There is no subordination of one divine Person to another in essential Deity . . . .

Obedience is not possible for God . . . . The place that the Spirit has taken in the economy of grace is patterned after the place Christ took. The Spirit has been pleased to take a subordinate place. One divine Person has taken a subordinate place to another divine Person who has also taken a subordinate place.

The reader should be clear that these are empty words, not only devoid of proof; but a shallow deceit, a verbal “slight of hand,” an evil, spiritual scam. The place that Christ took is the form of man. The place that the Spirit took is not “patterned after the place Christ took” in taking the form of man which was necessary for the Son being here in a dependent and subject place, and dying for our sins, on the cross. JT tried to divert attention from this fundamentally important requirement by making the pattern to mean subordination. But Christ’s taking a dependent place required taking manhood. The fact is that this really involved JT in a doctrine of subordination in the Deity which he is striving so hard to avoid because it upsets the system. His are mere words to try to hide the truth of the fundamental contradiction. The Son took a bondman’s form (Phil. 2:7). **What form did the Spirit take?** He abode in the form of God only.

**The Spirit Being the Spirit Before Being Sent Destroys the Evil System**

It is alleged that at the sending of the Spirit, He took a place of subordination to Christ -- who was subordinate to the Father. If the Spirit did not become the Spirit at that instant of being sent, then, in this system, He had become the Spirit before. And when else, then, did He become the Spirit but at the incarnation? Christ, by the Spirit, cast out demons (Matt: 11:28; see also vv. 31, 32). At this point the Spirit was not subordinate to Christ, for Christ had not sent Him, nor had the Father sent Him. But He was the Spirit. So, He was not sent and not subordinate in any way, yet He already was the Spirit, and thus in relationship to the Father. Thus, we have in this case two divine Persons (the Father and the Spirit), neither of them subordinate, both being in the form of God, and being in relationship. But if, and since, they have relationships in the form of God, then these are actually eternal relationships. Relationships in the form of God must necessarily be eternal relationships -- the very thing the system is trying to overthrow.

**C. A. Coates on the Sending of the Spirit**

CAC did address an objection based on the word “sent.” He did not really answer the objection but put out a flood of words to make one think he was answering. I must now quote at some length so as to prevent the ever-ready charge of quoting out of context, and so that the reader may be assured of how CAC responded. He wrote:

He asks, “In what way, then, was the Holy Spirit ‘sent’ and ‘given’? The answer is very simple. He was sent by the Father and by the Son as glorified to take a special place with and in the saints which was, and is, quite distinct from the place which He has in absolute Deity. If this is not maintained as the truth, the place which the Holy Spirit holds in the present divine economy will not be understood. I hold, through grace, that the Holy Spirit is God in the most absolute sense. But I also see that He has come into a special place, and is carrying on a special service, as sent by the Father and the Son, and that this special place and service of the Holy Spirit gives character to the economy in which God is known today. The Holy Spirit is God, and He has part in all that belongs to Godhead, including omniscience and omnipresence. But as sent by the Father and Son His activities are limited to those to whom He has been sent. He indwells the saints, and is known to them as the Comforter, the Spirit of truth; He announces to them certain things which He has heard and received. The fact that the Holy Spirit hears and receives before He announces shows that, as thus spoken of, He has a place in the divine economy which corresponds with the place which the Son has taken in that economy. Not that the Holy Spirit has become incarnate, but as indwelling the saints He operates in a special way to do what He was sent to do . . . .

This letter goes on with what amounts to another half-page of repetition of the same thing. The letter is dated Aug. 22, 1940, so he had a long time to think about how to answer the objection and this is all he could do. What he did was to say that the Spirit was sent for a special work -- which all knew anyway -- and that is the substance of his answer. He did not answer the objection **how One who remained in the form of God could be in a place of subordination patterned after Christ’s taking a place of subordination by taking the form of man!**

---

60. Letters of C. A. Coates, p. 201.
Remember that when speaking of Christ he said, “Obedience or subjection cannot be rightly connected with Him as in ‘the form of God.’” In keeping with the denial that Son of God cannot be His relationship eternally in the Godhead, but became Son in time, I ask again, what form did the divine Person, Who allegedly became the Spirit, take? All that I can think of is the allegation that a divine Person became “the Spirit.” Why has he not told us what kind of a form that is, if that is what it is? The problem they are seeking to circumvent, remember, is this: a divine Person cannot, as such, be subordinate or obey; a Person in the form of God cannot be subordinate or obey. CAC wrote:

There is no subordination of one divine Person to another in essential Deity. . . .

Since the Spirit allegedly took a subordinate place, it follows from CAC’s teaching that the Spirit added something to Himself that was not essential Deity. CAC has kept secret what it was. And his mentor, James Taylor, Sr. said:

The Father and the Spirit remain in the form of God . . .

Well, no help from him either as to what the Spirit added to Himself (as the Son became man) so as to be able to take a subordinate position.

James Taylor, Sr.’s Invention of a New Form for the Spirit

Let us note a statement on John 7:39 by JT concerning the form of the Spirit:

It does not refer to the eternal personality of the Spirit, but to the form in which He is here now . . .

We have been told that the Spirit did not leave the form of God, but that He condescended to take a place in keeping with Christ’s place; i.e., a subordinate place, and as we shall see, a place even subordinate to the subordinate place of Christ. Evidently this is the new “form in which He is here now” that is not “the eternal personality of the Spirit.” Well, it is said that necessity is the mother of invention, and FER and JT were very inventive in their attacks upon the Person of Christ and the eternal relationships. At any rate, John 7:39 does refer to the eternal personality of the Spirit, for He never took another form than the form of God.

The Sending of the Spirit was not in Time After the Spirit Was Here

The idea that all scriptures which so speak of ‘sending’ mean that the ‘slanding’ was in time (temporally) is false. Their idea is that the Son was not sent from heaven, but rather was sent in time. Concerning the sending of the Spirit, we read:

. . . those who have declared to you the glad tidings by [the] Holy Spirit, sent from heaven (1 Peter 1:12).

The Spirit did not come here and after having come, was sent. The sending of the Spirit from heaven shows that such an idea is false. What their use of the word “sent” does to the eternal Sonship backfires when applied to the Spirit who was sent before He came here. And since He was sent by Christ, who allegedly is in an inferior position, then it follows that the Spirit, who remained in the form of God, is inferior not only to the Father, Who also remained in the form of God, but also to Christ, who also sent Him. This system is a degrading of the Godhead! Listen to JT:

It [Matt. 28:19] implies gradation of Persons, the Father first, the Son next, and then the Spirit. These are relations taken in love to accomplish the counsels of God and make them known . . .

. . . in the economy two of the Persons are in the place of subjection and in general They will always be in that place . . . They will retain that place.

It is clear from this that the Son is in a grade lower than the Father and the Spirit is in a grade lower than the Son. Such is the system of the denial of the eternal relationships.

Moreover, when the Lord spoke those words concerning the sending of the Spirit, He was on earth and the Spirit had not yet been sent from heaven by Himself (1 Pet. 1:12). It is stated in Acts 2:33 that Christ received from the Father the Spirit and then Christ poured out the Spirit. Clearly, the Spirit was sent from heaven. The Spirit, who abode in the form of God, was sent from heaven.

When Did the Spirit Become the Spirit?

Keeping in mind that the Spirit was not sent until Christ was in glory, questions arise concerning His activities from the incarnation of Christ until being sent.

- Did the divine Person who became the Spirit become the Spirit before being sent — namely at the incarnation?

  If no, at what point and why at that point preceding His being sent, did He become the Spirit, and in what capacity was He acting?

  If yes, was He at that point in time subordinate to the Father?

  If no, why was He not subordinate to the Father?

  If yes, was He at that point subordinate to Christ?

- Did the Spirit take two steps in the subordination procedure? When and how did those steps occur?

---

63. Letters of C. A. Coates, p. 201.
64. Letters of James Taylor 1:390.
These are some of the questions that the system of denial of the eternal relationships raises. The truth does not cause such questions to arise. The truth is that the divine Persons existed eternally as Father, Son, and Spirit.

**How Could the Father Become the Father?**

The Father never was sent; and, He remained in the form of God. The only reason offered why a divine Person, we know not which, became the Father is because, allegedly, He took a place in keeping with the place Christ took. Now, that seems strange coming from those who do not want to go a hair-breadth beyond Scripture. It is mere assertion in order to maintain the system, and absolutely essential to the system. The idea that a divine Person took a place in keeping with the place Christ took in incarnation, so as to become the Father, is part of systematized evil coming from the flesh, yes, even the Enemy, but certainly not from Scripture. The Father, dwelling in the form of God, did not change so as to become the Father. He is the eternal Father.

Moreover, the Father abode in the eternal glory that He had with the Son. This is stated in John 17:5. There was no change. The Son requested that the Father glorify Him (as man) with that glory He had with the Father before the world was. In glorification, then, the Son took manhood up into that glory, as we shall consider later.

**The Sent is not Greater than He Who Has Sent Him**

Do ye know what I have done to you? Ye call me the Teacher and the Lord, and ye say well, for I am [so]. If I therefore, the Lord and teacher, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another’s feet; for I have given you an example that, as I have done to you, ye should do also. Verily, verily, I say to you, The bondman is not greater than his lord, nor the sent greater than he who has sent him. If ye know these things, blessed are ye if ye do them (John 13:12-17).

Concerning this, CAC wrote:

> The Holy Spirit being sent cannot be regarded as an exception unless it can be made evident that it is one.

And if it is made evident, then it may be that the Son also could have been sent before He became man. Concerning our Lord, he wrote:

> But as the SENT ONE He was under authority; He was in a subordinate relation to the One who sent Him.

The result of this system of the denial of the eternal relationships is that the Spirit is subordinate to Christ who is subordinate to the Father. There was not One who sent the Spirit, but Two sent Him! Our Lord said of the Spirit, “I will send him to you” (John 16:7). So if CAC is correct, then it follows that the Spirit, who abode in the form of God, is subordinate to Christ, who is subordinate to the Father. Can you really believe that? Can you really believe that ‘hierarchy,’ which is the logical consequence of this system? The Son as in the form of man is subordinate to the Father who abode in the form of God, and the Spirit who abode in the form of God is subordinate to the Son as in the form of man, since the Son sent the Spirit.

I have quoted v. 16 in context; and suggest from the context that v. 16 is confined to Himself in relation to His disciples, not to Himself in relation to the Father and/or the Spirit.

**The Activities of the Spirit Before He was Sent**

The notion is that all activities of divine Persons before Christ’s incarnation (and for the Spirit before He was sent from heaven) are mediatorial, as in, say, creation, but that did not involve subordination, because all was done as in the form of God:

> . . . They were acting as God, not in a relatively inferior position . . . mediatorial service does not necessarily imply inferiority.

So the pre-incarnation activities, including creation, were mediatorial, and elsewhere we are told that there was no intelligible communication in, for example, creation. Let the reader ponder mediatorial service without intelligible communication and see if the result is not confusion.

But there is much worse in this quotation. It defines acting as God as acting in a non-inferior way. The system says that the Spirit took an inferior place below Christ. So it follows that the Spirit, who was sent from heaven, yet abode in the form of God, acting in a relatively inferior position below Christ, could not be acting as God! The system is a net of evil absurdities spread by the Fowler.

**Has the Spirit Taken a Mediatorial Place?**

Yes, said JT:

> The other two Persons have taken mediatorial places.

The NT speaks of only one mediatorial place in connection with Christianity (Gal. 3:20; 1 Tim. 2:5). He may say that mediatorship is one person acting for another; but we can

---

70. Ministry by J. Taylor 34:86.
72. C. A. Coates defined “mediatorial” as:

> It is the way in which God has been pleased to work . . . So that even in creation one Person has acted on behalf of the Godhead.

The idea of one person acting on behalf of others is mediatorial (Outlines of the Epistles to the Hebrews. The Thessalonians Titus and Philemon. Lancing: Kingston Bible Trust, p. 7, 1987.

In some very broad sense this may be true (cp Notes and Comments 7/2), but the word is not used that way in Scripture; and in the N.T. only of (continued...)
see from the fact that there is only one mediator between God and man (the place of the mediator) that this false definition is fathered by the needs of the evil system of the denial of the eternal relationships. So not only was there non-intelligible mediatorial service, there came into existence two mediatorial places; and next we are told that the Godhead is in the Father, in connection with the idea that there are two mediatorial places.

**In Whom is the Godhead?**

So, consequent upon the incarnation:

The other two Persons have taken mediatorial places. They have not left the deity in the inscrutable sense, but they have taken a mediatorial place, so that God might be fully known, but the Father is the One we refer to objectively, as God -- “one God, the Father.” It is not one Father, God; but one God, the Father; that is, the Godhead is in the Father in the economy, and the other two divine Persons are in the mediatorial place so that they operate here -- Christ in heaven, and the Holy Spirit here . . .

Is that what 1 Cor. 8:6 means? -- that the divine Person who became the Father at the incarnation “remains in the supremacy of Godhead”? I perceive that he means more than that the Father stayed in the form of God, (for the Spirit did so also) for then the word “supremacy” would not be needed.

Commenting on 1 Cor. 8:6, JT said:

The Father -- that Person -- remains in the economy in the supremacy of Godhead, the other Persons taking subordinate -- although we know from other scriptures that They retain Their equality in Deity -- places.

That is to say, God, in that Person, remains in the position of Deity, being the Father. Then, everything proceeds from Him and everything is for Him.

Note the wording in the last quotation: “remains in the position of Deity.” Now, we saw that he stated that the Spirit remained in the form of God. So what we have here is that One (the Spirit) who remained in the form of God is lower than the One who “remains in the position of Deity.” The inference is that the Spirit did not remain in the position of Deity; and, in spite of any qualifiers, it is a lowering of the Spirit. The system is characterized by subtle verbiage, is it not?.

So two divine Persons acted mediatorially, in the form of God, before the incarnation; but at the incarnation these two divine Persons took mediatorial places -- One taking the form of man and the Other (the Spirit) remaining in the form of God but did not remain in the position of Deity -- for that position belongs to the Person, we know not which, who became the Father! In his effort to systematize the denial of the eternal relationships JT said the Godhead is in the Father (in the economy). Speaking of Christ, what does Scripture state?

For in him all the fulness [of the Godhead] was pleased to dwell (Col. 1:19).

For in Him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily (Col. 2:9).

JT’s skill at packing a huge amount of evil in a few sentences is indeed very great. But what does 1 Cor. 8:6 mean?

**One God, The Father**

. . . we know that an idol [is] nothing in [the] world, and that there is no other God save one. For and if indeed there are [those] called gods, whether in heaven or on earth, (as there are gods many, and lords many,) yet to us [there is] one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we for him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom [are] all things, and we by him (1 Cor. 8:4-6).

In v. 4, “no other God save one,” refers to the unity of God in contrast to idols, which denote many gods.

“One God, the Father” (v. 6), taken by itself, would lead to Unitarianism. But it is not the nature of God (i.e., the Godhead) that is determined in v. 6, but the fact is presented concerning source: “of {ek} whom are all things” -- and we for him, not for ourselves. In contrast to many gods being many sources, the Father is the source; and, I add, not the source of things from the incarnation onward, but of all things. It is not a divine Person, we know not which, who became the Father and so became the source of things since then. No, it was the Father, the eternal Father.

**Is the Spirit Eternally in a Subject Place?**

JT said yes:

. . . in the economy two of the Persons are in the place of subjection and in general They will always be in that place . . . They will retain that place.

So, the Spirit, who always abode in the form of God, but has not remained in the position of Deity, was sent from heaven by the Father, and sent by Christ as man, and thus has a lower place than Christ, and will eternally retain that place! This is an essential facet of this system of the denial of the eternal relationships.

The language used by JND regarding sovereign actions of the Spirit is quite in accord with His action as in the form of

---

72. (...continued)

73. I suggest that this notion about the Father is connected with the idea that they get through the act of “breaking the bread,” into the assembly, and worship the Father. See Appendix 3.


God. 78

The Word “Eternal” Spirit

The Eternal Spirit

Now we must observe the effort to get rid of the word “eternal” Spirit. “Eternal Spirit” shows that the denial of the eternal relationships in the Godhead is false and so the expression must be sacrificed on the altar of the temporal relationships in order to maintain the system. Here is CAC’s explanation:

It has long been recognized that the use of the word “eternal” in the epistle to the Hebrews contrasts what God has brought in now, through Christ and by His death, with what was known in Judaism.

The Spirit is not a name of relationship like Father and Son. The Holy Spirit has not been manifested like the Son, or revealed like the Father; He remains in His eternal character as an unseen Spirit, and therefore can be spoken of as “the eternal Spirit.” But Scripture does not speak of ‘the eternal Father,’ or ‘the eternal Son,’ because the Father and Son are names which give character to our present knowledge of God.

Since the Spirit is, allegedly, not a name of relationship, it is, in the Ravenistic system, not an eternal name, because the system denies all eternal relationships. Yet here he used the expression, “His eternal character as an unseen Spirit.” This is a word-game! He should have said, ‘eternal character as an unseen spirit being.’ It is absurd to say that He is an unseen spirit being. It is absurd to say that He is an unseen “eternal Spirit” that he would seek a way to evacuate it of its meaning. And he knew that Heb. 9:14 was just such a word-game! He should have said, ‘eternal character as an unseen Spirit.” This is, in the Ravenistic system, not an eternal name, because the Spirit is a word-game! He should have said, ‘eternal character as an unseen Spirit.”

The Holy Spirit is called “the eternal Spirit,” Heb. 9, as God is said to be “the eternal God,” Rom. 16:26, but these expressions should be regarded as contrasting divine Persons with creatures.

That is, JT allows the Spirit to be a divine Person eternally, in contrast to a mere creature, but does not allow the expression “the eternal Spirit” to signify who or what divine Person this might have been in eternity.

The Use of the Word Eternal in Hebrews

Hebrews is indeed a book of contrasts, as CAC indicated above. J. N. Darby, who stated the same thing on occasion, did not, however, share CAC’s evil use of that fact. CAC’s conclusion does not logically and necessarily follow. The contrast is the temporal with the eternal. And if “eternal Spirit” means what He is in His Person as in the Godhead, i.e., in the form of God, then “eternal” in Hebrews need not be limited to the thought of “what God has brought in now, through Christ and by His death, with what was known in Judaism.” There is some truth to that statement, but it is not the whole truth; it limits the truth to CAC’s purpose to get rid of the Spirit’s eternal relationship as Spirit. Eph. 3:10 speaks of God’s eternal purpose. The things spoken of as eternal in Hebrews (5:9; 6:2; 9:12; 9:15; 13:20) were ever present before the mind of the eternal God in connection with His eternal purpose. Some of them have been brought to pass, but not the eternal Spirit Who always was so; nor has the eternal judgment (Heb. 6:2) been yet executed. That eternal judgment is consistent with God’s eternal nature as light. The coming of the eternal Son in holy manhood to accomplish the Father’s holy will, in the power of the eternal Spirit, has brought out that which is eternal; and we who have eternal life in the Son are connected with eternal things.

God [is] Spirit

The darkness of this system is brought into every text it touches on. In John 4:24 we read:

God [is] a spirit; and they who worship him must worship [him] in spirit and truth.

Denying that Spirit is an eternal name of a divine Person, but rather a name taken up in time, JT wrote:

... while the designation Spirit conveys what God is essentially, it cannot be regarded as a name of One only of the divine Persons viewed in the conditions of absolute Deity, for this would be to assume that the other two divine Persons were not Spirits, which, of course, is not true, for God is said to be a Spirit, as we have noted.

This objection is nonsense, words, talk, for those duped by it. He is applying a statement about the essence of God against the truth of the divine relationships in the Godhead.

Let us see why this is so. In a footnote to John 4:24, JND

---

79. The Personal and Mediatorial Glory of the Son of God, p. 38.
has “Or, ‘God [is] spirit.’” So the interlinear translation by A. Marshall, “God [is] spirit.” Also, cp. 1 John 1:5 (“God is light”) and 4:8 (“God is love”). The point is not that God is a spirit, as if one among many spirits. Nor does this mean a name: Spirit. It refers to the nature of God, what God is. He is spirit in the essence of being. W. Hendriksen rightly stated:

The necessity for distinctly spiritual worship is rooted in the very being of God: God is Spirit. In the original (τὸν θεὸν ὁ θεός) the subject, God, stands last and is preceded by the article. The predicate, Spirit, is the first word of the sentence, and is not preceded by the article... The predicate is placed first for the sake of emphasis: completely spiritual in His essence is God! 85

The eternal name of the Father has been revealed, in grace, as a name of relationship that He has with the Son. And He has been pleased to establish a relationship with us, and He seeks “true worshipers” as His worshipers. “God” brings before the worshipers the thought of nature, in the Godhead. The worship, to be in spirit and truth, must be in accordance with both the relationship and the nature, as unfolded in Christianity.

The Father is seeking worshipers through Him by Whom grace and truth came (John 1:17).

Notice that it must be worship in spirit and truth; not one without the other, either. Whatever else it may be, the worship by persons who deny the eternal relationships is not worship either in spirit or truth. It is false worship. It is idolatry. It is “strange fire.” Imagine a Christ without a human soul and human spirit. It is not worship “in truth” when it is not in accordance with the revelation of the divine Persons. It is not worship “in spirit” when it is not in accordance with the true nature of God -- for the Godhead is the Father, Son and Spirit. It is the divine Person, the Spirit, who empowers spiritual worship. He does not empower worship in connection with what has been perverted into the scrutable, finite sphere. He would be untrue to Himself as the Spirit of truth.

### Conclusion

The fact that the Spirit was sent by the Father and the Son, though the Spirit abode in the form of God only, shows that One in the form of God can be sent. Therefore the fact that the Son was sent lends not a shadow of support to the notion that the Son must, therefore, have been sent after He took the form of man. One in the form of God can be sent.

Moreover, since the Father and the Spirit remained in the form of God, if in time they took on the relationships of Father and Spirit, then there arose relationships of those Persons who were only in the form of God. But if, and since, they have relationships in the form of God, then these are actually eternal relationships. Relationships in the form of God must necessarily be eternal relationships -- the very thing the system is trying to overthrow.

Observe, then, that these facts tells us that other arguments, such as those based on the words “begotten” and “only-begotten,” &c., are invalid; and another view of those things must be sought rather than the explanations of those who force these other things into conformity with their inherently self-contradictory denial of the eternal relationships.

The ‘fresh light’ of Ravenism is, then, old darkness and the ‘fresh truth’ is, rather, stale evil. The alleged gain of it is but the theft of the truth. Antichrist will deny the Father and Son.

---

84. (... continued)

Chapter 7

The Eternal Word

Christ in John

His Presentation

The Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke) present the Lord Jesus in some human office and station, but not to the detriment of His divine glory, of course. But John’s emphasis concerns His personal, essential glories as God (John 20:30, 31). His names tell forth His various glories and they express what He is in the Godhead and also in His pathway here of glorifying the Father and finishing the work He gave Him to do. Of course, His manhood is also before us in John. Not only does John give us something of Himself as the meal offering, as do all four gospels, but especially as the Burnt-offering. At the end of John, He shows His hands and His side -- speaking of His sustaining and vindicating the glory of God. While His flesh is not Godhood, of course, since they are human hands, nonetheless think of His hands as the hands of God. Because of the union in Him of the human and divine, what He is as God imparts its infinite value to every human word, way and work. Hence, during the three hours of darkness while suffering atoningly, He imparted the infinite value of His Person to those sufferings; and to the death likewise, though it was a human thing to die. The accomplishment of His death had the infinite value and glory of His Person in it. So with the precious stream of water and of blood; water to cleanse us from the filth of sin and blood to expiate our guilt, for sin makes us at once dirty and guilty. His atoning sufferings, atoning death, and atoning blood -- with the water -- comprise that work to which attaches the immensity, the infinite value, of His Person and glory.

In none of the gospels is the glory of the Son of God so fully presented to us as in John. The blessed name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, has indeed the very basis of its truth brought out to light in this gospel. Who could have understood that new name, that fresh revelation of Divine glory in that new name, of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, without some new, some fresh uncovering of the glories divine. This was done by the presentation to us, in this gospel, of the Son of the Father, as sent to open the way for the Holy Ghost.

He, thus sent of the Father, had a work to do ere the Spirit could come down according to the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and much truth to communicate with regard to the new position and its new relationships, which were about to be established, -- but Himself was revealed -- and the new name, Divine, the new position, the new privileges and the coming glories, were all inseparable from Himself in that name of Son of the Father. 86 ◆

The infiniteness of the Son’s divinity was kept up, in His humanity, and therefore apparent humiliation and inferiority, by His absolute inscrutability therein thus specifically and signally maintained; while His oneness with the father was made known in His competency to reveal, and supremacy of will in revealing, the Father. Both hold their place most beautifully, maintaining the Person in the glory of communion with the Father, and the inscrutability of God thus manifested while the Father was revealed. 87 ◆

. . . the divine nature of Christ and His oneness with the Father is so clearly stated -- having already taken the place of the Son of man, He is always divine, but always recipient and dependent. It is not the kingdom but the Person -- a divine one -- the Son one with the Father, but the Son of man who has taken the subject place, as we have often seen, all through. This is most important in itself, and for the understanding of John’s gospel, and most blessed. 88 ◆

The Shekinah and the Cloud of Incense

In Lev. 16 we see the Shekinah between the cherubim on the mercy-seat and the High Priest bringing in a censer full of hot coals from the altar. But on the hot coals was placed the incense which none, at the threat of execution, was allowed to mimic. The incense speaks of the Person of Christ, His value and glory, rising up as another cloud before the Shekinah. For, as one has said, righteousness can meet the claims of righteousness, but only a cloud can meet a cloud. The Shekinah represents the unspeakable glory of Jehovah, that sitteth between the cherubim. And the cloud of incense that rose up speaks of the unspeakable glory of our Beloved that imparted itself to the work wrought on calvary -- ineffable glory rose up before God at calvary in the work of atonement wrought there. It was marked in every part by all His infinite glory, and thus has that value. Such are some of the features which characterize John’s gospel. It is this Person that was eternally the Word. He was, and is, the Word (the Logos) in the Trinity.

86. S., “John 1,” The Present Testimony 12:44.
The Word

John 1

One of the divisions of John’s Gospel is John 1:1-2:22. Within that division John 1:1-18 forms a subdivision. And this subdivision may be considered in a number of sections, namely:

1:1-3: the Word and Creator
1:4-13: the Word and Light and Life
1:14-18: the Word become flesh manifesting His fullness, dwelling ever as the only-begotten Son in the bosom of the Father

In John 1 we see the Son in:
- deity
- creation
- redemption
- government (v. 51)

Notice well the order. The Word is there before creation.

In John 1:1-13 we see the Word:

- in relation, as the Word, to God (vv. 1, 2);
- in relation, as the Word, to creation (v. 3);
- in relation, as the Word, to men as Life and Light (v. 4-13).

Then in John 1:14-18 we have another section where we see:

- the Word became flesh;
- the Word’s glory, seen in flesh, as of an only begotten with a father;
- then in v. 18 we see that the Word becoming flesh did not mean, among other things, that the Son’s place in the bosom of the Father changed by becoming flesh.

The Word Personally

In the verses up to v. 14 we have before us the glory of His Person. The next glory comes in at v. 14, which we will consider below.

In (the) Beginning. This expression must be distinguished from the words in 1 John 1 where we read, “from [the] beginning.” So is it in 1 John 2:13. “From the beginning” means from the beginning of God’s ways in grace as manifested in the coming of the Son. In John 1:17 we read of grace and truth come through Jesus Christ. In a footnote JND says,

They began to exist de facto down here.

His becoming flesh marks the time of “from [the] beginning” (1 John 1:1), which points to the incarnation. “In the beginning” in John 1 does not point to the incarnation. We do not read of the Word having a beginning. The Word was necessarily there when anything was brought into existence as the fruit of His power, including the creation of angelic beings (Job 38:7), which preceded Gen. 1:1.

In (the) Beginning Was the Word. This is a formal statement by the Spirit of God that the Word is the Word eternally. First of all, then, He is eternally existent.

As the Word, (in Greek, the logos), He is the expression of God; the One by whom the inward thought of God is expressed, is made known. Why God is what He is we cannot know. But we have been shown that God is three Persons, one in power, knowledge, will and purpose, but distinct in Persons -- one God, three Persons, eternally related as Father, Son, and Spirit. They act in accordance with what they are in their Persons.

And the Word Was with God. This is a formal statement by the Spirit of God that the Word is a distinct Person in the Godhead. Secondly, then, in His Person He is distinct. But it also speaks of relationship -- He was with God:

... He was with God (pros ton Theon). All He was, a distinct Person, He was towards God.

This ‘being with God,’ includes, of course, the Father and the Spirit. Also, read Prov. 8:30.

Another wrote:

If the Word had been a faculty, then we should have had, ‘the Word was in God’; if the Word had been an expression of mind only, then we should have had, ‘the Word was of God.’ Both of these expressions may be found in other connections than that which is now before us. But here, speaking of a person -- the Son -- the proper expression is found: -- ‘And the Word was with God.’

And the Word Was God. This is a formal statement by the Spirit of God that the distinct, eternal Person, the Word, is one with God in the divine essence of God. Thirdly, then, in His nature He is deity. It does not mean that He was merely ‘divine’ (theios), but truly God (theos). There is no “the” before God. That would have made Him God to the exclusion of the other Persons and would have contradicted the statement that He was with God. Then it does not allow for the notion, either, that He was a God. That is polytheism.

Zech. 13:7 speaks of Christ as “the man [that is] my fellow, saith Jehovah of Hosts.”

89. J. N. Darby, Notes and Comments, p. 191.
91. Marshall’s Interlinear Greek-English New Testament shows that the order of the words is “and God was the Word.” A footnote to this says, “But note that the subject has the article and the predicate has it not; hence translate -- ‘the Word was God.”
The teaching we are opposing claims that God became the Word. Let us read John 1:1, 2 as if it applied to the incarnation, which it does not:

At the incarnation was the Word, and then the Word was with God, and then the Word was God. He was at the incarnation with God.

John 1:1, 2 tell us what He was, not what He became. What he became is reserved for v. 14. “In the beginning” reaches infinitely back before “from [the] beginning” of God’s ways in grace with the introduction of the Word into the creation which the Word created to fully manifest God. The “in the beginning” of Gen. 1:1 refers to the beginning of the universe. John 1:1 reaches infinitely back from that, as we time-bound, finite creatures speak. The Word created the universe; and in that creation itself there was necessarily something of God manifested, concerning which we shall speak below.

He Was in the Beginning with God. This is a formal statement by the Spirit of God that this distinct Person who is one in the divine essence of the Godhead has an eternal Personality; and was not a subsequent creation (or emanation or development, etc.) as “Jehovah’s Witnesses” claim. And this necessarily means that the with God is eternally with. If anything began, He was there already. And John 17:5 points to glory He had with the Father before the world was. Nor can you say that He Himself began, because if anything began He was there already.

The Name “Word.” “Word” is not a title. It is a name of a divine Person in the Godhead, expressing His distinction of Person. We do not find in Scripture the disciples addressing Him as the Word or referring to Him as the Word. Rather, we find that the Spirit of God formally declares the name through the apostle John. It is not “an appellation under which the disciples spoke of the Lord.” It was not a matter of “how they apprehended Him.”

Thus the Spirit declares the Word’s divine, eternal competency and being as “the intelligence and expression of God.”

F. E. Raven Denied That The Son Was Eternally the Word

W. Kelly said:

A warning I did give in 1890, and a brief leaflet, when the Weston-super-mare Notes disclosed the impious libel against the Lord, that “becoming a man, He becomes the Logos [the Word].” Many hoped that it was a slip; but if so, why was it not confessed in sackcloth and ashes? 92

Note well the date, 1890. This blasphemy was repeated:

He taught in 1897 that Christ “becoming a man, He becomes the Logos . . .” 93

In 1894, when he still held the eternal sonship (given up by at least 1898), he made a comment confirming this idea about the Word:

I should say that if a man intended to deny the eternal sonship of Christ I certainly should not care to remain in fellowship with him . . . The expression ‘the Word’ is much more a moral idea . . . 94

At a reading in the USA (1898) he said:

In the opening of the first chapter of John’s gospel the apostle is, I judge, speaking from his standpoint, not from God’s standpoint. “The Word” was a designation common among the apostles (see Luke 1:2), and the apostle is speaking of Him by the Spirit of God from that standpoint, and identifying the One they had known as “the word” with God. 95

The Word is the Creator

He Himself Could Not Have Been Created. We already saw this when considering that “He was in the beginning with God.” Now, in v. 3, we read:

All things received being through him, and without him not one [thing] received being which has received being. Here we have a twofold way of stating the absoluteness of His distinction from created things and that He is the Creator of all things that have received being. He did not receive being. Why would anyone say, in the face of this, that the Son was a created being? Not only have we seen that He


93. W. Kelly, F. E. R. Heterodox, p. 99. N. Noel said that this statement was published in the Readings and Addresses of Weston-Super-Mare, Jan. 3-10, 1897 (The History of the Brethren 2:663). The statement is found in Ministry by F. E. Raven 10:117. His denial of the eternal Word is also found in Ministry by F. E. Raven 5:1.


95. Readings and Addresses in U.S.A. and Canada with F.E.R., 1898, pp. 108, 109, cp. pp. 54, 55; and in Ministry by F. E. Raven, New Series 12:118 (1898). (So he indicated also in Notes and Readings on the Gospel of John, Greenwich, 1897, p. 1.) In the USA, F. W. Grant heard him:

I send you a few copies of my open letter. If I were writing it again, I should only make it stronger . . . I have heard him for myself also . . . from all that I learned at his meetings here (of which we have now his revised account), there is no doubt left that his printed statements give his doctrine fairly . . .

Another statement as to the Lord, which I heard him make, and which, having caused offense, seems to have been dropped (the mention of it, not the thing), was only a fuller statement of what was said at Weston, that when He became flesh He became the Word. He was not the Word before he took humanity. This was contended for strongly. When it is said “In the beginning was the Word,” He was only called so by anticipation! How sadly it reminds one of that other assertion that we, who are to be “ever with the Lord” in glory, will yet not call Him Lord. Thus His glory is shortened at both ends.

(Cited in Our Present Sin, p. 25.)
was in the beginning with God as a distinct, eternal Person, and one in the divine essence, but here we see that He could not have received being” (i.e., as a created being): because, “without him not one [thing] received being which has received being.” He hardly received being through Himself. Also, see Col. 1:16 and Heb. 1:2; Psa. 102:25 and Heb. 1:10.

Creation is a Preparatory, Intelligible Expression. In connection with the subject of the Word being the creator, perhaps it would be of some help to us here to see the caliber of the denial that He is eternally the Word. The denial of the eternal relationships of Father, Son and Spirit requires the denial that the Son is eternally the Word. C. A. Coates wrote:

The mind of God has been fully communicated in Christ, intelligibly so, and this required intelligent beings to receive the communication.

Creation made known God’s eternal power and divinity; these are invisible things, but they are apprehended by the mind through the things that are made. But the mind of God, what He is morally and in His nature, was not spoken in creation. It was spoken in Christ incarnate . . . Is anything taken from Him by saying that the intelligible expression in Him of every divine thought was in Manhood, and that it awaited the incarnation to be expressed? And that the expression of it is involved in the very word Logos? 97

Observe the effort to remove the creation from being an intelligible expression of God. The issue here is not that Christ in manhood fully communicated the mind of God. Is it really true that in creation there is no “intelligible expression” of a “divine thought”? If there was, then not all such expression was restricted to manhood. Observe that CAC’s effort is to restrict all intelligible communication by the Logos to Christ in manhood; because there was, he believes, no Logos in existence before Christ’s manhood. I repeat, if creation in any way at all involves an intelligible expression of the mind of God, then it was the act of the Word, the One who expresses God; i.e., the Word, as such, was at that time there, and He was therefore the Word before He became flesh.

The angels were created before the universe was created, as is seen by the fact that at the creation the morning stars sang (a figurative expression regarding these created intelligences) as seen in Job 38:7. Were they not intelligent creatures? Is it true that they really saw nothing intelligible expressed of God? Let us read Rom. 1:19-20:

Because what is known of God is manifest among them, for God has manifested [it] to them, -- for from [the] world’s creation the invisible things of him are perceived, being apprehended by the mind through the things that are made, both his eternal power and divinity, -- so as to render them inexcusable.

CAC said: “But the mind of God, what He is morally and in His nature, was not spoken in creation.” His attempt to parry the thrust of Rom. 1:19-20 is indeed miserable, though required by his denial of the eternal relationships. Here we read of His divinity being expressed in creation. So we see that CAC excluded God’s divinity from “His nature.”

Moreover, Adam was an intelligent being. Did he also not see or hear any intelligible expression of God?

Furthermore, did the Angel of Jehovah communicate nothing intelligible? And who was the Angel of Jehovah? He was the preincarnate Logos -- but CAC does not believe in a preincarnate Logos. So you can plainly see the reason why he wants no preincarnation expression of the mind of God, because that involves a preincarnation Logos.

Evidently in the mind of CAC the creation is not an expression of a divine thought, because all of those thoughts were expressed in manhood. But this is absurd, manifesting once again the evil fog of delusion enveloping the mind in the face of the obvious. Look at v. 20: there is manifestation, perception and apprehension; and by? -- yes, by “intelligent beings,” human beings living before the Word took manhood. This, then, involved the Logos who expresses God -- the pre-incarnate Logos. 98 The creation proves the Logos to be the Logos before creation. The Word (Logos) is His name in the Godhead, and because He is the Word, the expression and revealer of God, He was the One who created and entered that creation to display what God is. He acted in accordance with His distinction of Person in the Godhead.

The creation, then, was a step taken by the Word in preparation for entry into it by incarnation for the full expression of what God is. But that creation, while hardly that full expression, is part of the expression of God. It was an essential step in the communication of the mind of God

The Ravenite hymn-book once again underwent revision to accommodate the evil teachings we are reviewing, and it said this:

Some have thought that the framing of the worlds by the word of God (Heb. 11:3) alludes to Christ acting before incarnation as the Logos. “Word” here, however, is not

96. There are Jews who profess a mixture of Judaism and Christianity who believe that Christ really is the Messiah. They believe that Elohim is a family name that includes the Spirit and the Son, but that only one of the Persons in that family is Jehovah. What this means is that the Spirit and the Son are created beings and are not Jehovah. They believe Jehovah created the Son and the Spirit and took them into the family named Elohim. But the truth is that all three are Jehovah. Jehovah is Elohim, and Elohim is the Godhead; and the Godhead is three distinct Persons, one in will, power, purpose and essence. C. H. Brown’s Jesus is Jehovah masterfully answers these false teachings.


98. See Collected Writings of J. N. Darby 10:331.
Part 1: The Eternal Relationships in the Godhead

Logos, but Rhema. It is God’s utterance or fiat, and does not point to a particular divine Person. 99

This is ludicrous. “God’s utterance or fiat” is not an intelligible expression? Moreover, this is answered by the apostle Peter:

For this is hidden from them through their own wilfulness, that heavens were of old, and an earth, having its subsistence out of water and in water, by the word (logos) of God . . . (2 Pet. 2:5).

Their wilfulness resulted in it being hidden from them that this was by the logos of God. The creation, then, is by the logos of God. The most extensive footnote in JND’s translation concerning logos is found for 1 Cor. 1: 5:

Logos, whatever is the expression of a thought formed in the mind, and otherwise unknown. Hence used for the thing expressed, or the expression of it: hence ‘word.’ . . . Whatever expresses the mind is logos. Nous (Ch. 2:16, ‘mind’) is the intelligent faculty: whatever expresses the thought formed in it is logos. There is thus the intelligent and the intelligible. Thus all that communicates the divine mind (the intelligible) is logos, and first of all Christ himself.

Elsewhere he wrote:

There is the being of the Word, He is the Word, the Logos, the expression of God’s mind, for Word is both -- it is . . . the intelligent and the intelligible. Christ is the expression, and the Logos too, because He is God. When the expression only is meant it is rhema, not logos. But logos takes up what the mind is as having a thought, or it expresses the mind. All the wisdom of God is in Christ, He is it, and besides He is the expression of it. 100

There is an extended discussion of the word logos by J. N. Darby. 101

Why the Word was the One Who Created. The Persons in the Godhead act in accordance with their respective names of relationship. The thought in Scripture regarding names is that a name stands for the person, not as a mere label, but expressing what, or who, the person is. In connection with the name Word, we can see why He who was eternally the Word was the instrument of the Godhead to create the universe. It is not for a moment implied that the whole Godhead was not involved. But the fact is that the creation is ascribed to Him who is the Word and Son (John 1, Col. 1 and Heb. 1). This is so because He is the Word in His essential being. We do not know why God is what He is. But, being what He is, we may know why the Word is the one who created. It is because being the Word He is thereby marked as the revealer of God. As I write I am using words to reveal to you what is in my mind. The Son, as the Word, is the revealer of God. He communicates what God is. Thus, He is the one to whom creation is ascribed; and then He entered that creation in incarnation. Wondrous thought! He created it that He might enter it and display God, revealing the eternal, divine relationships. He came to declare the Father’s name. Now, this was brought about in accordance with what He is eternally as the Word.

This is lost when the eternal relationships are denied. It cannot be known which of the Three became which. It cannot be seen as inherent in the constitution of the Godhead and that God was giving expression to Himself in this way through the Word who is the eternal Son.

CAC refuses to even own that “Word” is a name. He wrote:

It is not a name of relationship like Son; not an official title like the Christ; but it is a designation which indicates the greatness of what is expressed in Him . . . Hence John, writing by inspiration of the Spirit, selects this appellation to designate Him as being “in the beginning.” Some title must be used, and we may be sure that “THE WORD” was more suitable in that connection than any other (The Personal and Mediatorial Glory of the Son of God, p. 29.)

In Rev. 19:13 we find that “his name is called ‘The Word of God.’” There He comes forth as the revealer of God in judgment and as governor. In 1 John 1:2 He is “the word of life.” He is the revealer and expresser of eternal life. In John 1 He is the revealer of God in relation to what He is in deity, and necessarily in relation to creation in which He expressed something of God. And, of course, He created long before He came into that creation in flesh. Indeed, being the divine Word is the very reason that we have the revelation of the eternal God. The fact is that the denial of the eternal relationships entails, in effect, the denial of any revelation of the divine.

---

100. Collected Writings 25:224.
101. See Collected Writings 9:330-332. See also Notes and Jottings, p. 353 for some discussion on logos and rhema.
And the Word Became Flesh

. . . and the Word became flesh, and dwelt {lit. ‘Tabernacled’} among us (and we have contemplated his glory, a glory as of an only-begotten with a father), full of grace and truth (John 1:14). 102

Here is the second glory in John 1: the declaration of God and the Father in Him. The third glory, in this chapter, is His work; but that is not our subject.

“Only-begotten” here, as in the other Scriptures which use this word concerning the Son, refers to His distinction of Person in the Godhead, and the relationship to the Father. It does not refer to His flesh. 103

The Incarnation

The One who expresses what God is, and created all things for a platform, so to speak, to display what God is, in the view of all created intelligences, became flesh. It is the One who participates in Godhead’s fullest, essential glory as the Word, who became flesh. The thought of it prostrates the mind, and bows our hearts in worship. What F. E. Raven offered instead amounts to this evil notion:

And the One, we know not which, who became flesh, also became the Word.

But we know that it was as the Word pre-incarnate that He became flesh in incarnation, in the womb of the virgin. It was the Word who created the womb, as part of creatorial power, that in the womb He might take up holy humanity into His divine Person. At the conception, the humanity and the deity were united, indissolubly. Never does Scripture speak of a divine Person becoming the Word or becoming the Son. We do read of our Beloved being made both Lord and Christ (Acts 2:36), but never of Him being made the Word or the Son. Indeed, since the Word became flesh, it is evident that He had to be the Word before becoming flesh. He became the Firstborn, but not the only-begotten Son -- which He was eternally; and without which, He could not become the Firstborn. Those who speak so piously of not wanting to go a hair-breadth beyond Scripture, while they are denying the eternal relationships, ought to have a Scripture for saying He became the Son and the Word.

The Son, who was in the form of God, took a bondman’s form:

It is clear that the whole passage . . . is opposing His course to Adam’s exalting Himself, when a man, to be as God; whereas the Lord, when in Godhead form, emptied Himself 104 (not of Godhead -- that could never be), but of the status of Godhead as such, “the form of God,” and became as Man a Servant. Now humiliation is properly coming down in the sphere in which one is, but laying aside His status as God is another and a much greater thing ekenose heauton (He emptied Himself). It was laying aside not the nature {of God} assuredly, but the state and condition in which Godhead naturally subsisted, and taking another, and in this sense was the greatest act of self-humiliation -- a coming down from the status itself, not being lowly in it. It was a positive arrangement of God, “a body hast Thou prepared Me, . . . then said I, Lo, I come to do Thy will O God” {Heb. 10:7}. 105

102. A footnote by JND reads: Para., with genitive as here, means ‘on the part of’: ‘from with’ gives the sense. But this must not be understood in the sense of ‘with’ merely. It has not this significance in the New Testament.

103. Gail Riplinger, in her New Age Bible Versions, A. V. Publications: Munroe Falls, 1993, p. 337, wrote:

From this we gather that “begotten” is used in reference to the body of “flesh” “beheld” by mankind.

The confusion of “begotten” and “only-begotten” is no more acceptable than her thinking that “beheld” refers to Christ’s flesh. Is it really so difficult to see that it refers to His moral glory?

104. James Taylor, Sr., will have it rather that “the emptying synchronized with the taking a bondman’s form” {Phil. 2:5} (Ministry by J. Taylor 34:87, 113). What does it mean that the emptying was synchronous with the taking the bondman’s form? It was as in the bondman’s form that He emptied Himself? -- or half-way between two forms? Observe that it does not fit into the system of inscrutability that J. N. Darby’s statement be correct -- and it is correct. JT has spoken! Rather than his having the mind of Christ Jesus, we see insufferable arrogance. In spite of his inscrutability talk, he can easily set that aside when it suits him: “The mind of humiliation does not properly belong to God as God.” Psalm 113:6 no doubt anticipates the incarnation” (Letters 1:359). You see how easy it was to dismiss Psalm 113:6 and assert that God does not have a mind of humiliation -- God does not have a humble mind? What kind of mind does God have?

105. J. N. Darby, Notes and Comments 2:117. We add here a few more relevant comments from JND:

The first word is not from God, Do you go, but “Lo, I come”: it was from Christ, “in the volume of the book it is written of me.” Here is Christ, the Son of God, a divine person, and the means of all blessing, taking the place of obedience on earth (Collected Writings 30:79).

{In Heb. 10} Verse 6 presents the thought and counsels of God, verse 7 His willing coming to do God’s will according to these counsels. But we must remember He speaks when man, and verses 6, 7 are the revelation of what passed in the everlasting world (wonderful thought!) telling us how He became a man. But, as in verse 5, so again in verse 8, Christ speaks again as actually in the place on earth (Collected Writings 17:84).

Nothing can be more solemn than thus to lift the veil from that which takes place in heaven between God and the Word who undertook to do His will. Observe that, before He was in the

(continued...)
Now it was not solely with a view to the redemption of mankind, for all God’s glory in redemption was brought out by it, and our being in the same glory with His Son, John 13 and 17. Compare Proverbs 8 and Luke 2, the shepherds’ chorus.  

... Isa. 50, where “he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned. The Lord God has opened mine ear,” &c. This has a peculiar character. It is His offering Himself before He came. So in Phil. 2. we read He becomes a man, taking the form of a servant, having ears, doing nothing but what He was told, listening to every word that came out of God’s mouth. “By every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God doth man live.” He had ears to receive it. Christ had no desire to do anything different from God’s will: this was His motive. Never to stir but as another — God — will guide you, is perfectness as a man. Do you say, What! am I never to do what I like? Oh! I answer, you want to have your own will, which is sin. Christ waited for the expression of His Father’s will before doing anything. Christ on earth was in the form of a servant. How did He get there? By putting off all the glory of having a will of His own — offering Himself before He came to do God’s will. His delight was to come; His love brought Him. “Lo, I come to do thy will, O God” {Heb. 10:7}. If that was His will, it was the Father’s will. He “learned obedience by the things which he suffered.” He told His disciples, in going forth, to say, “Peace. . . . And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again.” So it was with Him. He was obedient. He offered Himself to obey, and there was pure and constant obedience all through. There was power, of course, in Him, but He came into the place of perfect obedience. The first word from God is not, Do you go, but “Lo, I come”: it was from Christ, “in the volume of the book it is written of me.” This gives us a knowledge of Christ and His intercourse with God before He came. Here is Christ, the Son of God, a divine person, and the means of all blessing, taking the place of obedience on earth. Nay, He is the servant now, too . . . Others might talk about the thing, but Christ was it. In every word and act they might have seen the Father, if they had had eyes to see . . . There never is any rest for a human heart but in Him. One then learns of Him in the meekness and submission of His soul.

But the Word, in taking humanity into His Person, did not unite with some existing person, say, Israel Ben Jehudah. That would have made of Him two persons; the Son and Israel Ben Jehudah. No, the humanity that He took never had an independent existence apart from the incarnation. His humanity came from Mary, not merely preserved from the taint of sin by the overshadowing power (Luke 1:35), but that humanity was characterized as “holy.” It was not innocent (ignorant of evil) as was Adam’s at the first, but holy -- ever and always inherently rejecting evil and cleaving to good. And thus it was impeccable humanity. He took up holy humanity into union with His Person so that there was still but one Person. That humanity was spirit, soul and body, and with a human will. We do not know how this union could have taken place and the way that it is sustained. This is unfathomable; inscrutable, if you like.

And our Beloved has taken humanity up into the glory of God (John 17:5), the glory He had with the Father before the world was. His humanity is not only now held in a holy state, but also in a glorified state. Oh, how the glories of it all also show us the finiteness and feebleness of our little minds and hearts. There is such an infinite vastness to everything about Him that it will engage everlasting worship without any exhaustion. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so!

**Luke 1:2: The Spoken Word**

J. N. Darby translated Luke 1:1,2 thus:

> Foreasmuch as many have undertaken to draw up a relation concerning the matters fully believed among us, as those who from the beginning were eye-witnesses of and attendants on the Word have delivered them to us.

I do not know why he chose to capitalize the word “Word.” It is not a reference to our Lord as the Word. Elsewhere he wrote:

> These are his words, “Since many have taken in hand to compose a narration of things believed with certainty amongst us, as they have delivered them to us, who from the beginning were eye-witnesses and servants of the word, it seemed well to me . . . .”

W. Kelly has:

> . . . even as they who from the beginning were eye-witnesses and ministers of the word delivered them to us . . . .

This is also in keeping with the context. Luke was writing concerning the word of God; and as a matter of fact, what He was writing is part of the canon of Scripture, the word of

---

105. (continued) position of obedience, He offers Himself in order to accomplish the will of God . . . (Synopsis 5:230).

First step of humiliation -- He comes to be a man. Second step of humiliation -- being a man, He comes down to death (Newwritings\38Address.sam).


107. Collected Writings of J. N. Darby 30:118.

108. The word “attendants” is ἀπαρτήτου, which, he says in a note to 1 Cor. 4:1, “is always used in the New Testament for an official servant, or apparitor: see Luke 1:2; Acts 26:16.”


110. The Bible Treasury 6:195.
Son of God. In an effort to bolster his theory that our Lord was known by the title “Word,” imagining that this proves that this name (actually in the Godhead) is what He was only in time, JT wrote, concerning the use of logos in Luke 1:2: 

Probably John wrote the book of Revelation before he wrote his gospel, and this, with Luke 1:2, helps to show that our Lord was known by the title “Word” prior to the appearance of the later book, and that the apostle employed the designation in no “mysterious sense.” That Luke speaks of Him as Man known by this title is plain, for he aludes without explanation to “those who from the beginning were eye-witnesses of and attendants on the Word.” 111

It was F. E. Raven that first taught this. 112 We are not about to build on JT’s “probably.” Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Secondly, he assumes for his purpose that Luke is using logos for the Son instead of for the word of God expressed, which latter is what is meant. Thirdly, even if Luke 1:2 referred to our Lord as the Word, it in no way logically follows that He was not eternally the Word.

Luke 1:35: The Holy One Who Knew No Sin

And the angel answering said to her, [The] Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and power of [the] Highest overshadow thee, wherefore the holy thing also which shall be born shall be called Son of God (Luke 1:35).

The Holy State of Our Lord’s Humanity. In this Scripture we learn that the Lord Jesus held humanity in a holy state. Before the fall Adam had humanity that was innocent; i.e., innocence is ignorance of good and evil. Consequent upon the fall he held humanity in a sinful state. His humanity did not change to something other than humanity, but its state changed. It was neither innocent or sinful in the Lord’s case; rather, it was holy humanity -- i.e., holiness is the intrinsic rejection of evil and cleaving to good. How could the Son assume humanity into His person if it was not holy humanity?

Called Son of God. This Scripture tells us that because of the nature of what the Holy Spirit would do, the One born, or begotten, shall be called, not the Son of man, but “Son of God.” Son of man He surely was. But here was not the place to say that. The Holy One, come as man, is Son of God here in time. Moreover, He is Son eternally and He is Son also in resurrection (Rom. 1:4). The being Son in time and in resurrection flows from the fact that He is eternally the Son:

As man He becomes and enters into -- is in so far as He is a man in -- the relationship with the Father as divine and eternal Son. 113

While Luke, the gospel especially presenting the perfection of Christ as man, here speaks of that humanity as holy, and of His Sonship in time, all depends on the Sonship in the Godhead as the great source from which all of this flows:

But though Christ be made Lord and Christ as man, yet through oneness with the Father and His being the true God, it runs up into a divine title; just as in the case with Son. He is in the place of Son, as man, or we could not be with Him. “That holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the son of God”; but it cannot be separated from divine and eternal Son. 114

This text, then, speaks of Him as born, or begotten, which is not the same as “only-begotten” when this word is used of Him. His humanity came from Mary. He was the seed of the woman (Gen. 3) but the conception was caused by the “Holy Spirit” (Luke 1:35; Matt. 1:18).

Hence, by this overshadowing power of the Highest, and the action of the Holy Ghost, He was, as to His manhood, the Son of God, as well as the seed of the woman, for the same expression is made use of to show that the Holy Ghost is the source of this nature, in the reply given to Mary, “that which shall be born of thee”; and in the words, “made of a woman,” εκ γυναίκος, (Gal. 4:4); and this accords with the statement in Heb. 10:5, “a body hast thou prepared me.” 115

Psa. 2, quoted in a number of places (Acts 13:33; Heb. 1:5; Heb. 5:5) refers to what we read of in Luke 1:35:

Psa. 2 shows us the King set upon the Holy hill of Zion, the Son of God begotten in time (a distinct thing from His relationship as Son, one with the Father before the world was -- a doctrine taught in John 1, Heb. 1 Col. 1, and elsewhere -- yet I do not believe one could be without the other, though the “therefore” of Luke 1:35 shows it to be a distinct thing, and His Sonship in this place is also a truth of the greatest importance), owned such by Jehovah, and the Kings of the earth charged to submit to Him. Psa. 8 speaks of Him as the Son of man to whom all things are subjected according to the eternal purposes of God. In Psalm 110 He who had been despised and rejected, being seated at the right hand of God, is to rule in the midst of His enemies.

Compare Psalms 24 and 102. In the first, He is

112. F. E. Raven stated: In the opening of the first chapter of John’s gospel the apostle is, I judge, speaking from his standpoint, not from God’s standpoint. “The Word” was a designation common among the apostles (see Luke 1:2), and the apostle is speaking of Him by the Spirit of God from that standpoint, and identifying the One they had known as “the word” with God (Ministry, New Series 12:118, 1898).
So he indicated also in Notes and Readings on the Gospel of John, Greenwich, 1897, p. 1.
acknowledged as Jehovah of hosts, the King of glory, after having conquered His enemies: in the second, as the Creator Himself. 116

“Called,” Not “Became,” Son of God. Now we will look at a point made by JT:

Were He Son already, this could be stated, and the passage would read, “is Son of God,” the “wherefore” being unnecessary. 117

We do not dispute that the Lord is viewed in Luke 1:35 as Son in time. But since JT made an issue of wording, as if it supports his denial of the eternal Sonship, let us turn this around. Notice that it does not say “shall become Son of God.” But that is exactly JT’s notion concerning Sonship. This Scripture tells us what He was to be called, not what He became. John 1:14 tells us what He became: He became flesh. Moreover, He was “marked out Son of God” in resurrection (Rom. 1:4). He did not become Son in resurrection -- any more than He became Son in incarnation. All these things are founded on His eternal Sonship, as flowing from the great fact and character of the eternal relationships in Godhead glory. It is the divine name of Son of God applied to the incarnate One in time:

. . . But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, come of a woman . . . (Gal. 4:4).

. . . I came out from God. I came out from the Father and have come into the world . . . (John 16:27, 28).

One Person, Two Natures. The instant had come (Gal. 4:4) for the Word to become flesh (John 1:14). The union of the human and the divine took place in the womb of the virgin (Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:23). The second Man had come (1 Cor. 15:47). And in due time God took Him from the womb (Psa. 22:9, 10) and Mary brought forth her firstborn (Luke 2:7). It was the meal offering mingled with oil (Lev. 2) 118 as in Luke 3:21, 22 we have the meal offering anointed with oil. And He was made a little lower than the angels in order that He might die on the cross (Heb. 2:9).

The conception in the womb (Luke 1:35) was by the Holy Spirit. We are born of the Spirit as to the new nature received; He alone was conceived by the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit as to His humanity! That humanity never had an independent existence. The Son did not unite with some person -- which would have involved Him being two persons in that case. Indeed, we read of “the holy thing.” We are guarded by this from thinking that the conception involved an independent human person. It was a conception that involved the union of the human and the deity, not the conception of an independent, human person. Thus there is one Person, the Son having taken humanity into His Person.

He Did Not Have the Carnal Nature. As holy, He could not have the carnal nature, as some have claimed. He was not conceived in sin. His generation as man not only was sinless, but holy; and never did sin gain entrance throughout the life of the Holy One who knew no sin. Indeed, it was impeccable manhood that the Son assumed into His person at the conception in the womb of the virgin. Never was there in Him “a drive to sin” that He had to resist and overcome; neither was their any response in Him. Such notions are blasphemy. The “temptation” was testing; it came from outside 119 and was repulsed. He had humanity in a holy state and the temptation in the wilderness was the acid test to show (i.e., demonstrate) that the pure gold, so to speak, was there. Do you not know what having humanity in a holy state means?

No Union With Humanity in Incarnation. Nor is there in His taking manhood into union with Himself a union with humanity in general. The union of manhood and Godhead in Him is unique, true only of the Word become flesh. The revolting figment that by incarnation He was united to men, i.e., to mankind (the first Adam), who are sinful in being, cannot have been true of “the holy thing.” Moreover, we read:

Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a grain of wheat falling into the ground die, it abides alone; but if it die, it bears much fruit (John 12:24).

Thus, before His death, He abode alone, not in connection with humanity in general by incarnation. It is as the risen stalk that there is the bearing of much fruit. We form one plant with Him (using the figure of speech in John 12:24) in connection with His risen manhood, we having life in Him as the grains upon the stalk. This is the abundant life that the gospel of John speaks of: the resurrection life of the Son.

His Humanity Was Not Mortal. His was true flesh and blood, but His humanity ever abode in the holy state. It was not subject to death, which is the consequence of sin. He had neither the sinful nature nor its fruit manifested as acts of sin. His body was not subject to death; and hence was not “mortal.” He was capable of dying, obviously, but mortal means subject to death.

On this account the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have authority to lay it down and I have authority to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father (John 10:17, 18).

The Lord did not bleed to death. The Lord’s death was the

116. J. N. Darby, Synopsis 1:360, 361, note; and see 2:21 and 5:283. See also Collected Writings 7:59; 25:230; 27:357; 28:3; Notes and Comments 3:50, 51.


119. James 1:12 refers to holy temptations -- they come from outside. Not so James 1:13-15 -- these are unholy. Christ had none such. Lust is sin in the flesh and it produces sin in action. In Rom. 7, lust is sin. Christ had no lust, no sin in the flesh; and, he did no sin.
act of His will. His head did not droop in death; He bowed His head and He dismissed His spirit. It was a voluntary sacrifice on His part and it was also accomplished in obedience to the Father’s command. And when already dead:

“The very spear that pierced Thy side,
Drew forth the blood to save” (J. G. Deck).

The blood of atonement from the Lord’s side had all the value of the atoning death, which had all the value of the three hours of atoning sufferings, which had the infinite value and glory of His person as its value. This my soul sees and enjoys and blesses the Father for giving His Son to be the propitiation. It is all unfathomable but in our respective measures the joy of our souls.

The Spirit Named as the Holy Spirit by the Angel Before the Incarnation. Finally, you will note that the angel referred to this divine Person by His eternal name, Spirit. The angel called Him by this name before the incarnation took place. It was not ‘a divine Person who shall become the Holy Spirit after He comes upon you . . . .’ The Holy Spirit had this name before the incarnation took place. He was called this before the Son, who was in the form of God, took upon Himself the form of a servant (Phil:2:6). He is the Spirit of God eternally and is called in Hebrews “the eternal Spirit.”

**We Have a Revelation of God**

The reader must ever be alert to the way teachers of evil doctrine use words. For example, CAC wrote:

That precious name of Son gives character to the revelation of God, for He is made known as Father. 120

That is deceptive talk. In the system that denies eternal relationships there is no revelation of God. CAC believes in a revelation of what divine Persons became consequent upon the incarnation of One of them, he knows not which. Thus, rather than believing in a revelation of God, he believes in a revelation of what God became in time. Listen to what JT said:

He is not as to His Person, a subject of Revelation; as a Man here He is to be known. 121

Note that here he excluded manhood from the “Person.” In the system that denies eternal relationships, none of the divine Persons is a subject of revelation -- and so there is no revelation of God. The system means that we do not know God, regardless of the weasel-wording obfuscation.

---

Chapter 8

The Only-begotten Son

“Thou art my Son: to-day have I begotten thee.” Scripture speaks of Jesus as Son in two different aspects: as Son of God, born in the world, and Son according to the eternal relationship. This verse refers to the first of these: Jesus is seen here not in His glory as essentially divine, but in His glory as born Son. Nevertheless it is very important to consider the glory of Jesus as Son of God before His incarnation; for we could not speak of the love of God as we do, if the One He gave us was not His Son.

(Collected Writings of J. N. Darby 28:3.)

The Glory as of an Only-begotten With a Father

Beholding His Glory. James Taylor, Sr., wrote:

He was a Man among men, and contemplated by some as an object of the intensest affection to the Father . . . To make what men saw descriptive of relations in essential Deity is, I am certain, going beyond Scripture, it being expressly stated that no one had seen God at any time, indeed that He cannot be seen by men.

Let us be sure we understand the thrust of this objection. It is this:

1. Christ was “contemplated by some as an object of the intensest affection of the Father.”
2. What was contemplated could not be “descriptive of relations in essential deity.”
3. Since no man has seen God at any time, what they saw was descriptive of affections that began in time.

While that is a totally false use of the truth that no man has seen God at any time (in His essence), as we shall shortly see, it is instructive to observe the Spirit’s use of this truth in 1 John 4:11:

Beloved, if God has so loved us, we ought also to love one another. No one has seen God at any time: if we love one another, God abides in us, and his love is perfected in us (1 John 4:11).

Is it not evident that though no one has seen God in His essential deity, that there is another way in which He may be seen? -- and that that is exactly the point in both passages? Now J. N. Darby specifically addressed this matter, using both texts, as JT no doubt well knew, but no longer wanted to hear it. But let us listen:

If we look at John 1:18, it is said there, “No man hath seen God at any time.” How can I know and love a person I have never seen? “The only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared him.” That is, in the Gospel, which is to bring Christ before us, I find the sense to be this: Well, You have not seen God, and yet you have; because He who was the very delight of the Father -- who is in the bosom of the Father -- the immediate and closest object of the Father’s delight -- has declared Him. Therefore I do know Him. It is the answer to the difficulty, that no man ever saw God. Christ has made Him known to me.

If we compare verse 12 of our chapter 4 with chapter 1: 18 of the Gospel by John, we shall better apprehend the scope of the apostle’s teaching here. The same difficulty, or if you will, the same truth is presented in both cases. No one has ever seen God. How is this met?

In John 1:18 the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him. He who is in the most perfect intimacy, in the most absolute proximity and enjoyment of the Father’s love, the one eternal, sufficient object that knew the love of the Father as His only Son, has revealed Him unto men as He has Himself known Him. What is the answer in our epistle to this same difficulty? “If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.” By the communication of the divine nature, and by the dwelling of God in us, we inwardly enjoy Him as He has been manifested and declared by His only Son. His love is perfect in us, known to the heart, as it has been declared in Jesus. The God who has been declared by Him dwells in us. What a thought! that this answer to the fact that no one has ever

122. [This repetitious, pretended pious phrase about not “going beyond Scripture” by those who assert that a divine Person became the Son (where does Scripture state that?) is nauseating.]
123. Letters of James Taylor, p. 323.
124. Collected Writings 28: 235, 236. See the article and the connection with 1 John 4:12.
seen God is equally, that the only Son has declared Him, and that He dwells in us. What light this throws upon the words, “which thing is true in him and in you!” For it is in that Christ has become our life that we can thus enjoy God and His presence in us by the power of the Holy Ghost.  

He has also expressed himself on these two passages in his paper, The Capacity for Knowing Divine Love. Divine love is not a love that began in time. It is eternal love! And we have, by the Spirit, power to enter into it, without pretending to fathom it, or scrutinize it, if you will. The Son has infinite capacity to enjoy the love of the Father (who reciprocates it); and to come in manhood and, by the power of the Spirit, manifest that eternal, divine love.

In John 6:46 we read:

Not that anyone has seen the Father, except he who is of [para] God, he has seen the Father.

The One who has the essential, divine nature of God has seen the Father; and:

He that has seen me has seen the Father (John 14:9).

They said to him therefore, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye know neither me nor my Father. If ye had known me, ye would have known my Father also (John 8:19).

And this is the eternal life, that they should know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent (John 17:3).

What they saw in the Word made flesh was the expression of the divine relationship, but that does not mean that their little measure of apprehension was descriptive of the infinite, inscrutable magnitude of it. No one has said that what men saw was God in His essential deity (1 Tim. 6:15, 16). They saw a moral glory in the only-begotten Son; not that they plummed its depth, but they did contemplate it. It was not the measure of their apprehension that determined the greatness of it, for it was infinite; but they contemplated it. The fact is that what they saw was the manifestation of what flowed from relationship in essential deity, JT notwithstanding. It is a glory bound up with the revelation of the divine Persons expressed in Christ by the power of the Spirit.

True simplicity (or what should be called such if it is not) and true transparency were never so presented. The single eye -- God’s will and His Father’s pleasure were the simple purpose of His heart. And His whole being here below was so in accordance with this, so regulated by it, that this single simple purpose told itself out in every thought, word and deed. It was a transparency which man could not read, which no saint can apprehend, save by the discovery of the harmony between that single simple purpose of His being and His ways. -- But there it was, a glory -- an all excellent, all transcending manifestation of moral beauty was His, -- the glory as of the only begotten of the Father -- full of grace and truth.  

Another wrote:

Even the eyes of the disciples, -- of those who could say afterwards, "We beheld his glory, the glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth," -- were scarcely opened to it. They saw what was the glory of the Only Begotten," but not at that time did they apprehend its wondrous significance. Only after Christ’s death had fully rent the veil, and the Spirit of God had come to lead them into all truth, did they apprehend it. Only then could they say, “the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth.” Even at the very close of that marvellous course Philip could say, “Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us,” and the Lord answer, “Have I been so long time with you, and hast thou not known me, Philip?” What a flashing out of glory it must have been, when the true light did indeed shine unto their souls! “In that day,” says the Lord again, “ye shall know that I am in the Father”; -- yea, and beside that, -- “and ye in me, and I in you.”

They did indeed contemplate his glory; that is not to say that it was comprehended. One can apprehend what he cannot comprehend -- for He is incomprehensible because of the greatness of His Person -- unfathomable. The system we are reviewing destroys all this -- which is proper and essential to Christianity. Let the reader be warned that the evil system that denies the eternal relationships of Father, Son and Spirit means that “there was no mission from God at all.”

“[No Mission from God at All]”? He whom JT tried to besmirch with having a subconscious idea that Christ’s Sonship was only temporal (JND) wrote:

It was the Son that created in Hebrews 1, and in Colossians 1; and as to being Son in the eternal state, He says, “I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world”; again, “I leave the world and go to the Father”; and you have no Father if you have no Son. If I do not know Him as Son when He came into the world, I have no mission from God at all. And you get too the Father sent the Son . . . But there are persons who take it that Christ was only Son as come into the world . . . It is of immense import, because I have not the Father’s love sending the Son out of heaven, if I have not Him as Son before born into the world . . . I lose all that the Son is, if He is only so as incarnate, and you have lost all the love of the Father in sending the Son as well.

C. A. Coates Lost All That the Son Is. He, as FER and JT, confined the Sonship to time. In his book on Hebrews, CAC wrote:

As soon as He was born He inherited every title that belongs to the Messiah; and among these titles was the glorious name of Son (p. 4).
“The Son” is a mediatorial title (p. 6).

F. E. Raven Denied the Eternal Sonship

FER’s Denial of the Eternal Sonship. FER reached his full denial of the eternal Sonship in two steps. However, on Dec. 29, 1894, FER wrote:

. . . I should say that if a man intended to deny the Eternal Sonship of Christ I certainly should not care to remain in fellowship with him . . . . 130

Here is the first step he took in the denial.

Now, “Son of God” I understand to be the title of Christ incarnate; I should hardly use “Son of God” as referring to His eternal Person, for which “the Son” is usually employed . . . . 131

W. Kelly denounced the notion in FER Heterodox, p.36:

The alleged difference between “the Son” and “the Son of God” is rash and wrong, being even refuted by the text itself. That “Son of God” is (in Psa. 2 and elsewhere as John 1:49, as well as Luke 1:35) said of Christ as the King of Israel is true; yet the generalization made in page 109 is a dangerous falsehood, as is made certain by such texts as 1 John 3:8, 4:10, 11, 5:5, 9, 10, 20. But if one desire a single distinct disproof of its folly, one could not have a more decisive one than 1 John 5:12: “He that hath the Son hath life; he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” In this case the emphasis is rather the opposite way, as every spiritual mind must feel.

The above alleged distinction between Son and Son of God was an intermediate step. An extract of a letter was inserted in Letters of F. E. Raven, p.146,147 Stow Hill, 1963, from “Mr. Broomhead, of Greenwich, who accompanied Mr. Raven on his 1898 visit to the U.S.A.”

In the latter part of the meeting there was a very interesting digression as to the way in which divine Persons have been revealed. FER thought that “the Son” is used in a special reference to the Father and the name “Son of God” in reference to man, but that none of these titles are applied to Him in Scripture until incarnation, and therefore we are not authorized to carry these titles back into eternity. The reading was exceedingly free and greatly enjoyed.

The point about ‘titles’ was apparently revised out of the reading (a copy of which I have); revised by FER.

FER’s Denial of the Eternal Relationships. Next we have this on pp. 147, 148:

. . . As to what you refer to, my point was that it was permitted to us to know divine Persons AS and WHEN revealed and only so. In view of that revelation the Son has taken a new place relatively, that is, of inferiority to the Father, coming to do the will of God, though of course there would be no change morally or in affection. The names under which we know divine Persons, that is, Father, Son and Holy Spirit are, I judge, connected with this position, and I doubt if we are allowed to enter into the eternal relation of divine Persons apart from this revelation. No one knows the Son but the Father. What I think led me to it was fear lest in our minds we should almost insensibly give to the Son a place of inferiority (save as regards revelation) in our thoughts of the Godhead, which could not be right. The point is to be within the Limits of scripture and not trading on what is merely orthodox.

FER’s blasphemy was put forth under the ‘pious’ guise of “Fear lest in our minds we should almost insensibly give to the Son a place of inferiority,” since in his perverted thoughts Sonship means inferiority. Thus leaven is ‘piously’ put forth as honoring the Son.

J. Taylor, Sr. Learned the Denial of the Eternal Sonship from FER. No, it was not J. Taylor, Sr. who first taught the temporal Sonship -- at the infamous Barnet Conference in 1829. He had learned it from his spiritual mentor, the heresiarch, FER. N. Noel, in The History of the Brethren 2:605, 606, cites a reading at Barnet, 1929, in which J. Taylor, Sr. denied the eternal Sonship; and then on p. 607 cites the following:

Concerning the subject of the above extracts, Mr. James Taylor said afterwards:

It is a most weighty subject and I have no doubt the spiritual intelligence of the (Barnet, 1829) meeting warranted attention being called to it. What I expressed has been on my mind for at least twenty-five years; it came to me through Mr. Raven, when he was in America in 1902. It came out in a Reading, but it was not included in the printed notes.

It was omitted through the influence of Mr. T. H. Reynolds, who was screening Mr. Raven, as a numbers of others had done before him. 132

The attentive reader will note references to revising what FER said, in view of printing.

132. The statements by JT are also found in Letters of James Taylor 1:263, Stow Hill, 1956. See also pp. 260, 342, 390, 394; and 2:181.
together, JT denounced the truth of the eternal Sonship and the union of God and man in one person. 133 J. N. Darby said “Athanasius was the great and able champion of the truth.” 134

JT. said of his spiritual mentor, FER, regarding the eternal Sonship:

... in his later ministry he refused it. 135

Besides myself, there are many witnesses to his refusal of it, say from 1898 to the end of his service. 136

Now, notice how some evil teachers operate. JT wrote:

As to myself, the excerpts furnished in page 5 of the Ayr pamphlet to show that I held earlier as to the sonship the opposite of what I hold now fails of the object intended. In using the designation “Son” in the older ones I simply meant to convey the Person... It is over thirty years since the scriptural untenableness of the term “eternal Sonship” became fixed in my mind. ... 137

Some erroneously believe he first taught, or held, the temporal Sonship in 1929. On Dec. 20, 1920, he wrote:

... the title “only begotten Son.” “Begotten” implies his manhood, I apprehend. Note -- it is “is in the bosom of the Father,” not “was.” 138

The Denial of the Eternal Sonship is Fundamentally Evil Teaching. We quite agree with C.H. Mackintosh that the denial of the eternal Sonship is fundamental evil. This applies to the denial of the eternal Word, too.

If a man denies Christ we cannot own him; nay, to salute him or wish him God speed, would make us partakers of his evil deeds [2 John 9, 10]. What is the difference between a teacher of fundamental error and one who knowingly received him or wished him God speed? ... A scandalous liver is justly rejected; but a man may deny the deity, or the eternal Sonship of Christ, and be received and honored... fundamental truth... 139

J. N. Darby believed this:

Note though what is called “The eternal Sonship” be a vital truth, or we lose the Father sending the Son, and the Son creating, and we have no Father if we have no Son, so that it lies at the basis of all truth, yet in the historical presentation of Christianity the Son is always presented as down here in servant and manhood estate, as all through John, though in heaven and One with the Father. “This” -- this Person -- “is my beloved Son” -- He who was as Man here, yet there. In Matthew 3 the whole Trinity is revealed, and we may say for the first time fully. Wonderful grace it is! Hence “No! not the Son,” has no difficulty. Mark 13:32. 140

133. Letters of James Taylor 1:325.
134. Collected Writings 22:125, Morrish ed.
137. Letters of James Taylor 1:394, March 25, 1933.
138. Letters of James Taylor 1:187; see also p. 190.
139. Things New and Old 19:.83, 1876. See also ibid.,18:83; 25:110.
The Bosom of the Father

A Generated-Bosom?

It follows from the denial of the eternal relationships of Father, Son and Spirit, that the Father had no eternal bosom. The Father’s bosom, it follows, began in time. And the Son, after becoming the Son, moved into that newly generated bosom in the Person who had newly become the Father, to enjoy a newly generated love. Alas that this is supposed to be Christianity.

James Taylor, Sr., had an idea. The Greek preposition for the word “in” the bosom of the Father is eis; and this preposition indicates motion toward something -- so that the Person who became the Son moved into the newly generated bosom of the Person who had just become the Father. God grant us perfect abhorrence for these evils.

In or Into the Bosom?

In support of the generated-bosom doctrine, shortly after the Ravenite meetings at Barnet, England, in 1929, JT wrote:

The preposition “in” (eis) as you probably know, points to His coming to the position. The Holy Ghost used it in this most important verse knowing well how Greek readers would understand it. . . . If the Spirit meant to convey that the Lord had always been in the Father’s bosom as Son, He would, according to the general usage, have used “en” as in John 3:13, “in heaven.”

If position only were meant, “en” would be more intensive as proper to the relation of Sonship and is indeed used in chapter 14 -- “I am in my Father.” “En” is also used in chapter 13:23 to convey the beloved disciples position; “epi” in verse 25. If proximity were in view, “para,” as in John 1:14, would be appropriate.

C. A. Coates followed suit:

... I should have thought that eis referred to His characteristic place in the Father’s affections rather than to His essential Being. You have no doubt observed that eis is used characteristically in John 3:13, 31: 6:46; 8:47; 18:37.

In Oct. 1932 an article was published, The Eternal Sonship of Christ In View of Present Denials, by the Greek scholar W. E. Vine. He wrote:

The phrase (lit. “The One being in the bosom”) is almost equivalent to a title, and suggests a timeless, unoriginated, uninterrupted condition and relationship.*

Had the intention been to state simply that the Son is now in the bosom of the Father, the relative pronoun “who” with the present tense of “to be” would be used, i.e., “who is,” but the Apostle uses instead the definite article with the present participle, “the One being in the bosom,” indicating a pre-existent and permanent position and relationship, uninterrupted in time.146

I am not aware that W. Kelly had occasion to answer such a use of the preposition eis, but as he was a Greek scholar of the first rank we might notice that he did not see what was so obvious to JT. Responding to the notion that “who was” instead of “who is” is meant, he stated this:

It is true that the present participle, combined with a past tense or qualified by an adverb of time, may have an imperfect force, as in 1:29, 5:13, &c. But here nothing enters to weaken its simple, special, and emphatic force. The words are only difficult to unbelief. The late Dean Alford was bold enough in free thought; yet he expressly affirms that in both texts the present participle is used to signify essential truth without any particular regard to time.147

Indeed, he saw no such thing in v. 18 as JT did:

It is no longer a question of nature {as earlier in the chapter}, but of relationship; and hence it is not simply the Word, but the Son, and the Son in the highest possible character, the only-begotten Son, distinguishing Him thus from any others who might, in a subordinate sense be sons of God. “The Only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father.” Observe: not which was, but which is.” He is viewed as retaining the same perfect intimacy with the Father, entirely unimpaired by local or any other circumstances He had entered. Nothing in the slightest detracted from His own personal glory, and from the infinitely near relationship which He had had with the Father from all eternity . . . Under all changes outwardly, He abode as from eternity the only-begotten Son in the bosom of the Father.148

In a translation footnote, J. N. Darby has:

\[\epsilonις \not = \epsilonι\] perhaps ‘on.’ Ó ὡν εις, the place where, or the state: see Acts 8:23; Mark 1:9; In chap. 13 it is εις in ver. 23, ἐνπερ in ver. 25.

Just think of JT telling his followers that one of the divine Persons, we know not which, became the Son in time, and

141. This was the conference at which he foisted on the followers the denial of the eternal Sonship that he had learned from F. E. Raven in 1902 -- holding it in those intervening years.


144. Letters of James Taylor 1:322, May 1, 1931.


147. The Bible Treasury 19:80.

He then moved into the newly generated bosom of another of the divine Persons, we know not which, who had become the Father in time!

**The Father’s Bosom Characterizing the Declaration**

The great Declare of the Father, who eternally lay in that bosom, knows all the infiniteness of the love that is in that bosom. It is as One who is in that position in the bosom of the Father that the only-begotten Son is here said to have declared Him. What that bosom is marks the character and infinitude of the declaration. It is entirely changed by making this a temporal bosom, a bosom that began in time. It is One in essential, eternal relationship with the Father that has declared Him.

And I have made known to them thy name, and will make [it] known; that the love with which thou last loved me may be in them and I in them (John 17:26).

**Only-begotten Son**

“Only-begotten God” is a False Reading

You will find in many modern translations the expression “only-begotten God” in John 1:18. This expresses the view of many modern scholars. We follow here J. N. Darby’s and W. Kelly’s translation. W. Kelly negatived the acceptance of the textual reading, “God.” In the note, quoted in the next endnote reference, he rightly says:

It is not according to the analogy of Scripture to speak of “only-begotten God”; and Son is the true correlate to “Father.”

**The Use of Monogenes in Scripture**

Turning from this to the subject of the only-begotten Son, observe that the denial of the eternal relationships of Father, Son and Spirit entails an equating of the words “begotten” and “only-begotten.” The word “begotten” is used in Psa. 2 and NT passages which quote that Psalm and refer to something that happened in time; namely His introduction into the world in incarnation. And, the word “only-begotten” can be used to refer to an only child. So, if we merely reason from the human to the divine (as is at the core of the system that we reject here), we would essentially equate the two words “begotten” and “only-begotten” in connection with the Sonship; and behold -- the temporal Sonship is proved from Scripture! The sly method, then, is this:

1. always equate “begotten” and “only-begotten,”
2. state that begetting cannot mean in the Godhead,
3. conclude that therefore both words must refer to a relationship first taken up in time.

J. N. Darby had something to say about this kind of carnal reasoning:

As to the relationship of the divine Persons, there is the same reducing everything to man’s level in speaking of “begotten.” It must signify a beginning of existence, since it does with man. Scripture warrants another use of it: “I will make him my firstborn,” is said of Solomon; and, Israel is my son, my first-born.” “Only-begotten” is a term of relationship, not a low, carnal, human idea of

---

149. He wrote:

There is no doubt of the ancient, if not large, support, of Θεός, instead of the ordinary reading υιός, “Son.” Nevertheless Tregelles alone ventured to follow them as he does in other harsh readings, till the Cambridge Editors [Westcott and Hort] joined him. All others, notwithstanding N B C K L 33, two or three versions, and patristic allusions, prefer Α and fourteen other uncials, all cursives but one, the ancient Vv. and Fathers. It is not according to the analogy of scripture to speak of “only-begotten God”; and “Son” is the true correlate to “Father.” Alford stands with Griesbach, Lachman, Scholz, Scrivener, Tischendorf, Wordsworth, as well as the older critics (*The Bible Treasury* 15:112 (1884). See also his footnote to John 1:18 in his *Exposition of the Gospel of John*, published in 1898.

F. H. A Scrivener, the most accomplished textual critic on the Westcott and Hort revision committee, wrote:

... according to the form of writing universal in the oldest codicises... would require but the change of a single letter, ΤC or ΘC... Every one indeed must feel Θεός to be untrue, even though for the sake of consistency he [as Westcott and Hort] may be forced to uphold it (*A Plain Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament*, London: Bell, pp. 358, 359, vol. 2, 1894).

150. For example, CAC does this:

To apply the words “begotten” or “only-begotten” to Him as in eternal Deity in the past is simply a traditional error (*The Personal and Mediatorial Glory of the Son of God*, p. 10). However, he is quite aware that Isaac was called an “only-begotten” Heb. 11:17). Therefore this fact must be evacuated of its true bearing on the issue. After admitting that “it expresses a unique relationship, of which Isaac’s relationship to Abraham was a type...” he wrote: “But Isaac was truly “begotten” by Abraham.” Instead of profiting by the use of “only-begotten” in connection with Isaac, he forced his denial of the eternal relationships upon the help that the Spirit gave for our understanding. Cp. *JT, Ministry*, 34:107.
begetting . . . 151

The Raven/Taylor talk about “what has come into view recently” was not recent. It was old evil for the blinded to view as “new light”; and in this case long before characterized by JND as “a low, carnal, human idea of begetting.”

The Lord is also called the “firstborn,” a title signifying preeminence. If He enters the creation, He must be the firstborn of all creation. If He has brethren, He must be the firstborn among many brethren. If He rises from the dead, He must be the firstborn from among the dead. JND briefly stated the difference between only-begotten and first-born (or, first-begotten) in connection with Christ:

The difference between only-begotten (monogenees) and first-born (protokos), is that the first is His relationship to God eternally; the second is His relationship to other things. 152

The reader may trace for his soul’s profit the use of these words in Scripture (see The Englishman’s Greek Concordance). He will find monogenes used three times in Luke where three persons had an only-begotten and bring their case to the Only-begotten Son come here in manhood. Luke presents Him in the perfection of that manhood, and He entered into the loss of their only-begotten, and enters into it as only HImself could sympathise. And to think that His sympathy as man had a divine spring in it, imparting to that sympathy the infinite value of Who He was!

John uses the word monogenes five times concerning the Son. And in John 3:18 we read of His wonderful name; “the name of the only-begotten Son of God.”

Paul used monogenes once -- in connection with Isaac (Heb. 11:17). It has its obvious force and bearing upon the issue before us in the soul of all but those who dishonor the Son. For Isaac had a half-brother, by the same father, but Isaac is called the only-begotten. The fact that he was also begotten by Abraham does not invalidate the bearing of the use of monogenes here, because as soon as the word begotten is brought into this matter, we must take into account that Isaac had a half-brother. Thus, it is not in connection with Isaac’s birth that he is called the only-begotten. That would have been false.

The word “only-begotten” is definitely used of Isaac not as born in time; and in no other sense is that word used of him. This is also true of the Son.

And thus the Spirit of God has indicated to the reverent Christian the distinction in the use of begotten and only-begotten. Isaac is the great type in Gen. 22 in respect of being the only-begotten of Abraham. The distinction in Isaac’s case is plain, as is the case with Christ. As to His manhood, He was begotten. As to the Sonship in the Godhead, He is the only-begotten. And, of course, He remained the only-begotten Son in time as well as in eternity.

The Temptation of Christ

We need to keep in mind that when the devil said, “If thou be the Son of God” (Luke 4:3), he was also aiming at the Father. Of course, this involves the Trinity. The devil began with the Sonship but was foiled. We may be sure that the truth of the Godhead was under attack, and not only the Person of the Son.

Eternal Generation?

There arose among Christians the notion that the Son is eternally generated. The name “only-begotten Son,” however, has nothing to do with generation. There is no such thing as the eternal generation of the Son. The idea is metaphysical reasoning. J. N. Darby rightly refused to apply metaphysics to the doctrine of the trinity: . . . but we come to it by our wants, not by metaphysics, which I have no thought of applying to the doctrine. 153

There is also the idea of the “procession of the Spirit” over which disputes arose in earlier church history. I call attention to this in connection with “only-begotten Son” and the denial of the eternal relationships. By utilizing rejection of “eternal generation,” a polemical advantage is sought by some who deny the eternal relationships of Father, Son and Spirit. The eternal relationships are not in the least dependent on the mistaken teaching concerning the eternal generation of the Son. At the same time, I do not see the teaching as a question of fundamental truth but rather of metaphysical reasoning in divine things. A few quotes from J. N. Darby follow, with additional references in the endnotes:

The history of the doctrine of the procession of the Holy Ghost, which professedly divided the Greek and Roman churches, and which was a metaphysical novelty, forbidden even at Rome, in the time of Leo the Great, ought to have taught Christians in these days, while holding the doctrine of the Trinity personally, and unity in the Godhead without wavering, to avoid metaphysical theology in such holy matters, for this question of the procession is mere metaphysics in divine things. 154

Such strictures apply equally to the idea of the eternal procession of the Son 155 and to the notion about eternal generation of the Son. The doctrine of the eternal Sonship does not need, and does not rest on, that notion.

151. Collected Writings 6:25. See also 30:318.
152. Collected Writings 25:226.
154. Collected Writings 23:322. See also 18:129.
In John 15:26, we read:

But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes forth from with the Father, he shall bear witness concerning me.

This concerns His proceeding as coming from the Father, and sent by Christ in glory, to bear witness here in that special capacity named. 156 He came as recorded in Acts 2.

The Divine Circle of Affection

JT said:

We cannot exclude the Spirit from the divine circle of affection and make one Person the Only-begotten of Another, when All are in the inscrutableness of absolute deity. 157

Note that this indicates that there are two circles of affection:

1. The divine circle of affection “when All are in the inscrutableness of absolute deity”;
2. And another circle of affection, of the Father and Son, a circle which began in time.

Notice the implication that this second circle could not be “divine.” Thus, the second circle of affection is not divine affection. The love of the Father for you, reader, is therefore not “divine,” nor is the Son’s affection for you “divine.” It is not, then, based upon what is infinite, eternal and divine. The whole character of Christianity is thus attacked at its foundation. What is of the essence of Christianity is defined by this system to be non-divine.

Moreover, the truth is that there is nothing that the Father and Son do that does not have a divine character in it, though it be a human act or word. We can clearly see how the denial of the divine, eternal relationships is a fundamental assault on the Godhead.

It follows also that JT’s divine circle of affection encompasses a relationless love because, he taught, there were no relationships before the incarnation.

“God is love,” and this is in Godhead; hence the Spirit is in the divine circle of affection -- always was, and always will be. The Spirit sheds abroad the love of God in our hearts (Rom. 5:4; cp. Rom. 15:30). The love of God never had a beginning. The fact, then, that divine Persons have eternal relationships does not exclude the Spirit from the divine circle of affection. These eternal relationships show us distinction of Persons and these Persons have manifested themselves in accordance with those eternal relationships. This is the glory of the NT revelation of God in Trinity as Father, Son and Spirit! We apprehend these glories by faith, not by prying into, or wrecking, the Ark.

This Day Have I Begotten Thee

I will declare the decree: Jehovah hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee (Psa. 2:7).

The begetting here refers to the incarnation. Son of God in eternity, necessarily as a consequence He is also Son when in time. It is the eternal Sonship that carries character and value to the Sonship in incarnation.

Scripture speaks of Jesus as Son in two different aspects: as Son of God, born in the world, and Son according to eternal relationship. This verse {Heb. 1:5} refers to the first of these: Jesus is seen here not in His glory as essentially divine, but in His glory as born Son. Nevertheless it is very important to consider the glory of Jesus as Son of God before His incarnation; for we could not speak of the love of God as we do, if the One He gave us was not His Son. 158

I must, however, add here, that the revelation of the Father by the Son, as dwelling eternally in His bosom, is not to be looked for in the Old Testament. The relationship of Son is, doubtless, found therein, so that the thought is not foreign to it; . . . viewed in time, and not founded on the nature of His person in the Godhead, but as a relationship formed on earth. “He shall be to me a Son,” and “I will declare the decree. . . . Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.” This is in time on the earth, the glorious and true title and character of Messiah. . . . But in the New Testament we find the Son in His own proper relationship to the Father {John 1:18} . . . . He came forth from the Father {John 16:28}. 159

Acts 4:27

For in truth against thy holy servant Jesus . . . . (JND translation).

The Lord Jesus is never spoken of in Scripture as a child of God. The new birth involves the implantation of a new life from God and becoming a partaker of the divine nature. Neither of these things is true of the Son of God. The new birth is not involved with the Son’s being begotten in time. He took on Himself the form of a servant. It is confusion of truth to speak of Him as a child of God.

156. See W. Kelly on John, in loco; and JND, Collected Writings 3:110; 33:262.
158. Collected Writings of J. N. Darby 28:3.
159. Collected Writings of J. N. Darby 30:318, 319. See also Notes and Comments 3:50, 51 and Synopsis, in loco.
Chapter 9

The Son Came Out from the Father and Does Whatever He Sees the Father Do

The Son Came Out from the Father

I came out from God. I came out from the Father and have come into the world; again, I leave the world and go to the Father (John 16:28).

. . . “I say not that I will pray the Father for you [as if the Father did not Himself love you]; for the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.” This they had believed, but knew not yet in its fulness, known thus by the Holy Ghost (the Spirit of sonship given), namely, that He came forth from the Father. In this they were dull: it is the life of the saints. And this it is that makes the notion of sonship in Christ only when incarnate so destructive to the very elementary joy of the Church, and abhorrent to those who have communion by the Spirit in the truth.

(Collected Writings of J. N. Darby 3:89).

Nature and Relationship

When the Lord Jesus said that He came out from God, this refers to His divine nature as God; for He Himself is God. When He said that He came out from the Father, this refers to relationship. He is the Son of the Father. The One who came is God, and He is the Son of the Father, coming from Him.

He Came Into the World

How did He come into the world? He came into the world at the instant of the conception in the womb of the virgin. Then it was that the humanity was taken into union with the Son’s Person. What preceeded that coming into the world? “I came out from the Father and have come into the world.” I suggest to you that we have a fourfold movement here for the meditation of our hearts:

1. “I came out from the Father” -- eternal relationship and presence; preincarnate motion in the Godhead;
2. “and have come into the world” -- incarnation in the union of the Son of God with manhood: spirit, soul and body;
3. “again, I leave the world” -- ascending to glory as man;
4. “and go to the Father” -- eternal abiding with the Father as Son in manhood.

His coming out from the Father morally preceded His coming into the world. He did not come out from One who became the Father in time. No, No! It was the eternal Son who came out from the eternal Father and then came into the world. Listen to what the text states!
**Though sent, He is Always in Heaven**

And no one has gone up into heaven, save he who came down out of heaven, the Son of man who is in heaven (John 3:13).

We might think that it would say ‘the Son of God’ who is in heaven. While that also is true, what we have in this Scripture includes that truth, but goes further. It shows us the fact of the unity of the two natures, the human and divine, in Him. Bodily He was here on earth, but what He is as Son of God is not limited that way, and thus He can speak of Himself as in heaven. It also shows His deity. But it is as God and man in One Person that He so speaks — showing the unity of the two natures in His person. In Him, humanity was united to omnipresent deity.

As the eternal Son He was always in glory . . .

While here, He was, as always, in the bosom of the Father (John 1:18).

The Spirit also came, yet was everywhere. He came with respect to filling certain functions. And He will be taken out of the way (2 Thess. 2:7) when that is all accomplished -- when the saints are caught up at the rapture. That does not mean that He will not be here. He is God, and just as He was here before He came for those functions, He will be here for other purposes.

**John 8:42 and John 16:27, 28**

These two Scriptures tell us truth concerning several aspects regarding the coming of the Son. One of them is the distinctness of Person in the Godhead. And the prepositions used in these texts point to several complementary truths:

Jesus said to them, If God were your father ye would have loved me, for I came forth from {ek} God and am come [from him]; for neither am I come of myself, but he has sent me (John 8:42).

. . . I came out from {para} God. I came out from {ek} the Father and have come into the world . . . (John 16:27, 28).

In John 8:42, His coming forth from (ek) God indicates His essential Godhead. “God” indicates that it is a matter of nature. The Lord Jesus is one with God in the divine essence.

In John 16:28, His coming out from {ek} the “Father” indicates relationship. He was in essential relationship with the Father before He came into the world; and, of course, always is in that relationship (John 1:18).

John 16:27 indicates His coming out from with {para} God. In a footnote to John 1:14, J. N. Darby remarked:

*Para*, with a genitive as here, means “on the part of”; “from with” gives the sense. But this must not be understood in the sense of “with” merely. It has not this significance in the new testament.

This is true also in John 6:46 and concerning the Spirit in John 15:26.

**The Notion of Only Temporal Sonship is Destructive and Abhorrent**

JND wrote:

. . . He came forth from the Father. In this they were dull: it is the life of the saints. And this it is that makes the notion of sonship in Christ on ly when incarnate so destructive to the very elementary joy of the Church, and abhorrent to those who have communion by the Spirit in the truth. 161


The Son Does
Whatever He Sees the Father Do

My Father worketh hitherto and I work. For this therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he had not only violated the sabbath, but also said that God was his own Father, making himself equal with God. Jesus therefore answered and said to them, Verily, verily, I say to you, The Son can do nothing of himself save whatever he sees the Father doing: for whatever things he does, these things also the Son does in like manner. For the Father loves the Son and shows him all things which he himself does . . . (John 5:17-20).

The Son is God as Son

The Father and the Son worked together in unity. God’s rest was broken in Eden and God’s work with respect to sin began. This involved the three Persons; and so the Father and Son, as such, worked hitherto, but the revelation of the divine Persons awaited the coming of the Son.

That He made Himself equal with God is not merely a statement of what the Jews thought about it; the fact is that His saying God was His Father is assertion of equality with God. What is stated in v. 18 is what the apostle John stated (though the Jews no doubt correctly concluded that also). The relationship of Son to the Father indicates deity. The relationship is bound up with deity. It is a divine, essential relationship; a relationship in deity.

The Son Can Do Nothing of Himself

Verses 19 and 20 show the unity of the Father and Son in deity, though the works are now carried out in manhood, in the dependent place He took as receiving all from the Father.

These verses show the unity of will and action in the Godhead and as manifested by the Son in manhood. The words that the Son “can do nothing of himself . . .” shows the impossibility of any independent action in the Godhead; true, too, when the Son took the place of subjection in manhood. JT wrote:

“The Son can do nothing of Himself” is not a reference to His power which is ever undiminished, but to His choice. Having taken up the position of subjection and relative inferiority to the Father, He is in keeping with it. 162

It suits his denial of the eternal relationships to try to get the reader to think that it was the Son’s “choice” that is spoken of, not His power. Well, it is not a matter of either choice or power. JT has kept hidden the real issue. “The Son can do nothing of Himself” is a statement, not of chosing it to be so, but of inability to act otherwise than in complete unity of will with the Father. The divine Persons act in accordance with the truth respecting their distinction in Person and Their unity in will. To act from Himself independently is at once the end of the Trinity. We saw in v. 18 that His Sonship means equality with God. The equality of the Son with God involves the Son being infinite. The Son is infinite as Son.

And the Son is equal with the Father (John 5:19, 20). He who is co-equal with God is co-equal with the Father, and infinite, therefore, in relation to the Father. All of this involves the eternal Sonship and the eternal Father. “The Son can do nothing of Himself” is interwoven with all of this blessed truth.

Introducing the idea of “choice” is a deceit. “Can do nothing of himself” means that it is not possible. It would violate what God is in Trinity if the Son could do anything of Himself independently. It cannot be! It involves infinite unity of will. Moreover, what is stated as true of the Father and Son here is the stating of equality, even though the Son has come here to take a subject place in manhood.

It also shows that He is impeccable, could not sin, for that would have implicated the Father in the sin. Moreover, that also is impossible because His humanity was Holy (Luke 1:35) and in indissoluble union with the deity.

The Son Does Whatever the Father Does

This Scripture shows the Son’s competency to do all that the Father does; “whatever things he does.” Whatever! It is a divine, essential competency manifested in manhood. Every human word, work and way had a divine spring in it because of that union of the humanity and the deity. What He is as the eternal Son imparts infinite value to all wrought in manhood. The Son does nothing of Himself, i.e., independently. “Of himself” means from Himself as acting independently. What He does flows from the infinite and inscrutable unity with the Father. He does them “in like manner” with the Father. He does the same things as the Father and does them in the same manner as the Father. This involves omnipotence. We do bear in mind that this is all carried out by One who has come into a place of dependency as receiving all from the Father -- a fact that is enjoyed in our souls in our several measures, as taught by the Spirit of God, though it is unfathomable.

The Father Shows the Son All Things Which He Himself Does

Moreover, the Father shows the Son all things that He himself does (v. 20). There is not one thing that the Father does that He does not show it to the Son. And the Son does all those things that the Father shows Him (v.19). This is limitless. He “sees” whatever the Father does. This is omniscient seeing, omniscient knowledge. And there flowed from this omniscient seeing the omnipotent accomplishment. There was not one word, work or way of the Son here in

manhood that was other than the expression of the Father’s will -- what He saw the Father doing. He said:

... I do nothing of myself, but as the Father has taught me I speak these things. And he that has sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, because I do always those things that are pleasing to him (John 8:28, 29).

He did always those things that pleased the Father. All that the Son is gave character to all that the Son did and said. It all had as its value the infinite value and glory of His Person. So was it the case with His death. He became man in order to die. It was a human death. But what, I ask your soul, reader, was the value of that death? How did that human death infinitely glorify God in His nature? How did His work on the cross render a complete satisfaction to God for the outrage of sin against His nature and His majesty? The answer is that it was the value and glory of the Person of the Son that imparted its value and glory to the atoning sufferings, atoning death and atoning bloodshedding on the cross. The cloud of the incense that rose up from the coals of the altar met the cloud that was between the cherubim upon the mercy seat (Lev. 16). It was infinite glory meeting infinite glory!

So full and complete is this infinite relationship that the converse, of knowing the Son involving knowing the Father, must be true also:

He that hates me hates also my Father . . . but now they have both seen and hated both me and my Father (John 15:23, 24).

The Father Loves the Son

“For the Father loves the Son and shows him all things which he himself does.”

The Father loves the Son and has given all things [to be] in his hand (John 3:35; cp. 17:2, 6; etc.). But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father has commanded me, thus I do (John 14:31). As the Father has loved me, I also have loved you: abide in my love (John 15:9).

. . . that the world may know that [thou] hast loved them as thou hast loved me (John 17:23).

A new commandment I give to you, that ye love one another, as I have loved you, that ye love one another (John 13:34).

W. J. Lowe has some helpful remarks concerning the subject of love in John:

It has been noticed by Mr. Darby that the love wherewith we are loved by the Father (John 14-17), is that of which the blessed Lord was the object as the Son, not in His own essential eternal Sonship, but as manifested in this world, the Word made flesh. It is no question whatever of the distinction sought to be made by some between the nature of the love and the character of its manifestation: it is the love itself we have, in its own blessedness, manifested in the Person of Christ dwelling amongst us. So it is evidently, in John 15:9, where Christ is “the true vine” upon this earth. It has been a great delight to me, in going over the Gospel of John, to see this observation abundantly confirmed, and I would draw especial attention to it, noticing how the Lord’s being sent of the Father is regularly presented in these passages; John 1:14 with 18; 3:34 with 35; 14:21 with 15:10; 16:27, 28; 17:23. In verse 26, the Lord speaks of the love of the Father to Himself being in us. This keeps us from self-occupation, even as to being loved of the Father; and, as the Lord shows, is inseparable from His revelation to us of the Father’s name. It is the love of which He is the object, and He being in us, we partake of it in the way in which He enjoyed it as Man. Blessed indeed is this! May we be so kept in the communion and enjoyment of it, as to manifest practically Christ “in us”!

The observation above referred to was sent to me by another, and is so interesting that I have ventured to add it here textually:

It does not say, “as the Father loved them,” but “as he loved me” (as a man); for however Christ may bring us into the same place with Himself, if we elevate ourselves to an equality with Christ, immediately we shall be above Him; and it is ever the case that the more a saint enters into His elevation, as being brought into the same place with Christ, the more he adores Christ as God over all blessed for evermore (Collected Writings, vol. 17, p. 418 [p. 292, new ed.]).

Allow me to add one correction of a thought fundamentally just, and one correction of an error of expression or copy. The latter is in page 418. Read, “It does not say, ‘as the Father loves me,’ but, ‘as he loved me.’” That is, it is not the infinite and eternal delight, but the Father’s love to Christ, as one walking down here (Ibid. p. 430; p. 300, new ed.).

“The Father loveth the Son, and showeth him all things that himself doeth.” The word for “loveth” here, is not however the same in the original as that used in John 3:35; 13:1; &c. Here, in John 5:20, the word is the same as in John 11:3, 36; the one Peter uses three times over in John 21:15-17, and which is rendered, in the New Version {JND}, “attached to” in John 20:2, “has affection for” in John 16:27. (Matt. 26:48, &c. “kiss.”) It refers to external manifestation of love, rather than to its divine source, and carries with it the affection expressed in a “kiss” (1 Pet. 5:14), -- in paternal or filial love (Matt. 10:37), and in “brotherly love,” as, for example, in Rom. 12:10; 2 Pet. 1:7. The exquisite beauty of the difference in the two passages of John is very marked. John 3:35 is the source and effect of the Father’s purpose: He has given all things into the Son’s hand. In John 5:21, we find the details of His ways, for “the Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do; for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.” It is for our souls to appreciate and enjoy this. We can only now just notify it in passing.

163 Life and Propitiation, p. 67n.
Chapter 9: The Son Came Out from the Father and Does Whatever He Sees the Father Do

164.  *Life and Propitiation*, p. 64n.
Chapter 10: The Father Sent the Son

The Father Sent the Son

If “Sent” Implies Inferiority of the Sent One, Then the Use of “Divine Persons,” “I,” and “Me” Undermines the Godhead

So it is written, “the Father sent the Son to be the Savior.”

If we say He were not the Son till the incarnation, then do I utterly lose the link of connection of His being sent from above, for then were it only after he was a Man in the world that He was sent about as a Man, but no, He was sent into the world -- not to multiply passages, which are innumerable, for our connection with God hangs on it.

(Miscellaneous Writings of J. N. D. 4:267).

The Use of These Words

Earlier we saw that the idea applied to the Godhead, that one who is sent is necessarily inferior to the one who sends, would make the Spirit of God, who remained in the form of God, and was sent, inferior as a divine Person. The fact that He remained in the form of God, 165 and yet was sent, actually disproves the contention that the sent one must be inferior. And therefore this shows that the Father sending the Son is not necessarily a temporal sending, a sending that took place on our side of the incarnation. The objection is that “father” implies priority and “son” implies inferiority (obviously not always true) in human matters and this must be true of the Father and the Son -- and therefore cannot be true in the Godhead. This reasoning from the human to the divine is essential to the system. It results in making a god in man’s image.

The Use of the Word “Person.” Before we proceed, let us observe the hypocrisy of this evil assertion that a divine Person, the Father, sending another divine Person, would involve that sent Person being inferior in the Godhead. These objectors to the eternal relationships continue to use the expression “divine Persons.” In keeping with how they reason from the words “father and son,” their use of “divine Persons” results in projecting human limitation into the Godhead.

We speak of human beings as “persons.” How, then, call divine Persons “persons” -- since the Three are one God -- whereas to be a person makes one separate from another person? Note well, in keeping with this system of reasoning from the human, their use of “divine Persons” actually destroys the Trinity and for all practical purposes, results in Tritheism, spite of protests that they do not subscribe to Tritheism. Now, I have no objection to the expression “divine Person,” but I protest against the use of it by these objectors -- because they are, in effect, by their system, doing to the divine Persons what they accuse those of doing who hold to the eternal relationships in the Godhead; namely, they are limiting the divine Persons and undermining the Trinity because their rationalistic system results in this: that the word “person” as applied to the Father, Son, and Spirit limits Them to something that they are not, namely, independent Persons. The word Person, in this system, must necessarily limit God to my manner of being as a person, independent of other persons -- just as, they claim, that Father and Son must reflect the human manner of being, and so it could not be an eternal relationship!

Moreover, it follows from this rationalistic system that the divine Persons could not be eternal Persons, but could, at most, have become Persons consequent upon the incarnation. After all, they are limiting what God is by what is human; and to answer to the word “person,” with all its limitations, They must be temporal Persons, having become Persons in time. In answering F. W. Newman’s Phases of Faith, J. N. Darby, in his Irrationalism of Infidelity replied:

Having the unity of the Godhead constantly asserted in Scripture, the manner of the divine existence is the

165. The explanation that the Spirit took a place “patterned” after the place Christ took is merely verbiage to try to cover over this fatal flaw in the evil system. Christ took the form of man. The Spirit did not do so, yet He was sent. Of Him who was in the form of God it is stated:

But when he is come, the Spirit of truth, he shall guide you into all the truth: for he shall not speak from himself; but whatsoever he shall hear that shall he also speak (John 16:13).

Neither did the Son speak of (from) Himself when here (John 3:34, etc.).
subject of mere revelation. There I find the Holy Ghost wills and distributes; the Father sends; the Son is sent; and yet He and the Father are one. I find that the “Word is God,” that the Son is “the true God,” that “all things were created by him.” If it is said of the Holy Ghost, “All these worketh that one and self-same Spirit,” I read in the same passage, “It is the same God that worketh all in all.” Now, I have no better word than “person” for one who is sent, who wills, who distributes, who sends, and so on. It cannot give me that circumscribed idea of “person” which the word applied to man does (for then one existence excludes another); but I have no reason whatever to impose the limits of the manner of my being on God’s, but rather the contrary. 166

Yes; and we have no reason whatever to impose the limits of our “circumscribed idea” of the father and son relationship on divine relationships, but rather the contrary! The divine, eternal relationship of Father and Son ‘cannot give me that circumscribed idea of human father and son for one who is sent, . . . who sends, and so on.” 167 The same spirit of rationalism at work in F. W. Newman is at work in the objectors to the eternal relationships -- who also hypocritically refer to “divine Persons.” The truth is that these objectors make their minds the measure of God and create an idol.

Thou, F. E. Raven, Thoughtest that I Was Altogether Such a One as Thyself. The following stricture by J. N. Darby on F. W. Newman has an application to these objectors:

"Argumentatively, it is an absurdity to make man’s mind the measure of God.

Morally, it is a horrible iniquity as well as a folly.

But perhaps the reader will consider it unjust in argument, and even morally, to impute to Mr. N. such a thought, as that which the Psalmist, whose pietie he admires, puts into the mouth of God, being inspired so to do, as a charge against the wicked, “Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such a one as thyself.” 168"

No, we do not consider it unjust in argument. These objectors impose limitations on God by making their minds the measure of what God is:

"Effectively, if my mind is superior to the object it is exercised upon, it cannot have, morally, authority over me.” 169"

And so the true, divine relationships have no moral authority over these objectors.

The Use of the Word “I.” Before passing on we must observe the use of the word “I” and its relationship to what is said above regarding the use of the word person concerning the Trinity:

Even if I take the conscious “I” as marking knowledge of a person, I have no objection to its use as regards the Trinity in speaking of human language. For why -- because the conscious “I” in man supposes distinctness from any other “I” -- should the divine consciousness be a human one? Why not the consciousness of subsisting in unity -- not ours? We cannot conceive it by our minds so as to explain it in language, but yet can recognize as truth undoubtedly “I and the Father are one.” We apprehend it not by thought, but by the Spirit. He “hath given us an understanding that we should know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.” The perfect revelation of God in Christ is the strongest proof that limited existence to our minds (or the contrary) has nothing to do with the perfect revelation and knowledge of God. 170

So the Son’s use of the word “I” cannot be limited to the human use of the word. This is also true regarding the relationship of Father and Son. We must not limit the divine relationships to the human usage. Also observe that the Father, who was in the form of God, used the word “I” (Luke 3:22). What is said above about “I” also applies to “my” and “me.” Concerning the Spirit, who was in the form of God, we read:

"The Spirit said, Separate me now Barnabbas and Saul for the work to which I have called them (Acts 13:2)."

These words, “I” and “me,” cannot be limited to their human use in connection with divine Persons. But the minds of these objectors to the eternal relationships are superior to such relationships and they have removed them from the inscrutable to the scrutiny of their minds by imposing the human on their use concerning divine Persons; for they wish to apprehend by thought, and not by the Spirit, though they claim that what they hold, which is really blasphemy, is from the Spirit’s teaching. Let them, then, at least give up using the words “person” and “I” and “me” concerning divine Persons. I trust that the more we consider these things the more the reader will see the inconsistency, absurdity, arrogance, and wickedness of the objections to the eternal relationships. Indeed, their teaching is an assault on the Godhead. W. Kelly was surely right that F. E. Raven had a mission from an opposing and evil spirit.

166. Collected Writings of J. N. Darby 6:46. See also 10:1 and 25:247.
167. This is not to say that the human relationship may not be used to illustrate a divine truth.
169. Collected Writings of J. N. Darby 6:34.
170. Collected Writings of J. N. Darby 32:47.
The Father Sent the Son

He that has received his testimony has set to his seal that God is true; for he whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God gives not the Spirit by measure (John 3:34).

And this is the eternal life, that they should know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent (John 17:3).

... I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom ye do not know (John 7:28).

... for neither am I come of myself, but he has sent me (John 8:42).

I came out from God. I came out from the Father and have come into the world (John 16:28).

Herein as to us has been manifested the love of God, that God has sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be a propitiation for our sins (1 John 4:9, 10).

And we have seen, and testify, that the Father has sent the Son [as] savior of the world (1 John 4:14).

But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, come of a woman (Gal. 4:4).


When Was the Son Sent?

In connection with the sending of the Son there is a particular scripture that is used in objecting to the sending occurring before the incarnation:

... him whom the Father has sanctified and sent into the world (John 10:36).

C. A. Coates wrote:

It will be obvious to any careful reader that Scripture does not speak of the Lord as “sent” until He was actually here. Scripture particularly connects the thought of His being “sent” with His anointing. “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach glad tidings to the poor; he has sent me to preach” (Luke 4:18). This is the order, “anointed” and “sent”; and it corresponds with the “sanctified and sent into the world” of John 10:36. JT connected the sending with the taking of the bondman’s form but places the starting point as does CAC above.

According to CAC, J. N. Darby must not have been a careful reader, for he wrote:

“The Father sent the Son to be the savior of the world.” He did not send an idea merely. There was a living Person there who said He was sent. Nor was it merely when in this world, that He was sent for He says: “I came forth from the Father, and came into the world; and again I leave the world and go to the Father.” “Glorify Thou me with Thine own self, with the glory I had with Thee before the world was.” “Lo! I come in the volume of the book it is written of me, to do thy will, O God.” Here we have a Person, an “I” who has an intention, a purpose, and comes to fulfill it. Again “For I came not to do mine own will, but the will of him who sent me.”

The truth is that it was in glory that He was sent in accordance with God’s purpose in grace. His being sent to preach is but a part of the great sending of the Son from heaven into the world. At His baptism He was sanctified, or set apart, to preach, to enter upon His public service, to publicly take the place of the sent One, though He was previously the sent One.

In an 1881 letter, in answer to the question, “In what sense is the term ‘sanctified’ used in John 10:36? Why does it precede the sending into the world?” JND replied:

My impression, for it is not the result of theological examination, is that the Lord God speaks of Christ’s mission as a whole from the time it was said (if time it can be called) “a body hast thou prepared me” till the service was accomplished. He sent that blessed Person with the whole scene before Him into the world; but the actual sending, down here when a man in the world, was from the Holy Ghost coming upon Him when He returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee. With quite another object in view the two steps are in Philippians 2, “emptied himself,” and, being a man, “humbled himself.” So God prepared a body for Him (dug ears for Him); and then, though Son all the while as when twelve years of age, He was sent out as man set apart to bear the witness He was sent for. God had created the world Him, He will judge the world by Him. But here He is looked at as sent into the world for service; and His whole Person, Son of God and man, is in view as one whole in service. He took the form of a servant. “Lo, I come to do thy will.” The sanctifying was the appropriating -- setting apart -- this Person to the

171. The Personal and Mediatorial Glory of the Son of God, p. 4.


Part 1: The Eternal Relationships in the Godhead

humble, in one sense, but glorious service which Christ performed, though service He never gives up. The Father set apart this Person for this service -- did so in preparing a body -- did so in incarnation, and did so in anointing and sealing when the opportune time was come. He was sent into the world, so actually set apart in Matthew 3, 4, He could not have been actually then if not in God’s mind and by incarnation before. 175

And, finally, concerning John 10:36, we may say that it is part, at least, of what is meant in John 10:2, entering by the door.

In Gal. 4:4 we read:

But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, come of a woman, come under law. The fact is that the order is stated sequentially:

- sent forth by God,
- come of a woman,
- come under law, for He was circumcised on the eighth day after He was born.

Son of God eternally, “the Son of God has been manifested” (1 John 3:8). He was manifested from being hidden in the unrevealed Trinity; though when He took His public place at His baptism (identifying Himself with the godly remnant), the Spirit came down upon Him and the Father spoke from heaven. There we have the Trinity. Observe that the Spirit had not yet been sent when He came upon the Lord. The Spirit likewise was sent from heaven, at Pentecost, as the Son had been sent from above:

. . . by [the] Holy Spirit, sent from heaven (1 Peter 1:12).

It is not incumbent on us to be able to explain how a divine Person, who is equal among divine Persons, can be sent, without that implying subordination in deity. It is incumbent on us to receive 1 Pet. 1:12 by faith.

The Spirit is called the Spirit of God at Christ’s baptism (Matt. 3:16) and the Holy Spirit (Luke 3:22). John had been told by God, “upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending” (John 1:33). The Spirit was not “sent,” however, until the Lord was glorified (John 7:39; Acts 2:32, 33).

The Spirit always abode in the form of God. At the Lord’s baptism, He, in the form of God, before being sent, we see His name is the Spirit. There was no point at which He became the Spirit. The Spirit’s actions before having been sent, and being named the Spirit, has, of course, all been necessarily explained away.

Heb. 10:5, 6 points to something that refers to the Son before He took the form of a servant.

But again, I do not admit that He came merely as man. He undertook to come and do this will of God, a place of distinct service. “Mine ears hast thou opened” (“dugged” in margin); Psa. 40:6. He undertook the service freely, and God prepared a body for Him. “He wakeneth mine ear to hear” as the learned, “the Lord God hath opened mine ear,” that is, to learn down here; Isa. 50:4, 5. God formed the place of service, and prepared a body, and Christ says, “Lo, I come to do thy will, O God.” We hear of the undertaking to come when the body was only prepared; He comes to take it and became flesh. Then His ears were opened morning by morning, and finally according to Ex. 21:6, as He who had completed His full service, loving the One whose due service He had performed, His wife, His children, in death He became a servant for ever. Compare John 13. His present place, and Luke 12 when He comes and takes those who watch for Him to Himself. I came forth from the Father, and came into the world. 176 ◆

And observe it is the Son, as before His incarnation, who says, “Ears hast thou digged for me,” and accordingly it was in His incarnation He took on Him the form of a Servant . . . 177 ◆

There was a living Person there who said He was sent. Nor was it merely when in this world, that He was sent for He says: “I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world; and again I leave the world and go to the Father.” 178 ◆

Tritheism

These evil teachers reject the idea that they are Triteists -- which means the existence of three co-equal and co-eternal Gods, an absurdity of course, as involving three infinite beings each having infinite power. However, in spite of the denial, the teaching that denies eternal relationships results in Tritheism. Let us hear several statements from C. A. Coates:

The Persons of the Godhead are eternally the Same, though in Divine wisdom they may be known now by Names which did not even apply in Old Testament times. And if they did not apply in Old Testament times, how can we say that they applied eternally when there was no revelation at all? The fact is that we only know divine Persons as and when they are made known to us, and we speak of Them as we know Them. Divine Persons knew each Other and loved each Other eternally; this has been made known. But names of revelation were certainly not needed within the sphere of Deity. That is a region

176. Collected Writings 25:292. See also 33:277.
177. Notes and Comments 4:49.
utterly beyond creature apprehension . . . 179 ✔

On page 20 Mr. P {A. J. Pollock} says that a certain quoted statement “implies that there is no revelation of any ‘relative positions’ between Divine Persons.” The statement says no such thing. It deprecates that in speaking of the first, second, or third Persons of the Trinity it should be implied that “in eternity, or in the Deity as such, there could be any such relative positions. Each Person of the deity, as we say, is co-equal, co-eternal, co-existent, albeit distinct. The reader will judge whether Mr. P. is justified in his remark. 180 ✔

Note well the technique of dealing with what is supposed to be the truth of God. In the second quotation he is complaining about being misrepresented and italicized the word such. Mr. P. said that a statement implied no relative position. Not so, said CAC, I referred to first, second, and third Person -- there is no such relative position. However, CAC has not told us that there are other relative positions; nay, he denies that there are. Thus, I conclude that what he responded to Mr. P. is merely a polemical ploy.

As we examine CAC’s teaching we notice that it is consistent with Tritheism in spite of any denial of holding Tritheism. His teaching cannot guard against it.

In just the place to state where the Scripture teaches the Trinity, JT did not state it:

This page asks, “Have they also dropped the Triune God, the Trinity, because the term is not in our bibles?” The answer is that the Trinity is formally stated in our bibles to exist and so true Christians believe it; eternal sonship is not. 181 ✔

What the communications were between divine Persons were, who can say? 182 ✔

He did not refer to any text. Perhaps we could substitute Tri-Gods for Trinity in that statement. And what the three Gods said to each other, who can say? Who then can say that they are not, after all, three Gods?

In 1 Cor. 8:6 we read:

. . . yet to us [there] is one God, the Father, of whom all things, and we for him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom [are] all things, and we by him.

This is easily dismissed by JT:

The question as to “One God the Father” is answered by the remark that the apostle is speaking of the economy into which divine Persons have been pleased to come -- Father, Son and Holy Spirit. 183

This flippant remark is not at all true to the text. JND wrote:

The apostle does not here treat the abstract question of the Lord’s divinity, but the connection of men with what was above them in certain relationships. Pagans had many gods, and many lords, intermediate beings. Not so Christians. For them is the Father abiding in the absoluteness of the divinity, and Christ who, become man, has taken the place and the relationship of Lord toward us. 184

182. Letters 1:345.
Chapter 11

The Father, the Son, and We

Oneness of the Father and the Son; and the Father Greater than the Son

The Son Took the Place of Receiving All From the Father

J. N. Darby remarked:

But having taken the form of a servant, He does not leave it, and whilst declaring Himself one with the Father (for before Abraham was He was the “I AM”), He receives all, in the position He has taken, in these operations of grace, and in their fruits in glory, from the Father’s hand. This is striking in this Gospel [John], where the divine side of His Person is more fully brought out than in the others, although it be not more definitely affirmed. We find constantly that when He speaks of being on the same footing as His Father, He places Himself, nevertheless, ever upon the ground of receiving all from Him. 185

... but no man can fathom the Son [inscrutable] but the Father. “Son” is that being who was in the form of God, Christ, who “made himself of no reputation, and took upon himself the form of a servant” and so on; but if you ask how God can be a servant, you plunge yourself into difficulty by getting into the reasonings of men. 186

This last is what the men of Bethshemesh did with the Ark of the Covenant. Worse still is done by their modern counterparts who deny the eternal relationships so as to move relationships into the arena of the scrutable, making them subject to the measure of their minds; and at the same time pretending that this is reverent and God-glorifying. It is important, then, to see that the Father is God as the Father; and so is the case with the Son. He is God as the Son. The Spirit is also, of course, God as the Spirit. The relationships are divine, essential, eternal. There is something very wrong in the soul that professes to love the Son but denies this essential and fundamental truth. We learn these things in communion with the Father and the Son by the Spirit’s work within us; for it is His work in us to take of the things of Christ and show them to us.

I and the Father Are One

My Father who has given [them] to me is greater than all, and no one can seize them out of the hand of my Father.

The Jews answered him, For a good work we stone thee not, but for blasphemy, and because thou, being a man, makest thyself God (John 10:29-33).

The Jews understood this to mean equality with God. They were quite right. W. Kelly remarked:

Indeed, the Son and the Father are one, not one Person (which ἕν, with every other Scripture bearing on it refutes), but one thing, ἕν, {neuter} one Divine nature or essence (as other Scriptures equally prove). 187

And JND remarked:

“I and my Father are one”; no doubt in the mysterious unity of the Deity they are one, but there are two who are so. 188

Unitarianism is at war with the fact. The Father and the Son, though distinct in Person, are one in the divine essence; and, though one in the divine essence, are distinct in Person, contrary to the Sabellians.

The sheep cannot be seized out of the hand of the Son (v. 28) nor out of the hand of the Father who gave the sheep to the Son (v. 29). Though He is the “I am,” one with the Father, we see Him here, once again, acting as receiving all from the Father -- the sheep being given to Him by the Father. The Son’s glory, as one with the Father, is connected with the security of the sheep. The Son’s hands are seen in John as upholding the glory of God -- a thing that only One who is God can do. He keeps the sheep as well as the Father keeping them. We are “kept guarded by the power of God for salvation ready to be revealed” (1 Pet. 1:5). The Son is one in power with the Father and the Spirit. Of course, when He was here in manhood He upheld all things by the word of His power (Heb. 1:3), for all

185. Collected Writings of J. N. Darby 33:175.
188. Notes and Comments 2:281.
subsists through Him (Col. 1:17), though He be the babe in the manger.

The words of the Son are not the words of a creature but the words of God. There are not, cannot be, two (or three) independent, omnipotent beings. God is a Trinity of Father, Son and Spirit.

. . . that ye may know [and believe] that the Father is in me and I in him (John 10:38).

My Father Is Greater Than I

If ye loved me ye would rejoice that I go to the Father, for [my] Father is greater than I (John 14:28).

The Lord is speaking here in accordance with the station He took when He took the form of a servant. He had been in the form of God; as such, one in essence with the Father and the Spirit -- and, of course, that oneness in essence was never broken. That could not cease, though He took the form of a servant. W. Kelly commented:

Where would be the sense of any other man (and man He surely was and is) saying, “My Father is greater than I”? A strange piece of information in the mouth (I will not say of a Socrates or a Bacon merely, but) of a Moses or a Daniel, a Peter or a Paul; but in Him, how suitable and even needful, yet only so because He was truly God and equal with the Father, as He was man, the sent One, and so the Father was greater than He!189

His going to the Father involved the Father’s glorification of Him as man (John 17:5). He did not glorify Himself but asks the Father for that glory and as man receives it from the Father. These things are in keeping with His place in manhood.190

The Father in Him and He in the Father

. . . believe the works, that ye may know [and believe] that the Father is in me and I in him (John 10:28).

He that has seen me has seen the Father; and how sayest thou, “I believe the works of God. Those things are in keeping with His place in manhood.

My Father Is Greater Than I

If ye loved me ye would rejoice that I go to the Father, for [my] Father is greater than I (John 14:28).

The Lord is speaking here in accordance with the station He took when He took the form of a servant. He had been in the form of God; as such, one in essence with the Father and the Spirit -- and, of course, that oneness in essence was never broken. That could not cease, though He took the form of a servant. W. Kelly commented:

Where would be the sense of any other man (and man He surely was and is) saying, “My Father is greater than I”? A strange piece of information in the mouth (I will not say of a Socrates or a Bacon merely, but) of a Moses or a Daniel, a Peter or a Paul; but in Him, how suitable and even needful, yet only so because He was truly God and equal with the Father, as He was man, the sent One, and so the Father was greater than He!189

His going to the Father involved the Father’s glorification of Him as man (John 17:5). He did not glorify Himself but asks the Father for that glory and as man receives it from the Father. These things are in keeping with His place in manhood.190

The Father in Him and He in the Father

. . . believe the works, that ye may know [and believe] that the Father is in me and I in him (John 10:28).

He that has seen me has seen the Father; and how sayest thou, “I believe the works of God. Those things are in keeping with His place in manhood.

The Son Given to Have Life in Himself

For even as the Father has life in Himself, so has He given to the Son to have life in himself . . . (John 5:26).

This must not be confused with John 1:4 were we see that He had life in Himself. There, life speaks of what was in Him eternally as God. John 5:26 does not mean that the Son in the Godhead from all eternity was given life from the Father. No, it is as in the form of man here below, carrying out the will of Him who sent the Son. It was given Him to have life in Himself, as man, and having died, He took it again in resurrection. As to the life of the believer now, we have eternal life in the Son in connection with His risen manhood, as grains on the risen stalk; for had He not died He would have abode alone (John 12:24). As man risen from the dead, He is the source of our life. It is His resurrection-life. He gave the born-again disciples this character to the life from God that they already had, when He rose from the dead (John 20:22). When He rose from the dead, He was by the act the head of the new creation. “The beginning of the creation of God” in Rev. 3:14 refers to this. It had not existed before.

I Live on Account of the Father

John 6:57 is connected with the subject of eating the flesh of the Son of man, and drinking His blood. It has been truly said that life feeds on death. John 6:53 refers to the initial eating and John 6:56 to continuous eating. Of course, this does not refer to the Lord’s supper 191 (which points to that death) -- for then no one who died without partaking of the supper would have divine life in him; nor would he be raised from the dead (v. 54). The bread is His flesh given in death (v. 51) and we feed on this by faith. This has the communication of eternal life in view (v. 54).

The Father is spoken of here as “the living Father” for life is the subject.

As the living Father has sent me and I live on account of the Father, he also who eats me shall live on account of me. (John 6:57).

There is a footnote in JND’s translation which reads:

191. See W. Kelly, Exposition of the Gospel of John, in loco, for an excellent rebuttal to the idea that the Lord’s supper is meant.
Dia with the accusative is not simply ‘by’ or ‘through,’ and here it is evident that it is important to be accurate. The sense is ‘by reason of what the Father is and his living’ I live by reason of his being and living.

As the Son, in manhood, lived by reason of the Father’s being and living, so the believer, feeding on Christ’s flesh and blood, lives by reason of Christ’s being and living. We need to feed on Him to live. Ours is eternal life in the Son; for the grain of wheat fell into the ground and died, and thus on the risen stalk are many grains forming one plant with Him (see John 12:24). It is life in abundance (John 10:10). And it is through the One sent by the living Father that the Father has manifested Himself now, as was not so in OT times, nor could be. For we know the Father in accordance with the character of the association of life in the Son: “ye in me, and I in you.” How clear it is in God’s Word that OT saints did not have that association of life (though, of course, they were born again); for the Son Himself declared that the grain of wheat must first die, else it abode alone. Moreover, all of this also involves the presence of the Spirit in the believer (John 7:38, 39) as the One by whom this is brought about (John 20:17-22).

Concerning the Lord’s death in John’s gospel, W. J. Lowe wrote:

It is the food of life in John 6, without which “life” cannot exist; “whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day” (vers. 53, 54). Without it (in John 12), the corn of wheat abides alone. It is the proof before the world of the Lord’s love to the Father, the perfection of His obedience (John 14:30, 31); as of His love for “his friends” in John 15. It was to gather together in one the children of God scattered abroad (John 11:52), and to be the perfect example for these, as serving Him in their walk through this world even to the place where He now is (John 12:24-26). It was in death that He could bow His head and say, “It is finished,” and present to His Father, as absolutely complete, the work He had given Him to do (John 17:4; 19:30): here, as nowhere else, is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in Him; and the immediate answer to it is His being set as man in the glory with the Father, the glory He had with Him before the world was (John 13:31, 32; 17:4, 5). 192

Ye in Me and I in You

In that day ye shall know that I [am] in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you (John 14:20).

Hereby we know that we abide in him and he in us, that he has given to us of his Spirit (1 John 4:13).

John 14:20 looks forward to the time of His absence, the time of the giving of the Spirit as the Spirit of sonship (i.e., now). He had already told the disciples that He was in the Father while here with them. John 14:20 says, “in that day,” i.e., the time when the Spirit would be here as sent and as the Spirit of sonship, then they would know. They would have the consciousness of these things. Let us remember that the Father sent the Spirit (John 14:16, 26) that we might know. consciously know, that we are in the Son and He in us, and we before the Father in all this blessedness. The point is that we being in Him and He in us brings us into the knowledge of the Father in whom He is. We have oneness of life with Him, being one plant with Him as the grains in the risen stalk (John 12:24; 20:22). While we have the divine nature, we do not participate in deity, and never will.

Scripture says of eternal life, that this life is in His Son (1 John 5:11). And he who has the Son has life (John 3:36). We are in Him by Himself being our life; and from this immense fact flows the character of our blessedness, our place, and inheritance. We receive with Him what He has as man. And He is above, before the Father, and we are in Him there.

“Ye in me, and I in you” is known by us through the indwelling of the Spirit. We have the Spirit of Sonship whereby we cry “Abba, Father” (Gal. 4:6).

He that eats my flesh and drinks my blood dwells in me and I in him (John 6:56).

The Three Unities in John 17

It has been observed that there are three unities spoken of in John 17.

❖ The first unity is that of the apostles.

. . . that they may be one as we (John 17:11).

The unity of the apostles was unity by the power of thought and work of the Holy Ghost. They were identical in counsels and purposes, being entirely under the Holy Ghost, they were of one mind, and it was one thing. 191

This explains the words “as we”; as the Father and Son are one in purpose, one in mind, one in affection. It does not refer to the unity of divine essence.

❖ The second unity refers to those that believe throughout the time until the church is in glory, believing through the apostolic testimony (John 17:20, 21). That unity has not been displayed except at the beginning of the church’s history.

. . . that they may all be one, as thou, Father, [art] in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

This is not “as we” but “in us,” the unity of communion. The saints were to express unity in

192. Life and Propitiation, p. 65n.

communion/fellowship, as we have it in 1 John 1:1-4:

... that ye also may have fellowship with us; and our fellowship [is] indeed with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.

It is as having eternal life in the Son that there is capability of enjoying and expressing the communion that flows from having it. The subject, again, is not the unity of the divine essence, but rather participation in communion that flows from the Son having revealed the Father, and the Father loving and delighting in the Son.

It would evidence that the Father had sent the Son. We have been brought to share in the blessedness of this.

“...that the world may believe” has not happened.

Neither has this unity of believers continued in expression, though, of course, no divinely established, spiritual link can be broken. But there is a future unity that will be displayed when divine power acts in connection with the manifestation of Christ, for then will be manifested with Him in glory (Col. 3:4). You will notice in that Scripture that it speaks of Christ as our life. Then will the perfection of the communion flowing from that life be displayed in glory.

The third unity, then, is future, in glory, when we will be perfected into one:

And the glory which thou hast given me I have given them, that they may be one, as we are one; I in them and thou in me, that they may be perfected into one [and] that the world may know that thou hast sent me... (John 17:21-23).

In connection with the unity that was to be shown now, we read, “that the world may believe.” Regarding the future, we read, “that the world may know.” The visible display of glory will make it known that the Father sent the Son, though rejected when He came. There can be no failure in this as there has been in exhibiting the second unity. The glory given by the Father to the Son is the glory that He gives us (Col. 3:4). We will be one with Him in that given glory. And in this glory, the second unity, the unity of communion, is perfectly expressed. Indeed, the prayer of the Son regarding all three unities will be fully displayed in the day of glory, for how could the Father not grant this?

**Dwelling in God**

Our dwelling in God and He in us does not indicate a participation in deity. Concerning what this means, J. N. Darby remarked:

“He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.”

If I have it not, I do not know Him, because that is what He is. It is an immense truth, as regards the saints, that I know God. I have got the nature that enjoys God: and that is what our everlasting enjoyment will be.

“In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.” The apostle turns outside to get the proofs of this love. He is not looking inwards, as others do. “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us.” If I want to know divine love, God’s love, I do not look within; because “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” There is another thing here which shows the perfectness of this love -- it had no motive. It is what God was. ‘If we love them that love us, what reward have we?’ The manifestation of this love has a double character here. First, the Son is sent to be the propitiation for our sins; He loved us when we were guilty and defiled. “God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son,” etc.

God’s love to us has its proof in this -- when there was nothing at all in us to bring -- when there was not a movement in us towards God, there was in God towards us. We had no spiritual life, but we were guilty, looked at as born of Adam. Therefore this love is a perfect love. It has no motive in us, and, therefore, is perfect in itself; and it is exercised towards us according to our need. Here we have the proof of this love. “Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.”

Now we come to another thing. It is God Himself present. Not merely have I got the divine nature, but God is present in a very remarkable way. “No man hath seen God at any time.” How can I know and love a being that I have never seen? If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. The Apostle Paul expresses it in a different way. “The love of God,” he says, “is shed abroad in our hearts.” Now, what makes it so remarkable here? If we look at John 1:18, it is said there, “No man hath seen God at any time.” How can I know and love a person I have never seen? The only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him. That is, in the Gospel, which is to bring Christ before us, I find the sense to be this: Well, you have not seen God, and yet you have; because He who was the very delight of the Father, who is in the bosom of the Father, the immediate and closest object of the Father’s delight, He has declared Him. Therefore I do know Him. It is the answer to the difficulty, that no man ever saw God. Christ has made Him known to me. Here, in the Epistle, it is, “no man hath seen God at any time.” How can I love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us? That which is revealed in Christ is brought directly into our own hearts, because the Holy Ghost is in us. When Christ was in the world, it was the Son casting out devils and doing mighty works. And yet He said, “The Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.” Now, by the Spirit, He says, “We will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” He makes God dwelling in us the answer here to not seeing God; as Christ being in the world was then the answer to not seeing God. Having
Chapter 11: The Father, The Son, and We

washed us in the blood of the Lamb, He comes and dwell in us. We have a knowledge of God in that way. “If we love one another, God dwellethe in us, and his love is perfected in us.” It is not merely that the nature is there, but God is there. “Hereby know we that we dwell in him and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.” This is the way we have the consciousness that we dwell in God, because, as God dwells in us, and He is infinite, we have the consciousness of dwelling in God. He is our home: we dwell in Him. He is our abode. It is the presence of the Holy Ghost that gives the consciousness of God’s being there.

Note as to dwelling in God and God in us, we have it presented in a triple way, and inverse order. First, when the great truth of God’s dwelling in us is presented, of which the consequence is that we dwell in Him; thus, “Hereby we know that he abides in us by the Spirit which he has given to us,” and again, “Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwells in him and he in God.” The latter being the consequence of the former. Now the consequence of God dwelling in us is that we dwell in Him. He is our dwelling place, in heart, we are sheltered, protected, at home in God. We abide there as our hiding place and perfect joy. But thus we realize the spirit and power of that in which we dwell, and this realization gives an active, living character to the dwelling of God in us, so that we are said to dwell in Him first in this case, and He in us because this last is in power and grace. Hence it is said: “If we love one another, God dwells in us, and his love is perfected in us.” “Hereby we know that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit,” and “He who dwells in love dwells in God and God in him.” He abides in this power and source of joy and blessing, and thus the power and blessing of Him in whom he dwells is reproduced in him. We have already remarked the astonishing power and reality of this truth, from the comparison of 1 John 4:12 with John 1:18. The dwelling of God in us being an answer to the difficulty of having never seen God, as to His manifestation in the only-begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, i.e., in Him in whom the whole love of the Father centers in the most intimate nearness. We may add 1 John 2:5, where observing His word, His love is perfected in us, and thus “we know” we are in Him. The fruit, by His dwelling in us in power and grace, is not followed out, but the responsibility of walking as He walked, for it is specially connected with Christ here, whose Person is identified with God in this Epistle, as manifested in Him; compare 1 John 5:10.  

195. Notes and Comments 5:201, 202. See also 6:52.
Chapter 12: The Abandonment on the Cross and Communion with the Father

The Abandonment on the Cross and Communion with the Father

The Bosom of the Father

From time to time questions arise concerning the abandonment of Christ on the cross and how this bears upon the Son’s communion with the Father. The question bears upon the relationship of the Persons of the Godhead. Now, there are several things that we must keep in mind concerning the light Scripture sheds on this.

The first point to keep in mind is that God never ceases to be God. The intra-Trinitarian relationship does not change. From everlasting to everlasting, He is God. The relationship of Father, Son and Holy Spirit has always been, and always will be; and uninterruptedly so. The abandonment on the cross did not change it. The abandonment did not mean that one divine Person in the Godhead abandoned another divine person in the Godhead so as to break up the Trinity. In John 1:18 we read:

No one has seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared [him].

“In the bosom” tells the place where the only-begotten Son dwells. It is His eternal, never-interrupted dwelling place. It never has, and never will, change. It was never interrupted; no, not even during the three hours of darkness at calvary. The “bosom of the Father” is, of course, a figure of speech; but, oh, what fullness of meaning this conveys to us concerning that inexpressible relationship. Love never had a beginning. It always existed in the Godhead in reciprocation. That is where love comes from. And the Son has divine competency to reveal that love that is in the Father’s bosom. But though the Son came here in flesh, He never left that bosom. He came from that bosom to make known what is in that bosom which He never left. And He is full of grace and truth, and of His fullness have we all received (John 1:14, 16). Think of the only-begotten Son filling that infinite bosom with the plentitude of His own fullness, with the glory and value of His own Person. And this did not cease to be true during the three hours of darkness on the cross.

Here are some helpful comments:

Here we get Christ {John 1:18} as the only-begotten Son. It is not, He was in the bosom of the Father, as though He had left it, but, “is in the bosom of the Father.” There He is even when upon earth, and even upon the Cross it was true. He was always in the nearness of intimacy indicated by the expression “is in the bosom of the Father.” On the cross He was, of course, not enjoying this relationship, but bearing wrath. The expression, “from the bosom of the Father,” is rather inexact, for Christ never left the bosom of the Father. The passage, “Son of man which is in heaven” connects the manhood with the divinity; the Son was in heaven, and that Son was a man upon the earth, therefore might it be said, “Son of man in heaven.”

On the cross, Christ was under wrath, and therefore -- although He was then doing something on account of which the Father would in a very especial sense love Him -- yet then He could not be enjoying the relationship between Him and His Father. In one sense, the Father never loved the Son so much as when He was upon the cross. This was what was in the Father’s mind, not what was in Christ’s, who could not be enjoying His relationship and drinking the cup of wrath at the same time. He gave Himself up to drink this cup. On the cross He was entirely occupied in bearing the wrath: it required a divine person to apprehend infinitely what the wrath of God was. I apprehend that at that time Christ was fully occupied with what He was bearing -- infinite pain -- which He infinitely realized. God was to be glorified on account of sin, and only such a One as He could do it. Still it is a very deep mystery, and it becomes us to be very careful in speaking about it. We find, however, that the time Christ was upon the cross was most distinctly clouded. There is a period before the three hours of darkness and a period afterwards, when Christ on the cross uses the term “Father.” He does not use it during the three hours of darkness: during this time He appears to be entirely occupied with God -- bearing wrath; everything is shut out but what was passing between Him and God. It is exceedingly terrible, this three hours of darkness. It is this terrible character of bearing wrath which makes it so dreadful to think, that {it is alleged} in His life Christ was bearing wrath. Christ sympathizes with the judgment He was bearing, that was right. See Psa 22. Christ really bore this wrath {in the three hours of darkness} before His death, and when it was all done He gave up His life. After the bitter cry -- My God, why hast thou forsaken me? -- we see Him calmly giving up His spirit to His
Father. The depth of death, looked at as the wages of sin, had been gone through during the hours of darkness. We see first, all man’s wickedness in His crucifixion fully brought out; then the darkness -- darkness and wrath -- God forsaking Him. Afterwards, having borne this wrath, He comes out and occupies Himself in fulfilling the rest of the scripture which had to be fulfilled in His death. The expression, “It is finished,” shows it, that just then He was departing because everything was done.

It was a most blessed time for Him, for the bitterness of death was past -- He was going to Paradise. He must actually die in order that the blood and water might come out for us. We never could enter into what Christ entered into upon the cross, therefore it was that He went through it for us. We have no revelation of what He passed through during the three hours of darkness: we could not understand it, it was between Him and God alone.

In John’s Gospel we never get Jesus dying, as it were, but simply going out of the world to His Father. In John we get a divine person acting for us; in the other gospels, a man suffering for us.

Glory Meeting Glory

Let us ever keep before us the great fact that every word, way and work of the Lord Jesus had a divine spring in it. This is so because of the union in Him of the human and divine -- two natures, one Person. His death was a human death, but it was not a death accomplished in independence of deity. The accomplishment of that death had a divine spring in it, which imparted to that death all the value of His Person. So was it with the atoning sufferings and the abandonment. It was as man He bore this, but not as man apart from deity. The value of His infinite Person imparted infinite value to the sufferings and abandonment. The stream of blood and water from His side has all the value of His death in it; and the death has in it all the value of His atoning sufferings and abandonment during the three hours of darkness. It is all one great whole having the infinite value of His Person. This glory is typified in Lev. 16, where the cloud of incense rose up from the incense upon the coals of fire from the altar before Jehovah -- and that cloud of the incense covered the mercy-seat which was upon the testimony (Lev. 16:12, 13). There was another cloud present upon that occasion: “for I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy seat” (Lev. 16:2). This is the Shekinah of glory bespeaking all the glory of God. What could possibly meet that glory? One has well said that righteousness can meet the claims of righteousness, but only a cloud could meet a cloud! And here two clouds met. One cloud was brought before the other. The cloud brought into the sanctuary rose up from the incense upon the burning coals. It signifies the glory of our Beloved coming up from the burning coals of Calvary before the God of glory. The rising up of His glory, so to speak, before the Shekinah of glory, and what answers to the blood sprinkled on and before the mercy-seat, all took place on the cross. The work entailed the three hours of suffering, the voluntary death, and the bloodshedding (accompanied by the water of cleansing). The blood has all the value of this work comprehended in its value -- which necessarily contains the value and glory of His Person. The blood rent the vail, so to speak. The rending of the vail, consequent upon the finishing of that work of infinite value to God, was the response of the Shekinah of glory, for God was infinitely glorified. Glory had met glory. “I have glorified thee on the earth, I have completed the work which thou gavest me that I should do it” (John 17:5). The abandonment, then, experienced as man, had a divine spring in it and had all the infinite value and glory of His Person before God.

And from the Shekinah, God looked through the cloud of incense upon the priest.

Addressing God During the Three Hours of Darkness

The other point that guides in this matter is that it was only during the three hours of darkness that Christ addressed God as “God.” During His life before the cross He always addressed Him as “Father” and, note well, during the first three hours on the cross. Moreover, having come through the three hours, He again addressed Him as “Father.” Thus we have guidance by His address, and by the three hours of darkness:

- It marks off the three hours in a special way. It is only during those three hours of darkness that He cried, “My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?” These are the hours of the atoning sufferings, sufferings that had all the value of who He was. Infinite in value and glory, this He imparted to the work wrought on calvary; because, every human word, work, and way of the Lord Jesus had a divine spring in it, and to these was imparted all of the value and glory of who He is -- because He is God and man united in one Person.
- During these three hours Christ was abandoned as the sin-bearer. After the three hours He again addressed the Father, into Whose hands He commended His spirit.

The question is, then, what is meant by the cry of being forsaken? What does it mean that He was forsaken?

We never find such a thought in scripture as the Father’s
Now I believe that there never was a time when the Father’s complacency in the Son was so great as at that solemn moment; but that is not the communion of complacency. “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” is not the enjoyment of communion. He lived in the perfect relationship in which he was, and knew that none but Himself, as Man, could go through what He had undertaken to pass through. He was still “the only-begotten which is in the bosom of the Father.” Therefore it could not be said that “the face of the Father, as the Father, was hidden from His own Son.”

Never was the unfathomable love for God and man so proved in Him as when thus bearing our judgment at God’s hand on the cross; but for that very reason it could not be a time of Christ’s enjoying the communion of His love and delight as ever before and since. This was the necessary change then.

. . . surely never so the object of God’s love as when drinking the cup, for He could say, “therefore doth my Father love me,” a word that belongs only to a divine Person, but in His own soul tasting all its bitterness undiminished by any consolation, or it would not have been absolute and complete, yet showing His perfectness as to the state of His own heart in the words “my God.”

He lived in the perfect relationship in which he was, and says, “my Father”; but on the cross, when drinking the cup of wrath, he says, “my God.” That was His perfectness; it was not the expression of his full relationship, but it was the expression of infinite suffering of infinite claim.

. . . He walks in this path of obedience to obey to the end, finding that He could not be heard until the cup, of which He had a holy fear, had been drunk; that cup that He was going to drink, in being abandoned of God in His soul, then heard, doubtless, and glorified, but after having experienced to the end what it was not to be heard.

I believe Jesus’s soul passed into peace [at the end of the three hours of darkness], that He might give up His own Spirit [sic, spirit, His human spirit] -- which no one took from Him -- to God His Father. He delivered it up, as is stated in John 19:30; He commended it into His Father’s hands (Luke 23:46). His soul, while living, had gone morally through all the full depth of the -- to us -- unfathomable suffering of the atoning work, and gave up His spirit Himself to God His Father.

The Cry of the Son of Man

Yes, God was there, not the approver of what was good only, but the Judge of all evil laid upon that blessed head. It was God forsaking the faithful obedient Servant; yet it was His God: this would -- could -- never be given up; for, on the contrary, He even then firmly holds to it, “My God, my God”; yet He has to add now, “Why hast thou forsaken me?” It was the Son of the Father, but as Son of man necessarily that He so cried out. “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” Then, and then only, did God desert His unswerving Servant, the man Christ Jesus. Nevertheless we bow before the mystery of mysteries in His person -- God manifested in flesh. Had He not been man, of what avail for us? Had He not been God, all must have failed to give to His suffering for sins the infinite worth of Himself. This is atonement. And atonement has two parts in character and range. It is expiation before God; it is also substitution for our sins (Lev. 16:7-10; Jehovah’s lot and the people’s lot), though the latter part be not so much the subject of the psalmist here {Psa. 22}, and I do not therefore dwell on it now. The ground, the most important part, of the atonement, though all be of the deepest moment, is Jehovah’s lot.

Here then we have God in His majesty and righteous judgment of evil -- God in the display of His moral being dealing with sin, where alone it could be dealt with to bring out blessing and glory, in the person of His own Son; One who could when forsaken of God, reach the lowest, but morally highest, point of glorifying God, made sin for us on the cross. It was the very perfection of His bearing sin that He should not be heard. There was the sharpest pain and anguish and bitterness of rejection; and did He not feel it? Did the glory of His person render Him incapable of suffering? The idea denies His humanity. Rather was His deity that which made Him endure and feel it most, and as none other could. “I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels. My strength is dried up like a

199. {Boldface emphasis is added throughout by the editor.}
200. G. V. Wigram in Words of Faith, 1883, p. 73.
201. Collected Writings of J. N. Darby 7:202 note.
204. J. N. Darby, Notes and Jottings, p. 242.
206. Collected Writings of J. N. Darby 15:75n. {The Lord Jesus died as an act of his own will (John 10:18). He gave up His life voluntarily.}
potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death. For dogs have compassed me; the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet. I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me. They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture. But be not thou far from me, O Jehovah: O my strength, haste thee help me. Deliver my soul from the sword; my darling from the power of the dog” (Psa. 22:14-20).

Nevertheless the Lord Christ perfectly vindicates God who forsook Him there and then. Others had cried, and there was not one who had not been delivered; but it was His not to be. For the suffering must go to the uttermost, and sin be righteously atoned for, and this too not by power but by suffering.

But what is this that breaks on our ears, when the last drop in the cup is drained? “Thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns. I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee,” says the Savior. He says, now He is risen from the dead, “I will declare thy name unto my brethren.” He had declared it: such was His ministry here below, but now on an entirely new ground. Death and death alone disposed of sin; death, but His death alone, could dispose of sin, so that the sinner could bow to God’s righteousness about it, and be brought without sin into the presence of God. And this is what God Himself declares.

The Atoning Sufferings, the Death, and the Blood-shedding Comprise the Work of Atonement

I agree much with what you say at the end, that one must find it in the whole as a revealed fact. Thus we need His blood-shedding, His death, His forsaking [on the part] of God; all together make up His work. But when He shed His blood, He did not suffer; He was already dead. And this was important. Had the soldiers killed Him He would not have laid down His own life, it would have been taken from Him. Had He not shed His blood, the great sign that His life was given would have been wanting. Now, I get what expiated [blood] and what purified [water] in His death; but He laid down life Himself. Then being forsaken of God -- none of us can fathom what it was to One who had dwelt in the bosom of the Father, to find His soul as a man forsaken of Him, and that as made sin. In the measure in which He knew holiness and love, and that was absolute, He felt what it was to be [made] sin before God and forsaken. And though the physical death came after, then He, morally speaking, drank the cup. It was necessary He should freely give up His own Spirit {sic, spirit}, all being finished, in peace. John’s word is not “He gave up the ghost,” but “gave up his spirit” -- a divine act when all was done -- and in peace and confidence as a man, as in Luke, “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.” The use of the word Father is important here. He does not say “My God” in His life -- not even in Gethsemane, for He was in full communion with His Father. In the forsaking it is “My God,” though in perfect submission, and saying “My.” After His resurrection He uses both {God and Father}, in His message by Mary Magdalene; for now God was for us in righteousness and we children. But “Father into thy hands” is perfect peace in the enjoyment of sonship. But He must actually die, or nothing would have been done; but the sting and curse were gone out of it; and He laid down His life in communion with, and in obedience to, the Father. It is when really already dead, that His blood which had all the value of that death was shed (with the water) to cleanse from sin. It must have the value of death in it, yet death not be by it. Sin gives death its sting, and that must be borne -- yet death have none, but be the free giving up of His own spirit. All this was accomplished.

We learn it in parts, but it all made one great sacrifice, from meeting with God as made sin, His personal dignity in giving up His own life, and in the shedding forth the blood and water when all was finished -- the shedding forth that in which its value is applied to us. But it is of all moment to view it adoringly, and not in dissecting it, as it were; only fully recognizing as far as we can the import of drinking the cup, where all the ingredients that sin had put into death are found. It is in the spirit of adoration -- and withal, knowing what sin is -- we must dwell on it, but the glory of His person giving Himself for God the Father’s glory and then for our sins, and made sin for us, and devoted love to Him -- that we must look at it. 208

207. The Bible Treasury, New Series 8:114.
Chapter 13

The Son Glorified as Man

Three Divisions in John 17

There are three main divisions in John 17.

- Vv. 1-5: The Son’s desire that the Father be glorified in the glorified Son, as man.
- Vv. 6-21: The Son’s desire that His own, while in the world, would glorify the Father and the Son.
- Vv. 22-26: The Son’s desire that His own be with Him to behold the glory given by the Father to the Son; and that they be glorified with Him (v. 22).

The Lord here, as in the whole of John’s gospel, is regarded from the point of view of His divine nature, the Son of the Father, but at the same time never leaving the place of service. He receives everything and appropriates nothing to Himself . . Here also, He does not appropriate to Himself the glory, but the hour being come, He asks His Father to glorify Him. It is the Son of the Father who is glorified, it is His personal glory; it is not the Son of man glorified according to the counsels of God. It is the Father who does it. In chapter 13, Jesus speaks of Himself as the Son of man who has glorified God, and that in His work on the cross. Then God, as God, having been glorified, the Son of man enters, according to the value of His work, into the glory of God, which He had established on earth where sin reigned. There, man made sin, and the power of Satan, the judgment and love of God met together, and God has been fully glorified; what He is has been manifested and made good in the obedience of man. Here, it is the Son, who, having perfectly manifested the Father and glorified Him, re-enters, being Man, into the glory that He had with the Him before the world was, in order to glorify Him in this new position also.

The Son’s Request for Glorification

The hour, the epoch, as John uses the word “hour” in this way, had arrived for Him to request glorification as man.

Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son may glorify thee (John 17:2).

The Basis for the Glorification

There are two bases for the Son’s glorification as man:

1. The first is that He is entitled to it based on who He is (v. 2). In Person He is the Son.
2. The second is that he had completed the work that the Father gave Him to do, having glorified Him on the earth (v. 4). His work entitled Him to that glory.

The Purpose of the Glorification

In v. 4, we see that He had done all here on earth glorifying the Father. He desires to be in the glory of the Father, as man, in order to glorify Him in that very glory: “that thy Son may glorify thee.” In v. 19 we read: “and I sanctify myself for them.” The Lord Jesus never needed sanctification in the moral sense that we do. In John 10:36 we saw that He was sanctified, set apart, for public ministry at His baptism, when the Spirit came upon Him and He was sealed -- all apart from any application of blood -- of course! There in the glory wherewith He was glorified by the Father, He sets Himself apart “for them”; for you, for me, to whom His blessed service continues to the Father’s glory, through the Holy Spirit sent down at Pentecost.

The Character of the Glory Requested

And Now Glorify Me, Thou Father Along With Thyself. Ah, the unspeakable, the unfathomable, the inscrutable intimacy and oneness of the Father and the Son, how these words manifest it. Me, thou Father!

In a footnote to his translation, JND remarked on the word “with”:

‘Along with’ as to presence and place. That is in the presence of the Father in the glory above, as man.

With the Glory Which I Had Along With Thee Before the World Was. James Taylor, Sr., wrote:

210. See also Collected Writings of J. N. Darby 25:290.
As to the glory referred to in John 17:5, we do not know what it was, we can hardly say it was the form of God. 211

No doubt he does not know what it was -- because he rejects the eternal relationships, which is the key. Earlier he had thought it was “Godhead glory” 212 but subsequently, “we do not know.” As he systematized the evil, he found it necessary to reject the thought that he had had, that the glory was Godhead glory. What kind of glory do you think John 17:5 speaks of as existing before the foundation of the world? Creature glory? Certainly not! It was the glory of the Father and Son in the Trinity; divine glory. 213 But this is just what is not wanted by those who so systematically limit the glory of the divine Persons and of the Son in particular. “The glory which I had along with thee before the world was.” It is eternal glory. It most certainly was a glory shared by divine Persons who were in the form of God. What other form of divine Persons was there? They were in the form of God. They had eternal glory. In accordance with the distinction of the Persons in the Trinity, there was the glory of the Father and Son. But the Son had emptied Himself and took the form of a bondman. And now in the form of man, He would have the Father glorify Him with that same glory that He had with the Father, along with the Father, that was eternally His along with the Father as the eternal Son of the eternal Father. He would take manhood up into that glory and there in manhood enjoy the glory of Father and Son. It is our Beloved receiving as man, “what He had been in as a divine Person before ever the world was at all.” Though one with the Father, yet as man He receives all from Him.

. . . and now he was going to return into His former glory, the glory of the Son, but He re-entered it as man. 214

It is a glorious thing being God and being one with the Father; but then all that He has as man we have. There is His unity with the Father, and we cannot have that; but as it is displayed in man, we have it all. 215

There is communicable glory and incommunicable glory. The glory in John 17:2, 5, 24 is incommunicable. It is inscrutable. We cannot reason it out in a manner that the mind can scrutinize. It is received by faith. But JT rejects the thought of our contemplation of that glory:

There is a glory which He had with the Father before the world was (John 17:5) -- He does not say the disciples were to see that. They were to see the given glory (v. 24). 216

This is a denial that the glory of v. 24 is that of v. 5 (and he does not know what that glory is that is spoken of in v. 5!). It is a denial that the glory of v. 5 is a given glory. The Son, in fact, did say the disciples were to see that glory. What we do not know is to what extent -- for it is inscrutable glory. 217 But what we will behold will be in connection with His manhood. J. N. Darby wrote:

. . . that the Son had been sent from the Father, and that believers were loved by the Father as the Son Himself. The proof of it will be there: the Son manifested in glory, and believers in the same glory as He. This will be the visible accomplishment of the doctrine, of the marvelous truth with which the chapter is taken up: the Father in the Son as Man, and believers glorified with Him. But whether it be a scene of testimony or of glory, it is the world that is before our eyes.

In what follows, this is not the case, and it is this that gives quite another character to these last verses. “Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me, for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.” We see here, as we have seen throughout, that Christ speaks of Himself as man, though also as Son of the Father; as man, divested outwardly of the divine glory in which He had been — “the form of God” as we read in Philippians — and having taken “the form of a servant” in humanity. The Father has given the glory on high to the Man Christ. He had had, He says in this same chapter, this glory with the Father before the foundation of the world, but He was going back into it as man, for as man it is clear that He had never had it. He was not yet glorified. Never, down here, though He said and showed that He was one with the Father, and “I am” (John 8: 59), and said to the Jews: “Destroy this temple [His body where God was], and in three days I will raise it up”; never would He go outside this position of servant: He took a body in order to be obedient to His Father; Psalm 40. Moreover, a man who had not been so, would have been by the very fact, in evil: it was this that Satan sought to lead Him into; Matt. 4. The Father had proclaimed: “This is my beloved Son”; and in the first temptation, Satan says to Him: “If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones become bread”; but the Lord withstood his wiles, refusing to leave the place of obedience: “Man,” He says, “shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.” Thus, in speaking as Man in the midst of His own, He speaks of the glory into which He was going to enter, as being given Him of God. Nevertheless He presents it here objectively as His personal glory.

He had been loved before the foundation of the

211. Letters 1:360.
212. Ibid., p. 270.
213. “The Word become flesh, did not cease to be the Word, but was what it was not before -- become something -- and subsequently took manhood into divine glory” (J. N. Darby, Notes and Comments 2:282).
214. Collected Writings of J. N. Darby 33:278.
216. Ministry 29:373.
217. The inscrutable Person of Christ as God and man (Matt. 11:27; Luke 10:22) we will behold in the inscrutable glory of the Father and the Son.
world. We have learned, at the beginning of the chapter, that He had had with the Father, before the foundation of the world, the glory into which He was going to enter as Man. It is not that there are two glories; but I do not believe that human eyes down here can bear the glory as it is seen in heaven. The glory seen upon earth will be like that in which Moses and Elijah appeared upon the mountain -- the glory of the kingdom. But we read in Luke 9 that the disciples entered into the cloud, the shekinah. Moses had spoken to God, when God came down in the cloud, but he did not enter into it. But we shall see Him such as He is there, in the Father’s house. The disciples had suffered upon earth, and had seen Him suffer. He was going to be crucified, and He asked therefore that they should see His glory on high, with the Father. It was the answer to the ignominy to which He had been exposed for His love for us, and for the glory of His Father.  218

We Must Remember that There Are Kinds of Glory. Personal Glory. The glory referred to in John 17:2, 5, 24 refer to personal glory. In this we will never share, though we will ever behold it. John 17:24 refers to His personal glory in which He is as man, along with the Father, and in which He had been eternally as Son in the Godhead. Recall that He had spoken of Himself as the Son of man who is in heaven (John 3:13). What He is as deity transends what He is as Man. Though bodily here on earth, He was yet the omnipresent God and could so speak. And now He is, as man, above in the glory that was His as eternal Son with the eternal Father before the world was. Think of it, and worship: He has carried manhood into the glory of God. Yes, we do know what glory it is. And, we repeat, this is personal glory, and cannot be shared with others. No one else’s humanity was ever united to deity -- and this entry into that glory can only be for such a One as Himself. He is personally entitled to it (John 17:2) and He is entitled to it because of completing the work given Him to do (John 17:4, 5). Hold fast by faith that “they may behold my glory which thou hast given me, for thou lovest me before [the] foundation of [the] world (John 17:24). Now, I do not mean to disconnect the heavenly glory from this. But we must hold fast, by faith, that we are going to see the One who is in that glory. We are going to behold that glory. It shines in His face (2 Cor. 4:4-6) and in spirit, by faith, we behold it now (2 Cor. 3:18); but then we shall see Him as He is (1 John 3:2). These thoughts fill our souls with joy unspeakable, and full of glory. And all this shall be for our everlasting adoration and fulness of joy!.

His glory as man has a bearing upon our practical sanctification. Without enlarging upon this, we will consider a few extracts from J. N. Darby that direct our attention to this matter:

Christ did not pray that they might be taken out of world, although they did not belong to it, as He Himself did not belong to it, but that they might be kept from the evil, negatively from the influence of the world that surround them. Not only so, but that they might be sanctified, set apart in heart and in fact by the Father’s word; it was not prophecy nor the government of the world, but the revelation of the Father in His grace in Christ: the eternal joy of His communion. It was the immutable, eternal truth: Christ had been and always is it, but they were to be witnesses of it, be sent by the Son into the world, as the Son had been sent into it by the Father.

Now for the accomplishment of this sanctification in them an object is introduced in the Person of Christ Himself -- Christ, I believe, glorified; however, His Person remains the same. One might have supposed that the Son, eternally One with the Father in His divine nature, and who had been Son down here, introducing this relationship into human nature, but always able to say: “I and my Father are one”; one might have supposed, I say, that He would have laid aside this human garb in leaving this world, in order to enter again into His simply divine position. But no! He keeps it in the glory. He sets Himself apart in the glory as Man (John 17:19); always Son, in the glory that He had with the Father before the world was, in order that this relationship with the Father, in which man is placed in His Person, might be effectively revealed in its perfection and in its fulness to the hearts of the disciples, that these hearts filled with what He was, might be at the same time sanctified according to this perfection, and thus made to be the vessels of it in their testimony. Thus the truth of what the Father is -- the truth that sanctified them -- was not, so to speak, a dry doctrine, applied to their souls to form them, judging evil and communicating that which was suitable, but a living reality which placed them in this position, with all the affections which were connected with a Person, in whom they were and who was in them, a Savior known and beloved, who had been bound up with them in grace. All the fulness of the result of this relationship, established in its perfection in heaven, formed their heart according to this perfection.  219

“Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.” I see the work of redemption accomplished; I see Christ at the right hand of God; that is the Man I am connected with; and as to this first Adam, I must reckon it dead; it is enmity with God, and I am not in it though it be in me. When we look at our portion, it is that “we are sons of God, and when he shall appear we shall be like him.” That is the Christian hope, beloved friends, and the only thing that there is for the Christian’s heart.

He “purifieth himself even as he is pure.” I can never be as He was, for He never had any sin in His nature; but I am going to be perfectly like Him. Thus


I may do without all the notions of men as to perfection in this world; these are a mere delusion from beginning to end, for it is a glorified Christ we are going to be like, and no other Christ. He does not say we are to be pure as Adam was.

And why purify myself? Because I am not pure, and therefore I must purify myself. He does not say pure as He is pure. But He is the standard by which I purify myself -- Christ, as He is there above. I am to be like Him, and the life I have of Him can never be satisfied till then. I have ever to purify myself.

You may find other passages on the subject, but there is no other way of looking at sanctification in Scripture. There is no setting apart to God except in the second Man. It is, “Beholding with open [unveiled] face the glory of the Lord, we are changed into the same image from glory to glory.” Into what image? Why, the image of the One I am looking at -- Christ in glory. We have it expressed in three ways:

- “Beholding with unveiled face the glory of the Lord” [2 Cor. 3:18];
- then “the glory of Christ who is the image of God” [2 Cor. 4:4];
- and then “the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” [2 Cor. 4:6].

When I come to associate it with man, I must get it as it is in Him up there. If I say, Where am I to look at God’s holiness in a man? I answer, In Christ in glory. He was the Holy One and walked according to the Spirit of holiness down here, and I am to walk as He walked; but that by which the Holy Ghost works this in us is by looking at the glorified Christ up there, by having an object and a motive up there which takes my heart out of all that is here, as His was who walked through the world, as I have to do. I am going to be with Him and like Him. A man who, in heart, is not only with God and for God, but even now an imitator of God as a dear child -- that is Christian sanctification. ²²⁰

Non-Personal, Given Glory. We come now to consider given glory ²²¹ that He will share with us. And, of course, it all flows from the fact of His personal glorification. The glory to be shared with us is spoken of in John 17:22:

And the glory thou hast given me I have given them, that they may be one: I in them and thou in me, that they may be perfected into one [and] that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and [that] that thou hast loved them as thou hast loved me.

The saints are not expressing oneness before the world right now; quite the opposite. But we are going to be “perfected into one” and then the world will have the proof that the Father sent the Son. For it will then be seen how our beloved Father has loved us. Oh, but it is stunning, and only now receivable by faith, that we are to be so perfected into one, and in our oneness with Christ, that the eternal love which He fastened upon us will be in evidence in that day. And its blessed character will be seen to be that very love wherewith He loves the Son.

Everything which He is and has Himself He brings us into; except, of course, what is essential to His eternal Sonship: the Father’s words, the life, the glory, the love, with all the blessedness He has, and what is not so pleasant to us, His separation from the world. But it is a portion with Himself now and hereafter. ²²²

It is in connection with His personal glory that the Son sits upon the Father’s throne; while it is in connection with the non-personal, given glory that we will sit with Him in His throne (cp. Rev. 3:21). The world will see us in that glory (John 17:23).

Moral Glory. There shone in the Lord Jesus, when here on earth, moral glory -- from the cradle to the cross. J. G. Bellet has written a book concerning this entitled, The Moral Glory of the Lord Jesus. He has also written on the Sonship, by title, The Son of God. Read them.

The Eternal Sonship Confirmed

First of all, we may notice that this passage shows the Son to be an eternal Person, to be a distinct Person, and having equal glory eternally with the Father.

The Character of the Glorification Involves the Eternal Sonship. In v. 2 we read, “glorify thy Son.” That means, of course, the Son, as man, to be glorified with the glory He had before He became flesh, the glory that He and the Father had from all eternity (v. 5). What an ugly, debased, evil thought it is that a divine Person, we know not which one, who became the Son in time, requests to be glorified with another divine Person, we know not which one, who became the Father in time, with the glory the one had with the other in eternity, we know not what it was.

Now, John 17:5 contradicts this evil teaching and confirms the eternal Sonship. This glory is the glory concerning two divine Persons, but the Trinity is three divine Persons. The glory of God involves, of course, the three divine Persons. But there is an aspect of glory involving two of them that is consonant with the distinction...

²²⁰ Collected Writings of J. N. Darby 31:174, 175. Concerning sanctification, see also 34:391.

²²¹ Though the glory of John 17:5 is received by the Son, as man, from the Father, and is therefore given by the Father (v. 24), we must not allow evil teachers to ply their evil with the word “given” so as to swamp out what Scripture distinguishes, namely the personal glory that the Son received, as man, that He had with the Father before the world was, and the heavenly glory in which He is set, and we seated in Him there (Eph. 2:6) -- as well as the glory manifested at His appearing (Col. 3:4).

²²² Collected Writings of J. N. Darby 34:391.
Chapter 13: The Son Glorified as Man

of Persons: the Father and the Son. The fact is, then, that we do know something of distinction in the Godhead that preceded the incarnation: two of the divine Persons partook of a character of glory that accords with the distinction of Persons. This character of glory clearly involves the eternal **distinction of Persons in the Godhead**. Specifically, this character of glory clearly involves the distincton, eternally, of Father and Son.

When Did the Father Enter that Glory? The second way in which this passage confirms the eternal Sonship is that since the Father always was in that glory, He is eternally the Father, and the Son is also, thus, the eternal Son. We know when the Son, as man, entered that glory. It was on the fortieth day after His resurrection (Acts 1:3). You see that we have plain Scripture for when the Son, as man, entered it. The Son, as man, is now in the same glory with the Father -- that glory which is the glory that existed when the Son was not in the form of man. “The glory I had along with thee before the world was” (John 17:5) is uncreated glory. That glory always was. It follows from the denial of the eternal relationships that the Father, as Father, entered that glory at some point. Where is Scripture for such a notion? How did the Father come to be in that glory if as Father He was not eternally in that glory? Now, the Son, as man, entered that glory. He had taken the form of man. And in the form of man He entered that glory. **But the Father always abode in the form of God.** How did He enter that glory? The one who must have, as Father, allegedly entered that glory, had, as one in the form of God, always been in that glory. **Are we going to be told** that the Father entered that glory when the Son did? Where is the Scripture for that, given by those who plume themselves about not going a hair-breadth beyond Scripture? The glory existed before the world was. If it is said that the Father became the Father at some point, then at what point did the Father enter that glory concerning which the Son, as man, requested to enter “along with” the Father? Was the Father in that glory when He spoke at the mount of transfiguration: “such a voice being uttered to him by the excellent glory” (2 Pet. 1:17)? Whose voice came thus ‘by” the excellent glory, saying:

> This is my beloved Son, in whom I have found my delight: hear him (Matt. 17:5).

It was the Father speaking in the cloud, denoting the excellent glory. A footnote in JND’s translation to Matt. 17:5 says:

> The cloud covered, without darkening them; it was bright -- the excellent glory: 2 Pet. 1:17. The word is used in the LXX {Septuagint Greek translation of the OT} which took possession of the tabernacle and filled it with glory, Ex. 40:34, 35; see Mark 9:7.

How did the Father, as such, get into that excellent glory, the Shekinah, which denotes God’s dwelling place of glory. What is the Scripture which tells us when? Do you know why there is no Scripture that tells us when? It is because the Father never entered that excellent glory. The Father never entered it because He was in that glory eternally. He is the eternal Father, and the eternal Son was with Him in that glory in eternity and entered it as Man!

The man filled with the Holy Spirit, the first Christian martyr, Stephen, saw Him there (Acts 7:55); and not only saw Him there, but we read that he saw “[the] glory of God.” He “saw Jesus standing at the right hand of God.” Now, God is not visible, so how did he see Jesus at the right hand of God? It was on account of the character of the glory. He saw the man, Jesus, in that personal glory which we have been considering, which involves Him being at the right hand of God. It was given to this proto-martyr to see his blessed Lord in the glory and see Him standing to receive himself. What unspeakable grace!

The Son in manhood here below was the object upon whom heaven opened to declare Him the beloved Son; and then glorified above, while His first martyr was about to be presented to Him (for whom He stood to receive him), heaven opened upon that faithful follower so that heaven’s glorified Object would be seen by that believer walking faithfully, and being rejected in the place where the Son had been rejected. May the glory of Christ be made good to each of our souls by the sight of faith, as soon as we shall actually see Him as He is!!

---

223. C. A. Coates wrote:

> Scripture does not say that this glory of His in the past eternity was the glory of sonship, though it was undoubtedly a glory proper to His eternal Person (The Personal and Mediatorial Glory of the Son of God, p. 25).

> As to presence, place and glory Divine Persons were together, co-equal and co-eternal. Does not this suffice? (Remarks . . . , p. 13).

Concerning the Spirit in connection with the subject of John 17:1-5, CAC wrote:

> Certain things are revealed as to the relations of Two of those Persons: One was “with God” and was loved by Another before the foundation of the world. And in that particular connection the Spirit is not mentioned. But neither of the scriptures which make known these wondrous things known to us (John 1:1-3; John 17:5, 24) say anything which would exclude the Spirit . . . (Letters, p. 268).

---

224. “Along with” as to presence and place” (footnote in JND’s translation.

225. “This is what frightened the disciples on the mount of Transfiguration, I mean the “excellent glory,” that is, the cloud, or the Shechinah (Collected Writings of J. N. Darby 19:185).

226. In 1 John 1:2 we read of “the eternal life (i.e., He who is the Son), which was with the Father. Contrary to FER and company, it does show that the Father was the Father before He who is the eternal life came here in manhood.
Appendix 1: The Ravenistic Branch of the Denial of the Eternal Relationships

And he smote among the men of Bethshemesh, because they had looked into the ark of Jehovah... (1 Sam. 6:19).

There are three persons in particular that have not merely looked into the Ark; they have taken wrecking bars to it so that it is hardly recognizable concerning what they have done. The ark, of course, speaks of Christ. The spiritual mentor among these three is F. E. Raven. W. Kelly rightly referred to him as:

the wrecker. 227

Concerning the 'new light' brought out by FER, W. Kelly called it the light of death and that he had a mission from an evil spirit. He spoke of FER’s notions as smoke from the pit and an idea inbreathed by Satan, blasphemy, devilish, and deadly false doctrine, as well as a morass of mud and vapor, as well as from Satan, and as fundamental error. 228

228.  F. E. R. Heterodox, see pp. 41, 43, 69, 85, 91, 99, 103, 112, 124, etc.
F. E. Raven

Denied that the Son was Essentially the Eternal Life.

We saw in chapter one that the denial of eternal, divine relationships in the Godhead is not a 20th century phenomena, and thus a 20th century claim to “new light” on the subject of the Trinity’s relationships would be absurd. These attacks on the Son, taking many forms, are very old in church history. F. E. Raven (died 1903) had been in fellowship with J. N. Darby (died 1882). The public deviation from truth began during a conference at Witney, England in April 18, 19, 20, 1888 in connection with the subject of eternal life, etc., and went on to deny that the Son was ever, essentially, the eternal life in His own Person. During the interval to June 1890, there was much remonstrance with him. Then that June a godly separation from evil began because of the support of FER at the assembly at Greenwich, England. Then on July 3, 1890 he issued a paper, Eternal Life.

It was pointed out before the division took place that FER’s doctrine of eternal life involved him in dividing the Person of Christ. See Part Two. Between then and 1895 when he formally issued a paper, The Person of the Christ, in which he stated his Apollinarian doctrine via his formula in Person He is God, in condition He is man, there were preliminary indications of this evil notion.

Denied that the Son was Eternally the Word. In 1890 he denied that Christ was eternally the Word (and again in 1897):

W. Kelly said:

A warning I did give in 1890, and a brief leaflet, when the Weston-super-Mare Notes disclosed the impious libel against the Lord, that “becoming a man, He becomes the Logos [the Word].” Many hoped that it was a slip; but if so, why was it not confessed in sackcloth and ashes?

Note well the date, 1890. This blasphemy was repeated:

He taught in 1897 that Christ “becoming a man, He becomes the Logos…”

Denied that Christ Had a Human Soul and Spirit. Subsequent to 1890, he was developing his idea of the eternal-humanity-in-essence in the Son which was not part of deity, and then in 1895 printed his Apollinarian paper The Person of the Christ. Concerning his Apollinarianism (see Appendix 2), W. Kelly remarked:

It is to join Apollinarus of Antioch (the Son). He too made the Logos simply form Christ’s Person, as F. E. R. does, and was justly branded an Antichrist. . . . F. E. R. with shameless self confidence vaunts his idea, which is plain heterodoxy.

FER is justly branded an antichrist also:

Hereby ye know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses Jesus Christ come in flesh is of God; and every spirit which does not confess Jesus Christ come in flesh is not of God: and this is that [power] of the antichrist, [of] which ye have heard that it comes, and now is already in the world (1 John 4:2, 3).

Denied the Eternal Sonship. On Oct. 11, 1898, in the city of Rochester, NY, FER denied the eternal sonship in a meeting. In Letters of F. E. Raven, p. 146 (1963), there is a letter by J. S. Allan (see errata sheet) who had accompanied FER. He wrote:

F. E. R. thought that “the Son” is used in special reference to the Father and the name ‘Son of God’ in reference to man, but that none of these titles are applied to Him in Scripture until incarnation, and that we are not authorized to carry these titles back into eternity.

Notice that these blasphemous statements were tolerated. In the printed edition of the 1898 book, of which I have a copy (Readings and Addresses in the U. S. A. and Canada with F.E.R., London: Morrish), FER was the editor and the part about incarnation and eternity was edited out (see p. 109).

Denied the Eternal Relationships. In effect, all this was a denial of the eternal relationships in the Godhead, along with the denial that the Lord had a human soul and spirit. Thus, he attacked the Person of the Christ both in His deity and in His humanity and refused to acknowledge the eternal relationships in the Godhead. Indeed, on Nov. 23, 1898, he directly referred to his denial of the eternal relationships:

. . . As to what you refer to, my point was that it was permitted to us to know divine Persons AS and WHEN revealed and only so. In view of that revelation the Son has taken a new place relatively, that is, of inferiority to the Father, coming to do the will of God, though of course there would be no change morally or in affection. The names under which we know divine Persons, that is, Father, Son and Holy Spirit are, I judge, connected with this position, and I doubt if we are allowed to enter into the eternal relation of divine Persons apart from this revelation. No one knows the Son but the Father. What I think led me to it was a fear lest in our minds we should
almost insensibly give to the Son a place of inferiority (save as regards revelation) in our thoughts of the Godhead, which could not be right. The point is to be within the limits of Scripture and not trading on what is merely orthodox. 234

The company that supported FER is today sometimes called Taylorites, after FER’s prominent successor, James Taylor, Sr. (died 1953). The father of the evil system is F. E. Raven, not James Taylor, Sr., though he elaborated on FER’s teachings and added some other doctrinal developments. The system, then, is Ravenism; and additions and developments do not change the fact. FER also influenced J. B. Stoney into numbers of his evil doctrines.

Mysticism. It is FER that fostered the mysticism in the system of attack on Christ’s Person. In 1892 he said that his opposers were involved with a materialistic Christianity. 235 FER made a point in a conference in which a questioner depreciated Bible students. It was stated that Scripture was given for bounds so as not to transgress.

W. M. Then a Bible student is not much after all.

FER’s teachings and added some other doctrinal developments. The system, then, is Ravenism; and additions and developments do not change the fact. FER also influenced J. B. Stoney into numbers of his evil doctrines.

Mysticism. It is FER that fostered the mysticism in the system of attack on Christ’s Person. In 1892 he said that his opposers were involved with a materialistic Christianity. 235 FER made a point in a conference in which a questioner depreciated Bible students. It was stated that Scripture was given for bounds so as not to transgress.

W. M. Then a Bible student is not much after all.

FER. I have said that if I had to live over again I would study scripture less and pray more. The great thing for a Christian is to get in his closet and pray. Prayer and meditation.

The evidence shows that the mystic was not in communion with God in his closet. As W. Kelly said, FER had a mission from an evil spirit. Elsewhere FER said:

We need the spirit of Scripture, the letter kills. 237

The text of the New Testament never killed anyone. In 2 Cor. 3, it is obvious that “the letter kills” refers to the law. The law is “the letter.” Hear him again:

... And the impression produced on me is that each time we read these epistles we get an increased sense of the Person, and thus in a way become less distinctly doctrinal. 238

I hope the brethren will get dislodged more and more from the old doctrinal methods, so that they are not only learning about Christ, but living Christ. 239

Thus did the mystic seek to be free of Scripture control and give reign to his innovative mind under the influence of the Enemy of Christ, all with this aura of piety.

F. E. Raven Had a Mission from an Evil Spirit.

Concerning some of FER’s teachings, a book is available, The Collected Writings of A. C. Ord, which contains, among others, three Christ glorifying papers written about 1890-1894 dealing with many of FER’s doctrines. It is of interest that FER was caught in what I can only regard as a course of a lying cover-up with respect to something he wrote in a letter regarding the Babe in the Manger. See Part 2, Chapter 7 for documentation. It is not surprising that fundamental evil is accompanied by a loss in integrity.

It is not without instruction that the apostle often called “the apostle of love” is very forceful and firm regarding teachings derogatory to the One on whose bosom he had reclined! John’s attitude regarding such evil shows that he really loved the Lord Jesus, as well as showing the affront these derogatory teachings are to the Spirit Who was sent from the Father and the glorified Man (Acts 2:32, 33) to look after the interests of the absent Savior. How dare anyone who has had the blood-price paid by the great Redeemer so little value fidelity to Himself as to treat in an ironic manner what are in character antichrist teachings?

Among the many characterizations of the system of teaching that emanated from FER, W. Kelly wrote:

This man’s mission is not from the Holy spirit, but from an opposing and evil spirit to seduce unwary souls from the truth they once seemed to enjoy into a whirlpool of confusion and corrupting error. 240

Where did that opposing and evil spirit go when FER died?

James Taylor, Sr.

The loss of integrity was mentioned above regarding FER. In connection with the denial of the eternal Sonship, James Taylor, Sr. (JT) states that he learned it from FER in a reading held in 1902, but it was edited out for the printing of that book (see below). We also know that on Oct. 11, 1898, in the city of Rochester, NY, FER taught it in a meeting.

As to JT, we know he had the denial of the eternal Sonship secretly in his mind from 1902 until he pushed the doctrine upon a conference in Barnet England in June, 1929. Now, for a man to hold in his mind the denial of the eternal Sonship, and then for years to use the old terms with a new meaning, is a lie! How do we know the above are facts and true? Why, we have it from his own pen in his collected letters and we shall now see that fact, as well as how he wickedly tried to implicate J. N. Darby in a “subconscious” tendency to the same denial of the eternal Sonship.

How JT Learned the Denial of the Eternal Sonship.

... it came to me through F. E. R. when He was in America in 1902. It came out in a Reading but was not included in the printed notes (Letters 1:263, July 18, 1929; see p. 260 also).

Besides myself, there are many witnesses to his refusal of

236. Readings and Addresses in the U. S. A. And Canada with F. E. R., 1898, p. 126.
240. F. E. R. Heterodox, p. 43.
who, say from 1898 to the end of his service (Letters 1:394, March 25, 1933).

It was through him that the writer first obtained light as to it. JT Had It in His Mind for Many Years.

But from the time Mr. Raven spoke of the matter in America I have shrunk from applying such relationships to divine Persons as in absolute Deity (i.e., before incarnation) as would imply that One of Them was in a position of relative inferiority. I said little or nothing as to this important matter for many years, but the more I weighed it the more assured I was of the truth F. E. R., advanced. It can be seen as to the “Word” in his readings on John, and as to the Son in his printed letters.

JT Used Words Deceitfully. In the next quotation we find an admission to having held the doctrine from 1902 and that what he said on the subject of Christ’s Sonship, was not inconsistent with the denial of the eternal Sonship. So he was using the Scriptures and words with a new meaning in mind than what the hearers would understand. JT Told People Opposite Things. In letter dated Aug. 19, 1920 (about 9 years before the infamous Barnet conference of June 1929), JT wrote:

As regards the designation “only begotten Son,” F. E. R.’s thought was that to connect both terms of relationship with our Lord before incarnation is going beyond Scripture. I have always accepted this, while reluctant to say much about it, the subject being so great. To apply to Him as in the form of God without restriction, terms that Scripture applied to Him as Man is obviously not right . . . The only begotten Son is given and sent -- these are not expressions that apply to Him as in the form of God.

Compare that with this from July 15, 1929:

First, I wish to say that you must have misunderstood me in thinking that I said it would be derogatory to the Lord as a divine Person to speak of Him as being sent. I am sure I never had such a thought and I cannot believe I said what you report. He is never less or other than a Divine Person -- “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever.” In John’s gospel, which presents Him in this way, He is said many times to have been sent -- more often than elsewhere. Besides, as you say, the Holy Ghost is a divine Person and He is said to be sent.

Perhaps he did not use the word “derogatory” but that does not change the deceit he is practicing here, as FER did with what he had said about “helpless Babe.” JT has not merely contradicted his earlier statement, he is masking what he means by “sent,” for he did not believe that the divine Person who allegedly became the Son in time, was sent before incarnation. In the Birmingham conference of 1832 he said:

I doubt it can be shown from Scripture that the sending of Christ preceded His incarnation.

He Tried to Implicate J. N. Darby.

Thus a servant’s later ministry may in detail vary from what he presented earlier. This may be seen in Mr. Darby’s writings. That he held and urged the eternal Sonship of Christ as an accepted truth is true, but that he was satisfied with it in his later years is more than questionable. “Notes and Comments,” Volume 7, page 7, affords proof of this. Great efforts have been made to neutralize it, but his statement, “Nor do I see that in this character He is spoken of as Son save as known in the flesh” stands. The “note” makes this statement specially important, for it shows that the writer reconsidered it

243. In a letter dated Feb. 25, 1921, we read:
In view of Mark 13:32, I am unable to connect the term “son” with our Lord as “in the form of God.” It seems to me that it refers to Him only as having become man . . .

On the whole, I think the simple and safe attitude of mind to take up in regard of this immensely important subject is that one cannot undertake to speak definitely of the relationships that existed between divine Persons as viewed absolutely in the Godhead, or apply names that would designate these relationships.

P. S. -- I do not think it would be wise to publish my letter on this subject (Letters 1:190, 191).
244. Letters 1:394, March 25, 1933.
245. Letters of James Taylor 1:182. See also another letter on pp. 186-187 for similar thoughts.
248. {Present Truth Publishers has available a paper by JND on the eternal Sonship. In the beginning of it there is a note by A. Roach:
In 1950 I met brother Henry Sibthorpe of Redruth, Cornwall while he was in Woodbridge, N.J. He told me that his family had a Bible that had been Mr. Darby’s and there was a hand written article in it “I hold it vital to hold the Sonship before the worlds, it is the truth.” This is now published in pamphlet form. The Raven Party heard about this Bible and sent some representatives to prove that it was not Mr. Darby’s writing (as though someone else would write in his Bible!). However, these doubts were turned back by a letter JND had written to CHM and which letter the Sibthorpes also had. The handwriting was identical . . .}
He has attempted to indicate development in JND’s thoughts as JND grew older. Too bad for JT that he did not notice that there is a date of “Lord’s Day, April 8/27” (on p. 398 (this refers to the 1913 Carter ed., and p. 261 in the Stow Hill ed.) in these notes on John. We then would have been spared this self-serving clap-trap about development.

J. N. Darby was only 27 years old when these notes were written. Besides, JND can be difficult at times to understand (though such talk is overdone), and here we leave JND’s comments, just noting, for an example, that on p. 307 on Notes and Comments, vol. 7, JND says that John 17:5 proves the eternal Sonship. JT also wrote in reference to the same (1827) quotation from JND:

J. N. D. clearly held to our Lord’s “eternal Sonship,” but he seems to have had a remarkable subconsciousness that Scripture treats of Sonship as applying to Him as in the flesh as Man only (See Notes and Comments, Vol. 7, page 7).

What is “remarkable” is the unmitigated effrontery of this contemptible effort to drag down the name of JND to his own level of doctrine derogatory to the personal glory of the Son of the Father. It certainly was not in JT’s “subconscious mind.” It was consciously in the mind of a deceiver who spoke the old words with the new, hidden meanings that he learned from his mentor in evil, FER.

And what is he slyly implying by saying:

. . . I was well aware that Mr. Darby, especially in his early days, had strongly held “Eternal Sonship”? 251

He attributed to His Opposers What They Did Not Say. JT sees in remarks of those opposed to his evil teachings what is self-serving. Here is an example of misrepresenting his opponents that also plainly evidences his Apollinarianism:

“The Word became flesh” -- One who was God, taking human condition. It is thus Himself, whether He speaks of His spirit or His soul. F. E. R.’s opponents had in mind that there was a human being, spirit soul and body, and besides a divine being; that is a dual personality (more accurately two Persons inwardly), one merely human and the other Divine. 252

He has projected his own notions on to others, thereby putting them in a bad light. This is quite self-serving. None of FER’s opponents taught this gross misrepresentation as if Christ were two persons. 253 They held the union of the two natures in Christ, that the Son took humanity into His Person -- there being but one Person. None taught that the Person changed, 254 but rather that the Person took up manhood into union with Himself. The important point to note about the fact that the incarnation did not change the Person is this:

Personal identity can change its state and form -- ideal identity remains what it is or identity is gone. 255

See Phil. 2:6, 7. But observe that FER’s and JT’s, as well as C. A. Coates’, doctrine is that Himself (the divine Being) constituted the spirit and soul that the Lord spoke of concerning Himself. In other words, they allege that His manhood had no human soul and spirit, but that the deity filled the function of the human soul and spirit. See Appendix 2. JT also wrote:

. . . as to F. E. R.’s remarks on our Lord’s spirit. His paper helped me greatly at the time it appeared and what you write confirms me in my understanding of the truth involved. 256

The paper to which he referred, written by FER, is The Person of the Christ (1895), and embodies his Apollinarianism. So here we have it from JT himself that he was affected by FER’s Apollinarianism in 1895! Well, he held all of FER’s wicked teachings including the denial that the Son was eternally the eternal life, essentially in His own Person, as well as denying that He was eternally the Word. Now we will turn to another prominent propagator of these same evil teachings who taught these evil doctrines concurrently with James Taylor, Sr.

C. A. Coates (1862-1945)

C. A. Coates (CAC) held the same fundamentally evil teachings that FER and JT held. The teachings are scattered through his writings. For some references see Appendix 2. He issued two papers on the subject of the Sonship, as we saw, affirming the doctrine of the temporal relationships, and as implicit in such a teaching, the denial of the eternal Sonship of Christ. 257 Appendix 2 clearly shows his.

249. Letters 1:393, March 25, 1933.
251. Letters of James Taylor 2:140.
253. See, for example, the papers by W. T. Whybrow and W. Kelly in Appendix 2.
254. For example, J. N. Darby wrote:

. . . His Person remains the same . . . (Collected Writings 33:285).

He expresses His patience and faithfulness in the position which he had taken, addressing Jehovah as His God; and He tells us that He took this place willingly, according to the eternal counsels respecting His own Person. For the Person is not changed (Synopsis 5:230n).

For the Person is not changed (Synopsis 5:61).
255. J. N. Darby, Notes and Comments 2:283.
Apollinarianism.

CAC, like the others, was unsound on the subject of eternal life, as, for example, in:

*Luke*, p. 11, par. 2

*Leviticus*, p. 123 (the divine nature)

*Numbers*, p. 281

*Deuteronomy*, pp. 62, 64, 77, 95, 348, 349, 365, 390 (eternal life and “the land.”)

He wrote:

Mr. P. [A. J. Pollock] says that “the eternal life, which was with the Father, and has been manifested to us” was before time began. (Page 17.) How does Mr. P. know this? Certainly John did not tell him so. I have no doubt that eternal life was with the Father in the Person of the Son in Manhood, and as being there was manifested to the apostles. The Scripture quoted does not prove what Mr. P. says it does. And where did Mr. P. learn that eternal life was a Divine Person? 258

No doubt Mr. P. learned that eternal life was a divine Person from 1 John 5:20, if not from elsewhere also. Note also that just as did FER, so CAC restricted 1 John 1:2 to time. It is quite clear from this that CAC denies that the Son was eternally the eternal life in His own divine Person. This is a fundamental evil.

**Did C. A. Coates Reaffirm the Eternal Sonship of Christ Before He Died?**

by Frank Marotta

It has been claimed that when near death C. A. Coates recanted of his denial of the Eternal Sonship of Christ and for his role in the controversy concerning this teaching. This was given as the explanation as to why James Taylor, Sr. did not attend his funeral, even though he was in close proximity to C. A. Coates at the time he died in England.

I raised questions regarding C. A. Coates, J. Taylor, Sr. and the Eternal Sonship to A. P. Aris of Bournemouth, England in correspondence during 1989. Mr. Aris was a Taylor “out” who died at 99 in 1994. While he was quite sympathetic with F. E. Raven, Mr. Aris differed doctrinally with J. Taylor, Sr. on a few important points (e.g., appropriateness of hymns to the Spirit, the idea of vicarious burial of Christ) and also with C. A. Coates as to the “vicarious burial of Christ.” Mr. Aris had a keen recollection of historical events, and I always regarded him to be a direct and forthright correspondent. When I asked if it was true that there was friction between C. A. Coates and J. Taylor, Sr. before C. A. Coates died, and if so what was the cause, his

257. (...continued)

*Entitled “The Eternal Son,”* Lancing: Kingston Bible Trust, n. d.

reply was as follows:

As regards C.A.C. and J.T. (whose absence from his burial was a good deal criticized by brethren) I have understood that C. A. C. had reproved him for his constant use of whisky, even during the meetings he took (Letter, A. P. Aris to Frank Marotta, 13 September 1989). Mr. Aris attributed the breach between C. A. Coates and J. Taylor, Sr. to be over the use of alcohol by the latter (and we are writing about Taylor, Senior, not Junior! -- who was commonly reported to be an alcoholic), not to any doctrinal deviation by C. A. Coates. It should be noted in closing that C. A. Coates was heterodox on many points -- not just the Eternal Sonship (e.g., vicarious burial of Christ, Apollinarian view of the person Christ, etc.). If C. A. Coates had recanted on the Eternal Sonship denial, that would not be sufficient to consider him sound. The fact that C. A. Coates has said many things both soundly and profoundly has made it difficult for some to discern his evil teachings.

Appendix 2:

F. E. Raven’s Apollinarian Doctrine

FER’s paper, *The Person of the Christ* (not to be confused with FER’s *The Person of Christ*), was issued in 1895. N. Noel, *The History of the Brethren* 2:427 and 602, erroneously says it was issued in June 1889. An edition of this paper was reprinted, with footnotes, by someone (a D. J. S., Columbus Ohio, perhaps) who evidently objected to the paper. Most of the footnotes this person added are from J. N. Darby. The references to CW means the *Collected Writings* and refer to the Morrish edition. The numbers in braces { } refer to recent printings.

FER’s paper is an Apollinarian statement of Christ’s Person, really denying that He had a human soul and spirit. This teaching logically flowed from his previously stated views on the humanity-in-essence in the Son in eternity. In view of such development of doctrine, we will first give (the footnoted copy of) FER’s 1895 paper, *The Person of the Christ*, and follow this with W. T. Whybrow’s review of FER’s teaching concerning the Second man, *Divine Attributes and the Second Man*. Next we will have W. T. Whybrow’s *The Truth of Christ’s person: Is it Taught by Mr. F. E. Raven?* In the section of that paper, “Mr. R’s Teaching Systematized,” the reader will be shown how some of FER’s evil teachings concerning the person of Christ fit together as a system, with particular attention being paid to FER’s *The Person of the Christ*. After that, W. Kelly’s strictures on FER’s Apollinarianism will be before us. Finally, we will close Appendix 2 with an article on the Apollinarianism of FER Another paper on this Apollinarianism is found in the section of duplicated papers -- by P. A. Humphreys, *Remarks on a Paper Entitled “The Person of the Christ,” by F. E. R.*

*The Person of the Christ*  
*by F. E. Raven*
1 While extremely unwilling to enter on the field of controversy, especially on subjects touching the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ, I have thought it right, in the interests of the truth and of the Lord’s people, to put out a few remarks on two points of importance which have been in question. In so doing I decline to reply to any attacks which have appeared, based on isolated statements culled from letters I have written, partly from reluctance to notice them, and partly because I see in these attacks the tendency to shift (it may be almost unconsciously) the ground of conflict, in order to gain a point of vantage. In what I have to say I adhere therefore to two points that have been in question, which are these: --

2 As to whether Christ is ever viewed in scripture as man, distinct and apart from what He is as God.

3 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” -- and with this is connected the idea that every title referring to Christ covers the whole truth of His Person.

4 Now I affirm that the denial of the first, while claiming to maintain orthodoxy, is destructive of Christianity in its real power; and I would affectionately warn saints against giving up, in zeal for orthodoxy, the blessed foundations of Christianity. Further, that the assertion of the second is derogatory and dishonoring to the Son; and I proceed to show that both the denial and the assertion are contrary to the teaching of scripture.

5 The first betrays a singular inability to apprehend the great reality of the incarnation, at all events in a most essential aspect of it, namely, the fact of Christ having by it a place as man Godward. As the Word became flesh He dwelt among men and revealed God, and in Him all the fulness was pleased to dwell but He Himself filled and still fills a place as man toward God (see Psalm 16); and the two thoughts are wholly distinct conceptions, which cannot be grasped at one and the same time by any finite mind. “No one knows the Son save the Father.” As Man He is both Apostle and High Priest. In other words, in the apostle God has, so to say, come out, and in the High Priest man has entered in. Now these two thoughts, though realized in one Person, must of necessity be separately and distinctly apprehended. The one presents God, the other, man.

6 The reality of Christ’s manhood in its aspect Godward is amply presented in the New Testament. There we have the truth, that Christ, having died to sin once, lives to God. (Rom. 6.) The having put off the old man and having put on the new is said to be, “as the truth is in Jesus,” (Eph. 4). Christ Jesus before Pontius Pilate witnessed the good confession. (1 Tim. 6.) He sings praises to God in the midst of the assembly. (Heb. 2.) He praises in the great congregation. (Psalm 22.) He has entered in for us as Forerunner. (Heb. 6.) He appears in the presence of God for us. (Heb. 9.)

7 Now, while fully admitting that morally Christ’s manhood had its unique and blessed character from God, for in becoming man He gave character to manhood, yet in the thoughts above presented it is utterly impossible to introduce the idea of Deity in its proper character and attributes, because in every case it is man that is presented, or rather, Christ is viewed in the light of man Godward.

8 The refusal of this is destructive of Christianity in its
true power, for it is on the side that I have indicated that Christ is placed within the reach of our appropriation, so that we can eat Him and live by Him. He is, as second Man, the pattern of our blessing, the Leader of our salvation. He draws us to Himself by making known to us His love; and the affection on our part begotten by this appropriates Him as the expression and pattern of what we are according to the counsel of God; and it is in this way that the believer is led into the true sense of the greatness of His portion, and even partakes morally in the life of God. As “Lord” Christ is the Object of faith, as Head He is held by the believer, who is led by Him into heavenly blessing. Hence I am entirely at a loss to understand how the truth of Christianity can be maintained in the absence of the apprehension of Christ in His place as man Godward, distinct and apart from the glory and attributes which belong only to God, and in which Christ has part as Himself being a divine Person.

I may observe here that Christians are as a rule, uninstructed in three important points of Christian doctrine:

1st. Reconciliation, which they do not know as in the mind of God. The distance between God and the sinner must have been removed to effect it, and but few know the nature of the distance. They do not see that the man after the flesh has been terminated judicially in the cross in the Man Christ Jesus.

2nd. Christ as manna. They do not apprehend in any degree the manner of life of Christ here as man, “the life of Jesus.”

3rd. The mystery. They have no true conception that the church is the complement of the Man who glorified God here; but while admitting that all saints are united to Christ, they are leavened with the error that they are united to the Son of God, and they thus betray their ignorance of the mystery.

Hence, it is not surprising that many find difficulty in the apprehension of Christ in the point of view which I have sought to make plain.

The second error maintains that the truth of Christ’s Person consists in the union in Him of God and man.

Now, this idea arises, I judge, from confusion of thought as between person and condition, and has been fostered by expressions found in hymns, and the like, which have been used simply and devoutly by Christians without any very strict inquiry into their real force; but it involves a thought very derogatory to the truth of the Son, namely, that in becoming man a change has taken place as to His Person -- He is in person something which He was not before. This is not the teaching of scripture, nor do I think that it can be entertained. When I come to the word, I find that while in three gospels the truth of Christ in certain official positions is prominent, the fourth (John) is given to us to afford full light as to His Person, that is, “the Son”; and in this respect He is seen in three positions, namely, as eternally with the Father, as come into the world, and as going back to the Father, the same Person unchanged and unchangeable.

Further than this, the Person is even viewed as acting in regard to His form or condition, divine or human; “Being in the form of God, He emptied himself and took on him a servant’s form, becoming in the likeness of men.”

He comes to do God’s will in the body prepared for Him.

He raises up the temple of His body.

He gives His flesh for the life of the world.

He lays down His life (human condition) to take it again.

We have thus a divine Person presented, even apart

8. (...continued)

taught of God to believe -- CW15:228 {146, 147}.

Christ partook of flesh and blood; that is what Scripture states, and that is the whole matter. He was a real true man in flesh and blood -- CW15:236 {152 -- Snow Hill ed. Says “true real”}.

There is, however, one consideration which should weigh heavily in the estimation of every Christian, and that is, the vital nature of the doctrine of Christ’s humanity. It lies at the very foundation of Christianity. Almost all the leading errors which have found their way into the professing church disclose the Satanic purpose to undermine the truth as to the Person of Christ -- CHM’s Notes, Lev. p. 29 [see different page in more recent eds.].

A common phrase in CHM is “Christ’s “humanity,” and His personality as man is very evidently CHM’s belief.

The abstract word humanity means humanity, and no more, and being abstract, must be taken absolutely, according to its own meaning. . . . Now, that Christ was truly man, in thought, feeling, and sympathy, is a truth of cardinal blessing and fundamental importance to our souls -- CW15:229, 230 {147, 148}.

9. 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 human was complete, without a human personality or ego, we cannot understand, but we believe it is a mystery revealed for faith.” Where? 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 He say, “My God and your God, My Father and your Father” (not our) if there was no personality? CW29:321 {212}.

10. Heb. 13:8 -- The same yesterday, and today, and forever . . . The Word became flesh . . That which not having actually been in being before (i.e., in the world) now begins to be so Note to John 1:17, New Tr.

11. Such is the Son of man. He who came down to reveal the Father -- truth and grace -- but who divinely remained in heaven in the essence of His divine nature, IN HIS PERSON INSEPARABLE FROM THE HUMANITY with which He was clothed; the deity which filled this humanity was INSEPARABLE IN HIS PERSON from all the divine perfection, but he never ceased to be a man, really and truly man before God -- Notes on John, JND, p. 36 {CW33:148}.

He was as really a man as any of us, without the sinful part of it . . . we cannot fathom what [Snow Hill ed. says “who”] He was . . . Our hearts should not go and scrutinize the person of Christ, as though we could know it all. No human being can understand THE UNION OF GOD AND MAN IN HIS PERSON . . . But He in His very nature is associated with God, and associated with man. He is the “daysman that can lay His hand upon (continued...)
from the question of form, and the idea of the unity of the Person in the sense asserted is not found.

12 The One who being in the form of God, emptied Himself, and took on Him a servant’s form, is the same who, having become man, humbled Himself, and became obedient to the death of the cross, and is now highly exalted. There is no idea either of unity, or of change, in the person. It is the same person in servant’s form, and entering into what that form involved.

13 The truth of a divine Person assuming human condition, the Word becoming flesh, and in such wise as that He can be viewed objectively as man, I believe; but that is not a question of unity of a Person. It is a Person in a condition in which He was not previously.

14 Another idea connected with the above appears to be that every title or name inherited by the Son or applied to Him in scripture embraces or covers, if it does not describe, the whole truth of His Person. Now I believe this to be a fallacy, and a mistaken way of apprehending scripture. Unquestionably the Lord is identified or designated, and designates Himself, by official names or titles, as “the Christ” or “Son of man”; but such titles, though serving sufficiently to identify or designate the Person, do not cover the truth of His Person; and different titles applied to or fulfilled in Christ have to be understood each within its own appropriate limits. They describe the office, but not the Person that holds the office. In the same way we commonly use official and acquired titles, as ‘The Queen,’ ‘The Colonel,’ ‘The Doctor,’ to identify or designate a person, but we have no idea that such a title is descriptive of the person, or covers all that is true of the person, though once the person is so designated, many things can be said which refer to the person, and have nothing whatever to do with the particular designation; for instance, I might say, ‘When the Queen was a child.’ She was not queen as a child. It is simply a title used for designation, which has its own particular force and meaning.

15 Jesus is the anointed of God, that is, the Christ, but not properly so until He was anointed, whatever might be true in purpose. So too, He was not Son of man until He became Man, yet He says, “The Son of man came to minister.” “What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before.” “The Son of man which is in heaven.” The simple fact is that a title serves to designate the Person, without being descriptive of the Person, or involving any question of the unity of the Person. The titles “The Christ” and “Son of man” are both official titles which could have had no place or meaning except in the Son having become man; and it is remarkable that the Lord does not in the Gospels use what is, perhaps, the nearest approach to a personal name, i.e., Jesus, in the same way.

16 In conclusion, I earnestly entreat saints to come

15. The errors which JND is refuting in CW29:305-364 {202-240}, include the following, copied here (from p. 324 {214}), because of the close resemblance to the teachings of FER:

We have thus the Lord’s incarnation, the point where, (they say)
He connects Himself with human nature; not merely personally, or rather not personally (so they expressly say), but in nature as a new head of the race (He is not a man, not a human personality, but) with humanity.

Our precious Savior was quite as really man as I, as regards the simple and abstract idea of humanity; and, moreover, He was God manifest in flesh -- CW10:290 {183}.

Particular attention is asked to the last two sentences, showing as they do, how indissolubly, in the mind of JND, was the idea of our Lord’s personality as man associated with His humanity.

16. Now dear ______, having said thus much, I recommend to you with all my heart to avoid discussing and defining the person of our blessed Savior. You will lose the savor of Christ in your thoughts, and you will only find in their room the barrenness of man’s spirit in the things of God and in the affections which pertain to them. It is a labyrinth for man, because he labors there at his own charge. It is as if one dissected the body of his friend, instead of nourishing himself with his affections and character. It is one of the worst signs of all those I have met with for -- . . . I may add, that I am so profoundly convinced of man’s incapacity in this respect, that it is outside the teaching of the Spirit to wish to define how the divinity and the humanity are united in Jesus, that I am quite ready to suppose that, with every desire to avoid, I may have fallen into it, and in falling into it, said something false in what I have written to you. That He is really man, Son of man, dependent on God as such . . . really God in His unspeakable perfection -- to this I hold, I hope, more than to my life. To define is what I do not pretend. “No man knoweth the Son but the Father” -- CW10:290, 291 {183, 184}.

THE STATEMENT THAT CHRIST HAD NO HUMAN PERSONALITY, NO EGO, IS HERESY -- CW29:322 {213}.

(continued...)
prayerfully and patiently to scripture to get their thoughts of Christ formed by the word of God; and not to adopt the creeds or molds into which men, often with pious intent, have cast the truth in the vain effort to guard against error; and it is significant that those who have of late come forward to expose what they deemed to be error, have shown a tendency in their minds in the direction of a kind of Trithism. It is not in this way that the truth of Christ’s Person is guarded, or that of the unity of the Godhead maintained.

F. E. R.

* * * * *

1 John 4:2, 3; 2 John 9, 10.

16. (...continued)

“THEY HAVE NO TRUE CHRIST AT ALL” -- CW 29:321 (212).
I would point out the real object of attack in all the system of error now so prevalent. The endeavor is to separate divine attributes, such as having life in Himself, omnipotence, omniscience, &c., from the Second Man, the Son of Man. This, moreover, is not merely deduced or inferred from the general drift of certain teachings, but Mr. Raven has actually stated it word after word, more than once, in letters published with his consent. He says:

What characterizes the Second Man could not include all that is true of a divine person, such as self-existence (having life in Himself), omnipotence, omniscience, and many other attributes of a divine person.

(again he says) I cannot imagine how anyone can think that the Second Man covers all that is true of the Son.

As the Second Man, he practically limits Him to what is true in us as well as in Him -- what "we have in common with him." (See Some Letters of F.E.R., pp. 4, 5, 6), and in connection with this negation of divine attributes, he brings in "the position of mediation, which belongs to the Man Christ Jesus" (p. 7). Why is this? Have we forgotten the touchstone given by the apostle John (1 John 4:1-3), "every spirit which does not confess Jesus Christ come in flesh is not of God"? Moreover, Paul tells us concerning spiritual manifestations, that "no one can say Lord Jesus unless in the power of the Holy Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:3). again, Peter speaks of false teachers "who shall bring in by the bye destructive heresies, and deny the Master that bought them" (2 Pet. 2:1-10). These are they that despise lordship, and speak injuriously of dignities. Jude characterizes them as turning the grace of God into dissoluteness, and denying the only Master and our Lord Jesus Christ. These Scriptures clearly show that it is the lordship of Jesus in His mediatorial position -- the Second Man, the Man Christ Jesus -- that is so resisted by the spirit of evil, seeking as he does place and power in the Church itself (1 Tim. 4:1-3; 2 Tim. 3:1-9).

If the truth of Christ's humanity or of His person as "Second Man," "Son of Man," can be separated in the minds of Christians from divine attributes, such as omnipotence, omniscience, &c. (not to speak of self-existence), then Satan could boldly assume lordship, for, if this were true, he would have to meet One who was not all-powerful nor all-wise. But what does Scripture say? The One who ascends up where He was before is none other than the "Son of Man." It is the "Son of Man" who is in heaven (John 3:13), though the lowly Man on earth. He it was who "knew all men," who "Himself knew what was in man," and could say, "I say unto thee, we speak that which we know," and "we bear witness of that which we have seen." Does not this bespeak omniscience? Authority is given Him to execute judgment also, "because He is the Son of Man," (John 5) even as the Son of Man had power on earth to forgive sins -- omnipotence, surely, yet it is the Son of Man. It is by believing on the Son of Man that we have eternal life, and the rejected Son of Man, lifted up, is the gathering point and center of all (compare John 8:28; 12:31-36), and test of everything for God. How dare anyone say that the Second Man has not omnipotence, omniscience, and other divine attributes! What divine attribute is lacking to the Son of Man when He comes as the "Ancient of Days"? (compare Dan. 7:13, 22). And who is this Man, King of Kings and Lord of Lords, who comes, but the blessed and only Potentate, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light unapproachable, whom no man has seen, nor is able to see? to whom be honor and eternal might. Amen. (Compare 1 Tim. 6:15-16; Rev. 19:11-16).

But one may oppose that this is not His character for the Christian. Who, then, is it but the Son of Man who is seen among the seven golden lamps? (Rev. 1). And is He not characterized by omnipotence, omniscience, self-existence, and many other attributes of a divine Person? Surely so! Divine righteousness girds Him about; He bears conspicuously the proof of eternity of existence; omnipotence speaks in His voice, and all the ministry of light by the Holy Ghost is wielded by His right hand. He stands in the consuming power of God's judgment which tests everything -- a judgment which the word of His mouth exercises.

As to His Person, first of all deity is His and self-existence (that which Mr. Raven specially denies); He is the Living One! True, He become dead; but He lives to eternity, and has the keys of death and the grave -- than which there can be no fuller expression of omnipotence. All this is specifically what characterizes Him as Son of Man. In the house of God, as in the kingdom, it is the Son of Man who is seen to be a divine Person -- a Man to whom deity and all divine attributes belong (compare Heb. 2:8-9, 3:3-4, with Psa. 8:1).

If anyone object that Mr. Raven would perhaps allow the
Son of Man to possess divine attributes, but insists that the Second Man does not possess omnipotence, &c., I would first ask what warrant is there in Scripture for such an evil dissection of the truth of Christ’s Person? And secondly, I would point out that he distinctly classes the Second Man and the Son of Man, together, and that to do so is a part of his specific system of teaching. He says,

Now that the “Son of Man,” “the Second Man,” and “Eternal Life,” have, so to say, taken form, Scripture shows that they “are from heaven,” and he quotes as proof John 3:13 and 6:62, which precisely refer to the Son of Man. Moreover, the living corn of wheat, who died and brought forth much fruit after His kind {John 12:24}, was none other than the Son of Man. Well might J. N. D., in the quotation given by Mr. A. {Anstey} (Reply to the German Brethren, p. 2), insist upon the distinction between the Person of the Son, and the believer as receiving life from Him; and that the Son of Man, who is in heaven, speaks of Christ as a divine Person, with whom the believer cannot be identified so as to possess omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence, which attach alone to Him! But what would J. N. D. say to Mr. Raven who actually denies these divines attributes to the Second Man Himself?

In the Scriptures above quoted the Son of Man on earth is positively identified as an omnipresent and eternal Person, not an eternal humanity, but the same divine Person, though now Man, for He came down from heaven and is in heaven {John 3:13}, yet ascends up thither {John 20:17}, and was in heaven before ascending. Faith bows with joy and adoration, and presumes not to reason. Mr. Raven, however, believes that the “Son of Man, the Second Man (though not yet revealed) was ever essentially and in purpose in the Son. He

has become it . . . Now that the “Son of Man,” “the Second Man,” and Eternal life have, so to say, taken form, Scripture shows that they are from heaven.

For him the Son of Man is an “it,” and together with the Second Man and Eternal life, forms a “they,” essentially ever in the Son, which now, having taken form, are distinct from deity, and destitute of divine attributes though from heaven and of the Son; and, as to Eternal life, it is, he says, an “integral part” of His Person. Thus what is true in Him is true in us. He says:

Christ is the Second Man, and there is that which we have in common with Him. We are “all of one” (Some Letters, pp. 5-6).

And in order that this might be fitted in to Mr. Raven’s system, he declares that the Second Man does not cover all that is true of the Son, and that as such divine attributes do not attach to Him, viz., omnipotence, omniscience, self-existence, &c. That is to say, Mr. R. fears not to deny the attributes of a divine Person to this blessed One, as Second Man, because grace associates us with Him as “all of one!” Who, then, is this Son of Man that was lifted up that we might have eternal life? Deity and every divine attribute is His, else were the value of His deity eliminated from the atonement He made. This teaching dissolves, so to speak, the Person of Christ into parts, whether integral or essential, destroys true propitiation, and introduces into Christianity an essence -- eternal, but not deity 1 -- ever the Second Man, but having taken form, not including divine attributes, nor covering all that is true of the Son! Scripture abhors such theorizing.

This, again, is the stepping-stone to a further statement by Mr. Raven (Some Letters, p. 13). He says:

What they saw was man after the flesh in divine perfection before God. (Again), What came under the eye of God and before the eyes of man, apart from fruits and power of the anointing of the Holy Spirit for service and glimpses of divine glory, was the perfect setting forth of man . . . after the flesh.

What, may I ask, was there in Jesus apart from fruits of the Holy Spirit? Perfect Man, indeed, He was, and far more -- the Son of God, the Christ of God, manifested in flesh, and never was He apart from this as under the eye of God, or indeed before the eyes of men, however blind they were to it. Those who saw Him were “eye-witnesses of and attendants upon the Word” (Luke 1:2). A miraculous star announces His birth to far off Gentiles. A babe unborn, His great forerunner, who was to make ready for Jehovah a prepared people, leapt in presence of such grace. The angelic hosts fill the heavens to gaze upon that lowly Babe, and own Him as the Lord. The Holy Spirit by Simeon gives testimony that He is God’s Salvation -- Jehovah’s Christ. The Magi do Him homage, and the Scriptures put in evidence the eternal ways of Him who is born in Bethlehem. He is the object of the Father’s care, of the Angels’ ministry, and even of Satanic hatred, while on every hand the hearts and consciences of men are aroused. Perfect Man He was, and called a Nazarene -- in the likeness, surely, of sinful flesh, come of a woman under the law -- a body prepared for Him, but what came under the eye of God was more than “perfect man according to the flesh.” This Adam innocent was; but Christ was that “holy thing” {Luke 1:35} and Adam never was that.

But Mr. Raven separates what Scripture does not. He says:

What came under the eye of God, apart from fruits and power of the anointing of the Holy Ghost, was the perfect setting forth of man according to the flesh; but Scripture, on the contrary, connects the perfect humanity of Christ with the “fruits and power of the anointing of the

[1. {That is, FER held, as we may call it, a humanity-in-essence, and an eternal life-in-essence, ever in the Son eternally, though not part of deity.}]

Appendix 2 : F. E. Raven’s Apollinarian Doctrine 93
Holy Spirit.” Never is the fine flour in the meal-offering “apart from” the mingling or the anointing with oil.² May God preserve us from this evil doctrine, which is the negation of the truth of Christ!

A second edition of a letter, by Mr. J. A. Trench, has just been put into my hands, in which much truth is raked together and used to cover the evil of a doctrine which he has to say:

You will understand that it is not that the expression of the truth in him (Mr. Raven) commends itself to me, nor that I have received or find any help on the subject so much before him in his sentences (p. 1). (Again), Raven is far too one-sided in the way he treats the subject, and . . . does not “preserve the balance of Scripture as to it” (p. 9). (Again), I distrust his systematizing, and do not go with all the details of the development of it, fearing narrowness (p. 13). Who, then, is the teacher among whom such brethren are gathered to-day? And for whose sake have they rejected the solemn judgment of the two or three gathered to Christ’s Name {at Bexhill, June 29, 1890}? Is it Mr. Trench or Mr. Raven? The former knows perfectly well that he himself is the disciple following and supporting Mr. Raven, and using truth to pander to and shelter the evil doctrine of the latter. For instance, Mr. Trench says:

there is the determination to construe all that Raven says in the worst sense even if it seem capable of another (p. 1).

But should a teacher use words bearing the worst construction, even if, as a possible alternative, they may seem capable of another sense? Thus, according to Mr. J. A. Trench, Raven’s words have, or may have, a double sense, one the worst and the other good, or at least not so bad. Mr. J. C. Trench went even farther than this in his defense of Raven (Reply to One in Difficulty, p. 5) where he gives the senses of “involve” meaning “to result in,” and “is essential to,” and “has the capacity of” (three entirely different expressions), to the word “means,” used by Mr. Raven in the sentence “eternal life means for a Christian a wholly new order of things.” Such futile playing upon words exposes fully the spirit of partisanship at work, and causes Mr. J. A. Trench’s animadversions to recoil with tenfold force upon himself.

In p. 4 of this recent letter of Mr. J. A. T.’s, in reply to Mr. Rule, he has a remarkably good statement as to the glory of the Second Man. He says:

The Second Man, last Adam, is the central subject of Scripture . . .

If He fills all in all, it is not as God, but as He who has been raised from the dead.

. . . Not to angels, but to man -- the Second Man, I need hardly say -- Thou hast put all things in subjection under His feet . . . every ray of the glory of God concentrated upon the face for ever, once more marred then that of any man.

Here evidently the Second Man is a divine Person, with divine attributes, and divine glory; but suppose Mr. Raven’s bad doctrine were tacked on to this extract, viz., that “What characterizes the Second Man could not include all that is true of a divine Person, such as self-existence (having life in Himself), omnipotence, omniscience, and many other attributes of a divine Person!” It would deny and stultify all that J. A. Trench previously said. His tract indeed is but daubing the evil with the good -- the wall with untempered mortar. Forms of piety are thus used to set aside the glory of Christ as Man.

Mr. J. A. Trench writes much that is good, and speaks well of the supremacy, and deity, and divine glory, and attributes of the Second Man, but why does he speak so? It is in effect to force upon the saints a doctrine that absolutely denies divine attributes, such as omniscience, self-existence, omnipotence, and “many other attributes of a divine Person” to the Second Man -- a doctrine that asserts that “the Second Man does not cover all that is true of the Son.”

Such doctrines may indeed suit Mr. R., and his followers, but Scripture contradicts this statement in both its parts, for the blessed Savior adored by the living God to say if He was the Christ, the Son of God, replied “Thou hast said. Moreover, I say to you, from henceforth ye shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming on the clouds of heaven” (Matt. 26:63-64). Thus He identifies the Son of God, and Son of Man, and predicates omnipotence, precisely of the latter. Scripture is everywhere consistent in its testimony to this. In reply to His enquiry, “Who do men say that I the Son of Man am?” Peter, by the revelation of the Father, could say, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” True He was to go away to Jerusalem and suffer, but raised from the dead, the Son of Man would “come in the glory of His Father with His angels” (Matt. 16:13-28). The Son of Man was Son of the Father. Grace had brought Him into the world the first time, and His second advent would be characterized by glory, but His Person was the same unchangeably. For if the Son of Man takes the kingdom, it is He the Christ, who gives up the kingdom to Him who is God and Father, and then shall the Son also Himself be placed in subjection to Him who put all things in subjection to Him (1 Cor. 15:20-28). Here it is “the Son Himself” who is placed in subjection, and it is also “the Son” that can do nothing of Himself, but does this deny His omnipotence? Surely not. Nor is omniscience denied to “the Son” by the Scripture that states “of that day or of that hour (of the coming of the Son of Man) no one knows, neither the angels who are in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only” (Mark 13:32). On the other hand it is “the Son of Man” whom the angels serve (John 1:51), and to whom

². An apparent exception is found in Lev. 23, but notice the difference between v. 13 and v. 17. In the latter case the loaves were “baken with leaven.”
every knee shall bow.

I fearlessly assert that there is no Scripture, and no Scriptural warrant, for denying divine attributes to the Second Man; if there is, let them produce it. The statement as it stands, rests merely upon the “I cannot imagine” of a man. But more, all Scripture is consistent in its testimony to the positive deity and divine attributes of the Son of Man. Nor could it be otherwise. Scripture reveals the objects of faith, and faith receives and knows them as they really are before God. It does not systematize Scripture, which is in fact subjecting the truth to the mind of man, and thus is infidel in its tendency, and leaves God out. Into this error these teachers have fallen. On the contrary faith, however instructed and intelligent -- for there is such a thing as unintelligent faith -- ever sees as God sees, and for Him, Christ, the last Adam, the Second Man, the Son of Man, the Son of David though David's Lord, Son of God, Son of the Father, is ever the same blessed Person to whom deity and divine attributes absolutely belong, whatever the character and position He may assume, and however He may in grace empty Himself to become Man, and indeed humble Himself, even unto death, and that the death of the cross.
The truth of Christ’s Person: Is It Taught by Mr. F. E. Raven?

By W. T. Whybrow

To one who loves the Lord Jesus Christ no apology will be needed for drawing attention to Mr. Raven’s last paper, entitled The Person of the Christ, to which may now be added Notes of Readings, etc., at Quemerford.1 Months have passed since the publication of the former pamphlet; and now, instead of rebuke or protest from those associated with him, and who are involved in the responsibility of his erroneous teaching, a company of them gathered at Quemerford are found sitting at his feet and drinking it in, if not striving to enforce it. The few objectors are practically crushed.

Humanity a Part of Christ’s Person

The principle he has now adopted, namely, that humanity forms no part of the Person of the Lord, fatally compromises the truth of Christ. He says it is derogatory to the truth of the Son to think that, in becoming man,

He is in person something which He was not before.

It is a Person in a condition in which He was not previously.2 Christ, he says,

is not man in the sense that He is God.3

In Person He is God, in condition He is Man.4

Therefore he would not allow that He is personally man; 5 He is

a divine Person who came into human form and condition, 6

a divine Person assuming human condition. 7

Christ’s humanity is thus, according to Mr. Raven, a condition. He does not believe in Christ’s individuality as a man. He denies personality in the man Christ Jesus. Christ’s humanity is for him impersonal. He may, perhaps, allow that it consisted of body, soul, and spirit; 8 but his reply on the point leaves it very doubtful whether he holds even to Christ’s human spirit. 9 But it is clear he refuses Christ’s human personality. For him the Lord’s humanity is “actual condition,” as opposed to the Gnostic idea.10

If Not, No True Christ

Well would he be able to say with those Puseyite theologians who have preceded him in these profane reveries,

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 can not understand, but we believe it is a mystery revealed for faith.

Mr. Darby asks, Where? and adds, “They have no true Christ at all. 11 How strange and solemn the fact that this should be no less true of Mr. Raven and his followers to-day!

A Christ without human personality, but merely a divine Person in the condition of human life 12 is not a true Christ at all.

Jesus, God and Man in One Person

It is well that in his pamphlet he has come to Scripture. The attacks he therein speaks of, “based on isolated statements culled from letters he has written,” were but demands for Scripture proof of the doctrines he now reproduces and develops. To speak of these as attacks does not mark a consciousness of having Scripture for his ideas on the Person of Christ. He must remember that our Lord Jesus Christ is the Object of faith and love to every believer. It is therefore quite out of place for Mr. R. to adopt an injured tone when introducing thoughts about Him which are acknowledged to be in opposition to those entertained by Christians generally, as well as hitherto accepted by brethren as true. He

1. Truth For the Time (Part 8), Morrish.
2. The Person, &c., p. 3.
5. Truth, p. 132.
7. The Person, &c., p. 2.
8. [In using the words soul and spirit in another paper, The Person of Christ, for example, he was attaching new meanings to these old terms, as (continued…)]
12. Truth, p. 129.
repudiates the statement quoted from the Liturgy of the Anglican Establishment, “God and man, one Christ.” 13 Not that this, or any other creed, is of the least authority for faith, but the phrase quoted fairly expresses, in a human way, the revealed truth of the Person of Christ. Mr. R. would substitute for it a formula of his own, namely:

a divine Person assuming human condition,

a Person in a condition in which He was not previously, denying at the same time

the union in Him of God and man; 14

and in reply to the question “Why is He not personally man?” saying:

He is the Son, but in the condition of a man. 15

Thus he as plainly falsifies the truth of the Person of Christ as Athanasius fairly expresses it; and flatly contradicts the teaching of Mr. Darby, who says as to the Person of Christ:

“apart from God.” It constantly does. For example, “God and Man . . . who, although He be God and Man, yet He is not two, but one Christ.” And again, lower down, “So God and Man is one Christ,” where the Greek has ἕν ἐστιν ἄνθρωπος, οὗ µετὰ τοῦ θεοῦ. 

Athenæus himself says (De Trin. Dialog. 5): Χριστὸς ἐν πρὸς ὑλήν ἐστὶ συνειδήθνην ἐν λοιπὸν καὶ ἄνθρωποτός, ὥς πᾶς ἄνθρωπος ὁ κοινὸς ἐκ ζώου καὶ λογικοῦ.

Augustine says (in Joh. Tract. 783): Utrunçque autem simul non duo; sed unus est Christus. Ne sit quaternitas non trinitas Deus. Sic enim unus est homo anima rationalis et caro, sic unus est Christus Deus et Homo.

These, out of innumerable passages from early Christian writers, show clearly that Mr. Raven introduces thoughts which are in opposition to those entertained by Christians representative of the faith of Christians in all ages and places.

Mr. R.’s Teaching Systematized

The two points taken up in Mr. Raven’s pamphlet are by no means new, nor have those who reject his doctrines shifted the ground of conflict. From the first, the Person of Christ was, more or less, distinctly in question. He writes, under date of August 25, 1890:

What characterized the second man could not include all that was true of a divine Person;

and, again,

I cannot imagine how any one could think that the second man covers all that is true of the Son; yet the second man was out of heaven, as eternal life was with the Father.

November 25, 1890, three months later than the above, the same thing is repeated in almost identical terms, 17 yet three days afterwards, in a letter published by himself, 18 he says:

I had no system of doctrine, nor the faintest idea of propounding any.

In the same letter he says:

I think that I have, through grace, received light on these subjects, though four months previously he had disclaimed having “found new light.” 19

The climax of irreverence is reached in a letter of his, printed in a tract form, and circulated widely in Canada and the States, but without publisher’s name, under date of October 30, 1891, which says:

It is perfectly certain that Scripture can, and does, constantly view Christ as man, apart and distinct from what He is as divine.

The year following (May, 1892), and again after the lapse of some fifteen months, in a letter dated August 29, 1893, he repeats: “Christ is viewed as man, distinct and apart from what He is as God” in many passages of the Word.

Finally, in 1895, the same formula appears in a published form in the present tract.

It is, therefore, plain matter of fact that we have here a regularly formulated doctrine, and not mere “isolated statements culled from letters.” Forms of words, reiterated at intervals during a period of at least three or four years, reveal a well-defined system existing, though one would fain believe unconsciously in Mr. Raven’s mind. It is this that has to be met.

Christ not Viewed in Scripture
Apart from What He is as Divine

The question is a plain one, and fairly put -- whether Christ is ever viewed in Scripture as man, distinct and apart from what He has as divine, or as God? Scripture alone must, therefore, settle the question for us. In the first place remark, it is not whether Scripture views Christ as man “apart from God.” It constantly does. For example, “God is one, and the mediator of God and men one -- the man Christ Jesus,” but this does not view Christ apart from what He is as divine, nor question the union of the divine and human nature in Christ, 20 as Mr. Raven does. The difference

13. A friend communicates the following:

The Athanasian Creed runs as follows -- “We believe and confess, that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and Man . . . who, although He be God and Man, yet He is not two, but one Christ.” And again, lower down, “So God and Man is one Christ,” where the Greek has ἕν ἐστιν ἄνθρωπος, οὗ µετὰ τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἄνθρωπος εἰς ἐστιν Χριστός.

14. The Person, &c., p. 3.

15. Truth, &c., p. 133.


18. Letters dated Nov. 28, 1890; July 3, 1890.

19. Letters dated Nov. 28, 1890; July 3, 1890.

20. See Collected Writings of J. N. Darby 17:26 [17]. It seems as if Mr. R. had appropriated Mr. Darby’s words, without understanding them, and (continued…)
between his statement and that of Scripture is immense. His view abstracts Deity, so that Christ is seen apart from what He Himself is -- an absurdity which is its own refutation. It falsifies the truth, for if the Deity of His Person be eliminated, where is the value and efficacy of His mediation? Were it true, such passages would present a manhood without any Divine Person, or, indeed, a true personality at all. On the other hand, Scripture does view Christ as man necessarily so, and thus apart, one may say, from God as in the passage quoted, but not "apart from what He is" in His own Person as God or divine. He, and He alone, is God manifested in flesh, and to view Him "apart from what He is," is impossible in faith or fact. Mr. Raven tells us that Christ's Person is divine -- true; and he says the truth of it is "a divine Person assuming human condition." If, then, as he also says, Scripture views Him "apart from what He is as divine," or as God, then in such scriptures only a human condition would be presented to us!

Here it is no question of a title or condition, such as the term "the Christ" supposes, but of Christ Himself. Mr. R. makes "No man knows the Son save the Father" {Matt. 18:27}, equivalent to grasping what Christ is; firstly, as being "the Word become flesh," and secondly, as filling "a place as man toward God." The unknowableness of the Person of the Son is with him the impossibility of a "finite mind" grasping these two thoughts "at one and the same time." He thinks, however, to do so separately, and thus, perhaps, to know this unsearchable mystery. It is impossible. Can a finite mind grasp the thought of the Word become flesh -- whether separately or not? Nay, faith receives the revelation and worships. But the error of his theory is evident from a simple consideration. He says Christ is viewed as man "apart from what He is as God." If so, it must equally be allowed that Christ can be viewed as God apart from what He is as man. But this would be utterly false, for once in flesh you can have no personal Christ at all as an object of faith apart from His manhood.

Christ in Manhood

Ever Recognized to be Divine

No one questions that "the reality of Christ's manhood, in its aspect Godward, is amply presented in the New Testament." This is fundamental to the Christian faith, but the point with Mr. Raven is that in this respect He is "viewed apart and distinct from what He is as divine." In proof of this he quotes Rom. 6., but in no wise does the passage separate Christ as man from what He is as divine. It is "by the glory of the Father" He is raised from the dead. He is, therefore, the divine Son. It is not only "to sin," but "for sin," he has died. Will Mr. R. exclude what He is as divine from the sacrifice? True, He died in manhood, but will Mr. R. deny the value of His Deity to that death? If so, there would be no propitiation. He is of the seed of David according to the flesh, but the same person is marked out Son of God, with power according to the Spirit of holiness by the resurrection of the dead {Rom. 1:4}.

He quotes also Eph. 4:21, "As is truth in Jesus." Does he mean thereby so to eliminate the divine from the person of Jesus as to place Him on our level as set forth in that passage? Far be such a thought. He had not to put off the old man corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, nor had He to put on the new man. We needed to be created according to God. He was the creator Himself -- God, according to whom we are created.

The scriptures chosen by himself to support his theory, especially that from 1 Tim. 6:13, most emphatically deny it. Who is this Christ Jesus who witnessed before Pontius Pilate the good confession? Is He viewed apart from what He is as divine? Nay, He is linked with absolute Deity, as having divine claim upon the faithfulness and obedience of the servant. "I enjoin thee," Paul says, "before God . . . and Christ Jesus," and then immediately presents the inaccessible majesty of the unseen and sovereign Ruler. But our Lord Jesus Christ alone appears as the divine source and repository of this glory. Will He, then, be seen apart from what He is as divine? Will the Deity in Him be unrecognized, albeit that He is the faithful man? There is no such thought in Scripture, which, when speaking of that time, ascribes to Him the titles and attributes of Deity. (Cf. Dan. 7; Rev. 19). Here Christ is seen "in His place as man Godward," but not "apart and distinct from what He is as divine."

The Testimony to Christ’s Deity Involves His Manhood

Again Mr. R. quotes Heb. 2, 6, 9, and says, “the Apostle” presents God; “the High Priest,” man. The latter is presented in the above scriptures, and he says:

It is utterly impossible to introduce the idea of Deity in its proper character and attributes. This last clause is a new and somewhat vague limitation. What does he mean by the proper character and attributes of Deity? Well, we will suppose those already spoken of in 1 Tim. 6:15, 16, “Who only has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light; whom no man has seen, nor is able to see.” Here we have a general statement given by the Holy

20. (.. continued)
now reproduces them unintentionally perverted.
21. [This is the conclusion I had reached before I saw WTW’s paper. FER was bringing this into the area of scrutability by the human mind. See references to “inscrutability” in the subject index.

22. [It is the glory and value of His Person that imparts its infinite value to the work on the cross.]
Ghost of the attributes proper to Deity, essential and incommunicable. Can he say, then, that these are found in “the Apostle,” who, he says, presents God? Certainly not. If we view Christ as “the Apostle,” He is not inaccessible, not unseen. Viewing Him as God, you cannot leave out what He is as man. Nor does Scripture do so. Of whom is it said, “Thou art my Son: I have to-day begotten thee” {Psa. 2}? Of Messiah born in time -- a Man. Again, “I will be to him for father, and he shall be to me for son.” Was not this said of the Son of David’s Seed? Is He seen here apart from what He is as Man? Yet all this is said of Him precisely in His divine character. The address to the Son is, “Thy throne, O God,” and in the same Psalm, “Thy God hath anointed Thee.” Here we have His positive Deity and reality of Manhood spoken of as it were in the same breath. The divine Firstborn, whom all the angels shall worship, is clearly not the “idea of Deity” simply, but Messiah, Son of God and King of Israel, Son of David. You cannot abstract what He is as Man from these passages, though presented as testimonies to His positive Deity (Heb. 1:1, 2). To attempt to do so in that solemn and wonderful Psa. 102 (or, indeed, anywhere), would deserve the reprobation of every Christian. Who is this person whose heart is smitten and withered like grass; who has eaten as he liked bread, and mingled his drink with weeping; whose strength is weakened in the way, and his days shortened? Surely a Man. Yes, but He whose years are from generation to generation, the Creator eternally the Same, whose years have no end.

**The High Priest a Divine Person**

But to turn to the other side of the question: When viewed as man is He seen apart from what He is as God? The great example given by Mr. Raven is that of the High Priest. Here He is seen, he says, apart from what He is as God. The whole drift of the Epistle to the Hebrews is the studious denial of this. In order to establish the wavering minds of the Hebrew Christians, the Apostle insists most diligently that they have “a great high priest . . . Jesus the Son of God” (Heb. 4:14). Again, he links the testimony to His divine Sonship with His call to the everlasting priesthood in Heb. 5:5-8. It is the Son who fills this office according to all the glory of His Person. Jesus is entered as forerunner for us, and is presented surely as man Godward. This is not the point in debate, but whether, if so, He is viewed apart from what He is as divine. To suppose so would deny the whole scope of the Apostle’s argument in Heb. 7; that is, would be destructive of Christianity. He sets forth most powerfully the spiritual force of the term “order of Melchizedek,” used to describe the Priesthood of Christ. Being Son of God, He answers divinely to that of which Melchizedek was a figure -- king of righteousness, king of peace, without genealogy -- contrasted with human descent, He abides as Son of God, a priest continually.

In this character He is our forerunner, but so far from being viewed apart from what He is as divine, or as God, He, in contrast with human high priests, is a Son perfected forever. The importance of the use of “Son” here is seen by comparison with the first chapter, where it is quoted in testimony to His essential Deity.

The theory in question is thus disproved in every particular. “We have such a one high priest who has sat down on the right hand of the throne of the greatness in the heavens” (Heb. 8:1). Is there nothing divine here? Is it “utterly impossible to introduce the idea of Deity in its proper character and attributes”? On the contrary, the object of the apostle is to bring in the idea of His Deity, and to show forth the divine excellence of this glorious man. Moreover, who is He that appears in the presence of God for us? The answer is supplied in Heb. 10. It is He who, according to His own eternal competency, could say, “Lo, I come (in the roll of the book it is written of me) to do, O God, Thy will.” Is this viewing Him apart from what He is as divine? As in Psa. 45 He says, “O God,” but it is the divine and eternal One, in the eternal scene, who says it. The fact, then, is clear that the disassociation of the divine and human in the Person of Christ is destructive of faith and of Christianity.

Moreover, Mr. Raven’s interpretation of the Epistle to the Hebrews is largely leavened with a misapprehension of the force of the rending of the veil. It does not represent “God coming out.” 23 This was true in Christ in the days of His flesh. The veil was rent for man to go in. If Christ presents man to God Scripture views Him therein as Jehovah’s Fellow (Zech. 13:7), not as Mr. Raven says, “Apart and distinct from what He is as divine”; and if God to man, it is a man who is God manifested in flesh. If I think of Him as God it is the man I see, and seeing Him the eye rests upon God. “He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father.”

**To Say that Christ had No Human Personality Is Heresy**

The second portion of Mr. Raven’s tract insists that “the truth of Christ’s Person” does not consist “in the union in Him of God and man” (p. 3). This idea is, that in becoming man Christ is not “in Person something which He was not before,” that in Him is no human personality or individuality at all, but His humanity only relates to form or human condition, which could be taken and given up and taken again (p. 3), and the Person, the Son, remain without any difference. Mr. R. considers that to reject his teaching on this subject approaches very near to heresy, and infers a dual personality. But he may remember Nestorius was anathematized because he taught that there was a separate

---

basis of personality in the human nature of our Lord, that He was, in fact, a double being. It is Mr. R. who now would view Christ as man, distinct and apart from what He is as God or divine. And in avoiding the Scylla of Nestorianism he has fallen into the Charybdis of an impersonal humanity, for he denies the union in Christ of God and man, and that in becoming man . . . He is in person something which He was not before.

For Mr. R. it is simply “the same Person unchanged and unchangeable” -- “a divine Person assuming a human condition” -- “a condition in which He was not previously.” “In Person Christ is God,” he says, “in condition He is man.” There is no human personality, but only human condition. This is the High-church doctrine of the incarnation. It is strange that Mr. R. should have imbibed it, for he denies the union in Christ of God and man, and other Christians would repudiate with abhorrence. It is this, too, that Mr. Darby so strongly condemned in his article on “Christological Pantheism.”

J. N. D. writes:

That Christ had no human personality . . . is really heresy (though God and man were united in one person) (again), 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? (And in a note he adds) It shows the danger of those 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.

This is precisely what is now in question. Unconsciously, or, at least, inconsiderately, Mr. Raven has followed the doctrine of the Bampton Lectures of Dr. Liddon which teach the impersonal humanity of Christ, a figment invented in conformity with their doctrinal and sacramental theory of union with Christ in incarnation. As Dr. Liddon writes,

Our eternal Lord has thus taken upon Him our fallen nature in its integrity, (and consequently we are) sanctified by a real union with the Most Holy. (p.65).

If Christ’s personality or individuality as a Man is denied, then there would be no “Person” to raise up out of death. It is death and resurrection that exposes the futility of Mr. Raven’s teaching, identical as it is with the system in this respect.

The Human Personality of Christ not lost by Death

Mr. Raven’s reasoning is fallacious and unscriptural, for the contrast presented in Phil. 2, which he quotes, is between “the form of God” and “a bondman’s form,” “the likeness of men.” When, being in the form of God, He emptied Himself, did He cease to be God? Certainly not. When He laid down His life (“human condition,” Mr. R says), did He cease to be Man? Indeed, no! Resurrection was surely needed, but death was no relapse into abstract Deity. He was still Man. Having become Man, He abides Man uninterruptedly in death as well as out of it (Psa. 16:10). It is, therefore, vain to insist that Mr. R.’s term “human condition” is equivalent to the scriptural expression “likeness of men.”

The drift of Mr. Raven’s teaching is that manhood in Christ is “human condition” in contrast with His Person -- a condition which can be wholly laid down. If this were so, then it would be equally true of our manhood. But we have no “person” at all apart from manhood, and never shall have. If, therefore, manhood be merely “human condition” and brought into death, then all personality for us would be gone for ever. On Mr. R.’s principle, death for Christ would mean relapse into abstract Deity, and for us annihilation. But our manhood consists of “soul” with “spirit” and body. In 1 Pet. 3:19, 20, personality is connected with the “soul” in this world, and with the “spirit” in the intermediate state. Personality is, therefore, not gone with the body. Mr. R.’s doctrine has a distinctly Sadducean tendency.

His error consists in conceiving of Christ’s humanity as “condition” or “form,” distinct from Person; whereas Scripture presents the form and His Person both as God and as Man. Ever remaining God, He emptied Himself, and now ever remaining Man He, having humbled Himself to death, received Lordship, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to God the Father’s glory.

The Person of Christ not Limited to the Deity in Him

It is not true that Scripture confines the Person of Christ to that which was simple Deity in Him, “unchanged and unchangeable” (p. 3), and apart from His becoming Man, which is “something which He was not before” (p. 3). A passage quoted by Mr. R. (p. 1) itself disproves any such thought. In Col. 1:10, we read, “In Him all the fulness was pleased to dwell.” This is clearly essential Deity and of His Person, yet it is spoken of in distinction with “Him.” It reconciles all things to Itself by “Him,” and makes peace by the blood of His Cross. The Divine “unchanged and unchangeable” does not, therefore, cover all the Personality which is expressly attributed here to Him, in whom the fulness dwelt, and whose blood was shed upon the Cross. There is no dual personality; but Christ’s Person now covers His Manhood equally with His Godhead. In seeking to grasp what is beyond a finite mind, Mr. R. has fatally erred in

---

denying that humanity forms part of the Person of Christ.

It is scarcely possible to acquit him of subtilty in his teaching on page 3. He says that to hold “the union in Him of God and man . . . involves a thought very derogatory to the truth of the Son, namely, that, in becoming man, a change has taken place as to His Person.” So far one would agree that becoming Man has not, in any degree whatever, changed, or caused any change, in the essential Deity of His Person. But immediately Mr. R. adds, as if it were the same thought, something entirely different, namely, that He is not “in person something which He was not before” (p. 3). Now though His divine Person is “unchanged and unchangeable,” yet, in becoming Man, Scripture shows us, as we have seen in Col. 1, that Personality is expressly predicated of Him, whose blood was shed, by Whom the fulness which dwelt in Him, reconciles all things to itself. It is not a dual-Personality, but a divine and human Person, who, in becoming Man, is something which He was not before -- that is, a Man. He is, moreover, not viewed in Scripture distinct and apart from what He is as God or divine. Were He not Man He would not be the image of the invisible God; yet, in being this, the attributes of Deity are necessarily included. He was not, like Adam, made in the image of God; but, being Man, He was, and is, the image of the invisible God, because He was, and is, Himself God. So also, were He not God, the Creator, He would not be the First-born of every creature; yet Manhood is of necessity involved in being it.

Mr. Raven would view Christ apart from what He is as God or as divine, and thus having conceived a mere humanity, he declares this is “condition,” not “Person.” Thus, instead of a living Christ, there would be but a “human condition”! The wonder is how any Christian can allow the truth of Christ to be so flitted away in abstractions.

The Christ and Son of Man

The last question, taken up in page 4 of the tract, is thoroughly misapprehended. He states it thus: whether every title, or name, inherited by the Son, or applied to Him in Scripture, embraces or covers, if it does not describe, the whole truth of His Person.

Undoubtedly, each title has to be understood within its own appropriate limits. But this is not the question, but whether, when “applied to Him, it embraces the whole truth of His Person.” Emphatically, yes! Mr. Raven does not distinguish between a title or office, abstractedly considered, and the application of it to a person. The title, “anointed,” is applied to the Patriarchs, to Saul, to David, to the Son Himself, and to the Saints, as joined to Christ. In each case the title has a different force, according to the person to whom it is applied. Saul’s anointing was that of a king given in anger; David’s, that of a man after God’s own heart; Christ’s, that of the divine Son; of the saints as united to Him, it is said, “So also is the Christ” {1 Cor. 12:12}. In each case the term has no unvarying abstract force, but extends to the truth of the person to whom it is applied.

“Jesus is the anointed of God”; but immediately it can be said that Jesus is that, then the how and why declare, at once, what the term covers in His case. Anointed by the Holy Ghost, on the ground of His own personal worthiness and relationship as Son of the Father -- a divine Person, though truly Man, yet Son of God; this and more is what “the Christ” covers, as applied to Him.

“Christ” is a name applicable to the Person only. “The Christ,” the Messiah or Anointed, designates a condition into which He has entered, and which, as now applied to Him, so covers the truth of His Person that, as “the Christ,” all that He is is embraced.

“Son of Man” is a character found in Scripture (Dan. 7:13); but immediately it is taken by the Lord Himself it becomes personal, and covers the truth of what He is. Thus the Lord uses it to embrace or cover, as Son of Man, the whole truth of His Person, so that no divine attribute can be denied to Him; as for example, “The Son of Man, who is in heaven”; “If then ye see the Son of Man ascending up where He was before” {John 6:62}.

Jesus having become “the Christ” and “Son of Man,” they are filled according to the glory of His Person, and the reverent heart feels instinctively that it is ruinous to treat them as merely official titles. Can a title be lifted up, or an office suffer? Granted that the former is a condition, now that Christ is in it, it covers the truth of what He is as such.

Death Destroys

The Christ of Ravenism

Bad as Mr. R.’s teaching is on this point, it is the making Christ’s humanity to be “condition,” with nothing of “Person,” that is so fatal. A humanity of this sort, if laid down in death, would be gone for ever. Nor can we doubt that it is this kind of humanity he contemplates; for he denies, as to the blessed Lord, that in becoming Man “He is in person something which He was not before” (p. 3). Moreover, he identifies “His life,” which He lays down, with His “human condition” (p. 3), and insists, as to “Person,” that it is “unchanged and unchangeable.” It is clear, then, that he excludes humanity from Christ’s Person, denying “that the truth of Christ’s Person consists in the union in Him of God and man,” 27 and denying that He is personally man. 28 He carefully distinguishes between Christ’s “person and condition,” and says He is “a divine

26. See Note on Rev. 1:13; Cor. 1:5, N. Trans., {of J.D.}.
27. Mr. Darby asserts, “God and man were united in one person” (Bible Witness and Review 1:206 (1877)).
Person assuming human condition” (p. 3). But he declares that Christ lays down “human condition.” Then, if so, the divine Person alone remains -- humanity is gone. It is in vain for Mr. Raven to say that He takes it again -- not only resurrection, but re-incarnation would be needed. Man is body, soul, and spirit. If Christ had not all this in manhood -- if He had not a human personality or individuality as a man, then death was the end of His humanity. True, Mr. R. allows that He takes “human condition” again, but if this is without human personality, and is separated from His divine and unchangeable “Person” by death, it must be lost, and another and a different “condition” taken. The Man is not the same; the true character of His humanity would be gone for ever -- that which fitted Him to be a merciful and faithful High Priest would be utterly lost. The Man, who suffered and was tempted in all things in like manner as we, would have perished. Man is something that Christ was not before incarnation, but Mr. R. asserts this is untrue of Christ’s Person. On this principle there is no humanity in Christ’s Person, and if brought into death the “unchanged and unchangeable” divine Person alone remains, and the body raised, but the Man is lost. It is only in that case, just what Mr. Raven says, “a divine Person assuming human condition” (p. 3).

While pretending to put the truth of the High Priest in its place all this Raven system destroys it. The Man who offered up both supplications and entreaties to Him who was able to save Him out of death, with strong crying and tears, is the same Man, though He were a Son, who, having been perfected, became to them that obey Him author of eternal salvation. Scripture does not present His humanity as a “condition” which He laid down and took up again, though this is true as to His life, but shows Him to be personally Man, divine also, who suffered in the days of His flesh, died and rose again, as really as any one of His saints, but the same blessed Man throughout, and now Man eternally -- God and man in one Person.

Deny the part that manhood has in the person of Christ, and you deny any true man in resurrection. Moreover, as to this, what is denied of Christ must be denied of His saints.

Ravenism and Unitarianism

Mr. Raven’s scoffing remark about Tritheism, at the close of his paper, is one that Christians are well accustomed to from the lips of Unitarians. The difference, however, between the two systems of teaching is simply this: the Unitarian would offer you a Christ in whose person there is no Deity. Mr. R. presents a Christ in whose “Person” there is no manhood. For him Christ’s humanity is no part of His “Person,” for he says His Person is “unchanged and unchangeable,” and is not “something which He was not before,” as is His manhood. The latter is, according to his theory, “a condition” assumed by a divine Person, but distinct from “Person.” Scripture teaches us that being in the form of God Christ was and is eternally and unchangeably God. Becoming in the likeness of men He was a man, not merely in a “human condition”; and there was naught of humanity in Him before. In death He laid down “human condition,” yet remained man, being ever God. In resurrection He takes life again, and abides Man for ever -- a servant in grace, even if exalted Lord of all. It is death and resurrection that tests and exposes Mr. Raven’s teaching.

29. {The reader should appreciate the fact that when our Lord’s body lay in death, the human soul and spirit remained united to the Deity, and so the incarnation continued to subsist.}
F. E. R. Heterodox on
the Person of the Christ

by William Kelly

... Like B. W. N. [Newton] he [F. E. Raven] does not deny the true deity or the perfect humanity of Christ. But the mind of man readily overthrows the truth of His Person otherwise. So Mr. N. did by his teaching that distance in Christ's relation to God was involved in His birth of woman. Still more boldly does F. E. R. assail the common faith of God's elect. This he knows quite well; for he denies that its truth “consists in the union in Him of God and Man.” I am content to denounce his own form of denial as a against the truth. He has trusted his mind in trying to explain the very point of the Son’s inscrutability. The question is not simply of the divine and eternal personality of the Word, but of Him incarnate. The truth no less clearly revealed is that He became flesh, Christ Jesus Man henceforward, as surely as also God from everlasting to everlasting.

It is to the unity of the two natures in His Person that he objects, and in very revolting and contemptuous terms, where reverence and self-distrust were preeminently called for. Yet he knew that he was not only opposing but striving to put shame on the confession of every saint who has written on it, as far as is known through all the church of God, to say nothing of every teacher esteemed among Brethren. Here are his words (7 Dec. 1893): --

Where the idea of unity of a person is got from I know not. It seems to me perfect nonsense. The idea of person does not bring in the thought of either parts or unity. A person is that person in every variety of relations he may enter. No one would accuse me of dividing the person of the Queen because I said that in her home life she was seen distinct and apart from what she is as Queen. It is two totally distinct ideas coalesced in one person, but which can be separately presented and apprehended.

Now who does not know that a person among men consists of both parts and unity? There are spirit and soul and body; and yet they constitute the person. There may be temporary dissolution of the outer tie by death; there will surely be their unity in one person for eternity. But for the true believer Christ’s Person is distinguished from every other by the infinite fact of God and man united thus. These are in Him for ever indissoluble, though no saint doubts that He is Son of God and Son of man. Whatever His profound emotion in spirit, whatever the conflict when He prayed more earnestly, and His sweat became as great drops of blood, that Man was inseparably God; and as from His conception, so fully in His death and resurrection. Thus had His every word, work, thought, and suffering divine value.

It is not the Son alone, but “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.” The man Christ Jesus is not only the one Mediator, but the true God and eternal life; the sent Servant, and the “I AM”; Christ of the fathers as according to flesh, yet He that is over all, God blessed for evermore. Amen.

Deny the unity of His Person, of the Word become flesh; and all the truth of His life and death dissolves. His atoning work is thus utterly subverted: on which depends not only man’s salvation, the reconciling of the creature, and the new heavens and earth, but the moral glory of God in view of sin, His counsels of grace as to Christ and the church, and His triumphant rest in men for all eternity. Think of the Queen or any other human being adduced to solve the great mystery of godliness! What have various relations or differing conditions to do with the divine and the human united in one sole Person, the Christ of God, the knot which man’s wicked wit and will dare to judge, and essay to untie to his own destruction? Truly “fools rush in where angels fear to tread,” and adore. To F. E. R. IT SEEMS PERFECT NONSENSE!

Brethren, have you ever heard of a true Christian who did not thus confess Christ? Here is one called a brother, and claiming to teach, who utter’s his scornful unbelief of Christ’s Person in terms which must have insured his expulsion with horror from all fellowship of saints in former days. Who has a doubt that then it would have raised an impassable barrier? Only of the Lord Jesus could such a unity be predicated, for in Him alone were the two natures for ever united. F. E. R. talks of the Queen! and “two totally different ideas coalesced in one person!” Yes, it is not truth, but “ideas” for F. E. R. Is this to “abide in the doctrine of the Christ”?

It is to join Apollinarius of Antioch (the son). He too made the Logos simply form Christ’s Person, as F. E. R. does, and was therefore justly branded as an antichrist; so Nestorius was for dividing the Person, and Eutyches for confusing it: all of them, strict Trinitarians. For if the Logos had not been united to the soul as to spirit and body in the Christ, Christ was not and is not very Man as well as very God. Without that union there must have been two distinct personalities, the divine and the human. It is the union of both in one Person which alone secures the truth according to scripture. F. E. R. with shameless self-confidence vaunts his idea, which is plain heterodoxy. He
does not “bring the doctrine” of Christ. The Son did not change His Person, but took up manhood into unity, and this in soul as in body.

In some such way deadly false doctrine befalls such as venture to pry into what is only known to the Father and immeasurably above man’s ken. The Apollinarian heterodoxy prevails largely at present; as the error which led to it is a relic of heathen philosophy, accepted by early Fathers such as Clement of Alexandria, and exceedingly common among “thinkers” now as at all times. It pervades Franz Delitzsch’s Psychology and its English analogue, The Tripartite Nature of Man. They (and F. E. R. follows them) make the self-conscious “I” or individuality to reside in man’s spirit. But scripture abundantly proves its seat to be in the soul. The spirit is inner capacity as to which man is responsible to God; but the soul is that in which he is so; and the body is the outer vessel which displays the result, whether by grace for God’s will or by self-will in Satan’s service.

To the soul belongs the working of the will, and now also since the fall the instinctive knowledge of good and evil; so that one is enticed into fleshly lusts which degrade man, as well as into reasonings of the spirit and every high thing that lifts itself up against the knowledge of God. Hence we read of soul-salvation or “salvation of souls” as in 1 Pet. 1:9. Hence Ezek. 18:4, “Behold, all souls are Mine,” and the regular use of “souls” for persons in both O. & N. Testaments. For the self-conscious individual, the responsible person, is in the “I.” It is the “I” in self-will without God; the “I” when converted to God, but in bondage of spirit; and the “I” when Christ’s deliverance is known in peace and liberty; as for the latter we see in Rom. 7, 8. Read also Gal. 2:20.

The error falsifies the truth in human things and yet more in divine. F. E. R. has fallen into Satan’s trap in the most solemn of all truths through morbid self-confidence, and the mania of correcting every body by the standard of his fanciful ideas. He has imagined for the Christ a being, Who, if God, is certainly not complete man. For in his theory the soul does not enter Christ’s personality which is exclusively the Logos. Thus he bans that unity of the two natures which every saint hitherto confesses to be in Christ’s Person. He was already wrong as to man’s person; for like most philosophers he follows the error of the heathen, and ignores the teaching of scripture which points to “the soul” by many plain and irrefragable proofs. But the awful weight of the falsehood lies in his audacious rising up against faith’s mystery of Him Who was manifested in flesh (the body prepared for God’s Son), not taken up as a mere condition but united with Himself indivisibly to all eternity for God’s counsels, work, and ways. If we can rightly say condition, it is that of humanity sustained by Deity in the Person of the Christ.

Beyond doubt the union of God and man in one Person is the wondrous and unfathomable One revealed, not for our comprehension, but for unquestioning faith, love, and honor as we honor the Father. He is thus at once the weary man and the only-begotten Son that is (not “was” merely) in the Father’s bosom; the Son of man here below that is in heaven, and the “I am” on earth threatened by the Jews with stoning because He told them the truth. He must have been the Logos to have been what He was here as man. His soul was united to the Logos: else the Person had been doubled or severed, and He could not be true and complete man. He cried, Let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt. There was His holy will; and it was right to lay it before His Father, but in entire submissiveness to His will and glory; of which none but a divine Person was capable. It was not therefore the Logos superseding the spirit (still less the soul), but perfectly associated with the soul in His one Person. He was true man and true God in the same indivisible Person. In Him dwelt and dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

Yet it is deep pain to feel compelled to speak out plainly, on such a theme not only before others liable to stumble, but in the sense of one’s own danger of offending against God’s word in defense of what is dearer than life, and far beyond man’s thought. Indeed some may be surprised to learn that it was most distasteful to say anything more. A warning I did give in 1890, and a brief leaflet, when the Weston-super-mare Notes disclosed the impious libel against the Lord, that, “Becoming a man, He becomes Logos.” Many hoped that it might be but a slip; but if so, why was it not confessed in sackcloth and ashes? Understanding that it has been defended since, what must one fear? At any rate when the volume unmasked for was sent to me, not a page was read for years. At length having dipped into it, I perceived an astounding progress of unabashed evil. Even then I intended no more than a short paper on “Life Eternal,” and another on its denial as a present gift. As one read on, it seemed a duty to expose unsparingly the system of error in general. This may account for a lack of due order through enlarging the original design.

* * * * *
F. E. Raven, James Taylor, Sr., C. A. Coates, and J. B. Stoney were Apollinarians

FER Denied that Christ Had A Human Soul and Spirit

FER Held that Christ’s Humanity Was a “Condition.” It is important to keep in mind that FER used the word “Person” to mean only the Deity; whereas, the truth is that the Son took manhood into His Person. This means the union of God and man in Him. FER’s mode of speech was that in Person He is God, in condition He is man; i.e., the Person came into a condition. W. Kelly rightly denounced as Apollinarian. 30 FER’s teaching concerning the incarnation, JND wrote:

... the Apollinarians held that Christ had no human intellectual soul, but that the divinity took its place in Christ. 31

JND, who died years before the controversy arose, deliberately rejected Apollinarianism. FER’s Apollinarian doctrine was clearly enunciated in a paper titled, The Person of the Christ (1895). In this paper he said:

The second error maintains that the truth of Christ’s Person consists in the union in Him of God and man ... . The idea of the unity of the Person in the sense asserted is not found. It is a Person in a condition in which He

was not previously. 32

By “condition” he means “flesh and blood,” i.e. a body only. He is here arguing against the orthodox statement that Christ is God and man united in one Person. The “union in Him of God and man” means that man as human body, human soul, and human spirit was united to the deity. This is the truth FER here denies.

Diety Enclosed in a Body. FER’s doctrine, “a Person in a condition” means that the condition was not part of His Person. What this amounts to is that the Son encased Himself in a body. Thus, there was no human soul and spirit; rather, the Deity performed the function of the spirit of the body. That body then, had no human spirit.

No Two Distinct Personalities in Christ. I have emphasised the word distinct in several of the following quotations. In another paper, not to be confused with the above, titled The Person of Christ, FER said:

The same Person abides, though the condition be changed, in His coming of a woman. He is a real Man, body soul and spirit, but still God’s Son (that same Person).

If you carry the thought of the incarnation beyond the scriptural limit, that is, form (that of a servant) and condition (flesh and blood), you cannot avoid, that I can see, reaching distinct personality, and so making two personalities in Christ, a divine and a human. These may be said to be mysteriously blended into one, 33 the unity of the Person, but that is as great an error as if they were spoken of as distinct and apart from Him ... Unity of Person, or indivisibility, is not, I believe, a thought found in Scripture.

... any line of teaching that gives the idea of change in any way as regards the Person is, to my mind, dishonoring to the Son ... “His complete person” is an expression I do not at all like ... I should certainly have thought that what was spiritual was of Himself. 34

This means that the Deity was actually the soul and spirit. His talk about the human soul and spirit merely means, to him, that the Deity supplied that function. There was no real

30. F. E. R. Heterodos, p. 124. The doctrine may be summarized as follows:

Apollinaris at first asserted that the Logos united with a human body only. Afterwards he modified this, by asserting that He united with a body and an irrational soul. ... Apollinaris, from the account given of him by Gregory of Nyssa (Adv. Apollinarem) seems to have blended and confused the human and divine natures even in the Godhead: for he asserted a human element in the divine essence itself. (W. G. T. Shedd, Dogmatic Theology, Minneapolis: Klock and Klock, vol. 2A, p. 312).

A creed called the Chalcedonian creed was issued in 451 A.D. by the Council of Chalcedon in response to a number of attacks on the Person of Christ. Apart from the use of the phrase “Mother of God” it is sound. With the followers of Apollinaris, called Apollinarians, in view, this creed stated:

Perfect in Deity and perfect in Humanity, Truly God and truly Man.

Of a rational soul and body,

Consubstantial with the Father according to His Deity,

Consubstantial with us according to his Humanity, Like us in all respects, apart from sin ...

The expression, “Of a rational soul” (those who consider man to be tri-partite, and rightly so, will find the rational faculty in the spirit, 1 Cor. 2:11) was aimed at the Apollinarians. In addition to FER’s denial that Christ had a human spirit, he also had some such doctrine concerning manhood and deity, for he taught that all that characterizes manhood He brought with Him.

31. Collected writings 34:106.


33. [Who said that? It is merely vicious and cheap polemics to infer his opposers might think that. Why did He never represent their view properly? It sounds like wishful thinking to place his opposers into the position of being Nestorians. JND wrote: “They [the natures] are not to be confounded any more than the Person divided” (Collected Writings 34:106).

human soul and spirit; else, he says, you would have two distinct personalities, i.e., two Persons. He constantly, dishonestly, misrepresented those who publicly opposed him. No one said the Person changed. The Son took manhood into His Person and abides the same Person. And as to where the humanity came from -- it came from Mary. 35

W. Kelly wrote:

Without that union there must have been two distinct personalities, the divine and human. It is the union of both in one Person which alone secures the truth according to Scripture. F. E. R. with shameless self-confidence vaunts his idea, which is plain heterodoxy. He does not "bring the doctrine" of Christ . . . who utters his scornful unbelief of Christ’s Person in terms which must have ensured his expulsion with horror from all fellowship of saints in former days. 36

Hear FER again:

The truth of the incarnation is that a divine person in the Godhead has assumed manhood. I believe the old notion of the union of God and man to be wrong. I do not think it was meant wrongly, but, in the light of what has come out now, it was incorrect. What I believe is, what Scripture states, that a divine Person in the unity of the Godhead assumed manhood, never ceasing by it to be a divine Person and in the unity of the Godhead. 37

Manhood did not add anything to Christ morally . . . It is impossible to change the Person. Manhood in His case derived its character from what He Himself was . . . Everything which came out in Him morally was of His own Person. Himself, a divine Person in the condition of human life down here. 38

Observe three things. First, the shameless effrontery to pretend that this, which is the old Apollinarism, is something new that is a corrective: “in the light of what has come out now.”

Second, we see here what we might call the humanity-in-essence in the Son: “Everything which came out in Him morally was of His own Person,” has a subtle meaning in FER’s scheme. Since he separated the humanity from the Person (meaning by “Person” the deity only), this means that what was morally human was in the deity! This is an expression of his notion of an eternal-humanity-in-essence that was in the deity, yet not part of deity. Apollinarus held something similar. The truth is that every that came out in the person of Christ had a divine spring in it. The glory and value of His Person was found in every word, work, and way, flowing from the unfathomable “union of God and man.”

Third, it is FER himself was guilty of dividing Christ into two distinct things, as we saw W. T. Whybrow point out above:

Mr. R. considers that to reject his teaching on this subject approaches very near to heresy, and infers a dual personality. But he may remember Nestorius was anathematized because he taught that there was a separate basis of personality in the human nature of our Lord, that He was, in fact, a double being. It is Mr. R. who now would view Christ as man, distinct and apart from what He is as God or divine. And in avoiding the Scylla of Nestorianism he has fallen into the Charybdis of an impersonal humanity, for he denies the union in Christ of God and man . . .

Yes, FER Did Deny Human Personality in the Person of Christ. FER also said,

[Christ] is not a man in the sense that He is God . . . In Person He is God, in condition He is Man.

Gal. 4:4. The same Person abides, though the condition be changed, in His coming of a woman.

Every Scripture which definitely refers to the incarnation speaks of it as the assumption by Christ of a form or condition.

Query - Why is He not personally Man?

Mr. Raven -- He is personally the Son. You cannot have two personalities in one. He is the Son, but in the condition of a Man. 39

Concerning this P. A. Humphreys remarked:

The pretence that the truth leads to the doctrine of a dual personality (“two personalities”) is mere dust for the eyes; every believer can see that the truth of the unity of our Lord’s adorable Person, God and Man, but one Christ who is both, can involve no such absurdity. 40

F. W. Grant wrote:

This last matter, as you know, is your doctrine as to the Person of Christ, and in order that we more fully realize what is in question, I shall try to classify your teachings somewhat, so as best to elicit your meaning from your own words.

First of all, you distinctly assert that Christ “is not man in the sense that He is God. J.N.D. said many times, He could not change His Person. In Person He is

35. “The difference then of His humanity is not that it was not really and fully that of Mary (surely it was), but in that it was by that act of divine power, so as to be without sin . . .” (Letters of J. N. Darby 1:281; see also Collected Writings 10:52, 288, W. Kelly, Minor Prophets, p. 215).
36. F. E. R. Heterodox, p. 123, 124. FER misrepresented his opposers. He is not to be excused as if this was unintentional. He wrote:

These [the two natures] may be said to be mysteriously blended in one, the unity of the Person, but that is as great an error as if they were spoken of as distinct and apart in Him. (From, “The Person of Christ.”)

Thus he set up a phoney opponent. That is not what his opponents were teaching.
God; in condition He is man” (pp. 145, 146).

This has been denied for you, but I cannot learn or suppose that you have ever denied it. Your very illustration of how He was not Man in the sense that He was God is that He was personally God, but man in condition.

You had said this also before, and the question had been thereupon put, “Why is He not personally man?” and you reply, “He is personally the Son. You cannot have two personalities in one” (p. 132).

This makes it plain also what you mean by “He could not change His person.” We all believe that in the sense in which, no doubt, J.N.D. said it. When the Word became flesh, He was still the Word; the eternal Son in manhood was still the Son. But that is not your meaning evidently: your meaning is that manhood never became part of His person -- is not, therefore, part. His humanity is impersonal.

But we must look farther and ask just what with you these terms mean -- “person” and “condition.” You seem to have defined them somewhat clearly for us. You say:

A person is an intelligent moral being; he may be in the condition of flesh and blood or out of it. When God created Adam He made him out of the dust of the earth. What made him a person was that God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and he became a living soul.

But your person exists when you are not in human condition in flesh and blood. Do you remember what the Lord says to the thief, “This day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise?” (p. 134).

Now from this I necessarily argue that all the “intelligent moral being” in Christ was merely divine. Even the personality in man may exist out of the “human condition.” And what is that? “flesh and blood.” “The Lord,” you further say, “brought into manhood all that He was morally.” We may add, “all that He was intelligently.” So that the unintelligent, unmoral (not, God forbid, immoral) human condition that you ascribe to Him cannot be much more than flesh and blood”! And this I find A. M. presently affirming in the most distinct way: “But the Lord is identified with His body the moment He became man, and so is man” (p. 135). The Lord is man because identified with His body!

But I can imagine some of my readers asking, But what about spirit and soul, then? Had He not these? and had He not these as man? That is a question I have been putting for some time, and can get no proper -- I may say, no answer. Something like it is asked on p. 135, and here is what we find:

“We say of man he is a tri-partite creature, body, soul and spirit. The Lord was . . . you do not contend against His manhood?”

You answer with a “no” and a “but”: --

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.

True, surely: and therefore we affirm “manhood” of Him. Is there such a thing as manhood, apart from spirit and soul? Manhood without spirit and soul would not be any manhood such as we know from Scripture. It would be organism, machinery, a human organism, perhaps, but not manhood. How could we find “the Man Christ Jesus” here? But you go on:

In the thought of spirit I believe you get the idea of personality. “Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit.” It was the spirit of a man; but that Man was the Son of God. He committed to the Father that which was immaterial, what referred to the Father, beneath flesh and blood.

“It was the spirit of a man”: those words have, no doubt, comforted very many. They have said, “Mr. Raven means after all much the same with all of us.” Would that one could think so! but where, then, the “danger” in applying soul and spirit to the humanity of the Lord? “But does he not say, ‘It is the spirit of a man?’” He does; but he takes care to let us know that “spirit” here is personality; and that for him is divine, not human. And though “it is the spirit of a man,” that is very far from saying “a human spirit.” For He is only to be called a “man” by identifying Him with His body!

Even as to “soul,” -- “Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell (hades)” -- you say (p. 144) --

It is one of the parallels of the Old Testament: it simply means, as man He would not be left in the place of death. ‘Now is my soul troubled.’ Soul is used here in contrast to the actual physical condition. The abstraction of Himself from the mere physical condition.

. . . The glorious “Man” that Scripture presents to us has disappeared. Divine-human personality you must own is not in your mind: and what this means every Christian heart should be able to say. 42

J. N. Darby Denounced the Denial of Human Personality in Christ as Heresy. J. N. Darby wrote:

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

41. I trust I am not disposed to make a man an offender for a word; nor can I say in this case who uttered the word; but it has passed under your revision at any rate. Someone in the Weston conference is responsible for saying of the Lord, “Becoming a man, He becomes the Logos” (p. 127) [it was FER who taught this!] Can it be that that was said and let pass by the many gathered at Weston? and that you have let it go out in this fashion for every one who reads to see?

42. An Open Letter to Mr. F. E. Raven, Plainfield NJ, Sept. 28th, 1897, New York: Loizeaux.
I (ego) 43? Why does He say, “My God and your God, my Father and your Father” (not our), if there was no personality? 44 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, 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. 45

FER would not confess the union of God and man in one Person, which all fundamentally sound Christians confess.

I hardly care for the expression ‘He took human nature into union with Himself.’ I do not like the term ‘union’ in this connection. It is hardly the scriptural way of speaking of the incarnation. There it is “become flesh,” “took upon him the form of a servant,” etc., etc., none of these passages convey the thought of union, but rather identification of a Person with a state or form assumed.

JND wrote:

. . . and in 2 John, he that “confesseth not Jesus Christ come in the flesh” is a deceiver and antichrist. The real proper humanity is insisted on, a divine Person -- no doubt the Word made flesh, but partaking of flesh and blood because the children did, only without sin. 47

FER’s teaching about Christ’s humanity is not the confession of Jesus Christ come in the flesh. He was a deceiver and his teaching is antichrist in character.

FER Denied the Lord had a Human Soul and Spirit.

It was quite clear when F. E. Raven was living that many objections and exposures of his evil teaching were published, pointing out that what he held was that the Lord had no human soul and spirit -- rather, that the deity filled the function of the human spirit. We close this section with a letter written in the year he published his The Person of the Christ (1895):

I look upon Philippians 2: 6 as the place taken by Christ in the fact of assuming a servant’s form; it was, so to say, an act of mind in taking the servant’s form. I really prefer the authorised version, “He made himself of no reputation.” It was not only that He assumed the form but the mind suited the form. . . .

-- accuses me of not holding the real humanity of Christ, because I will not accept his idea of a complete man, “spirit, soul and body,” distinct46 from Deity. He seems to me to have no idea of the Son becoming Man and giving a spirit to manhood, in fact of the incarnation. 49

So he would say:

. . . not merely a divine Person in a body, but all moral perfection as suited to that place. 50

And for all that, it is still a divine Person in a body -- no human soul and spirit!

James Taylor, Sr., Also Denied That Christ Had a Human Soul and Spirit

Just as FER used the word Person to mean the divinity, not the manhood, so did JT likewise:

. . . mediatiorship necessarily involves the Lord’s Person {His divinity} as well as His manhood . . . 51

Listen to this from James Taylor, Sr.:

It is thus Himself, whether He speaks of His spirit or His soul. F. E. R.’s opponents had in mind that there was a human being, soul and body, and besides a divine Being; that is a dual personality (more accurately two Persons inwardly), one merely human and the other Divine. This is manifestly false. 52

J.T. . . . He is His own spirit. He has not two spirits. That is a very remarkable thing to understand, and I think the brethren will do well to look into it because there is no dual personality in Christ at all. He is only Himself; He has become incarnate. He is a divine Person. He has not a human spirit at all as we speak. He is His own Spirit; when it speaks of His spirit, it is Himself.

P.A. Otherwise He would be a creature, but it is blasphemy to say that against the Lord Jesus.

J.T. Very good. It will not do at all, it is blasphemous . . . . He said to His Father, “Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit,” Luke 23:46, that is Himself. He has not got two spirits, it is Himself. He is Himself His
C. A. Coates wrote:  

"... I, i.e., the Deity.  His spirit was Himself in his view, as with FER, the spirit of the manhood:"

You see that JT pronounced the true doctrine to be blasphemy!

There was no such thing as two persons. None of FER’s opponents taught there were two persons. They held similarly to what W. Kelly said as given previously in this Appendix. The Son took holy manhood into His Person. What is manifest is the self-serving, wicked caricature of those who opposed FER.

C. A. Coates Also Denied That Christ Had A Human Soul and Spirit

C. A. Coates also taught the Apollinarianism:

- A divine Person has come into manhood . . .
- The Son of God, a divine Person in manhood . . .
- The Lord’s spirit went to paradise the moment He died . . .
- It shows, too, how entirely He has taken the place of man, because His spirit was Himself.
- Christ having come into the condition of flesh and blood . . .

It seems incredible that a man who believes the spirit of Christ’s manhood was “the divine Person” could explain Luke 2:46 thus: Christ’s answers . . . were not what He knew as God, but what He had learned from God in the place of an instructed One.

Since his view is that the immaterial part of Christ was only the divine Person, this involves a divine Person learning. We might think it is difficult to know whether the stupidity of these notions exceeds the blasphemy or not; but see what leaven does to the mind.

Like FER, he held that the Son came into a condition, not that He took manhood into His Person. The Deity was, in his view, as with FER, the spirit of the manhood: His spirit was Himself, i.e., the Deity.

C. A. Coates wrote:

As to waxing strong in spirit, you have no doubt noticed that the Editors omit “in spirit,” which leaves the expression as to waxing strong a general one, which is quite easy to understand as going along with advancing in stature, and belonging, of course, to the condition into which He had come . . .

CAC made the same point about “in spirit” being omitted as J. Taylor, Sr. did (see below). CAC said, “because His spirit was Himself.” J. Taylor, Sr. said, “As to His Spirit, it was Himself.”

Regarding the Lord’s dismissal of His spirit, F. E. Raven said:

But it is the Person who left the condition. All three agree; the spirit that left the body was the Deity and did not involve a human spirit.

J. B. Stoney Became an Apollinarian Also

And now we come to J. B. Stoney. His mystical system was at work during the last few years of J. N. Darby’s life (JND died in 1882). An examination of articles appearing in J. B. Stoney’s magazine, Voice to the Faithful, vol.11 (I do not know if JBS authored those criticized by JND) is found in Letters of J. N. Darby 3:482-491. JND referred to “a settled system” (p. 488); says, “Your remarks, I think, are constantly fancies” (p. 489); warns, “. . . Satan found opportunity to mix your own imagination with it, and introduce what tended to sap the reality of truth” (p. 491).

A few more remarks are found on pp. 472, 473. Further remarks are found on life and new creation in vol. 3, pp. 14, 15 and concerning related matters on pp. 54-56. An article received by JND in 1875 (vol. 3. pp. 439-441), found in Food for the Flock 2:1, tends in the same line. (That article was not written by J. B. Stoney).

While JBS had many good things to say, he was moving into mysticism that also ensnared F. E. Raven. It is likely that JBS developed FER who in turn led JBS into supporting and personally holding and propagating fundamentally evil doctrine.

On Dec. 19, 1895 F. E. Raven wrote:

For myself I can say that there is no one on earth whose ministry and self have produced so lasting a moral effect on me as Mr. Stoney.

Let us now examine some things that appeared in Mr. Stoney’s magazine. B. W. K. wrote:

Those who say that the Son of God, or the eternal Son, the Christ, and eternal Life are identical or interchangeable terms (and there are such) have evidently lost the all important distinction between the blessed Lord as a divine Person and as Man . . .

Thus, Mr. Stoney allowed the printing of blasphemy in his magazine. This doctrine means that the Son was not eternal life essentially in His divine, eternal Being.

55. Ibid. pp. 283, 286.
56. Ibid. p. 291. He means by “spirit” the Deity, as the next quotation shows.
57. Ibid., p. 292.
58. An outline of Mark’s Gospel and Other Ministry, p. 276 -- see also pp. 182, 185.
60. Letters of C. A. Coates, p. 301.
62. Voice to the Faithful, 1891, p. 11 (J. B. Stoney, editor). The division from FER and those supporting him, came in 1890.
The Voice to the Faithful, 1891, p. 257, says:

Things and people continue in ordinary agreement until a greater light from God is made known, and then a division ensues . . .

This is sanction of F. E. Raven, not ignorance of what he was really saying. I do not know if JBS wrote that article.

While no editor of any magazine would agree to accept responsibility for every expression and notion printed in his magazine, when such vital truth is touched, an editor is responsible.

Query - Why is He not personally Man?
Mr. Raven - He is personally the Son. You cannot have two personalities in one. He is the Son, but in the condition of a Man.

Compare that with the following from J. B. Stoney:

The truth is that God was manifest in flesh; the divine Being, a Spirit, took bodily human form . . . The opposers want to have two persons in one, man and God, one time to act as God and at another to act as man. They really do not see the incarnation. They do not see that He who was God became man and hence a man out of heaven. They would have Him to be a man in flesh and blood, and in a way distinct from His being God -- whereas He is God, and He, that same Person, became a man in flesh and blood, but He came from God, He brought everything with Him.

This is the same Apollinarianism as in FER; and not only that, but the same doctrine that the humanity, an eternal-humanity-in-essence, was ever in the Son though not a part of deity, is also in this statement (“He brought everything with Him”). It is an integrated system of fundamental evil.

In 1893 JBS said:

The divisions among us all spring from not understanding the mystery, and the nature of Christ; they are intimately connected.

If this statement is true, then JBS did not understand the mystery because he, along with FER, was fundamentally unsound on the Person of Christ.

Mr. Stoney (died 1896), we see, imbibed the main parts of FER’s evil doctrine as propounded up to this point in time. In June 1894, FER stated in a letter:

I know of no divergence of thought between myself and

J. B. S.

W. Kelly wrote:

It is to join Apollinarus of Antioch (the son). He too made the Logos simply form Christ’s Person, as F. E. R. does, and was therefore justly branded an Antichrist . . . F. E. R. with shameless self confidence vaunts his idea, which is plain heterodoxy.

J. N. Darby wrote:

. . . He was a true man, body and soul, and, one may add, spirit. This was called in question by heresy as soon as His deity was.

Persons who hold such doctrines (as FER, JBS, CAC & JT, Sr.) are antichrists and heretics.

Some Implications of Apollinarism

An Apollinarian Christ Means That Deity Learns. Let us refer to another of the connections of this Apollinarism with the denial of eternal relationships. JT said:

You cannot attach the idea of learning to Deity. But it is as coming into manhood that it is attachable to Him.

Consider the utter absurdity of an Apollinarian concatenating those two sentences. Since the One who learned had no human soul or spirit with which to learn; and Apollinarism thus leaves only the Deity to learn -- yet JT said that “you cannot attach the idea of learning to Deity.” But in effect he has done exactly that since there was no human spirit to learn! The result of Apollinarism is that the Deity learned. The notion that a divine Person was the spirit of the body of our Lord would in effect mean that when He advanced in wisdom (Luke 2:40), the divine Person advanced in wisdom. That is absurd.

An Apollinarian Christ Means God Suffered as Christ’s Mind. Remarking upon the Apollinarians, JND wrote:

. . . . the latter must have made God suffer as the mind in Christ, or else He must have ceased to be.

That is one of the results of FER’s teaching: God suffered as the mind in Christ, because there was no human soul and spirit.

An Apollinarian Christ Means That God Took A

64. (This statement is a ludicrous misrepresentation, as A. C. Ord showed. The truth is that every human word and work of the Lord Jesus had a divine spring in it. The humanity never acted independently of the divine.)
68. F. E. R. Heterodox, p. 124.
69. Collected Writings 23:478 (Morrish ed.).
71. “For who of men hath known the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him?” In a footnote to man, JND remarked: “Man” here has the article, but the sense is this: what is in man’s mind is not known of any but the spirit of the man himself, who has the thoughts; much more so is it with God.
72. Collected Writings of J. N. Darby 34:106.
Place Lower Than God. Consider FER’s blasphemy concerning the Son’s emptying Himself (May 2, 1896):

... the Son emptied Himself -- in mind took a place lower than that of God in which He could say, “My Father is greater than I”.

Since Christ had, according to FER’s teaching, no human mind, these words really mean that in the divine mind, which is the deity, He took a lower place than God. Let us call this a **Ravenite kenosis**.

The Death of an Apollinarian Christ Means No Atonement. P. A. Humphreys, in a response to FER, remarked on the meaning of this statement by FER:

He replied:

Now if... true, and means only what Mr. R. Allows in his parenthesis, the atonement is gone; for human condition could not suffice to make atonement; it would be mere condition and not life at all. In order to make atonement, there must be actual life laid down, not a mere condition given up.

Concerning John 6:51, he wrote:

Here again, if Mr. Raven’s definition of our Lord’s flesh being mere human condition is true, the whole of this passage is reduced to eating and drinking “human condition,” for he insists on our Lord’s life here as Man being “human condition,” which he says. “He lays down.” Can folly go further? Truly when the mind dabbles in Divine things, and tries to explain them to its own satisfaction, it exposes its utter incapacity to understand them, and reduces the most blessed and holy truths to the folly it itself is full of..

Again in Heb. 9:14: “who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God.” Did He offer Himself merely as a divine Person in a condition? If so, to what does the “without spot” refer? According to Mr. Raven it would be to the “human condition,” for he could not refer it to the “divine Person as such.” Scripture applies it to Himself -- “Himself without spot” -- the wondrous, the perfect God-Man, who offered Himself, not mere “human condition,” without spot to God. Mr. Raven may say, if he pleases to do so, that it was the Divine Person in human condition who thus offered Himself, but in that case there is no sense in the “without spot,” for it can only refer to Himself as the One Man who could offer a spotless offering -- Himself, His own blessed self.

Listen to D. L. Higgins tell it like it is:

The One who laid down His life (Psuke, soul, human condition) was in Person God, but we could not say God laid down His life. His statement would be at best incredible blather if it were not fundamental evil. In the Apollinarian Christ there really is no human life since the deity fills the function of the human soul and spirit.

The Death of an Apollinarian Christ Dissolves the Incarnation. FER wrote:

In the expression, ‘Father into Thy hands I commend my spirit’ I judge that the Lord takes up an expression suited to the position in which He was. But it is the Person who left the condition, which He had assumed, to take it again...

Look at the wickedness of the last statement. “The Person who left the condition” means that the Deity left the humanity. Thus Christ did not dismiss a human spirit. According to FER, what He dismissed as the spirit of the body was the Deity. So what He did was -- He dismissed Himself.

Thus, since in FER’s scheme the Lord only had a body (no human soul and spirit), when He died, the divine Person was no longer connected with manhood in any way. It follows that in death, on the cross, He was no longer man. The death dissolved the Christ. Furthermore, the resurrection then amounted to another incarnation, i.e., He came into the condition of manhood once again. (However, having laid aside that manhood (the condition) that was there before death, we would not know that the new “condition” He took in resurrection was the same one.) These two scriptures alone would be sufficient to show the evil of his views. The truth is that while Christ was dead, the human soul and human spirit remained united to the Deity. However, this would not fit the system, as the following quotation shows:

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 judiciously in the cross, in the Man Christ Jesus” (“The Person,” page 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

---

76. Thoughts on the Names by Which God is Known, p. 19, Stow Hill, n.d.
77. (Quemerford Notes, pp. 145-6). Cited in B. M., A Brief History of Ravenism, p. 5.
Letters,” page 5; “Eternal Life,” by F. E. R. page 7). In His incarnate humanity Christ was the “old” in contrast to the “new” which He now is (“Eternal Life,” page 3; “The Person,” page 2). 78

The reader will comprehend these remarks by observing that in the evil system the resurrection of Christ really amounts to another incarnation, as was pointed out above. The fundamental evil opened a totally new sphere of doctrine for the instrument of Satan to mystically apprehend, and propound as new light and advanced truth among those who refused to bow to the Bexhill action of June 1890, separating from FER and Greenwich, which supported him. When was there ever put forth a more evil system?

In a letter dated July 1, 1895 FER wrote:

---- accuses me of not holding the real humanity of Christ because I will not accept his idea of a complete man ‘spirit, soul and body,’ distinct from Deity. He seems to me to have no idea of the Son becoming Man and giving a spirit to manhood, in fact of the incarnation. 79

In the following quotations I have supplied the boldfacing.

C. A. Coates, who imbibed FER’s system, said:

A divine Person has come into manhood . . . 80

. . . the Son of God, a divine Person in manhood . . . . 81

The Lord’s spirit went to paradise the moment He died . . . . 82

It shows, too, how entirely He has taken the place of man, because His spirit was Himself. 83

That is a sample of the new form of language -- it clothes the Apollinarian doctrine. “His spirit was Himself” means that the “spirit” was the Deity; that He had no human spirit as you and I have.

J. Taylor, Sr. wrote:

Our Lord Jesus, though really man, begotten of the Holy Ghost, born of the divinely-overshadowed vessel, was uncreate, though He entered His own creation, and His holy humanity had no link with that of fallen man. As to His spirit, it was Himself -- the Son . . . . And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man. The omission of ‘in spirit’ in [Luke 2] verse 40 is important as confirming that His spirit was Himself personally and could not be spoken of as in our case. 84

His spirit was Himself. 85

Every soul that loves Him and bows to scripture would surely admit that while becoming flesh He changed His estate He could not and did not change in any way His personality, and still more would reject any suggestion that henceforth there became embodied in Him two personalities. The thought is abhorrent! Nor would any reverent soul assert that He received, as we, a created spirit. Yet HE HIMSELF, THE SON, became and abides forever really, actually Man, in all that holy manhood involves. Having become Man, how could His spirit be other than human though never ceasing to be divine? 86 for He brought into manhood all that was perfect in manhood according to God. It was surely as was said, Himself, for passing into death, in Luke, He commends His spirit to His Father. His death was a reality, as His burial attests (p.279).

At the same time, to speak of Him having a human spirit savors of dividing up what scripture does not, and might seem to imply something added to Him.” (Note to page 279.) 87

He commended His spirit to His Father, a most impressive reference to the perfection of His manhood, not that He had a spirit other than Himself . . . Becoming Man, He is Himself His Spirit, for he tells the thief that he should be with Him in paradise. They were both going there that day, not through resurrection, but through disembodiment for the moment, but they were both men in that sense. Jesus was as really man as the thief, having a spirit as a man, too, but it was Himself. Coming into manhood He became His own spirit . . . He was personally a divine Person and became His own spirit in manhood, so that it was Himself. “Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.” 88

While all this is unspeakably evil and warped notions, the idea that our Lord’s words, last quoted, prove the doctrine, is patently absurd to anyone not under this delusion. It amounts to the spirit, being the Deity, being at the same time human. What incredible, evil blather about Christ.

Regarding the Lord’s dismissal of His spirit, F. E. Raven said:

But it is the Person who left the condition.

These writers agree; the spirit that left the body was the Deity and did not involve a human spirit. Thus, the incarnation dissolved with Christ’s death. The truth is that when Christ died, the human soul and spirit remained united to the Deity, and the incarnation was maintained.

78. An Answer to . . . What is Ravenism?, p. 10.
81. Ibid., pp. 283, 286.
82. Ibid. p. 291. He means by “spirit” the Deity, as the next quotation shows.
83. Ibid., p. 292.
86. {Observe that he says that the spirit is divine, yet it is human! All such talk is spiritual scam.}
87. J. Taylor, Sr., Mutual Comfort, p. 279 (1920), as quoted by N. Noel, The History of the Brethren 2: 599. Italics in the quotation were added by N. Noel.
88. Ministry by J. Taylor 100:111. This was included in vol. 100, taken from vol. 48,
The God and the Christ of F. E. Raven, James Taylor, Sr., and C. A. Coates do not exist!

See again at the end of W. T. Whybrow’s paper, *The Truth of Christ’s Person* . . ., comments under the heading, “Death Destroys the Christ of Ravenism.”

The Resurrection of Christ is an Incarnation. In the mind of a Ravenite, the resurrection of Christ is a resurrection because he thinks the deity filled the function of the human spirit. Thus the “spirit” and body were reunited in resurrection. The truth is that it was another incarnation.

“The Person who left the condition” took the “condition” again. When the Son came, says FER, the Person took a condition. When Christ died, the Person left the condition. Is it not simple to see that subsequently He took the condition again? It really amounts to another incarnation -- though actually there really is no such thing as an Apollinarian incarnation (or resurrection). No such thing ever happened because an Apollinarian Christ is not truly human at all.
Appendix 3:

F. E. Raven’s Mystical Worship of the False God,
or,

“The Service of God”

F. E. Raven also invented a new kind of breaking of bread and a new worship for his idols.

“The Service of God”

Such is the title of a reading held on Oct 7, 1898, in the USA, where he had denied the eternal Sonship, thus completing his denial of the eternal relationships of the divine Persons. “The Service of God” refers to how the meeting for what has been commonly called “the breaking of bread,” or, the remembrance of the Lord -- when the Lord’s Supper is held. He had expressed mystical notions regarding this before, but this seems to bring his views out more fully and labels this view as “The Service of God.” What it entailed was viewing the meeting as having two definite parts. The first part involves the breaking of bread and should be done very early in the meeting; this was called “our side.” The second part involved the worship of the Father and Christ singing in the midst (this reference is to Heb. 2:12). This second part is referred to as “His side,” i.e., Christ’s side. We will now look at a number of extracts from the above noted article as well as some others.

Passing Into the Assembly through the Supper

F.E.R. . . . The Lord’s supper is properly introductory to the assembly, and it is through that that we pass over to His side. It is in the entering into His death that you pass over to His side as the living One, then you come to the service of the sanctuary (12:74). 89

F.E.R. You pass into the assembly through the supper (12:73).

F.E.R. The supper leads on properly to the assembly in its true character. But the first thing in connection with the assembly is that you call the Lord to mind {i.e., in the breaking of bread} (12:286).

F.E.R. I think the Supper is introductory in the assembly; the Supper rallies the saints, and they come together in assembly to eat the supper; it is what is immediately before us in coming together, but as introductory to the assembly (12:265).

F.E.R. The Supper is introductory to the assembly; and that is the reason for finishing all that is formal at first. Passing round the bread and the cup and the box are so far formal; you cannot help this, but it is a great thing to be free of it, so that you may be prepared for the assembly in its proper character (12:283).

Our Side and His Side

The two parts of the meeting were designated as “our side” and “His side.”

F.E.R. But you cannot know anything at all about the love of the Father except as you know the love of Christ, and hence the first leads to the second. The remembrance of the Lord, and getting into touch with His love leads into the other.

Ques. That is why the breaking of bread should be the first thing in the meeting, so that you may get into these things.

F.E.R. Yes Christ is realized on our side, and He takes us as we are attached to Him into the Father’s love (10:305; cp. 295).

F.E.R. . . . it is only on that side that you worship. It is the constituted order according to God; and it is really only on that side that you can worship. “In the midst of the church will I sing praise.” It is the only ground of worship (10:321).

On Lord’s Day Morning?

W.B. Going back to the Lord’s supper, is it not rather the way in which the Lord conducts us consciously into the realisation of what He is in the midst?

F.E.R. It is the way in which He makes His presence good to and felt by us. He was about to leave His own after the flesh, and shows then how He would make good

89. (12:74) refers to vol. 12, p. 74 of Ministry by F. E. Raven. Such references will be used for the quotations unless otherwise noted. This article, “The Service of God,” includes pp. 65-87.
His presence to them after He left them.

W.B. And then do we get on to the assembly?

F.E.R. I think so. You have another element of the truth in chapter 12, and that is we are one body in the Spirit, not in the flesh; there is one Spirit and one body.

G.W. You say we go from the breaking of bread to the assembly.

F.E.R. It is clear enough that the Lord’s supper is the beginning.

G.W. Then you go from the assembly into the sanctuary.

F.E.R. The sanctuary is largely a question of individual apprehension; so long as we are down here (it will not be so in heaven) this must be the case.

G.W. I am surprised at that; you mean when we are gathered together on the Lord’s day morning -- and that, you say, introduces us into the assembly?

F.E.R. The saints are together in assembly, that is right enough, but the question of entering into the sanctuary is a question of individual apprehension.


---

“The Service of God” Is a Ravenite Symbol

This designation for the Ravenite meeting on the Lord’s day really is a symbol. As an indication of its on-going development, we read the following under the title, “The Service of God in the Assembly”:

Some controversy arose in 1958 and 1959 as a result of it having been put out in ministry that in the service of God in the assembly worship to the Spirit should come first, followed by worship to the Lord, and then by worship to the Father, leading ultimately to the worship of God as apprehended in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. 90

By this time the worship of the Spirit had been foisted on the Ravenites through James Taylor, Jr. Development continued on. These special leaders (FER, JT, Sr., JT, Jr., etc. are referred to in the main body of Ravenites as “elect vessels” and JND was the first, it is said. What a disparagement of his memory this is. Let us turn to sound and wholesome thoughts from JND concerning the Lord’s supper and the worship in the holiest.

---

Worship Leads to the Lord’s Supper

Worship is such an important point of practical Christianity that it will be beneficial to see what J. N. Darby taught regarding Christian worship in the assembly. Worship leads to the Lord’s supper. Worship arises in the heart and we worship individually. But then we desire to worship collectively in the assembly where Christ is in the midst in that special way and where He sings. So worship leads to the Lord’s supper, not the other way around.

What is Worship?

Worship is the expression of what is in our heart to God according to the holy claim He has upon us, and the full revelation He has made of Himself to us. Intercession is intervention with God for another. Christ may be present in spirit to lead the praises of His saints, and offer also their praises on high that they may be accepted.

Where is the Place of Worship?

Worship is the adoration, and for us in the holiest, of those who have been brought nigh by sacrifice, who know God as love, who know Him as a Father who has sought in grace worshipers in spirit and in truth, and brought them in cleansed to do so. The worshipers once purged should have no more conscience of sins. By one offering Christ had perfected them forever, such is scripture truth (see Heb. 10); and then they worship, adore, praise in the sense of perfect divine favor and a Father’s love. They have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way He has consecrated for them through the veil. It is not that Christ is doing it in heaven actually in the triumphant church, and they on earth in the militant. They enter in spirit into the holiest, in heaven itself, to worship there; and hence a high priest made higher than the heavens was needed for them, because their worship is there. They do not offer the sacrifice in order to come in, they are within in virtue of the sacrifice.

And this is the place the symbols, of Christ’s broken body and blood, have in worship. The worshipers are in spirit in heavenly places, Christ in spirit in their midst, as it is written, “In the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee,” and they own and remember that blessed and perfect sacrifice by which they can so worship, by which they have entered in. Doubtless they feed on Christ in spirit; but that is not the point we are on now. The Christ that is represented in the Eucharist is a Christ with a broken body, and the cup is His shed blood, not a glorified Christ in heaven. It is His death, a broken body and the blood separated from it, life given up in this world, that is before us. We may in spirit eat also the old corn of the land -- be occupied with a heavenly Christ, assuredly we may, and blessedly so; but that is not the Christ that is here. We eat His flesh and drink His blood, that is, separate from His body -- not only the manna which is for the desert and ceased in Canaan, the bread that came down from heaven, but the additional and necessary truth of His death. Hence His going up is only spoken of in John 6 as an additional subsequent truth. We worship as belonging to heaven and own that by which we got there, that perfect blessed work which He, who could speak what He knew there, and testify what He had seen, could tell was needed that we might have the heavenly things, and not only tell but in infinite love, accomplished. But no such Christ as the one whose symbols lie before us in the Lord’s supper exists now. It is specifically, solely, and emphatically, as a dead Christ that He is remembered there. They were to do that, that is, to use the emphatic symbols of His death, in remembrance of Him. Hence it is the center of worship because hereby know I love, because He laid down His life for us. Here He glorified the Father for me, so that I can enter into the holiest. Then the veil was rent and

91. What an attitude towards the Lord Jesus is displayed in the comment, “I can worship at home.” Yes you can, and you should, but it will not be with the Lord Jesus in the midst singing praises to God.
92. Collected Writings 15:360; see also 7:88, 100-102. See also Synopsis 1:134.
the way opened; but here was the perfect work accomplished, by which I, as risen together with Him, can say I am not in the flesh. In the heavenly Christ I say, by the Holy Ghost, I am in Him and He in me. It is being of Him, being united to Him, He in our midst in grace. A dead Christ I remember. I do not, in the joy and glory in which I have a part through and with Him, forget that lonely work in which He bore the sorrow and drank the cup of wrath. I remember with touched affections the lowly rejected Christ, now that I am in heavenly places through His solitary humiliation. The offering Him up now is a presumptuous denial of Christianity. The remembering Him, that divine Person, in His solitary suffering and perfect love to His Father, is the most touching of Christian affections, the basis and center of all true worship, as the efficacy of the work wrought there alone admits us to worship at all. The drinking of the blood apart points it out as shed. We show forth the Lord's death, emphatically, not a glorified Christ, but we do so as associated with Him the glorified Man, who Himself purged our sins, remembering with thankful hearts how we got there, and, above all, Him who gave Himself up that we might. 93  

We worship in spirit in heaven . . . . 94  

They enter in spirit into the holiest, in heaven itself, to worship there. 95  

Being one with Christ, I can have no place of worship on the earth, though my body may be there. 96  

The Jews had worship on earth; we go higher than the heavens. Our priest is there, on the right hand of God. That stamps the character of our worship. “Higher than the heavens” is the place of our worship. 97  

A perfect and eternal redemption has been accomplished, and the love of God flows out on every side, embraces all races of men, calls them to worship in the heavenly sanctuary, where the glory is manifested in the Person of Jesus with unveiled face, where the love of the Father does not hid itself, where it attracts and reveals itself. 98  

**What is the Center of Worship?**

I admit the Lord’s supper to be the center of true worship . . . The Lord’s supper is the center of worship. 99  

Worship is that for which Christians should meet, and, I add, the Lord’s supper is the center of worship. 100  

I have no doubt that worship, with the Lord’s supper as the great and characterizing center of it, and not preaching, is the great object of Christians assembling themselves together. 100  

. . . hence we see how the Lord’s supper allies itself to worship, witnessing to redemption. 102  

If Jesus attaches value to our remembrance to Him -- if He presents Himself to us with so much tenderness in the memorials of His dying love, that love, at the same time, produces in us the very deepest affections -- affections which are connected with what is most exalted in the grace of God, and which express themselves in the adoration of the heart. We can understand, then, that although worship is offered in various ways, by hymns, by thanksgivings, in the form of prayers, in praise, etc., we can understand, I say, that the Lord’s supper, as representing that which forms the basis of all worship, is the center of its exercise, around which the other elements that compose it are grouped. The worshipper is thereby reminded of that which is the most precious of all things in the sight of God -- the death of His beloved Son. He recalls the act in which the Saviour has testified His love in the most powerful way. Other considerations add their weight to those which we have just presented with regard to the Lord’s supper. The worshipper eats in the house of God, as the priests ate of the things with which expiation had been made; he enters with spiritual affection into the perfection of that expiation -- of what Christ has been in the accomplishment of it. “He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.” I apply not this exclusively to the Lord’s supper, although the most vivid expression of it.

The peace-offering presents, with the passover, the most lively images of the true character of the Lord’s supper. The former was a feast consequent upon a sacrifice; in the latter, Israel fed upon the sacrifice, the blood of which was their safeguard against judgment. In the former, the partakers were, God, the priest who officiated, the priests, the worshipper, and those who were with him. The fat burnt upon the altar was called “the food of God.” This expresses the full satisfaction of God in the sweet odour of the work of Christ. The priest who offered the blood had his part. That is, Christ partakes in the joy of those that are His through the efficacy of His death. The other priests ate another part. They represent Christians in general. Lastly, the guests of him who makes the sacrifice represent united worshippers. Thus God Himself has His part in the joy; so has Christ; so has the Church in general; and lastly, the assembly which participates therein. 103  

---

95. Collected Writings 15:372, see also p. 376.
96. Collected Writings 5:311.
97. Collected Writings 27:376.
98. Collected Writings 4:165.
99. Collected Writings 15:356.
100. Collected Writings 15:301.
103. Collected Writings 7:110, 111.
He leads the chorus of praise. Thus our praise must be according to the fullness with which Christ knows and enjoys the blessedness of the fruit of His work, and the relationship into which He is entered as man in virtue of it. It must answer to the name He declares to us as heard from the horns of the unicorn and risen, that we may join Him in praising His Father and our Father, His God and our God, or it is out of tune with Him, who leads so blessedly these praises. We must praise with Him on the ground of that blessedness in which He praises, or it is discord. 106 ◆

But worship together has a distinct character, because there is Christ’s promise to be there. “In the midst of the church will I sing praise to thee.” 105 ◆

**God and Father**

What is presented in Hebrews does not refer to the Father. But worship also includes the Father. Indeed, the Father is seeking worshipers (John 4) and we will look at some extracts from JND concerning this.

The difference between the names of God and of Father is always distinctly maintained in John’s Gospel. When it is a question of the nature, and of the acting of God according to that nature, as the origin of redemption, and of the responsibility of man, the word God is employed; when it is a question of the grace which acts in the Person, and for us, by means of the work which the Father had given Him to do, then the descent of the Holy Ghost, in a word, the grace which operates in the Person, and for us, by means of the work of Jesus -- there is where we find the Father revealed. Jesus revealed this name to His disciples, although they had understood nothing of it (John 17:26); and now that the work which purifies us and justifies us has been accomplished, we have received the Spirit, by whom we cry, “Abba, Father.” The name of Father is a name of relationship, revealed by the presence of Christ, and which one knows and enjoys individually by the Holy Ghost. This is what characterises Christianity, and we may say, Christ Himself. God is what God is in His nature and His authority, the name of a Being, not of a relationship, except in the rights of absolute authority that belong to Him; but of a Being who, being supreme, enters into relationship with us, in grace. We see the importance of this distinction in the words of Christ Himself. During the whole of His life He does not say, “my God,” but, “my Father,” even in Gethsemane; and the enjoyment of this relationship is perfect. “I am not alone, for the Father is with me.” He says again, “Father,” when He explains what it is for Him to drink the cup. On the cross He said, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” Made sin for us, He felt what it was to be it before God, God being what He is. After His resurrection He employs the two names of God and of Father, when He introduces His disciples into the position into which He entered, from that time forth, as Man, according to the righteousness of God. “I ascend unto my Father, and your Father, unto my God, and your God.” His own were, by grace, as Himself, in their relationship with God as Father; they were, by His work, before God such as He is in His nature, and that in righteousness, according to the value of the work that He had accomplished, and according to their acceptance in His Person, well pleasing in the Beloved. But what a wonderful privilege to know what the Father’s affections are set upon, and to know Him who is the object of them, and who is worthy of them -- who suffices for these affections! What happiness to know the Lord, for the Father wills that there where He finds His delight we should find ours. What perfect, infinite happiness! 106

**The Worship of Priests and Children**

As we have already seen, Christianity has an entirely different character. It considers mankind as universally lost, proves them in reality to be so, and seeks, through the power of a new life, worshippers in spirit and in truth. In like manner does it introduce the worshippers themselves into the presence of God, who there reveals Himself as their Father -- a Father who has sought and saved them. And this is done, not by means of an intermediate priestly class who represent the worshippers because of the inability of the latter to approach a terrible and imperfectly known God; but it introduces them in full confidence to a God known and loved, because He loved them, sought, and washed them from all their sins, that they might be before Him without fear.

The consequence of this marked difference between the relations in which Jews and Christians stand as toward God is, that the Jews had a priesthood (and not a ministry) which acted outwards, that is, outside the people; while Christianity has a ministry which finds its exercise in the active revelation of what God is -- whether within the church or without -- there being no intermediate priesthood between God and His people, save the Great High Priest Himself. The Christian priesthood is composed of all true Christians, who equally enjoy the right of entering into the holy places by
the new and living way which has been consecrated for them -- a priesthood, moreover, whose relations are essentially heavenly. Ministry, then, is essential to Christianity; which is the activity of the love of God in delivering souls from ruin and from sin, and in drawing them to Himself.

On earth, then, as regards the relations subsisting between God and man, a priesthood was the distinguishing characteristic of the Jewish dispensation; ministry, of the Christian: because priesthood maintained the Jews in their relations with God; and because by ministry Christianity seeks in this world worshippers of the Father. I say, on earth, for, in truth, when we consider the portion of the Christian in its highest point of view, namely, in that which has relation to heaven, Christianity has its “kings and priests” -- that is to say, all saints. The worship of God is not ministry; it is the expression of the heart of the children before their Father in heaven, and of priests before their God; in the intimacy of the presence of Him who, in His love, has rent the veil, which His justice had opposed to the sinner; and has rent it by a stroke which has disarmed justice, and left her nothing but the happy task of clothing with the best robe those to whom before all entrance had been denied.  

**The Father Seeks Worshipers**

The woman now turns to worship. The Lord tells her that salvation was of the Jews; the Samaritans worshipped they knew not what; but the hour was coming, and now was, when the true worshippers should worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for it was no longer a question of what man ought to be for God, but of what God is for the sinner. “The Father seeketh such to worship him.” As for man’s worship, it was all worthless. You may get a machine to do ceremonies if you only are clever enough to make one. As we read in the prophet of the outward worship of Israel. God calls it, “bowing the head like a bulrush.” It is utterly worthless. You must have to do with God who knows you, and whom you must know if you would worship Him in spirit and in truth. It is not God requiring worship -- all very true, as man’s duty -- but the Lord is here in grace, and out of the abundance of His heart He says, “The Father seeketh” worshippers. He is not regarding forms of worship, but He is seeking vile, broken-down sinners to make them worshippers. He is not seeking the Pharisee: his worship proceeds out of himself; he thanks God for what he is.  

But there remains yet another element of our intelligent service -- the character of “the Father.” God must be worshipped in “spirit and in truth,” for He is a Spirit: but it is as “the Father” that He “seeketh such to worship him.”

To worship “in spirit” is to worship according to the true nature of God, and in the power of that communion which the Spirit of God gives. Spiritual worship is thus in contrast with the forms and ceremonies, and all the religiousness of which the flesh is capable.

To worship God “in truth,” is to worship Him according to the revelation which He has given of Himself.

The Samaritans worshipped God neither in spirit nor in truth. The Jews worshipped God in truth, so far as this can be said of a revelation which was imperfect; but they worshipped Him in no respect in spirit. Now to worship God both are needful. He is to be worshipped according to the true revelation of Himself (that is, “in truth”), and according to His nature (that is, “in spirit”).

Yet this is not all that is presented to us in this passage: in it is found another precious element of worship. The Father seeks such worshippers. It is grace which makes such now -- grace flowing forth from love to themselves. Worship, therefore, is not rendered under a responsibility imposed by the flames of Mount Sinai, which, whilst demanding worship in the name of the holy majesty of the Lord, placed a barrier in the way of access to God, which no one could pass, under penalty of death; and which left the worshiper far off from God, trembling under the sense of responsibility, although encouraged by the benefits received from Him whom he dared not approach. No. Love seeks worshippers, but it seeks them under the gentle name of “Father.” It places them in a position of freedom before Him as the children of His love. The Spirit, who acts in them and produces worship, is “the spirit of adoption,” which cries, “Abba, Father.” It is not that God has lost His majesty, but that He, whose majesty is far better known, is known also under the more tender and loving character of Father. The Spirit, who leads to worship the Father, leads us also into the knowledge and enjoyment of all the love of God, who would have us to worship Him as His children.

**The Spirit’s Operations in Worship**

These observations lead me to refer to a very important principle; namely, that the Holy Spirit is the energy, the sole living source, of all that takes place in worship so far as it is genuine. This principle, indeed, is true universally; it is true of all the exercises of spiritual life. We live by the Spirit. We walk by the Spirit. We worship in spirit and in truth. It is the Spirit who contends against the flesh. It is the affection of the Spirit which is the expression of the whole of the inward Christian life. But in Christian worship, the members of Christ being united together, the Spirit acts in the body. All that which is real and blessed comes from Him. Sovereign in action, but acting according to the spiritual capacity of each, He uses this sovereign power in order to express the feelings which are suitable to the assembly.
before God, to nourish and strengthen them by His grace. That which takes place ought to be according to the spiritual capacity of the assembly, raising it up, however, in the tone and spirit of worship, and leading it into the sensible enjoyment of the divine presence. It is thus that the Holy Spirit acts, for He acts in man, but according to the energy and grace of God. 110

The Spirit, the Lord’s Supper, and Our State

The two grand elements of Christian worship are the presence of the Holy Spirit and the remembrance of the sacrifice of Christ, which is commemorated in the Supper.

But in this worship the affections which are connected with all our relationships with God are developed. God, in His majesty, is adored. The gifts even of His providence are recognized. He who is a Spirit is worshipped in spirit and in truth. We present to God, as our Father -- the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ -- the expression of the holy affections which He has produced in us; for He sought us when we were afar off, and has brought us near to Himself, as His beloved children, giving us the spirit of adoption, and associating us (wondrous grace!) with His well-beloved Son. We adore our Saviour-God, who has purged us from our sins, and placed us in His presence without spot, His holiness and His righteousness, which have been so marvellously displayed in our redemption, being to us a source of joy which passes not away; for, through the perfect work of Christ, we are in the light as He Himself is in the light. It is the Holy Spirit Himself who reveals to us these heavenly things, and the glory which is to come, and who works in us so as to produce affections suitable to such blessed relationships with God. He it is who is the bond of union between the heart and these things. But in thus drawing out our souls He makes us feel that we are children of the same family, and members of the same body; uniting us in this worship by means of mutual affections and feelings common to all towards Him who is the object of our worship. Jesus Himself is present in our midst, according to His promise. In fine, worship is exercised in connection with the very sweetest recollection of His love, whether we regard His work upon the cross, or whether we recall the thought of His ever fresh and tender affection for us. He desires our remembrance of Him.

Sweet and precious thought! Oh! how joyous to our souls, and yet, at the same time, how solemn ought such worship to be! What sort of life should we be careful to lead in order to render it! How watchful over our own spirits! How sensitive as to evil! With what earnestness should we seek the presence and guidance of the Holy Spirit, in order to render such worship suitably! Yet it should be very simple and truthful; for true affection is always simple, and at the same time devout, for the sense of such interests imparts devoutness. The majesty of Him whom we adore, and the greatness of His love, give solemnity to every act in which we draw near to Him. With what deep affections and thankfulness should we at such times think of the Saviour, when we recall all His love for us -- abiding through Him in the presence of God, far removed from all evil, in the foretaste of our eternal blessing!

These two great subjects about which Christian worship is occupied (namely, the love of God our Father, and the love of the Lord Jesus, in His work, and as Head of His body the Church) afford slight changes in the character of worship, according to the state of those who render it. At times the Lord Jesus will be more specially before the mind; at times thoughts of the Father will be more present. The Holy Spirit alone can guide us in this; but the truthfulness and spirituality of worship will depend upon the state of those who compose the assembly. Effort in such things has no place. He who is the channel of worship, let it be observed, should not present that which is proper and peculiar to himself, but that which is truly the exercise through the Spirit of the hearts of those who compose the assembly. This will make us feel our entire dependence upon the Comforter -- the Spirit of truth -- for fruitful service to God in communion. Nothing, however, is more simple or more evident than the truth, that the worship which is rendered should be the worship of all.

There is another observation which the consideration of scripture would suggest, namely, how much the worship will be affected by all that grieves the Holy Spirit; every impediment, therefore, even in an individual, will make itself felt, if there be spirituality; for we are there as but “one body.” It is of the utmost importance that this delicacy of spiritual feeling should be cultivated and maintained, and that we should not habituate ourselves in worship to but little sense of the presence of God and of the power of the Holy Spirit. If there is true spirituality, if the Holy Spirit fills the assembly with His presence, evil of every kind is quickly discovered. For God is a jealous God, and He is faithful. A single Achan was discovered at the commencement of the history of Israel -- a single lie in Ananias in the beginning of the Church’s history. Alas! what things afterwards occurred in Israel! And what things afterwards took place in the Church, without anyone having even the consciousness that evil was present! May God make us humble, watchful, and true to Him, and enable us to bear in mind that His Spirit abides with us, in order that we may be able to render spiritual worship! It is by the Spirit’s powerful testimony to the efficacy of the work of Christ, that we can abide in the presence of God, without blame and full of joy, and thus present to Him worship which is a witness before the angels of heaven to God’s gracious and unfathomable love, and which presents to God Himself the most acceptable proof of the efficacy of that work which takes from us all fear in His presence, and which opens a

channel, otherwise eternally closed, for the outflowing of that love in which He finds His delight.

The privilege of being able to render worship to God is granted to two or three gathered together in the name of Jesus. Disciples are so gathered, when it is the power of His name known amongst them as the common tie, which is recognized as the principle of their assembly. Jesus, in accordance with His promise {Matt. 18:20}, is there as the joy and strength of their common service. \(^{111}\)

\(^{111}\) Collected Writings 7:114-117.
Appendix 4: John MacArthur’s Attack on the Trinity

Hebrews

Numbers of John MacArthur’s books on the N.T. carry his denial of the eternal Sonship. We shall quote some of his statements and use them as an occasion to examine some Scriptures that we have not looked at before.

Attack on Christ’s Humanity. We shall begin with his Hebrews 112 wherein he attacks both the Lord’s humanity and His eternal Sonship. Let us first note his doctrine concerning the Lord’s humanity:

Weaknesses [in Hebrews 4:15] does not refer directly to sin, but to feebleness or infirmity. It refers to all the natural limitations of humanity, which however, includes liability to sin. Jesus knew firsthand the drive of human nature toward sin (p. 113).

So weaknesses includes liability to sin. So our High Priest sympathizes with our liability to sin! This is an outrage against the holy One. “The drive of human nature toward sin” is exactly “the law of sin which exists in my members” (Rom. 7:23). That “Jesus knew firsthand the drive of human nature toward sin” flies in the face of Scripture:

Who knew no sin (2 Cor. 5:21).

2 Cor. 5:21 does not refer to sinful acts (1 Pet. 2:22 refers to acts) but to the internal root of those acts -- that very law of sin which exists in our members. There was no sin in Christ (1 John 3:5; cp. John 14:30 and 8:46). These texts all refer to indwelling sin. Concerning weakness, Paul boasted in them (2 Cor. 12:9, 10). Imagine Paul boasting in “liability to sin”!

Attack on the Eternal Sonship. Let us now look at his incarnational Sonship notions:

As noted, Son is an incarnational title of Christ . . .

The term Son has only to do with Jesus Christ in His incarnation. It is only an analogy to say that God is Father and Jesus is Son -- God’s way of helping us understand the essential relationship between the first and second Persons of the Trinity (p. 27).

It is interesting how these writers avoid saying “name” and use “title.” What looseness of words. “Essential relationship” is used of his incarnational Sonship teaching. In essence, as Son, He is one, eternally, with the Father. And what does he know about first and second Persons of the Trinity? He really does not know which of the divine Persons became Son and which became the Father. He is using traditional language (wherein first and second Person were use of those related as Father and Son in the Godhead) with a new meaning.

Christ was not Son until His incarnation. Before that He was eternal God. It is therefore incorrect to say the [sic] Jesus Christ is eternally inferior to God because He goes under the title of Son. He is no “eternal son” always subservient to God, always less than God, always under God (p. 28).

This is absurd. He is an intelligent man. He could not perceive that the eternal Sonship is not really interlocked with eternal subservience? He could not see that eternal Sonship is not interlocked with being always less than God? Well, after all, it is not a question of intelligence, for the most intelligent can be very foolish. His trouble is that he reasons upon these things in accordance with the mind of the flesh, and sets aside the revelation of the eternal relationships. He reasons from the human relationship to impose certain things on the divine relationship. And he utilizes certain texts which speak of the Son as born in time (as here in Heb. 1:5) to cover the entire truth of His Sonship -- i.e., reasoning from the partial to the whole.

Heb. 1:1, 2 refer to the eternal Sonship.

God having spoken in many parts and in many ways formerly to the fathers in the prophets, at the end of these days has spoken to us in [the person of the] Son . . . .

There is a very valuable footnote to this by JND (1884 ed.).

The absence of the Greek article here [he is referring to the word the] is important, though difficult to render in English; the result is, that God, speaking in the prophets, and using them as His mouth, is clearly


113. In his Matthew 1-7, Chicago: Moody, p. 411 (1985), he wrote:

He did not in the least degree allow temptation to develop into desire, much less into sin (cf. James 1:13-15). He did not think the matter over or give it consideration. He simply stood firmly in His Father’s will and said no!

This seems, on the surface, to be true, but not seemingly good words can cancel what he said in Hebrews.
In Hebrews 5:8, 9 we read below.

None of this detracts from the eternal Sonship but rather and Jehovah (v. 10), as well as “the Same” (v. 12).

He did not learn obedience by the law, though He kept it, but from the things He suffered in this world hostile to God. No Doubt v. 7 refers particularly to Gethsemane, yet one would not limit v. 8 to that, for he suffered many things. His deity did not shield Him from this. Indeed, it was consonant with the perfection of His Person in manhood to suffer in this sinful world as none but the Holy One could; and also to shrink in horror at the thought of being made sin for us, as He did shrink in Gethsemane. Not to so shrink would have been a moral fault. Having died on the cross, He was saved out of death, perfected in resurrection, and the author of eternal salvation to those who obey Him.


Earlier it was noted that Psal. 2:7, “this day have I begotten thee,” refers to the incarnation. He was Son eternally and He was Son in time, as born here. J. MacArthur wrote a position paper, John MacArthur’s Views on the Eternal Sonship of Christ, composed of five typed pages, unsigned and undated. He wrote:

It is interesting to note that Psalm 2:7 is quoted three times in the New Testament: once in the aforementioned Hebrews 1:5 passage, once in Hebrews 5:5, and once by the apostle Paul in Acts 13:33. That last verse says, “God has fulfilled this promise to our children in that He raised up Jesus, as it is also written in the second Psalm, ‘Thou art my Son; today I have begotten Thee.’” The interesting thing about verse {sic} is the fact that Paul doesn’t relate Psalm 2:7 to the incarnation, but to the resurrection. Which is correct? I believe the answer is both. Jesus’ Sonship came to full bloom in His resurrection. He is a Son not only because He was begotten of a virgin, but also because He was begotten from the dead.

Paul said that Jesus was “declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead” (Rom. 1:4). In the Old Testament it was prophesied that Christ would come as a Son. In the New Testament He came as a Son in His virgin birth and was fully declared to be the Son by His resurrection from the dead.

Acts 13:33 115 is, of course, a reference to Psa. 2:7 and

114. His pathway through these sufferings and resurrection and glory gives all a completeness here described as His having been perfected.
115. Verse 33 answers to Psalm 2:7 and refers to the raising up of the deliverer, as Zacharias said (“raised up a horn of deliverance for us in the house of David his servant”). Verse 34 turns to the subject of the resurrection and quotes a passage referring to that.

And we declare unto you the glad tidings of the promise made to the fathers, that God has fulfilled this to us their children, having raised up Jesus; as it is written in the second Psalm, Thou art my Son: this day have I begotten thee. But that he raised him from among [the dead], no more to return to corruption, he spoke thus: I will give to you the faithful

(continued...
means the incarnation, not the resurrection.

Romans 1:4

Notice above that he used his false application of Acts 13:33 to the resurrection to evacuate Rom. 1:4 of its true force concerning the Sonship.

. . . concerning his Son (come of David’s seed according to flesh, marked out Son of God in power, according to [the] Spirit of holiness, by resurrection of [the] dead) Jesus Christ our Lord . . . (Rom. 1:3-5).

In his exposition of Romans he wrote:

. . . the title Son is reserved as an incarnational term.

Psalm 2:7 is also quoted by the apostle Paul in Acts 13:33. This passage points to the resurrection as the declaration of that Sonship.

. . . Paul says He was declared God’s Son when He was supernaturally conceived in Mary and was born of a descendent of David according to flesh.

As Paul goes on to explain, the most conclusive and irrefutable evidence of Jesus’ divine sonship was given with power by the resurrection from the dead (cf. Acts 13:29-33). According to the Spirit of holiness is another way of saying “according to the nature and work of the Holy Spirit.”

Actually, in his books he applies Psa. 2:7 to both the conception/birth and the resurrection. Psa. 2:7 has in view the begetting of Christ’s humanity — not His resurrection; while Acts 13:33, as we noted above, does not refer to the resurrection but to the incarnation. He is really making out of the resurrection a ‘begetting’ of the Son, and doing so to parry the true force of Rom. 1:4, which he needed to explain away somehow. The theory of a twice-begetting is absurd. It is to make of Christ’s resurrection another incarnation. Paul, who I doubt not is the author of Hebrews, applies Psa. 2:7 to the incarnation, not the resurrection. I noticed, too, that he sometime uses the expression “divine Son” when what is really meant, in accordance with his teaching, is ‘incarnational Sonship.’

“Come of David’s seed” refers to the incarnation while “marked out Son of God in power . . . by resurrection” refers to the proof, in power, of who He was as Son of God. While this text does not state expressly the eternal Sonship, it cannot be without it; nor does it state expressly J. MacArthur’s view of the temporal Sonship.

The Spirit of God as “the Spirit of holiness” ever characterized the life of the Lord Jesus. The Spirit is thus characterized because God operates in power through the Spirit in producing all in man that is in accordance with the holiness of God. This was true in O.T. times as it is now, though now in a different way since the Son came into the world in holy manhood. Every word, work and way of

His was the expression of the Spirit of holiness and this was true also in His death and resurrection (cp. 1 Pet. 3:18). Of course, He raised Himself from the dead (John 10:18) and He was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father (Rom. 6:4). Necessarily the Trinity was involved, as always, in every word way, and work — for He was corporeally the vessel of the indwelling of “all the fulness of the Godhead bodily” (Col. 2:9). By resurrection, the Son, as man, has entered a new sphere, on the other side of death. By the Spirit we are quickened together with Him out of the state of spiritual death. Moreover:

But if the Spirit of him [i.e., God] that has raised up Jesus from among [the] dead dwell in you, he that has raised up Christ from among [the] dead shall quicken your mortal bodies also on account of the Spirit which dwells in you (Rom. 8:11).

As to ourselves while we await the coming of the Lord, He is our life (Col. 3:4) as risen from the dead (John 12:24; cp. John 20:22) and we have the same Spirit.

God has sent out the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father (Gal. 4:6).

The only time we read of God’s Son saying Abba, Father, was in Gethsemane (Mark 14:36). This is the gospel that presents the Son in the perfection of His service; and though Servant, yet He prays in all the intimacy of the Son of the Father. Whatever human office or station that the Son filled, the Father and the Spirit are ever watchful to maintain the honor and glory of His Person as Son.

Galatians 4:4

But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, come of a woman, come under law . . .

We elsewhere noted that we have an order here: first, God sent forth His Son; secondly, the Son came of a woman; thirdly, eight days after His birth He was circumcised under the covenant of the law. But J. MacArthur wrote:

Son does not refer to Jesus’ divine essence. He was not by nature eternally subordinate to God the Father but was equal to Him . . .

To him, reasoning from man to God (backwards) Sonship means subordination, whereas Sonship indicates equality with God (John 5:18; 10:30, 36). Nor need arguments against ‘the eternal generation of the Son” detain us. The truth of the eternal Sonship, as was elsewhere said, is not interlocked with that metaphysical speculation. It stands without that, as we have seen earlier. John MacArthur is unsound on this fundamental truth of our most holy faith, the eternal Sonship.


**Playing Down the Doctrinal Importance**

We have seen in the body of this book the fundamental importance of the doctrine of the eternal Sonship. It denies the truth of His Person, falsifies the Trinity, removes the true mission from the Father, etc. It is fundamental evil, i.e., leaven. But John MacArthur wants to minimize the importance:

> I don’t view this as a major doctrine in Scripture, however, nor do I feel that those holding to the eternal Sonship of Christ are outside the orthodox camp.¹¹⁸

And so the leaven spreads, pretending that it is not part of the doctrine of Christ.

Whosoever goes forward and abides not in the doctrine of the Christ has not God. He that abides in the doctrine, *he* has both the Father and the Son. If any one come to you and bring not this doctrine, do not receive him into [the] house, and greet him not; for he who greets him partakes in his wicked works (2 John 9, 10).

---

Part 2:

The Separation
From
F. E. Raven
and
His Supporters
1 John 5:20

*He is the true God and eternal life.*

Q. 1 John 5:20. The article before “eternal life” in this verse is said not to have authority sufficient to retain it in the Greek. What difference does the presence or absence of the article make for this passage? In the controversy during recent years on “life eternal” I have seen it stated, that the absence of the article here renders this passage to mean that “life eternal” is “characteristic” of Christ, not that He is personally “the life eternal.” INQUIRER.

A. In 1 John 5:20 the oldest and best authority excludes the article before “life eternal.” But it is only a novice in zeal for his notion that could thence infer that the phrase is characteristic and not objective. For the article before “the true God” is passed on by the connective particle to “life eternal” also according to a well-known principle of its usage. “The true God and life eternal” are thus bound up with our Lord Jesus Christ in the striking way peculiar to this Epistle, which combines God with Him, or as here with life eternal. The case therefore is not only an oversight, but a cogent proof against those who would separate them. Had the article been repeated before “life,” it would have made them distinct objects, the very thing which the apostle avoided. The opening chapter 1 (v. 2) is most emphatic in predicating objective reality of “the life eternal,” both with the Father before He became flesh, and when He was thus manifested. “A little knowledge is a dangerous thing,” especially for such as hastily seize a superficial appearance in questions so grave and momentous, where truth and safety are found only in entire subjection to the written word.

Chapter 1

Survey of What Led to the Separation from Evil

Introduction

It should be kept in mind that material in the text and footnotes enclosed by braces { } has been added editorially.

Worldliness and Mysticism

There is always a need among God’s saints for objective ministry; i.e., the setting forth of the revealed truths of Christianity, such as the doctrine of Christ, the work of Christ, the believer’s perfect standing, his place in the new creation, etc. There is always an accompanying need for corrective ministry, and exhortation also, ministry concerning what is due to Christ (which is part of preaching Christ) because we tend to abuse the grace of God wherein we stand. Thus, the epistles contain so much correction and exhortation; founded, of course, upon the objective truths. There is even a gift of exhortation (Rom. 12:8) and prophesying often takes the character of dealing with the state.

Worldliness is a snare to which many may succumb. J. N. Darby remarked:

It is important that the testimony borne against not the world only, but worldly Christians should be distinct and positive. With a worldly person, not bearing Christ’s name, one thinks at least of speaking to him of grace. But to a Christian who, knowing his privileges, walks with the world, it is hard to speak of grace, because he abuses it. Love does not consist in walking with such, but in warning them. It is not possible to walk in [according to] the light and in worldliness. One must show oneself more decided with the Christian who is worldly than with the worldly man . . . .

The scriptures warn us about worldliness. And in ministry the “sense” (Neh. 8:8) of scripture might be pressed upon us by faithful ministers of Christ (including what is due to Christ) who “preach the Word” (2 Tim. 4:1) and do not omit parts of it in order to maintain popularity and spare themselves.

J. B. Stoney (1814 - 1897) had a characteristic ministry of exhortation and correction and there is written and recorded ministry of his which is of much profit. In his later years, however, from just before the death of J. N. Darby in 1882 until his own death, his ministry began to have the additional feature of mysticism. F. E. Raven came under its influence, elaborated the mysticism, introduced fundamentally evil doctrine, and affected J. B. Stoney in such a way that he not only defended F. E. Raven, but absorbed some, if not all, of FER’s fundamentally evil doctrines, as we saw in Part One, Appendix Two.

A separation occurred in June 1890, wherein F. E. Raven and his supporters were refused by those who separated from evil unto the Lord; because he held and taught evil doctrines.

By hindsight it was seen that the first hint of FER’s doctrinal aberrations concerning the present possession of eternal Life came out in 1886 in a magazine edited by J. B. Stoney, A Voice to the Faithful. From 1888, when FER began to publicly voice his evil teachings on eternal life and on the Person of the Son in His deity, and in His manhood, until the assembly at Bexhill, England took action (June 29, 1890) separating from him and Greenwich, he was admonished in public meetings, private meetings and in correspondence, as well as printed papers, all to no avail.

One of the theses of this paper is that by June 29, 1890, FER’s mystical mind had already formed an integrated system of evil doctrines, and before his death in 1903 he had refined it.

On June 29, 1890 a letter went from the saints gathered together to the name of our Lord Jesus Christ at Bexhill, England, to the Christians at Greenwich, England (meeting with, and supporting, F. E. Raven), refusing to any longer recognize them as an assembly. Mr. Raven was refused because he held and taught evil doctrines.

The Core of F. E. Raven’s System

FER’s fundamentally evil doctrines concerning the Person of the Son formed a complete and integrated system.

1. In early 1888 he began by publicly teaching deviation from truth concerning the believer regarding eternal life and being made the righteousness of God in Him.

Soon it came out that he held that the Son was eternal life in eternity, but he did not mean by that what 1 John 5:20 states; i.e., he denied that the Son was essentially in His Person the Eternal Life. Rather, he believed in what may be called an eternal life-in-essence in the Son, but which was not part of deity. Coupled with that, he taught that eternal life is always connected with manhood. Thus, you can see, according to this, that humanity must have always been in the Son in eternity. And indeed that was his teaching. But as in the case of the eternal life-in-essence -- which was eternally there, but not part of deity -- just so was it with the humanity-in-essence; it was eternally there, but not part of deity. Therefore the conclusion follows that there was an eternal manhood -- but it was not part of deity. And that eternal manhood is the basis for his claim that the Son brought with him all that characterized His humanity. Moreover, in connection with the subject of Christ as the eternal life, he denied that it was manifested to the world.

2. Consistently, he denied divine attributes to the Second Man. And it is clear why he did so. The humanity that the Son, allegedly, brought with Him was not part of deity and therefore Christ, as the Second Man, could not have the divine attributes of omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence. This led FER to assert that “It is perfectly certain that Scripture can, and does, constantly view Christ as man, apart and distinct from what He is as divine.” Thus He divided the Person. Indeed, He necessarily restricted the use of the word “Person” to mean only the deity. The truth is that the Son took humanity into His Person. And consistent with FER’s evil was His Apollinarian doctrine which he formally presented in 1895 in The Person of the Christ.

3. The assertion of Apollinarian doctrine (that Christ had no human spirit) was couched in the formula: “In Person He is God, in condition He is man” (1895). This meant that the Deity was the spirit in the man, the Lord Jesus. He falsely characterized his opponents as believing that Christ was two persons (i.e., had two distinct personalities).

He taught that the Deity and the manhood must be considered separately. Why? Observe that FER did not believe that the Son took humanity into His Person -- so when he spoke of the Person, he meant only the deity. Well, no wonder he said they must be considered apart. He was denying the unity of the two natures in Christ.

4. In 1890 he denied that the Son was eternally the Word. Then in 1898, in the USA, he denied the eternal Sonship. It was only consistency with the rest of the evil to do so.

Thus the foundation was completed for the denial of all eternal relationships in the Godhead by 1898. He was really making out of what were divine relationships merely temporal relationships, and withal dividing the Person of Christ -- so as to bring these things into the range of scrutability by the human mind. FER died in 1903. Obviously, it is a myth that James Taylor Sr. is the father of these teachings.

Of course, FER did not clearly lay out his system. FER, whom W. Kelly said that he had a mission from an evil spirit, let out a little here and there, backtracked slightly, feinted, gave “explanations” to dupe his adherents, let out some more, enunciated formula-type expressions in which to couch his system, lied, claimed he agreed with J. N. Darby while attacking the recovered truth; and worst of all -- set up this totally false Christ which is but an idol of a mind led by an evil spirit. He worded himself so that those who would be deceived might place a good-sounding construction on his words.

It should be clear to the reader that with such a false Christ (who is no Christ at all) before his soul, FER could leave no truth untouched. For all truth conforms to the truth of Christ’s Person. And FER’s role was to conform (deform) truth to the false Christ. After Bexhill refused the Greenwich assembly (FER’s assembly) on June 29, 1890, he was, of course, emboldened by the support he received to state his subtly worded blasphemies with more impunity, though the record shows that some of his more extreme utterances were revised by his supporters before being printed.

J. N. Darby wrote:

It never was, nor I trust ever will be the notion of brethren, that the truth of Christ’s Person . . . was to be sacrificed to outward unity: it is making Brethren of more importance than Christ . . . I must have a true Christ.

He also wrote:

The semblance of love which does not maintain the truth, but accommodates itself to that which is not the truth, is not Love according to God; it is taking advantage of the name of love in order to help on the seductions of Satan. In the last days the test of true love is the maintenance of the truth. God would have us love one another; but the Holy Ghost, by Whose power we receive the divine nature and Who pours the love of God into our hearts, is the Spirit of Truth, and His office is to glorify Christ. Therefore it is impossible that a love which can put up with a doctrine that falsifies Christ, or which is indifferent to anything that concerns His glory, can be of the Holy Ghost -- still less so, if such indifference be set up as the proof of the love. Compare also 1 John 5:2, 3 and 2 John 6. 120

Mr. Raven’s words were:

I must be judged according to what I have written. 121

---

120. Synopsis on 2 John, p.357 (Stow Hill ed.).
121. Letter to J. Dunlop, 10th June, 1890, cited in N. Noel, History 2:539.
Chapter 1: What Lead to the Separation?

Object of This Paper

The object in Part 2 is manifold, namely, to:

1. trace the history that led to the separation in June 1890;
2. show that a system of doctrinal evil occasioned the separation which took place in June 1890;
3. show that J. B. Stoney and some other supporters of FER imbibed fundamentally evil teachings;
4. show that the European brethren denounced FER’s teachings as fundamental evil.

Survey of the History Leading to the June, 1890 Separation

A Historical survey by One on the Scene

Following is a paper, Grave Facts, written just before the division occurred, recounting some of the main points from early 1888 to June 1890. It is written by H. T. C. (probably Dr. Cotton).

Grave Facts

“Purge out the old leaven.”

Early in 1888, at a brothers’ reading held at Mr. Binney’s, nearly 80 being present, Mr. Raven taught that 2 Cor. 5:21 was future and purpose. This was challenged by Mr. Whybrow who insisted upon its being present, though the display of glory was future. Mr. R. held his ground, and quoted Phil. 3:9, in support of it. Mr. {J. B.} Stoney administered no rebuke.

Shortly after, brothers were reminded of this at Cheapside {London}. Mr. Henderson said I had misunderstood Mr. R., and invited me to a reading at his house, on April 28, to be put right. I went, and before the reading questioned Mr. R. in the presence of about 25 persons. He again denied that the believer was become the Righteousness of God in Christ now, and maintained the point of the verse was not “in Christ,” but “our becoming” the Righteousness of God, He could not say a believer was become now the Righteousness of God, save as in any measure he had become so morally. He further maintained that this teaching was according to the writings of Mr. Darby. Mr. R.’s subsequent view of 2 Cor. 5:21 is in print.

In January, 1889, the brothers’ readings re-commenced, notwithstanding the wide-spread uneasiness resulting from what had been taught at Witney, in 1888. Mr. {J. S.} Oliphant and two others informed me that at the first reading, which was held at Mr. Hewer’s, Mr. R. had taught that all the Lord’s Life was not the manifestation of Eternal Life.

The next reading took place on Jan. 29, at the Brixton meeting room, Tunstall Hall, over 100 being present. After the opening prayer, I refused the above teaching as not being the Shepherd’s voice. Mr. Stoney insisted such doctrine had not been taught. Mr. Oliphant maintained it had. Mr. R. stated that what he had said was that Eternal Life was not manifested to the world, but only to His own. Mr. Whybrow maintained it was manifested to the world as well as to the disciples, and read John 15:22-24, Mr. Stoney interrupting him all the time. Great efforts were made to stifle all further conversation and the reading was commenced. During the evening Mr. R. stated that the Lord was not presented as Eternal Life in John’s Gospel, and that if we wanted to find out what Eternal Life was we must go to the Epistle of John. Mr. R. received no public rebuke for this teaching. These readings were continued every fortnight, and as Mr. R. was still recognized as a teacher, some brothers felt compelled to absent themselves.

On October 15 {1889}, before the reading commenced, at Tunstall Hall, I reminded brothers of the grievous dishonor done to Christ by the teaching in that room on January 29. The doctrine had neither been withdrawn nor judged. I read John 1:4, and 1 John 1:1-2 and retired. Mr. Lowe was present, and in the course of the evening refused some of the doctrines that came out as subversive of Christianity. The readings were continued steadily in spite of repeated protests from brothers at Cheapside.

At the reading on March 18, 1890, at Park Street, I understand Mr. Stoney maintained firmly that Eternal Life was not manifested to the world, thus repeating Mr. R.’s terrible doctrine of January 29, 1889. Unlike Mr. R., however, he would not allow Eternal Life was a sphere. Mr. R. was pressed as to this point, and denied that he had taught it was a sphere. Mr. R.’s repeated utterances in the past, and his printed views, defining Eternal Life as a sphere, will be fresh in the minds of brethren, and remain unjudged and withdrawn. God has not forgotten all this that has happened in London.

May 29, 1890

H. T. C.

“Let everyone who names the name of the Lord withdraw from iniquity.”
Part 2: The Separation from F. E. Raven and His Supporters

N.B.

Having asked the Ebury Street saints five consecutive Lord’s Days for an assembly meeting, to consider the question of fellowship with Greenwich where Mr. R. breaks bread, and having failed to exercise them as to the evil doctrine taught in London and sheltered at Greenwich, a brother and myself, with our wives, have withdrawn from those meeting at 184 Bury Street. How many more will follow is not yet known, but this is to intimate to all that the table there is spread in declared fellowship with Greenwich.

Writing to Bexhill, Greenwich brothers speak of Mr. R. as “a brother in whom the meeting has the fullest confidence.”

Bexhill Assembly, in their reply to Greenwich Assembly of June 8, {1890} states that his “teaching is, we judge, derogatory to the glory of the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ, and contrary to Scripture.” We accept that Assembly’s judgment, and refuse fellowship with those who recognize Greenwich and its unrighteous judgment of June 2nd, excommunicating the brother {Mr. Corbett} who withdrew from fellowship for conscience sake, on account of the evil doctrines, three months before.

“Save yourselves from this untoward generation.”

June 17, 1890.

---

Summary of the Early History

Leading to the Division

H. C. Anstey, one of the vigorous supporters of FER, sent a letter, countersigned by J. B. Stoney and C. H. Mackintosh, to Germany. Of particular interest to us at this point is the response by H. A. Hammond to untruthful complaints in this letter concerning the procedure of dealing with FER. This response lays out the history of how FER was dealt with. I have added the notes in braces {}.

The German Letter by H. C. A., J. B. S., and C. H. M.

The assertion having been constantly made that adequate efforts have not been employed to get Mr. Raven to see the gravity of his teaching; and that he has not been dealt with in a proper way: we may notice especially, as an example of this, some statements put forth in a letter to certain German brethren, signed by H. C. Anstey, and countersigned by J. B. Stoney and C. H. Mackintosh.

This letter complains, as follows:

1. The accused has never been visited (according to Matt. 18:15-17) by one or more of his accusers, to prove to him that ‘leaven’ was there, and to awaken his conscience as to it.

2. The accused never brought their complaint before the local Assembly in Greenwich, where the accused is responsible, nor sought to prove it to them, as is commanded in the passage mentioned.

3. In no gathering in England have the accusers, in presence of the accused, thrown the matter upon the Lord, who is in the midst, in confidence in His faithfulness, so that He might lead to an issue in this sad matter. The seceders have settled the matter in their own way, and their way was to leave fellowship.

Never have they proved their accusations; neither alone with brother Raven, nor with two or three besides: nor has the matter been laid before the Assembly at Greenwich, so that the saints could have the opportunity of putting out the evil, or of withdrawing from it, should it be in their midst.

In answer to complaint No. (1), the following facts, which it is believed will be found substantially accurate, may be mentioned:

Early in 1888, at a reading meeting at Mr. Binney’s, nearly 80 brothers being present, Mr. Raven taught that 1 Cor. 5:21 was “future,” and “purpose.” This was contested by Mr. Whybrow; who insisted that it is “present,” though the display in glory will be future. Mr. R. held to his ground. J. B. S. {Stoney} was present when this matter was mentioned, shortly after, by Dr. Cotton, at Cheapside. Afterwards Dr. C. met Mr. Raven by appointment at Mr. Henderson’s, and questioned him on the subject, in the presence of some 25 persons. Mr. Raven, in reply, would not say that the believer was become now the Righteousness of God, save as, in any measure, he had become so morally, maintaining, as against Dr. Cotton, that the words “in Christ” were not the point in 2 Cor. 5:21, but “our becoming,”-- “that we might become.”

The Witney Conference was held on the 18th, 19th, and 20th of April, 1888, and the anxiety caused by what was taught on that occasion, led, in the following May and June, to the important correspondence between Mr. Bradstock and Mr. Raven. (See pp. 3 to 9 above. {See below.})

On Tuesday evening, July 17, six brothers (J. S. O. Oliphant), with Brothers Bradstock, Hooten, Anstey himself, {W. J.} Lowe, and Henderson met Mr. Raven at Mr. Oliphant’s house, to look into his doctrines, especially
that of righteousness, and life as a “sphere.” Mr. Bradstock, and also Mr. Lowe, earnestly appealed to Mr. Raven, seeking to bring home to him the erroneous nature of his views.

The following letter was written a few days after, by Mr. Bradstock, a brother who was considerably senior to the others present, to one of those who had thus met:

23rd July, 1888.

Beloved Brother,

I have been considering the meeting last Tuesday night. There was a little yielding on the part of Raven, and he evidently modified his doctrine; but the tendency to go wrong appeared to be still there, and the past, I fear, left unjudged.

I was thankful for the meeting, because one had a better opportunity of seeing where Raven is. I dread his activity of mind; and the want of subjection to the word was most apparent.

I find, too, some are inviting him to teach and preach, as though nothing had occurred. It is incumbent upon us, in view of all this lack of discernment, to be firm in the maintenance of the truth. I feel sad.

Yours affectionately in the Lord, W. Bradstock

On Jan. 15th, 1889, the readings of the London brothers were resumed, the subject being John’s Gospel; J. B. S. {Stoney}, and F. E. R. taking a prominent part. Teaching of an alarming character as to the person of the Lord, 127 was resisted by several; but their remonstrances were unheeded, so that some brothers, if not several, went no more to those readings; and at the next fortnightly meeting at Brixton, on Jan. 29, a protest was entered by Dr. Cotton against what Mr. Raven had taught, as to the Lord. on Jan. 15th; over 100 being present.

Early in October, 1889, after a long and close conversation with W. J. L. {Lowe}, Mr. R. maintained that he saw nothing of an objectionable character in the “notes” of the Witney Conference. These “notes” of what had been said at Witney in relation to the First Epistle of John, after having been revised by J. B. S. {Stoney}, T. H. R. {Reynolds}, and F. E. R. (Mr. Raven), were circulated privately, and drew forth a searching criticism from J. S. O. {Oliphant}, raising many very serious points of objection. Being so manifest a departure from the truth, they led to much anxiety; and their appearance in print, which had been at first decided on, was afterwards abandoned.

Mr. Raven, after being publicly withstood in a large meeting of brothers at Brixton, especially by C. D. M. {Dr. Maynard} and W. J. L. {Lowe}, on Oct. 15, 1889, declared, in a letter to Dr. Cotton, on Oct. 28th, that “the matter had become public”; and on this ground, refused to see Dr. C. “alone,” as Dr. Cotton had asked him to do, in intended compliance with Matt. 18:5 {sic} (though it was “no question of a personal trespass between” them).

On Nov. 12, W. J. L. wrote Mr. Raven a long letter, setting many points before him, gathered from his own writings, and beseeching him to withdraw his teaching as “involving consequences directly antagonistic to fundamental truth.” To this Mr. Raven answered on the 25th, maintaining his ground.

On Dec. 10, a meeting was convened at Dr. Hewer’s, at which 38 brethren were present.

126. Compare with this, Mr. Raven’s statement at the top of p. 10 and Mr. Bradstock’s at the bottom of p. 12. N. B. Italics are by Editor.

127. Extracts from notes of reading on John 3, at Dr. Hewer’s, 15th January, 1889.

Dr. Calthorp (to Mr. Raven). -- You say that Christ manifested the eternal life in His spiritual relationships. Would you not say that He did in His natural relationships too?

Mr. R. -- What do you mean by natural relationships?

Dr. C. -- Well: take an instance: when He was on the Cross and spoke of His mother.

Mr. R. -- I should not say He was manifesting the eternal life then, but what he did was perfectly consistent with it. You may walk perfectly consistent with the characteristics of eternal life, but you cannot display it in this sphere. Eternal life belongs entirely to another sphere altogether. (See Collected Writings of A. C. Ord, p. 120.)

Qy. -- Are we not to manifest the life of Christ down here?

Mr. R. -- My point is, that eternal life is on the ground of death and resurrection and therefore belongs to another sphere altogether.

Mr. Hooten. -- The display of the eternal life down here was the person of Christ; and you cannot analyze that.

Mr. R. -- Christ magnified His Father’s Name unto the men which were given Him out of the world, but never to the world.” [Italics by Ed. {H. A. H.}]

On Nov. 5, 1890, enquiry was made of Mr. Raven to the following effect:

-- Referring to the reading at Dr. Hewer’s on John 3, on Jan. 15, 1889, do I understand that you would say that when Christ was on the Cross and spoke of His mother that He was not manifesting the eternal life then, but that what He did was perfectly consistent with it?" (continued…)

127. (...continued)

Mr. Raven replied, Nov. 6,

I am really unable to recall with any certainty what was said at the meeting you speak of.

I may add, that I do not apprehend that eternal life as revealed in Christ -- and as we have it (heavenly things) -- connects itself with the sphere and relationships of human life down here (see John 17:3). [Italics by Ed. {H. A. H.}]

One of the “judgments” that had been issued, speaking of certain doctrines that have been abroad among brethren during the last two years, touching the Nature and Manifestation of Eternal Life in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, says,

That this Assembly judges, that, stripped of all explanations and withdrawals, we have the fact, that an enquiry has been raised (for which there is no Scriptural warrant), as to what was, or what was not, the Eternal Life in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ; and also as to what was, or what was not, the expression of the Eternal Life in His Person.

And

That THIS ENQUIRY is evil, and that the doctrine and statements resulting from it, are deeply dishonoring to the Blessed Lord.
Amongst these were brethren from the country, some of whom knew but little of what had passed in London. Mr. Raven was there, and was defended by J. S. O. {Oliphant}, who read to the brethren a letter by F. E. R., addressed to him for this purpose, explanatory of his views. Explanations were given as to several matters, which satisfied the majority of those present; but all points of importance were not gone into, and none of the objectionable expressions previously maintained, were withdrawn; so that some of the brethren present went away dissatisfied with what they had heard.

On Dec. 23 {1889} Mr. Bradstock, then confined to his house through illness, had a very serious interview with Mr. R.; again endeavoring to reach his conscience. This led to Mr. Raven’s letter of Dec. 4 (see p. 9 above); on which day also, J. S. O. printed the letter of Dec. 6, which he had read out at Dr. Hewers’, and put it forth for sale in the Vassall Road. This provoked many printed answers, and, among them, in January, 1890, those of the widely honored servants of Christ, C. S. {Charles Stanley}, and B. F. P. {Pinkerton}, now no longer with us.

Some time in 1890 an intimate friend of R’s. feeling it was due to R. to let him know the action he, Mr. H., was taking, in refusing R’s doctrine, had a most serious interview with Mr. R., which resulted in bringing their intercourse to an end.

In addition to what has been mentioned above, there have been various private appeals to Mr. Raven, both by letter and personally, some of which have been most solemn and touching.

As to charges Nos. (2) and (3):
It has been shown above (pp. 47 to 51), with reference to the Greenwich gathering that the Bexhill meeting did make known their complaint before that local assembly {see Chapter 3}, this action having been forced upon them by circumstances for which those who belonged to the Greenwich Meeting were responsible. According to the Scripture order, that gathering ought to have been foremost in displaying godly jealousy for the Lord’s glory (Lev. 14:35). They, however, never drew back from their expressions of having “the fullest confidence” in the brother whose teaching was in question. (See above p. 37.)

In reply to the allegation that “in no gathering in England have the accusers, in presence of the accused, thrown the matter upon the Lord, who is in the midst”; suffice it to say, -- that documentary evidence furnished, or admitted by, or in the handwriting of, the accused) put out by a teacher to satisfy others as to his views, 128 and that during a period of two years’ controversy -- is surely more than a sufficient basis for a judgment, and is a far more reliable ground than a viva voce statement on subtle matters of doctrine; since the real meaning of what is said is not always, or readily, seized on by those not accustomed to such matters, even though the answers themselves may appear at first sight satisfactory.

Besides which it is surely evident, that Matthew 18:15-17 refers to the case of one who has committed a personal trespass, and that it is not therefore applicable to the case of Mr. Raven.

A remark as to the last sentence in paragraph No. (3), seems necessary.

Where Assemblies have been able to act unitedly in refusing doctrine held to be dishonoring to Christ, the primary obligation of guarding the Lord’s Table has been, thus, maintained. Where, however, through the working of the leaven, this has not been possible, in that case, either the general reception of evil doctrine, or division, has, of necessity, ensued. The term “seceder,” consequently, describes those who have had to withdraw from the majority of an assembly, in consequence of such majority coming to a judgment to which the conscience of the others was unable to submit; whether such judgment supported unscriptural teaching, or was a refusal of it. To make it, therefore, a term of opprobrium, as though it implied a departure from the principles of God’s House, is no more than a subterfuge; since obedience to the Lord imperatively demands withdrawal from any assembly, that, after expostulation or warning, refuses to close its doors against the intrusion of evil. H. C. A. {Anstey} objects to this; and calls it, untruly, “their own way.” In this, however, he has gone back from the principles he once held. (See extract headed “Separation from Evil,” p. 85.)

N. B. -- A reply to “Mr. Anstey’s open letter,” “sent out in all directions,” “confirmed by two aged and highly esteemed brothers” has been sent “To the brothers H. C. Anstey, J. B. Stoney, and C. H. Mackintosh,” by “Your brothers in the Lord’s bonds, C. Brockhaus, Phil. Thielmann, Emil Donges, H. C. Voorhoeve; on behalf of all the brothers present” “to consider the word” at Elberfeld, March, 1891”; with the “concurrence” of H. J. Lemkes, E. d’Okolski, Carl Miiri, Ch. Vodos, Josue Goret; copies of which may be had (in English) from “M,” 358, Strand. London W. C.

The Witney Meetings

With that general survey from early 1888 to Jan. 1890 behind us, we will now back up for a few points regarding the Witney meetings held April 18-20, 1888 and then give the Bradstock-Raven correspondence initiated by these meetings.

128 Mr. Raven recognizes this. His words are:
I must be judged according to what I have written. (Letter to J. Dunlop of June 10, 1890 -- see “Two Letters” Hart & Son, Printers, Montreal.)
Two of FER’s supporters, J. S. Oliphant 129 (who was present) and H. D’A. Champney, 130 as became their habit, attempted to palliate what FER said. Notes of the meetings were revised for publication, but publication did not occur because of objection.

B. F. Pinkerton wrote:
At times during 1888 some articles appeared in the *Voice to the Faithful* (edited by J. B. Stoney), on the subject of “eternal life”; and careful readers, even at a distance from England observed that there were evidently some serious differences of teaching on this fundamental subject. For instance in the number for May there was an article on “eternal life,” signed “M” (who it is I know not), giving simple scriptural teaching on this subject, stating what all Christians, irrespective of creeds, have believed and held, viz., that Christ Himself is personally and eternally “eternal life,” and was made manifest, and that all who believe have eternal life. Then, in the July number appeared another article, signed by the initials of one whose name I knew not at the time, but learned it later on. This article seemed to many to unsettle the question of what “eternal life” is, and especially the great fact, that all true believers have it. I need not take it up in detail, for the writer himself hastened to put an explanation in the August number, distinctly declaring that he did not intend to convey that all believers have not eternal life, -- that in fact, his convictions were such, he could not have done so. This seemed to me satisfactory, so far as it went; although I felt that the editor of the Voice was a good deal to be blamed for having admitted an obscure article, to say the least about it, on such a subject as eternal life, gratuitously raising questions and disturbing souls, without any benefit whatever. There were also some other things which appeared in his paper that had troubled me even more than what I have referred to; and a criticism I had made on them, quite privately, and later on, got abroad and troubled some who did not view the matter as I did. In fact, the immediate occasion of it is another similar criticism a brother had written and printed. It seemed to me that his remarks were just and needed, and I said so privately. About the style, I say nothing; nor have any of us much right to complain in that direction, for few of us are characterized by mildness when speaking or writing about what we believe to be false and misleading. For my part I still hoped that all would pass, and felt sorry that I had written, even privately; while my judgment of the things complained of remained unchanged. Had it been published, I would have withdrawn it. However, in the meantime, a good many other things had been taking place which came to my knowledge later on. Near the end of that year, I learned that the questions about eternal life were far from being settled. And I also learned that Mr. F. E. Raven was the principal introducer of these new thoughts. There had been a conference held at Witney, the details of which others can speak of better than I. I have seen M.S. notes of the lectures there given by Mr. Stoney on the first epistle of John. Mr. Raven was also there; and the copy of notes I saw had been corrected by those two brethren and third one {T. R. Reynolds, another supporter of FER}, whose name I do not remember, with a view to their publication. However, they were finally not published, because of a remonstrance made by a brother, that their publication would cause much agitation, on account of objectionable matter contained in them. It seemed to me when I read them, as it did to many who heard them, that the general teaching of the Epistle was much obscured, if not directly perverted, in many instances, but especially as regards the fact of all believers having eternal life. It seemed to be more than intimated, that this is a kind of attainment that only some

129. In a printed letter (dated Aug. 12, 1890) right after the division, he wrote:
If, instead of worrying the saints with printed pamphlets, containing shocking misrepresentations, exaggerations and unfounded accusations, and then causing a division by fleeging like hirelings from the flock, the leaders, who have gone out, had been willing to meet their brethren, the Lord would, I believe, have shown that many truths were being regarded from different points of view, and that there was little ground for supposing that anything new or contrary to the truth was being forced upon brethren. Expressions were used at Witney which undoubtedly gave cause for alarm, and, I thought, tended to weaken the force of the word; but what occurred has been greatly exaggerated. The principal point was the state and position of the babes and young men in 1 John 2, who were said to be “not in eternal life.” This has been explained to mean, that, not being in practical deliverance from the power of the world as a sphere, they were neither in the conscious possession, nor in the enjoyment, nor in the understanding of eternal life as the portion of the believer in the Son. The point I pressed was that they had the Holy Ghost, and were not in a bad state, though warned against false teachers and the world.

Another question as to the notes was, whether the knowledge in 1 John 5:20 as the common portion of all saints who have the Spirit, or a matter of attainment to be reached by experience. I thought, and still think, that the understanding is given to all who have the Spirit, however feebly it is entered into by many, and that it is not to be limited to fathers in Christ. No questions as to God’s righteousness, or mixed state, or new birth not of itself conducting into heavenly relationship, or of eternal life not being manifested to the world, and no questions relating to Christ’s person, or “the babe in the manger” were broached at Witney, and I cannot find in my objections a single objection to any statement or doctrine contained in F. E. R.’s letter of 6th December, 1889. So far from life being said to be an essence, the following sentences occur in the notes: “Life is a Person, not an essence;” and, “The Apostle very strongly brings out the personality of the Lord in order to refute gnostics who denied an essence;” and careful readers, even at a distance from England observed that there were evidently some serious differences of teaching on this fundamental subject. For instance in the number for May there was an article on “eternal life,” signed “M” (who it is I know not), giving simple scriptural teaching on this subject, stating what all Christians, irrespective of creeds, have believed and held, viz., that Christ Himself is personally and eternally “eternal life,” and was made manifest, and that all who believe have eternal life. Then, in the July number appeared another article, signed by the initials of one whose name I knew not at the time, but learned it later on. This article seemed to many to unsettle the question of what “eternal life” is, and especially the great fact, that all true believers have it. I need not take it up in detail, for the writer himself hastened to put an explanation in the August number, distinctly declaring that he did not intend to convey that all believers have not eternal life, -- that in fact, his convictions were such, he could not have done so. This seemed to me satisfactory, so far as it went; although I felt that the editor of the Voice was a good deal to be blamed for having admitted an obscure article, to say the least about it, on such a subject as eternal life, gratuitously raising questions and disturbing souls, without any benefit whatever. There were also some other things which appeared in his paper that had troubled me even more than what I have referred to; and a criticism I had made on them, quite privately, and later on, got abroad and troubled some who did not view the matter as I did. In fact, the immediate occasion of it is another similar criticism a brother had written and printed. It seemed to me that his remarks were just and needed, and I said so privately. About the style, I say nothing; nor have any of us much right to complain in that direction, for few of us are characterized by mildness when speaking or writing about what we believe to be false and misleading. For my part I still hoped that all would pass, and felt sorry that I had written, even privately; while my judgment of the things complained of remained unchanged. Had it been published, I would have withdrawn it. However, in the meantime, a good many other things had been taking place which came to my knowledge later on. Near the end of that year, I learned that the questions about eternal life were far from being settled. And I also learned that Mr. F. E. Raven was the principal introducer of these new thoughts. There had been a conference held at Witney, the details of which others can speak of better than I. I have seen M.S. notes of the lectures there given by Mr. Stoney on the first epistle of John. Mr. Raven was also there; and the copy of notes I saw had been corrected by those two brethren and third one {T. R. Reynolds, another supporter of FER}, whose name I do not remember, with a view to their publication. However, they were finally not published, because of a remonstrance made by a brother, that their publication would cause much agitation, on account of objectionable matter contained in them. It seemed to me when I read them, as it did to many who heard them, that the general teaching of the Epistle was much obscured, if not directly perverted, in many instances, but especially as regards the fact of all believers having eternal life. It seemed to be more than intimated, that this is a kind of attainment that only some
make, and these are the “fathers” of chapter 2., while the general aim of John, in the whole Epistle, was, it was alleged, to lead believers on to the possession of eternal life. Hence there was a good deal of opposition and some spoke of the conference as a kind of a battle. Now all this deeply impressed on me that there was a new system of doctrine on this subject being sprung upon us. If not, why all this agitation. Several instances related to me served to show me that I was not alone in this impression. One of these I will mention as it ought to interest evangelists everywhere; and indeed all believers, who desire certainty as to whether they have eternal life, or not. An elderly brother, an evangelist I believe, was there, and heard what seemed to be so new, and to take away all certainty on this subject, and was afterwards speaking to some young evangelists, and warned them that if they accepted what they had been hearing, they could no longer use John 5:24 and similar passages, and could not tell sinners that whoever believes “ hath eternal life”; for this would not be a present possession by simple faith, as what they had heard took away the certainty of it from the believer, and made it to depend on something else than faith. Now if he was right, and I believe he was, there is certainly a new doctrine in issue, never known before amongst us before, and which, if accepted, would throw many believers back into uncertainty, as well as require evangelists to change the matter anti tone of their preaching.  

P. A. Humphreys wrote:

But touching this question of Eternal Life, I will now give extracts from two letters which state the matter more simply than usual with Mr. Raven. The first extract is from a letter of one of his followers, and the second is from his reply.

Extract No. 1 --

I shall feel obliged if you will kindly send me a word or two as to the enclosed question as to Eternal Life, and as to whether you maintain now, as I think you did at Witney, that neither the little children, nor the young men had Eternal Life, because they could be tempted by the world; and whether you would say now that Eternal Life was not a principle of living.

Remark on this letter is needless, save as pointing out that the impression left on the writer’s mind by Mr. Raven’s teaching at the Witney meeting two years ago was, that the babes and young men had not Eternal Life, the reason being that “they could be tempted by the world!”

Extract No. 2 --

What I thought, and I think maintained at Witney was that, though the fathers had not received anything from God that the babes had not received, yet that no one could, as to his Christianity, go beyond the testimony he had received, and hence there must be Christians who, in this sense, had not Eternal Life. The early Christians had forgiveness of sins, and the Spirit, end were waiting for the kingdom. The truth of Eternal Life came out with Paul’s testimony. As to the other point, I should still hesitate to say that Eternal Life is presented as a principle of living, and for the reason that for us Eternal Life means a new man, and not simply a new vitality. Hence it is “He that has the Son has life,” and “He that eateth me shall live by me.” I think Eternal Life describes generally the blessing in which we are placed before the Father. The principle of living is Christ assimilated, and effective in us by the power of the Spirit, so that we are formed in the new man.

Sd. F. E. R., July 16, 90.

Now I ask any child of God to weigh what is said here in the light of the Word of God. What was understood to be said at Witney is not denied, but repeated in another form — babes and fathers are said to have received equally from God, but at once a distinction is made, and “his Christianity,” i.e. the individual Christianity of each one is spoken of, just as if there were different grades, and forms, and standards of Christianity, each one going up to his own standard according to “the testimony he has received” — the testimony varying, and thus producing a different result in each. Where is any such thought to be found in Scripture? A varying testimony and a varying standard in Christianity! And this is his ground for saying that there might be Christians who had not Eternal Life.”

H. D’Arcy Champney sought to palliate what FER had said at Witney in a paper that generally misrepresented everything up until the time he wrote his paper, Letter to the Saints Gathered to the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. To this paper W. T. Whybrow issued a devastating reply, exposing the misrepresentations (Heavenly Truth: A Review of Mr. Champney’s “Letter to the Saints,” with an Appendix). Of course, Mr. Champney was unsound on the matter of the Son as the eternal life (1 John 5:20) in that very paper (p. 21). He doctrinally followed FER and then, latter, James Taylor, Sr.; and the day came when Mr. Champney wrote a paper called My Son, in which he upheld the denial of the eternal Sonship. Another palliator, J. S. Oliphant wrote:

The principle point was the state and position of the young men in 1 John 2, who were said to be “not in eternal life.” This has been explained to mean, that, not being in practical deliverance from the power of the world as a sphere, they were not in the conscious possession, nor in the enjoyment, nor in the understanding of eternal life as the portion of the believer in the Son. The point I pressed was that they had the

131. Remarks on Eternal Life and Divine Righteousness, Bath: Lewis, , about 1891, pp. 4-6.

Thus he helped the putting a “spin” (a distortion) on what was said. “This has been explained to mean . . .” went on and on while so many became increasingly entangled in the web of evil and deceit. On p. 3 of his paper there is evidence that he was also following the evil of FER on 1 John 5:20. The result of palliating evil is to be drawn to it. As we continue, the reader should be aware of the shiftiness of FER, the explanations, etc.

There is another witness who was present at the Witney meetings, a laborer in Japan, H. G. Brand. Here is an extract from his Let no Man take thy Crown:

My ground for rejecting the doctrines of Mr. Raven I will state in a few words. --

In the Spring of 1888, through the gracious forethought of our God, I was at the Conference at Witney. I think that is acknowledged to be the time when these new doctrines were first definitely declared. And there was no mistaking their meaning then. They were put forward with undisguised clearness of speech. I mention this because I find a general dislike to go back to the origin of this controversy.

The subject of the evening meetings at Witney, was Eternal Life. A statement was made which astonished those who heard it for the first time, that neither the young men nor the babes had Eternal life, only the fathers. This was immediately contested. And the expression was modified thus, that though they “had ’t it, they “had not got it” -- a distinction hard to be appreciated. It was also remarked that though they might have it, they were not “in it.” Eternal life was stated to be a “sphere,” as we might speak of “Australian life” and “Bush life.” Two things were thus prominently put forward:

First, WHAT ETERNAL LIFE WAS. Up to this time we had always known Eternal life to be, and defined it at once to be, the Person of the Son of God. “This is the true God and Eternal Life” {1 John 5:20}. Thus to accept these new doctrines, all we had before learned must be unlearned. Eternal life was not in us, but outside us -- not a Person but a “sphere.” The examples were plain enough as to this; for there may be hundreds, all with their different personal lives in the Bush; yet they all lead “Bush life.” A man does not live by the Bush life. This is the life he leads. Bush life is one thing, and the life by which he lives, another.

I would here remark that we were reading 1 John 1:1-3, and considering what Eternal life was.

The next point then was who had Eternal life. Of course, according to this new doctrine, all was confusion. Unless we could say we were fathers, we could not legitimately confess we “had got” Eternal life. At length J. B. S. {Stoney} was appealed to. “He thought he had touched it!”

A simple Christian was at once struck with the thought, that those who put forward such things were talking of what they confessed they knew practically nothing about.

It seems impossible for an honest Christian to fail to see that at that time a complete revolution in our confession as to what eternal life was, was inevitable.

What was said by FER at these meetings led to a correspondence between W. Bradstock and F. E. Raven, which we will now quote from H. A. Hammond’s, A Record of Some Correspondence, with documents and Facts, 1888 to 1891, Revised, with Postscript.

The Bradstock-Raven Correspondence

The correspondence between Mr. Raven and Mr. Bradstock has been printed, on account of its being freely stated, that Mr. Raven’s Doctrine in these letters has been withdrawn. That the contrary is true, may be seen from Mr. Raven’s letter of Dec. 24, 1889 {which see below} and from Mr. Bradstock’s of Feb. 12th 1890 {which see below}.

It should be noted that Mr. Raven’s letter of Dec. 24, in which he “adheres” to the “substance” of his letters to Mr. B. of 1st and 8th May, and 6th June, was written some three weeks after his letter to J. S. O. {Oliphant}, of Dec. 6th, 1889 (p. 17), had been read at a Meeting at Dr. Hewer’s, at which he was present, and in which he appeared to have given up his views on 2 Cor. 5:21 as they had been expressed in his letter to Mr. Bradstock of May 1, 1888.

It will be further noted, that his said letter of Dec. 24, 1889 (in which he adheres to the substance of his three previous letters to Mr. Bradstock), was written nearly 20 months after the first of those letters was written; during which period he had had ample time to examine and reflect whether the charges (made in various pamphlets by well-known brethren) against their contents, had indicated any statement by him which needed correction or withdrawal. So far from this, he tells Mr. Bradstock that he “adheres in substance” to them all . . . These letters gave rise to events which have called forth from Mr. Raven certain printed statements, as to his doctrine, since in circulation; but which, being out of print and not obtainable, are now, for private convenience, appended: also, as forming a suitable introduction to the Greenwich and Bexhill correspondence; Documents 2 and 3 {see next Chapter} forming the grounds upon which Bexhill acted, but which can hardly be put forward as a record of Mr. Raven’s publicly expressed views, without the other Documents.

133. Printed letter dated London, 12th August, 1890, p. 3.
My dear Brother,

I had rather have explained things to you by word of mouth, than in writing, but will endeavor to comply with your wish.

I hold nothing extraordinary, nor that any blessing given to us of Christ is a matter of attainment; but, I am opposed to the taking up of things in such a way as practically to exclude faith and hope -- two of the essential elements of Christian life.

The point as to Divine righteousness is as to the force of 2 Cor. 5:21. It is, as I understand it, the text of the ministry of reconciliation. It gives us the Divine intent in Christ being made sin for us.

Divine righteousness is to be displayed in us in Christ. We are to have a perfect state, in a heavenly standing. God has secured this for us, in Christ in glory, and the moment He appears it will be absolutely true in us. So long as we have the flesh and sin, I could not say that it is absolutely made good in us, but it is made good in us morally as we walk in faith in the power of the Spirit. Hence it is not a question of attainment, but of walking in the power of the Spirit, in faith and hope. Paul looked to be found having God’s righteousness.

In regard to eternal life, it seems to me that it is a kind of technical expression indicating an order and state of blessing purposed and prepared of God for men. With Paul, it is viewed as a reward, or end, or hope, though the believer, being called to it, is to grasp it while on the road to it. With John it is present and moral (not in display), formed for us by the incarnation of the Son of God, and we, having entrance to it through His death. The Son, when His voice is heard, gives us the privilege, and entry, and freedom of this sphere of blessing, which is expressed in Himself as Man: the privilege of blessed nearness to the Father, and of being the object of the Father’s love and joy, and delight. Hence, the eternal life is in the Son. He is it. So that “eternal life” is objective and practical, -- rather than subjective, -- a sphere and order of blessing.

But, not only does Christ give freedom of entry into this sphere. He also gives the Spirit as the capacity. The Spirit in the believer is life. Hence the believer has freedom or entry, and the capacity to enjoy this sphere of blessing which Christ has formed; and, behind all, he is born of God. This is no question of attainment; but I am, at the same time quite sure that there are many Christians who are not morally in it, and yet loudly claiming to have possession of eternal life. Faith is not in exercise, and they are not free of the world. I should be thankful if the Lord use this to set your mind at rest.

Royal Naval College, Greenwich, S.E., 1st May, 1888.

Believe me, Your affectionate Brother,
(Signed) F. E. Raven

W. Bradstock, Esquire.

Ardleigh Road, N., June 3rd, 1888.

My dear Brother,

I have weighed the statements you have expressed in your letters to me, but pressure of business and temporary illness have delayed further communication until now.

Your way of expressing yourself upon such subjects as divine righteousness and eternal life, are novel to me. I wrote to get in your own words what you hold upon these subjects, and your replies confirm what the brethren had previously told me.

I have long regarded the Person and Work of Christ as a rock for the soul to rest upon and that the believer, whether a babe or a father, was, in Christ, become the righteousness of God, and that he had eternal life in the Son. These have been to me truths plainly stated in the Word, and therefore beyond question. You say you hold nothing extraordinary as to these.

Your phraseology is certainly new. You call eternal life a “sphere of blessing,” and, as “formed for us by the Son of God,” and further, you could not say, so long as we have the flesh and sin, that 2 Cor. 5:21 is “absolutely made good in us.” However, the question is, Is eternal life given to us in Christ before we enter into the enjoyment of it? Have we eternal life in the Son now -- the babe born yesterday, and the father born fifty years since? When quickened together with Christ, do we all equally receive eternal life? As to righteousness, are we now justified? And, what is the righteousness in which we stand? There are varied states of soul, and people have to learn themselves; but if there is
Chapter 1: What Lead to the Separation?

faith, are they in Divine righteousness? You say, flesh and sin modify it in us. This may be true as to what is in us, but I am asking what is true of us as looked at in Christ?

If you can relieve me as to these questions I shall be thankful.

I am, Yours affectionately in Christ,
(Signed) W. Bradstock

To F. E. Raven.

Royal Naval College, Greenwich, S. E., 6th June, 1888.

My dear Brother:

Pardon the delay in replying to your letter. First, as to 2 Cor. 5:21. The subject here is reconciliation, not justification. In Rom. 3 and 4, where the question is of offenses, justification through faith in Christ’s blood is brought in, and the believer is justified now -- is accounted righteous -- the righteousness of God is upon him.

But in 2 Cor. 5:21, the point is not guilt but state. This is met by reconciliation on the basis of Christ having been made sin for us, that we might become God’s righteousness in Christ. Surely to become God’s righteousness is more than to be held for righteous as in Rom. 4. If it means anything, it means that sin is to be completely displaced in us by Divine righteousness, and this cannot be till the Lord comes. Looking at a believer abstractedly as in Christ, it may be true now, but the verse involves more than this -- the full result of Christ having been made sin for us.

Now, as to Eternal life -- that it is a sphere or condition of blessing is evident enough to one from such passages as John 4:14; 6:27; 17:3. It is “in the Son.” J. N. D. said over and over again that life was never said to be in us.

It is given to every and the youngest believer in Christ, but is in the Son, and the believer has the Spirit of life in him. He is born, too, of God -- has every element. Still, the having eternal life is the result of the reception of the testimony as to the Son, on which it is founded. He that hath the Son hath life.

John is seeking to lead those who believed in the Name of the Son to the knowledge that they had eternal life. He shows that the believer (babes and all) is in the light, is born of God, and has the Spirit; his object being that they, continuing in the testimony they had heard (the Father and the Son) might have the present experience of the blessing of eternal life.

Your affectionate brother,
(Signed) F. E. Raven.

Royal Naval College, Greenwich, S. E., 24th Dec., 1889.

My dear Brother,

Referring to our conversation of yesterday, I send a line to say that while adhering to the substance of my letters to you of 1st and 8th May and 6th June, 1888, there is an expression in that of 6th June which I would wish to withdraw. It is as follows, viz.: “If it means anything at all it means that sin is to be completely displaced in us by Divine righteousness, and this cannot be till the Lord comes.” The sentence as it stands involves confusion between a state in us conformable to God’s righteousness, and that righteousness in itself. In doing this I express my regret at any difficulty the expression may have caused in any mind, though the circulation of my letters is not my responsibility.

What I had in my mind was, as I think the tenor of my letters shows, that the full answer in us to Christ having been made sin for us is in our being perfected after His order in glory.

The difference in present application to the believer between 2 Cor. 5:21 and Rom. 3 and 4, seems to me to make the difference between a place in Christ in the Holiest, and a place of acceptance, as at the brazen altar, down here. Both belong in God’s righteousness to the believer.

That I ever held that any state in the believer constituted his righteousness before God, I absolutely deny. Christ is made that to us of God.

I take the opportunity of adding a word in regard to eternal life. Were I now writing on the subject, I should lay more stress on a point touched in my letter of 6th June, viz.: the Son being in us as life in the power of the Spirit, and, in connection with it, the relationship of children (1 John 3:1) into which we are brought through redemption, and as the fruit of the manifestation of the Father’s Name by the Son, to the men given to Him of the Father out of the world.

I trust our conversation did not overtax you.

Believe me, Your affectionate brother,
(Signed) F. E. Raven

{To} W. Bradstock.

[The above were copied from the originals, but it is not clear if the words in a different type were emphasized by another hand. H.A.H.]

W. B. {Bradstock} TO W. J. L. {Lowe}

IN REFERENCE TO F. E. R.’S LETTERS TO HIM.

London, Feb. 12th, 1890.

Beloved Brother,

It is no easy thing to find a way, as you seem to have done, through this intricate maze.

We have had conflict over the question of the “Unity of

135. Underlined by Editor [HAH].
the Body”; now, the vital truths of Eternal Life and Divine Righteousness are in question. The matter has been before me nearly two years, and after correspondence and interviews with the author, I have come to the conclusion that his doctrines are unscriptural, and that his paper (circulated by J. S. O. {Oliphant}), with much pretension to precision, throws into confusion the subjects of New Birth, Eternal Life, Divine Righteousness, and the operations of the Spirit of God.

God keeping me, I shall hold to the things which I have “learned” and enjoyed above 40 years. The word for me is Eph. 4:14. Would that its caution had its place with all saints! I am said to be “clear.” Thank God, I am clear, and trust He will keep me so. When novelties were coming into the early Church, the Apostle John reminded the subjects of what was “from the beginning.” Surely this is a word for me and for all. It is a great sorrow to me to find myself opposed to those I love, and on such fundamental points. I am unfit for controversy, but I owe it to God and to my brethren to express my convictions.

A letter from the north this morning informs me that it is reported there that F. E. R.’s letters to me have been withdrawn. Those letters have never been withdrawn. He has written to me to alter the phrase as to Divine Righteousness and “the displacement of sin in us”; but his correction leaves the doctrine substantially the same.

Your affectionate brother in the Lord,

W. Bradstock

To W. J. Lowe.

8, Lordship Grove, Stoke Newington, London, 12th October, 1890.

Beloved Brother,

I send herewith the letters themselves. . . . I am poorly at present, the sorrow and struggle have told upon me. What a terrible affair it is, what a mercy to escape. Excuse brevity.

Yours affectionately in the Lord,

W. Bradstock.

I think the correspondence should be published, but I am unequal to it {due to illness}.

{To} H. A. Hammond.

During the period under review, namely early 1888 to February 1890, there were various letters written by F. E. Raven and some responses as well as published papers. We will review some of this in the next chapter.

136. Underlinings by Editor (HAH)
Chapter 2

Letters and Papers
Before the Division on June 29, 1890

Letters

In this chapter, letters of F. E. Raven, written from July 7, 1888 to June 1890 are included. Most are found in the 1963 edition of Letters of F. E. Raven, but some of what is included here are not in that book. These additional letters have been culled from the writings of those who opposed FER and their sources are indicated as such, and these additional letters appear between braces { }, as do any comments added by myself.

1888 10, Crooms Hill, Greenwich, July 7th, 1888.
Mr. J. S. Oliphant.
My Dear Brother,
Just a line to say that should the meeting on the 17th not come off, I would readily come over and see you -- or meet Lowe and yourself.

I have thought to add a word, not as asserting my thoughts, but because I judge brethren have been a little at cross purposes in the use of terms. There seems to me two ideas in John -- ‘life’ and ‘eternal life’ -- intimately connected yet distinct. Christ is the source and head of life -- and the expression and seat of ‘eternal life.’ As source of life He, by His word, communicates life to the believer -- by whom His word is, as one might say, assimilated (the work of God being there) and the believer lives by Him. “He that eateth me shall live by me.” “He that hath the Son hath life.”

It is a dependent life, inseparable from its source though in us in the power and reality of the Spirit. But more than this, in being drawn to the Son, who as Son of Man has been lifted up, we are morally out of the world and the flesh -- in the infinite and eternal blessedness which is expressed and exists in Him as Man, in a new position and relationship which He has constituted for man before the Father, Whom He has revealed. We are ‘in the Son’ -- and He is the true God and eternal life. I am not saying if that is right or wrong -- but it is this sense that some of us have used the term ‘eternal life’ -- perhaps, in appearance, a little to the exclusion of life, certainly not intentionally. I say this in the hope of helping to clear up misunderstanding.

Ever your affectionate brother,
F. E. Raven

1888 Royal Naval College, Greenwich, July 11th, 1888.
My Dear Brother, If it be a question of meeting two or three brothers such as you name I could raise no objection. What I dreaded was a sort of formal meeting with brothers present whose minds were in a state of excitement. I do not think I could meet them without others being there who had been prominent at Witney.

You would hardly say that John was written to such as had conscious possession of eternal life, because he avowedly wishes that they may be conscious. I think there are two sides to the truth, the gift side and the appropriation side. It is undeniable that God has given ‘eternal life’ to every one that has the Holy Spirit, i.e., to every Christian. The Christian is ‘in the Son,’ having left, morally, the flesh and the world, and there he has eternal life -- shares that blessedness which has been embodied in the Son, as Man, before the Father. But though this be true of every believer I think there are very many not awake to it -- and this I thought was the point at Witney -- they haven’t it as part of their practical Christianity, i.e., the enjoyment of it.

Christ is, of course, the source of life -- the last Adam -- a quickening Spirit -- and we all live by Him, but this is, I think, a different thought to His being the eternal life “which was with the Father.”

We have to exhibit the life of Christ here in patience and suffering -- but ‘eternal life’ is all blessedness, it is what is in the Son with the Father. I quite think with you that in John it is ‘in the Son,’ and in Paul in the risen glorified Man.

Ever your affectionate brother,
F. E. Raven
Chapter 7. Here is an extract from A. C. Ord containing 1963 ed. We will treat FER’s lying about this matter in part of the letter that FER revealed. Observe also that the July 2, 1890 letter in which FER revealed this extract is also missing in Letters of F. E. Raven, 1963 ed. We will treat FER’s lying about this matter in Chapter 7. Here is an extract from A. C. Ord containing part of the letter that FER revealed. Observe also that the July 2, 1890 letter in which FER revealed this extract is also missing in Letters of F. E. Raven, 1963 ed.

Mr. Raven wrote to a brother in the West of England a letter dated July 2nd, 1890:

I send you an extract from the letter in which the statement,

“Think of a helpless infant, &c.,” occurs. I think it speaks for itself. The exhibition of eternal life is in the Risen Man, who has annulled death.

(Signed) F. E. Raven

EXTRACT

June 29, 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.

Here then is the letter (June 29, 1889) so long held back: and the reason for this unholy compact in concealment is now evident. . . .

1889 {On Nov. 15, 1889, J. S. Oliphant, with F. E. Raven’s permission, printed answers to a brother’s questions.

QUESTIONS BY A BROTHER

As Printed by J. S. O (Oliphant), with Mr. Raven’s permission.

[November 15, 1889]

Q 1. Is Eternal life a sphere, or, is the life by which we live before God Eternal life?

Q 2. What is the difference between nature and life?

A. “To reply to your second question first, I would say that nature is subjective; life is not wholly so. Scripture says, ‘if any man will love life’; you would not here say nature. The fact is, life refers to the conditions, affections, relationships, etc., in which we are set, and not simply to the fact that we are alive.

And this holds good as to eternal life, in which we are introduced, by the appropriation of Christ’s death into a wholly new sphere of affections and relationships, in which we are alive by Christ being our life. This is what I meant by the use of the word sphere, though I see the objection that exists if the term be used in regard to Christ. The mistake is, in separating life in us (Christ) from the relationship to which it refers; and in failing to see that eternal life is a comprehensive expression that takes in all.”

Q 3. What do you say about 2 Cor. 5:21?

A. “My thought in regard to 2 Cor. 5:21 (where the point is STATE, not guilt, reconciliation, nor justification) is that the full answer in righteousness to Christ having been made sin for us is, that we are to be displayed in the glory and likeness of Christ. From this, it is argued that I deny a present application of our being made God’s righteousness in Christ. But this is not so, for I say the Christian is in Christ, and Christ in him, but then, of course, that is abstract, as Scripture recognizes other things (sin and flesh) as being still in the believer. I believe the mistake is in the attempt to use in an absolute, dogmatic way, statements which are true of a believer abstractedly as in Christ. Our being justified from guilt, and accounted righteous, is absolute enough.”

Q 4. While 2 Cor. 5:21 awaits full accomplishment, is not divine righteousness displayed now in our being in Christ and Christ in us, according to Romans, where the subject is divine righteousness?

Q 5. Do you say he who believes, and has the Spirit, has eternal life?

A. “I doubt if righteousness goes, in Romans, much beyond a reckoning. I think what you say right enough, only that in Christ we become God’s righteousness. I think there must be (and is) a state (by new creation) answering to the position.

As to your other question, the one believing in the Son of God has eternal life; but as J. B. Stoney has said, the type (the brazen serpent) shows it is not the beginning of the gospel. Man first wants relief as to himself, before he can enter into God’s thoughts about him.

Of course, everything is conferred through the gospel; but to talk of a person having eternal life without

136. Part 2: The Separation from F. E. Raven and His Supporters


the Spirit (as in the O. T.) is absurd. ‘We live in the Spirit.’ ‘If Christ be in you, the Spirit is life.’ In John 4, there is the well of water in the believer, springing up. In John 5, the Son quickens after His own order. In John 20, He breathes on the disciples a breath of life in the power of the Spirit, resurrection life, life more abundantly. This is what we have been always taught.”

Q 6. As to the bearing of justification of life in Romans?

A. “The statement in Romans 5 is as abstract as possible, ‘by one righteousness towards all men unto justification of life,’ and the following verse seems to render its bearing future, ‘shall the many be made righteous.’ I think it accords with the general line of Romans, which views the believer justified and indwelt by the Spirit, and life in the future, -- ‘we shall live with him,’ ‘the end is eternal life.’ Of course, it is true we are already alive in Christ, and in this sense justification applies, but it is hardly the doctrinal statement of the Epistle.

F.  E.  R.} 139

1889 In reply to Mr. W. J. Lowe, November 25th, 1889.

My Dear Brother, Your putting ‘formally’ before me the proofs of the systematic character of evil teaching 140 with which I am charged necessitates some reply as I suppose it to be on your part a preliminary to other steps.

Finding this I accept your disavowal of personal feeling and expression of unfeigned affection and I think I can avow the same toward you. It has been a trying experience to me to find myself in a position of antagonism toward you. I had thought after the meeting at Oliphant’s more than a year ago that there was but little substantial difference of thought between us and I know of nothing which has since come to light to justify the extreme expression with which your letter closes.

In examining your letter I must first remark on the slender premises on which the charge of an evil system of doctrine is based: a passage from a letter -- a supposition of something said at a reading -- an expression from a paper written two years ago (as to which paper you spoke to me at the time taking no exception to it) an extract from a letter to a brother -- a statement at a reading: these are for the most part taken out of their connection: read in their place their meaning is clear enough, but stated by themselves their meaning may not be apparent. No brother can pretend to inspired accuracy of language and if a charge of heresy is to be based on such premises as these, no teacher would be safe. It is a human way of proceeding and not a movement of the Spirit of God and ought, I believe, to be resisted to the utmost. The practice of teachers watching one another to find out proofs of heresy is not of God. I do not for a moment pretend that my thoughts on the points in question are absolutely right or the thoughts of others absolutely wrong. I apprehend they are matters on which with patience light might be obtained from Scripture: but I affirm that what I have expressed as to them at one time and another has had simple reference to each point in itself and is not the outcome of any system existing in my mind save the system of Scripture so far as it has been formed there.

Before referring to the main points of righteousness, relationship and life, I touch on some points of detail: as to life and its manifestation in the Son of God I need say but a few words. What you state has mostly reference to the testimony which He who was the Light of the world bore to the Father here, and it is with this that the responsibility of the world was connected. They could not be won by the greatest testimony that could be presented to them. The prominent thought in the gospel of John is the revelation of the Father in the Son with the gift of eternal life to those given of the Father to the Son and the promise of the Comforter. Eternal life is a subject elsewhere unfolded. I can only express here what I have felt in regard to statements advanced by others that to make eternal life (which in its main force in Scripture refers to purpose of blessing for man) to be descriptive of all that was seen in Christ is on the one side seriously to obscure His true Deity (which is the prominent subject in John’s gospel) and on the other the real part which He took in human life in its conditions down here and which in death He gave up never to resume.

Another point is that of knowledge in connection with John 17:3, and here I have some difficulty in apprehending your meaning. You say that knowledge belongs to the revelation made and is received in faith and when so received is possessed: and again that the knowledge which is implied in the revelation made is received by faith and is a perfect thing in itself.

I admit and so does everybody that the revelation is complete and is received in faith and that knowledge is inherent in the revelation. The revelation is received because it commends itself to the heart and conscience as God’s word not because it is known and I am at a loss to understand the idea of knowledge being received by faith, and that as a perfect thing in itself. Knowledge is in part and will always be so here (1 Cor.13:12) and is in proportion as the

139. Quoted from H. A. Hammond, A Record of Some Correspondence, with Documents and Facts, 1888 to 1890, Revised, with Postscript, pp. 14-17 (Oct. 28, 1891).

140. (This from the pen of FER himself exposes the character of H. D’Arcy Champney’s palliations of FER. Observe also that J. S. Oliphant wrote:

I know of no fundamental doctrines being given up by either R. or Greenwich . . . .

Printed letter dated London, 12th August, 1890)
revelation is wrought in us by grace. All knowledge is in the revelation but certainly not yet in us. I doubt not that a man’s spiritual stature is pretty much the measure of his real knowledge though all be his to be known. But I do not think this explains John 17:3.

The verse gives the form and character to us of eternal life and the ‘know’ means, I judge, the knowing which involves a kindred nature as “I know my sheep and am known of mine, as the Father knoweth me even so know I the Father,” though the objects must have been revealed to be thus known. I do not reject here the conclusion to which you seek to push me that the verse involves the presence of the Spirit in the believer.

This effort to make knowledge entirely objective I regard as very erroneous and tending to destroy the formative value of revelation. As to the expression ‘moral state’ or ‘state of blessing’ in connection with eternal life, I only remark that eternal life means for us a wholly new order of things for which we have to eat Christ’s flesh and drink His blood and the seat of which is in Him who is the Resurrection and the Life.

As to what is implied in the distinctive names of the Father and Jesus Christ, His sent One, I say that as to what is distinctive, which was my point in my lecture at Quemerford, grace in its counsels and movements is what is distinctly connected with the Father’s Name: while the accomplishment of those counsels belongs to the Son and for this end He has become Man and died and all judgment is committed to Him to secure His being honored by all as is the Father. Your quotation from 1 Peter 1:17 is nothing to the point -- it is simply that the God who judges according to every man’s work is invoked as Father by Christians.

Now I come to the main points of your letter, namely, righteousness, life and relationship: and here I am bound to say that the defect which is apparent in your apprehension of these subjects really disqualifies you for passing judgment on what I have put forward. But to begin with, the peculiar force of the expression “in Christ” (and I do not think ‘with Christ’ in your sense is found in Ephesians) as denoting the distinctive position of the church in connection with eternal calling in the heavenly places and in the ages to come is frittered away. Your enquiry Where in Scripture is “in Christ” or “in Him” used to denote our conformity to Christ in glory? is in the face of Ephesians 1:4 perfectly astounding. At the same time our becoming the righteousness of God in Christ as the fruit of Christ’s having been made sin for us is leveled down to the truth of Romans 4, and made to be a mere question of justification in respect of guilt eked out by a vague reference to new creation. In 2 Corinthians 5:21 the subject is a wholly distinct one not of guilt but of state. Again by reasoning from nature, relationship and eternal life are made by you to be the consequence of new birth. I say they are the consequences of the gospel though a man must be born to see or believe the gospel. Relationship and eternal life do not belong to the old man but to the new, and though of the grace of God and received through the gospel they are true to the believer only in the having put off the ‘old man’ and put on the new and this is more than new birth.

But your system is ruinous for it cuts away the whole fabric of experimental Christianity. Life and relationship are detached from the great characteristic truth of our salvation, namely, the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, in other words, from heavenly ground and heavenly state. The entry by Christ’s death and resurrection to on new and heavenly ground with consequent deliverance from flesh and the world, as well as the formation of Christ in the christian (as to which the apostle travailed again in birth in regard to the Galatians) by the testimony presented to him, is all swept away. For you all has been effected by new birth and yet as to relationship the testimony of Scripture is “As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God” and it is by the Spirit of adoption that we cry “Abba Father.” I know the effort to exclude from John’s writings the light of Paul’s -- but in principle there is no difference between them. With John eternal life is in the Son (not said to be in us): the three witnesses to us are the Spirit and the water and the blood, and it is not until the Spirit is received that the results of redemption, the power and efficacy of the water and blood, are really known. The one who eats Christ’s flesh and drinks His blood has eternal life.

Without indulging in any strong language I believe you to be wholly wrong; your doctrine appears to be new birth, perfect knowledge received as a whole by faith and then known by the Holy Spirit. I do not accept it: it savors to me far too much of Mr. Grant’s system.

F. E. Raven.

1889 Mr. W. Bradstock December 24, 1889.
My Dear Brother. Referring to our conversation of yesterday I send a line to say that, while adhering to the substance of my letters to you of May 1st and 6th, and June 6th, 1888 there is an expression in that of June 6th which I would wish to withdraw -- it is as follows, ‘if it means anything it means that sin is to be completely displaced in us by divine righteousness, and this cannot be until the Lord comes.’ The sentence as it stands involves confusion between a state in us conformable to God’s righteousness and that righteousness in itself. In doing this I express my regret at any difficulty the expression may have caused in any mind, though the circulation of the letters is not my responsibility. What I had in my mind was, as I think the tenor of my letters shows, that the full answer in us to Christ having been made sin for us is in our being perfected after His order in glory. The difference in present application to the believer between 2 Corinthians 5:21 and Romans 3 and 4 seems to me the
difference between a place in Christ in the holiest and a place of acceptance as at the brazen altar down here. Both belong in God’s righteousness to the believer. That I ever held that any state in the believer constituted his righteousness before God I absolutely deny, Christ is made that to us of God.

I take the opportunity of adding a word in regard to eternal life. Were I now writing on the subject I should lay more stress on a point touched in my letter of June 6th, viz., the Son being in us as life in the power of the Spirit, and in connection with it the relationship of children (1 John 3:1) into which we are brought through redemption and as the fruit of the manifestation of the Father’s Name by the Son to the men given to Him of the Father out of the world. Believe me, etc.,

F. E. Raven

1889 {FER wrote a letter dated Dec. 6, 1889, printed by J. S. Oliphant with FER’s permission. It was reissued on March 21, 1890 by FER himself -- and it appears under that date in Letters of F. E. Raven, 1963. It is place here where it belongs in the flow of letters and documents, and changes between it as printed by JSO on Dec. 6, 1889 and FER on Mar. 21, 1890 are indicated here. Observe that the introductory letter in FER’s reissue is dated March 21, 1890. The date, Dec. 6, 1888 is inserted where that part begins.}

Greenwich, March 21st, 1890

I have thought it well, I trust before the Lord, to reprint, on my own responsibility, the text of my letter to Mr. O. {Oliphant} of December 6th, 1889 adding some notes in explanation of points that in the text may not be quite clear, or may appear open to question. The text remains unchanged, save that the last paragraph is omitted for the reason that I believe some of the thoughts therein referred to have been withdrawn or modified. I take the opportunity of avowing in the most distinct and emphatic way that I never had in my mind the thought of separating eternal life from the Person of the Son of God, or of asserting that eternal life is, for a Christian, any other than Christ. I would add that I have not been nor am without exercise of heart or sorrow before the Lord in regard to the strained and painful state of feeling existing amongst us; and I regret, on my own part, the measure in which it has been contributed to by obscure or defective expressions of mine which have gone abroad, taken from letters to individuals, or reports of readings. I can only say I wrote or spoke according to the light I had, and I have since sought to make all the amends in my power, without sacrificing the truth, by rendering explanation, I trust in patience, to all who desired it, both publicly, privately and by letter. Believing that what I have sought to maintain is substantially the truth as to Christianity in its proper heavenly character, such as it has been brought before us by those most highly esteemed, I have confidence that the Lord will care for the simple who desire God’s will, and assure their hearts as to what is or is not of God.

F. E. Raven.

{Dec. 6, 1889} 141

The key to almost all that I have said lies in my objection to apply in an absolute way 142 to the believer in his mixed condition down here statements in Scripture which refer to what he is, or what is true of him, viewed as in Christ. 143 Such a practice results in the statements becoming mere dogmas, conveying little sense of reality. 144 This may be seen in regard to divine righteousness as spoken of in 2 Corinthians 5:21. The believer is in Christ, and as there, 145 is become God’s righteousness in Christ; but besides this, he still is in a condition here, in which the existence of sin and the flesh are taken account of 146 (the Spirit lusts against the flesh), and this is wholly distinct from our state in Christ, to which divine righteousness in its fullest sense applies. Christ in glory is the full expression of divine righteousness, and to be there as He is, is that into which grace introduces

---


142. That is, in such a way as to exclude every other thought about him.

143. In Ephesians the believer is seen in Christ, according to the sovereign purpose and counsels of God who has raised Christ from the dead and set Him at His right hand by the working of His mighty power. Hence, as ‘in Christ,’ the believer is looked at as quickened together with Him by the same power of God. He is thus of a new order, morally of a new creation, which is outside the present creation or order of things in which he actually is, though the character and beauty of it are to come out in every sphere owned of God. In Romans the believer is, on the other hand, seen as alive on earth. He is justified, has peace with God, the Holy Spirit is given to him, he is dead to sin, and to reckon himself so and alive to God in Christ Jesus, and is not to reign in his mortal body to obey its lusts; he is dead to the law to be to Christ; not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, the righteousness of the law is to be fulfilled in him, and not a debtor to the flesh to fulfill flesh’s lust; has to do with the groaning creation, though he has the firstfruits of the Spirit. It is the life of responsibility here, though carried out in divine power. Truths which view the Christian in one aspect cannot be used to weaken the force of the truth about him in another aspect. A Christian is of God in Christ, a new creation, where old things have passed away and all things become new, in which is neither male nor female; but the truth which describes him in that aspect does not describe what he is in himself. At the same time, what he is in Christ is for faith as positively true as what he is and is recognized to be in himself as a man down here in the world.

144. {See comments in Collected Writings of A. C. Ord, p. 75.}

145. That is, as in Him.

146. Not in a judicial way, but in fact.
us in Christ. Hence, Paul looked to be found in Him having the righteousness which is of God by faith. 147 The above in no sense weakens or sets aside the reality of the believer’s present standing in Christ; it is his true position according to grace; but it needs to be borne in mind, that it is the position of the believer before God, distinct from his actual condition here with the consciousness of the existence of the flesh in him.

I may add a word of explanation as to the use of the word ‘state.’ I have commonly used it as indicating that which is true of us as new-created in Christ (as seen in the new man) apart from any question of the Christian’s walk here.

Next, as to eternal life. It was God’s purpose in Christ from eternity; it was, in essence, with the Father in eternity, 149 but has now been manifested in the only-begotten Son of God, who came here declaring the Father, in such wise as that the apostles could see it, 150 and afterwards declare it by the Spirit -- but I regard it of all importance to maintain, clear and distinct from any purpose of blessing for man, the true Deity, the eternal Sonship of the Word. Eternal life is given to us of God, and in God’s Son -- for us it is the heavenly relationship and blessedness in which, in the Son, man is now placed and lives before the Father, the death of Christ having come in as the end before God of man’s state in the flesh. 151 “He that has the (sic) life”; the testimony he has received concerning the Son is, by the Spirit, the power of life in the believer, he having been born of God to receive it. 152 He has also eaten the flesh of the Son of man, and drunk His blood. But at the same time, the believer still has part in seen things here (which the Son has not 154) and all that is seen is temporal, and will come to an end. It has no part in eternal life though it may be greatly influenced by it. As to eternal life being a technical term, it simply referred to the fact of its having been a term in common use among the Jews without any very definite meaning. They frequently came to the Lord with questions as to it, and thought they had it in the Scriptures.

As to our relationship with God, whether of child or son, it is of gift, conveyed through the gospel. We are sons of God, through faith in Christ Jesus. Christ came to redeem that we might receive sonship. It is the full fruit and effect of redemption. Hence, it is in resurrection Jesus says to His disciples, “I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God.” The full consequences of redemption belong now to every one who has faith in the Person and work of Christ; none the less, the real entering of the soul on heavenly blessing, of which relationship is the highest part, is in the putting on of Christ, and demands “the renewing of the Holy Spirit, which has been shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior.” It is the Spirit of God’s Son sent forth into our hearts that cries, Abba, Father.

I may add a few words in regard to new birth. It is an absolute necessity for man, if he has to do with God in blessing. It lies at the beginning of all -- without it a man cannot see, much less receive any saving testimony. It is the sovereign act of the Spirit of God. Peter and John both recognize that those who were really in the faith of Christ were born again of the word of God, or born of God -- a seed of God has been implanted in them from the outset. None the less, new birth of itself does not conduct into heavenly relationship or blessing. 155 For this, something more was needed, namely, redemption, which in its full power, sets man in Christ in glory, and the renewing of the Holy Spirit, which fits man for the new order of things. Of course, these are now, through grace, the portion of the believer.

[I have not written the above with the thought of defending myself. I can leave that. At the same time, I must say that such thoughts as are now current, limiting divine righteousness to the believer being justified -- and therefore to Christ being raised -- confining “in Christ” to a present position, so that it brings no light of eternal purpose or future glory -- separating, in the believer, eternal life from the Holy Ghost -- and talking about Christ manifesting to the unbelieving world, eternal life -- the blessedness in which, as man, He was with the Father -- are to my mind not only erroneous, but repulsive. That the light and character of the

147. I judge that 2 Corinthians 5:21, in its full scope refers to the saints becoming in Christ in glory the witness or expression of God’s righteousness; because that righteousness was displayed in setting Him there. A comparison of verse 21 with verse 17 shows that the passage has reference to new creation, and therefore the remarks in the second note apply. The believer is made the righteousness of God ‘in Christ.’ It is in no sense a progressive thing in him, nor dependent on his practical state or experience.

148. That is, as to us. See 2 Timothy 1:9, 10; Titus 1:1-3.

149. That is, in the Son, though I intended to convey this by the succeeding clause.

150. The apostles are mentioned in the text because they were the inspired instruments of declaring what they had seen. Others also were with Jesus and saw Him to be the eternal life, who to the unbelieving eyes of men was only the son of Joseph, the carpenter.

151. This is not intended as a definition of eternal life but an endeavor to convey the thought that eternal life means for a Christian a wholly new order of things, which is in its nature outside the world and seen things -- it belongs to another scene.

152. { A note here by H. A. Hammond says: The “the” appears in both issues of this letter, that, namely, of December 6, and that of March 21. The “the” is omitted in Letters of F. E. Raven, 1963.}

153. It might be added here that it is by the Son that the believer lives, he is in Him that is true, that is, in His Son Jesus Christ, who is the true God and eternal life.

154. Though in the days of His flesh He had.

155. On the other hand, the Son of God, who is the life of every believer, is the source of all life for men.
Life shone out in Christ, I do not think anyone ever thought of disputing.

Your affectionate brother,
F. E. Raven

[N.B. The words bracketed occurred in the letter as first printed by J. S. O., but were omitted in the reissue by F. E. R., for the reason assigned in the . . . statement, dated March 21st. H. A. Hammond]

1889  {The following letter has some important differences in Letters of F. E. Raven, pp. 11-13, compared to the printing of it by C. Stanley in his paper, Present Troubles, Jan. 30, 1890. Here it is given as C. Stanley, to whom it was written, printed it, and several differences are noticed in footnotes.}

Greenwich, December 24th, 1889. 156

Mr. C. Stanley.

My Dear Brother, Mr. Stoney has sent on to me a letter of yours bearing no date, nor am I sure to whom it is written -- but I feel I cannot allow it to pass without sending a line to remonstrate against the injustice both of its basis, and of its reasonings and conclusions. All is based on extracts from letters obtained from me by a brother eighteen months ago, and these extracts (which you have not taken the trouble to authenticate) are treated as though they were a careful exposition of a system of doctrine. I never knew a brother judged before on such premises.

Then as to the reasoning, I venture to say that in regard to both subjects in question, it is fallacious, and leads to unjust conclusions. Eternal life is said to be “the eternal Person of the ever blessed Son of God.” Thus the Son of God and eternal life are made strictly equivalent, and expressions used in reference to the latter are tested by their applicability to the former. I am sure such reasoning will not hold. On the one hand the Son of God is more than eternal life -- He is God the Giver of eternal life; and on the other hand, expressions may be used in speaking of eternal life which cannot be applied to Christ personally. The righteous go into eternal life. You cannot here substitute Son of God. John in his first epistle declares unto us eternal life, manifested in the Son of God, in the character in which we possess it here. It is in 157 God’s Son and we are in Him that is true. He is the true God and eternal life. It is what He is to Christians. Eternal life, viewed as a subject in itself has also other bearings.

Further, as to divine righteousness, it is reasoned that because it is maintained that divine righteousness in its fullest sense sets and displays us in glory in the life and state of Christ that therefore that life and state are held to constitute our righteousness before God. This latter idea is, I believe, Cluffism, but never had a place in my thoughts. The former, I have no doubt, is the truth, and gives the fullest place to redemption. The righteousness of God which is upon us (Rom. 3) has reference to our responsibility. We are freely justified in His grace through redemption; but this is not beyond the brass of the tabernacle. The glad tidings of God’s glory are far beyond the question of our responsibility, and through righteousness set us in a wholly new state and place for man. And here we come to the gold of the tabernacle. It is the fruit of Christ having been made SIN for us. This is 2 Corinthians 5:21. We have a place and state in Him who is righteous and holy in the holiest of all.

Anyone reading without prejudice my letters to Mr. B. [Bradstock] would see that the tenor of them is that eternal life means for us an entirely new order of things which has come to pass in man, in the Son of God having become man, and into which we have entrance through His death, and in the power 158 of the Holy Ghost. The Son being our life. And that as to 2 Corinthians 5:21, the complete answer to Christ having been made sin for us is in our being perfected after His order in glory.

And now I add a word or two as to the details of your letter. On page 2 you endeavor to make me say that Christ is a sphere, and by inference that Christ is a myth. What I did say is that eternal life is in the Son -- He is it, that is, eternal life -- as I have shown at the beginning of my letter. I do not accept your method of reasoning between eternal life and Christ, and I add here that if eternal life does not denote to the believer a new sphere and order of blessing, he knows very little about it experimentally, “This is life eternal that they might know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.” It is for us a wholly new order. The effort to charge me with Cluffism I wholly repudiate. I never had an idea that anything in us constituted our righteousness before God. Christ is made that to us. And I should have maintained this as strenuously as any. Hence the charge of undiluted Romanism means nothing, any more than the being robbed of a certainty as to reconciliation. The ministry of reconciliation is based on what has been done -- the death of God’s Son -- His having been made sin for us: and hence reconciliation is ever “now” though the state consequent on it, holy and unblamable and unreprovable, be in its consummation future. I suppose I have in my measure urged

156.  {See C. Stanley, Present Troubles, pp. 7, 8;
A. H. Burton, Remarks, p. 6, note.
H. G. Brand, The One: Lost in Man’s Glory, p. 18.}
157.  {Letters of F. E. Raven, p. 12 (1963), omits the word “in.”}
158.  {Letters of F. E. Raven, p. 13 (1963) substitutes the word “Person” for “power.”}
this as strongly as most. In conclusion I must say that the attacks made on me present ideas so foreign to my whole habit of thought, are so erroneous in reasoning, and in virulence are so utterly out of proportion to the offence given, or the weight of the person implicated, that I am unable to recognize in them the work of the Spirit of God, and am very grieved for those who have taken part in them.

Believe me, your affectionate brother,
F. E. Raven.

1890 {This letter is taken from Collected Writings of A. C. Ord, p. 127.}

February 10, 1890.

How you can say that my interpretation of 1 John 1 sweeps away Christ as Himself the Eternal Life I am at a loss to understand. I admit Eternal life to be a state, as it has been said, a condition of being and relationship, and this was at least in essence in the Son in eternity.

To W. Barker.

1890 {The following letter is found in Ministry by F. E. Raven 20:292.}

Royal Naval College, Greenwich, S. E.,
February 27th, 1890.

Mr. Henry Taylor.

My Dear Brother, In reply to yours of 25th I send a line to try and explain what I mean by ‘mixed conditions.’ The truth is that a christian is of new creation before he has done with the old; he is heavenly before he has done with the earthly; he has eternal life before he has done with his responsible life as a man down here. Hence while on the one hand we are a new creation in Christ where old things have passed away and all things have become new, on the other hand we have to run a race, to continue in the faith, to see that sin and flesh do not reign in us. In Ephesians we see our new creation state, in Romans our responsible life as still here in old creation condition and circumstances, but justified and indwelt by the Spirit. This makes the mixed condition, and it is of all moment to see these things in their distinctness or we fail to see either the true character of the new creation order-or to appreciate the grace by which we are supported in our responsible life while here. It is somewhat like a dissolving view; the new picture has come on to the scene before the old has completely passed away.

I trust this may help to make the matter plain.

Your affectionate brother,

F. E. Raven.

1890 {The following letter is taken from P. A. Humphreys, “Be Not Deceived,” p. 20.}

Greenwich, March 6, 1890.

'A man in Christ' was caught up into the third heaven -- Paul in the body walked here -- but he walked, as should every Christian, in the power of the Spirit, according to the character of new creation, as dead to sin the law and the world. Again, the cross gives you title to be a heavenly man -- (to enter into the holiest) -- but it is the quickening power of Christ that makes you it -- as is the heavenly such are they that are heavenly -- but from your present condition of existence you cannot eliminate the element of responsibility, and Scripture deals with this (see Rom. 6) -- while there is no such thing as responsibility ‘in Christ.’ It is a new creation, where old things have passed away, and all things have become new, and all things are of God.

1890 {The following letter is taken from Collected Writings of A. C. Ord, p. 73}

Greenwich, March 6, 1890. 161

My dear brother, I return Mr. {H. H.} Snell’s letter. In regard to the first point, I am not aware that I ever penned the sentence supposed to be mine. It is for Major McCarthy, who I believe is the author of the paper, in which the sentence appears in inverted commas, to prove whence he derived it. 162

As to the other points I think I would bow to Scripture in a moment, but Scripture does not speak of Christ having been the eternal life which was with the Father before the world was. That the Eternal life was with the Father (as I should say essentially) Scripture says, and I have no doubt whatever that the reference is to the Son, but the importance of the difference is that John in his Epistle is giving prominence to the condition because we have part in it.

Again, Scripture does not I think speak of our having had eternal life imparted to us. What is imparted to us, as I understand it, is life in the power of the Holy Spirit, a well of water in the believer.

Eternal life is in the Son and we are in Him, and live by Him in the power of the Spirit. This is the form in which eternal life is now given to us. I will send you a further line as to the remaining part of your letter

161. {See H. K., et. al., A Brief Statement of F. E. R.’s Doctrines, and Their Effect in Bristol, 1890, p. 12; W. Kelly, The New Development, 1890, p. 18.}

162. {In this paragraph begins the lie by FER concerning what he had written regarding the Babe in the manger, to which a chapter is devoted.}
Chapter 2: Letters and Papers Before the Division on June 29, 1890

Your affectionate Brother,
F. E. Raven

To W. Barker.

1890  {The March 20, 1890 letter relates to the issue over the Babe in the Manger and is quoted in Chapter 7. }

1890  {The following letters of Feb. 24, 1890 and April 12, 1890 do not appear in Letters of F. E. Raven, 1963. They are taken from P. A. Humphreys, “Be Not Deceived,” pp. 19, 20 (May, 1890).

Greenwich, Feb. 24, 1890.

The teaching amongst us seems to be on two lines -- the one would apply every statement of the Christian calling in an absolute dogmatic way to the believer as here -- the other while recognizing that the believer is filling out the remains of his life in the flesh through grace would show that the true calling relationships and blessings of the Christian belong to the scene and sphere where (Christ now is, wholly disconnected from human life down here. I confess I am through grace on the latter line.

Signed. F. E. Raven.

To this the brother replied:

12 April, 1890.

Nothing has more deeply pained and troubled me, I think, than this question of Christian responsibility, which seems to be uppermost just now. I am convinced it is false -- not so gross perhaps as it is insidious and subtle. But if the root is corrupt, the fruit will be also. Mr. Darby has written “The whole question of our responsibility as living in the life of man before God, is settled by Christ’s judicially bearing the consequences before God, and by the death of the life in which we stood as sinners. The nature, being, sins, guilt, existence in which he was responsible before Him, are, as regards the believer, gone before God.” My responsibility then is not as a man in the first Adam, but as a Christian in the Second. On the first ground I am wholly lost already; it is vain to talk of responsibility, unless to convince of sin. On the second, because I am saved, and a child of God in the family, I am become responsible for walking as such, like the example of the Firstborn of many brethren. “Christian responsibility is the responsibility of being a Christian, that is of walking, because we are in Christ, as Christ walked, through Christ dwelling in us.” You tell me “there is no such thing as responsibility in Christ.” It certainly is not in Adam for the Christian. Again, “Communion with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ, and the manifestation of the Divine life, can only have place so far as the flesh is practically held -- as we have the title to hold it -- for dead, always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus may be made manifest in our mortal body.”

In a paper by A. C. Ord there is quoted in full two letters by FER, dated Mar. 6, 1890 and Mar. 20, 1890. These are not in FER’s Letters of F. E. Raven, 1963. These are quoted in Chapter 5 concerning the lie FER told regarding the matter of his statement about the Babe in the manger. These letters also bear on other points which were being opposed at this point in time.

The March 24, 1890 letter with reprint of the Dec. 6, 1889 letter printed by J. S. Oliphant, with the permission of FER was moved to the Dec. 6, 1889.

Greenwich, April 14, 1890

I do not think the tone of your letter either courteous or becoming -- false, insidious, subtle, corrupt, are hardly terms suitable to apply to the thoughts of a brother with whom you remain professedly in fellowship. The real difficulty lies in your apparent inability to distinguish between what is true “in Christ” looked at in its own proper character as new creation, after God -- and what is true of a Christian who, though in Christ, has to walk in the flesh down here. Mr. Darby’s remarks apply to the latter -- my observation, that there is no such thing as responsibility in Christ, to the former.

F. E. Raven.

1890  {The letter replying to the following questions is not found in Letters of F. E. Raven, 1963, and is taken from A. C. Ord, The Glory of the Person of the Son of God: His Title as the Eternal Life, p. 78.

Questions Addressed in a Letter to Mr. Raven

Is it true that you hold that Eternal life is an essence or sphere apart from Christ?

Do you believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is and was from the beginning that Eternal Life which was with the Father?

Do you say that 2 Cor. 4:10, 11 is not Eternal Life, and if not, what life is it?

Do you hold that a Christian attending to his earthly calling is not manifesting Eternal Life whilst thus engaged?

Why not, if we do all to His glory?

Reply to the above Letter.

June 18th, 1890.

Dear Mrs. S., I readily answer your letter. But I must say that I can only characterize the statement (from whoever it
may come) that I hold any evil doctrine as to the divinity of the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ as shameful untruth. The tendency of what I have maintained is to keep the truth of what He is as a true divine Person distinct from purpose in Him of blessing for man.

The only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, and other titles which speak of the true Deity of Christ, are not interchangeable with eternal life. He is the true God AND eternal life.

To answer your questions. I do not hold that Eternal Life is an essence or sphere apart from Christ, though I have no doubt that the apprehension of the new and heavenly sphere is essential to the entering into Eternal Life.

I believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is the true God and eternal life; that eternal life was manifested in Him here, and eternally in Him (in essence, i.e. not in form of man) with the Father.

2 Corinthians 4:10, 11 appears to me to refer to life in the sense of character. The life of Jesus (what He was as Man here) is to be manifested in our mortal bodies. Eternal Life is, that we live in Him where He is.

Eternal life is heavenly (John 3:12), and has in itself nothing to do with earthly calling, &c. For us its form and character is to know the Father as the only true God, and Jesus Christ His sent One. I do not know where Scripture speaks of any one manifesting eternal life. What it does say is that it has been manifested, a special revelation, so to say, to the apostles that they might declare it.

They apprehended in some way the out-of-the-world heavenly relationship and being in which eternal life consists. The more we are in the power of it the better we shall do all here to the glory of God; but all this will pass away, and Eternal Life abide.

(Signed) F. E. Raven

Papers
Following are three papers, written before the division in June 1890. They dealing with F. E. Raven’s teaching regarding divine righteousness, eternal life, and the Person of the Son as Eternal Life. The first paper, by C. D. Manered, I had available in only the third edition.

On Some Subversions of the Truth

by C. D. Maynard
(third edition)

Several evil expressions, which are really untruths, as they pervert the simple truth of God, for “no lie is of the truth,” have found more or less acceptance amongst us. I wish to point out some I have heard as a warning.

The first I name (and I believe the worst) is, that Christ did not manifest eternal life to the world. Note, Scripture does not use the expression, “Christ manifested eternal life,” at all. He was ever the life; and when He became incarnate, “Jesus Christ come in flesh,” He was Himself in His visible condition, the manifestation of the life, hitherto unseen as with the Father. Mark the difference between the way in which the “glory” and the “life” are spoken bona fide life communicated to the soul at all, for you cannot communicate a sphere. If it be true life, as John 6 and other scriptures show, the one who has it may rejoice that he will communicate a sphere. If it be true life, as John 6 and other scriptures show, the one who has it may rejoice that he will communicate a sphere. If it be true life, as John 6 and other scriptures show, the one who has it may rejoice that he will never perish, as our blessed Lord assures the feeblest believer in Him (John 3:15-16, &c.); and the evangelist may go on with his “hates,” though we may have much to learn of the fulness of that life which is Christ Himself. Every life has its sphere. Heaven may be said to be the sphere of eternal life. Water is the sphere of a fish’s life; but the life and its sphere are distinct. The word “life” may be used in a figurative or secondary way, as “now we live if ye stand fast”; and death too, as, “She that liveth in pleasure, is dead while she liveth”; but the connection makes all plain. To give the secondary meaning of a word as its primary signification, or to run the two together, as Mr. R does in the quotation on p. 3, is to bring in confusion. Simplicity and infinity go together. Life is in itself mysterious, yet a child knows it; and “we know in part” only. But fuller light never unsettles what God has taught us. We must avoid mysticism calling itself “enlarged views,” lest we fall into folly and falsehood.

Akin to this error is the statement that those who believe and have the Spirit have eternal life. This makes our Lord’s words false, for He says, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on Me hath everlasting life,” -- adding no word about the Spirit, which those who then believed on Him did not have until He was glorified (John 7:39). When a sinner believes in Christ he has a divine title to say “I have eternal life.” “Wait,” says this statement, “have you got the Spirit?” This suggests that the indwelling of the Spirit is the saving thing, not faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and so trenches on “another gospel” (Gal. 1:8-9). “By grace are ye saved through faith.”

As the truth about life is confounded, so is the truth about righteousness. The verse in 2 Cor. 5:21: “He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; for we read, “Of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption” (1 Cor. 1:30). And, “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus. “Again, if it be not absolutely true now that we are in Christ, but only

163. “I must say such thoughts as are now current . . . talking about Christ manifesting to the unbelieving world eternal life -- the blessedness in which as man He was with the Father -- are to my mind not only erroneous, but repulsive.” (F. E. Raven: Paper printed by J. S.O., Dec. 6th, 1890 [sic -- 1889].)

To this I must now add the dreadful teaching that eternal life is not Christ, which statement is supported by an adherence to the letter of Scripture which sets aside its spirit, quite characteristic of this movement. And I couple with this the audacious assertion that “Eternal Life was ever an integral part of the Person of the Eternal Son.” Both of these statements really deny, as does the one in the text, that Christ is the Eternal Life.

164. {Copied as it was printed.}

165. “Of course everything is conferred through the gospel, but to talk of a person having eternal life without the Spirit is absurd” (Ibid. p. 4).
abstractedly so \(^{166}\) -- as you might say abstractedly we are glorified (Rom. 8:30) -- then it is not absolutely true that there is a new creation now, for it is as in Him we are “new creation” (2 Cor. 5:17). But Scripture is positive as to this (Eph. 2:10; 4:24). As born into this world we were in Adam and lost, and soon by our acts guilty. Now, the believer is in Christ a new creation through grace, and “justified by His blood.” All the fullness of this will be displayed in glory in the future, when we shall be with Christ; but it is absolutely true now that the saints are in Christ, and all who are not so are absolutely in condemnation (Rom. 8:1). True, most of us know little about being in Christ, but let us hold fast what we do know. Satan tried to take the present standing of the saint in Christ away in 1884-5, and grace preserved it. May the Lord do so now, though the attack be more extended.

I add that I myself heard it maintained in London that the new birth does not bring believers into the relationship of children to God, \(^{167}\) which denies birth relationship with Him; and thus shakes the basis of filial affection and brotherly love (1 John 5:1). Well might the apostle say, “I fear lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtility, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.”

May the Lord give us grace to be truly exercised before Him about these things. His word to Philadelphia is surely His word to us, “Behold I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.” But after Philadelphia comes Laodicea.

C. D. Maynard

I have rewritten the paragraph on page 4, commencing, “As the truth,” because I consider that in my first edition there were in it defective expressions, tending to limit “in Christ” to a present position, which I regret. Otherwise, with a few alterations, the paper is essentially the same.

Foot notes are now added, supporting charges made in the text.

First Edition was written November, 1889.

---

166. “It is argued that I deny a present application of our being made God’s righteousness in Christ. But this not so, for I say the Christian is in Christ, and Christ in him, but then of course that is abstract, as scripture recognizes other things (sin and death) as being still in the believer” (Ibid., p. 4).

167. “None the less new birth of itself does not conduct into heavenly relationship and blessing” (Ibid., p. 2).
Letter on Life and its Manifestation

Second Edition

by W. J. Lowe

January 15th, 1890

My dear Brother,

It seems to me that we should not be inattentive to the publication of the "letter" and "replies" from Mr. R., by one [J. S. Oliphant] who eighteen months ago avowed the mischief that had accrued from these views, and deprecated doctrines which he now sends forth without a word of warning or disapproval.

We have here the result of weeks of pressure caused by widespread anxiety as to doctrines recently taught. Let us examine it patiently, and endeavor to get at the meaning of what is often obscurely expressed. People are apt to run away with words and phrases they do not understand, and thus unwittingly lead others into error. Thus, recently, some one affirmed that Scripture -- he did not say in what part of it -- speaks of "nature without life," meaning that a soul might be renewed and yet not have life in the Christian sense of it. We may well leave those who propound such things to disentangle their theological refinements. On this point, however, the paper we are considering is far from clear. We are told that "new birth of itself does not conduct into heavenly relationship or blessing"; but that "life refers to the conditions, affections, relationships, &c., in which we are set," and this is what is "meant by the use of the word sphere"; and again, eternal life, for us, is the heavenly relationship and blessedness in which, in the Son, man is now placed, and lives before the Father.

So that though "a seed of God has been implanted in them from the outset," you cannot say they have eternal life until they have the "renewing of the Holy Ghost"; and this is explained to be the Spirit of God's Son sent forth into our hearts, crying, "Abba, Father." Again,

To talk of a person having eternal life without the Spirit is absurd.

What then does "new birth" involve, according to this teaching? Clearly not "eternal life," only a nature which in its character accords with its origin, of the order according to which it is begotten.

But, we may well ask, How can there be "nature" without life? What would it be the nature of? Take the case of the impotent man (John 5), who lay in the porches of Bethesda, because he could not move, and had no one to put him into the pool when the water was troubled. Jesus said to him, "Rise." Who heard that word? Clearly the man still impotent. But in obeying the word he was impotent no longer -- he was healed. What was his condition when Jesus met him? Impotence. What was it when he rose? Health. What produced the change? Evidently the life-giving word of Jesus. "His word was with power." Even as He said, "the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." Do we ask, What is the "nature" of their life? We find that Christ manifested it. And as to the believer, it is written, "He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked" (1 John 2:6). But let us seek to understand better these terms -- "life," "nature," "sphere."

Mr. R. has objected to analogy drawn from natural things when his theory has been controverted; but since the Holy Spirit employs it, we are on safe ground. Not that we are reduced to arguments of this kind to establish the truth as to divine life, for we have many formal declarations as to it in the Scripture; but the illustration will help us to understand the terms employed, just as the human body is used to set forth the mystery of the "Body" of Christ. The principle of God's creation was that every form of life had its special nature. We do not gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thistles. Every tree had its "seed in itself, after its kind." So again, we read that "God has given to every seed its own body." "All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, another of birds" (1 Cor. 15:38, 39). They all live, but the nature of their life and the sphere of it are different. A fish lives in water, a dog cannot do so. The life does not produce the sphere, nor the sphere the life, but they are suited one to the other, as the fish to the water. Every one can observe, and in a measure understand, the suitability of the sphere to the living creature which exists in it, but you could not describe the one by the other. To attempt to do so is confusion. How would "water" help me to understand what a "fish" is, if I had never seen a fish? Nor can we explain anything of "life" beyond what God has made known to us in the Scriptures. When any one attempts to reason on it according to human wisdom, he speedily manifests his folly.

The expression "living soul" is applied Scripture to both man and beast, and the Preacher asks whether any, by mere observation, can tell the difference between the two; "all go unto one place"; "as the one dieth, so dieth the other" (Eccl.

168. The "letter," except the last paragraph, has been republished by its author, with some explanatory notes, under date of 21st March. The text of it reappears intact. The "replies" are not appended to it in its present form; but there is nothing to indicate that it is wished to modify them. The text of the present tract is, therefore, maintained with a few trifling modifications (April, 1890.)
3:18-21). God has shown us the difference by His own account of the way in which they were created. In their origin we learn the respective natures of their life. God breathed into man’s nostrils the breath of life (Gen. 2:7). This is not said of any animal. Consequently man’s soul is immortal, and he has responsibility toward God, which an animal has not. When man dies, his spirit returns to God to whom he gave it (Eccl. 12:7). All live unto God. (Luke 20:38). Man sinned, and consequently is appointed to die; but he must rise from the dead, and pass into a new condition no more subject to change, whether of eternal torment or blessedness. But this blessed condition supposes a new life communicated to him, depending upon divine quickening power, and inseparable from faith. “The just shall live by faith” (Rom. 1:17, &c.).

Thus we can speak of man’s natural life as it is in itself, its origin, development, end, and so on; and then morally of the relationships, affections, responsibilities, duties, joys, sorrows, that belong to it. Thus I say, “I live”; I can also speak of the “life” I lead. These are human things which the mind of man can grasp. A man lives; his nature is “flesh”; that which is born of the flesh is flesh. “The sphere of his life is “earth” (Psa. 115:16). “He is of the earth, earthly.” So Jesus says, “Ye are from beneath.” Our moral condition is “in the flesh,” and is unfit for God’s presence and kingdom. We need a new life. “Our hearts must be purified by faith,” (Acts 15:9).

But when we come to divine life we have everything to learn. “What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God” (1 Cor. 2:11, 12). No human reasoning avails; it is by the Spirit alone that they are revealed. At the outset we are met by a statement which No human reasoning avails; it is by the Spirit alone that they knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God” (1 Cor. 2:11, 12). Thus I say, “I live”; I can also speak of the “life” I lead. These are human things which the mind of man can grasp. A man lives; his nature is “flesh”; that which is born of the flesh is flesh. “The sphere of his life is “earth” (Psa. 115:16). “He is of the earth, earthly.” So Jesus says, “Ye are from beneath.” Our moral condition is “in the flesh,” and is unfit for God’s presence and kingdom. We need a new life. “Our hearts must be purified by faith,” (Acts 15:9).

There is One alone who “hath immortality,” who can “lift up His hand to heaven, and say, I live for ever” (Deut. 32:40). The source of life is in Himself. He hath it, and can both manifest and communicate it. This life was in Christ. He was it. Its sphere is where He is (John 12:26). Divine and heavenly in its nature, it adapts itself in sovereign grace to lost man, and to all the circumstances in which man is found, even in death and judgment. As the light of men it shone (not for fallen angels). It shone in the darkness, though the darkness comprehended it not. Yet it could and did make itself known in its own creative power. “The Son quickeneth whom He will.” So Jesus could say, “I am the light of the world.” And again, “Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins; for if ye believe not that I am [He], ye shall die in your sins” (John 8:12, 23, 24).

The Holy Ghost had not yet come down upon the disciples when Jesus said, “Now they have known that all things whatsoever Thou hast given Me are of Thee: for I have given unto them the words which Thou gavest Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from Thee, and they have believed that Thou didst send Me.” And again, “Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you” (John 15:3). And so, after His resurrection, “My Father, and your Father.”

The risen Jesus, who breathed on the disciples the breath of His risen life (John 20:22), after saying, “It is finished” and accomplishing redemption, expressed in His Person that “life more abundant” (John 10:10) which He had said His “sheep” should have -- a life which carried with it the relationship with the Father in which He was, and which He came to declare (John 1:18, 39-34). There was also the divine guarantee that the Holy Ghost would be given. When He breathed on them He said, “Receive ye [the] Holy Spirit.” He thus described that breath of life; 166 and as surely as He “went up,” so surely would He send upon His own “the promise of the Father.” But the indwelling of the Spirit is a distinct thing from the life. The Spirit is given to those only who have life already; i.e., to believers; for the believer “HATH eternal life” (John 3:36; 5:24; 6:47). This spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive (John 7:39). This is a plain proof that those “believers” had not the Spirit then. Christ was the Son eternally with the Father. He makes us “children” as the result of His death and resurrection, bringing forth fruit of His own order, as He said, “If it die, it bringeth forth much fruit else the blessed, perfect “corn of wheat” could only have remained “alone” (John 12:24). It is well to remark that John always uses “children” rather than “sons” in speaking of believers. 170

Surely this helps to keep our souls in their proper condition of worship when the wondrous nearness to God conveyed in sonship is so blessedly revealed. Hence we have three great

169. This surely is in contrast with the “breath of life” which made Adam a “living soul” (Gen. 2). “The last Adam is a quickening Spirit.” The life communicated is of the Spirit, and is thus characterized by the operation of the Holy Ghost, through whom it comes (“It is the Spirit that quickeneth”), though it cannot be effective as to fruit bearing in a believer without the Spirit being communicated as well. We see that expressed in Jesus in John 1:32. “The fulness of life was always in Him, but He was sealed for official service. So He breathes the breath of His risen life on His disciples; and besides that, goes up into the glory and “baptizes” with the Holy Ghost (Acts 1:5). All that we receive is from Him, as it is expressed in Him. For us, since His resurrection, John 3 (“That which is born of the Spirit is spirit”) and John 20 coincide in this sense, that there is no other life communicated to a soul now but that which is characterized by Christ’s resurrection. See Rom. 8:2, as compared with v. 9, which latter would correspond with the giving of the Holy Ghost (Acts 2: 15:8).

170. Our Authorized Version unfortunately does not preserve this distinction.
steps in the unfolding of the truth:

I. In incarnation we see in Jesus what the eternal life is personally, in its relationship, communion, joys, sorrows, sympathy, service, power, and moral glory. He was the life “manifested” (John 14:6; 1 John 1:2), and He is the food of it (John 6:27, 33, 48-51).

II. In resurrection it is set forth in its proper character, as communicated to us -- life “abundantly” to those for whom Jesus died (John 20:17, 22). He could then call His disciples not merely His “sheep,” but distinctly His “brethren,” which He had not done before, though He had treated them as in the place of children (Matt. 17:26).

III. In ascended glory we see it expressed in Jesus in its own sphere -- with the Father; and the Holy Ghost is sent down to take of His things, and communicate them to us, that we may be brought into communion with the Father, and with the Son in what He actually enjoys. The Spirit witnesses with our spirit that we are children of God, and enables us to address the Father directly, approaching Him with the cry, “Abba,” having in our hearts the blessed sense of this personal relationship with Him. The same Spirit who is the power for having in our hearts the blessed sense of this personal relationship with Him. The same Spirit who is the power for

In the gospel of John, God reveals His own nature, light and love. He reveals Himself in the Son, who thus sets forth at the first instance, but we read (John 1:32) not only that the Spirit descended like a dove, but that it "abode" upon Him. But He was also the Baptizer with the Holy Ghost; and for that He must go up to the Father, and be exalted “at God’s right hand” (Mark 16:19). There He becomes the object for the believer’s soul. In beholding Him the believer is by the Spirit conformed to His image, as we read in 2 Cor. 3:18 (and compare Acts 7:55). Nothing can be known of this life apart from Jesus, and nothing enjoyed of it apart from communion with Himself, for which the Spirit is the power; and that necessarily entails communion with one another, because God is revealed as FATHER. “We love Him, because He first loved us,” and “Every one that loveth Him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of Him.” How the truth manifests its harmoniousness when Christ has His proper place!

John, we know, both in the gospel and epistle, presents eternal life in an aspect different from either Mark, or Luke, and again from Paul in his epistles. For the first three gospels it {eternal life} is always future, and, whether it be heavenly or earthly blessing, refers to the “world to come,” or the “regeneration when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of His glory.” Paul regularly speaks of it in its full accomplishment, according to the purpose of God in glory. He had seen Jesus there. Consequently, except when spoken of as a principle of grace, the general idea is future -- “in hope of eternal life” . . . “the end eternal life.” So even as to the “adoration” in Rom. 8, it is “the redemption of our body.” There must be conformity to Christ in glory, that He may be the “firstborn among many brethren.” But John saw Jesus here, lay in His bosom here, and unfolds to us what will truly be displayed in the glory, but yet, apart from the future display, the thing, itself, the life of Jesus here. “John has nothing to do with heaven,” as has been said. “As He is, so are we in this world.” When we might expect him to say “heaven,” he uses expressions which set forth the Person rather than the place, and fix our thoughts upon the Person of the Father and the Son, as {John} 6:62; 14:2; 17:24. John’s gospel presents us with a Person who ever was and is

171. Though manifested for us in Jesus here below, Son of God and Son of man, this blessing could only be realized through the Holy spirit when in glory Jesus became the object of the soul, as in the case of Stephen, “full of the Holy Ghost” (Acts 7:55, 56). But the Holy Ghost had come when the gospel of John was written. All blessing is centered in Jesus, expressed in Him.

172. The word “have” is never used with “eternal life” before we come to John’s gospel, except in Matt. 19:16, where, in the mouth of the young man, it certainly meant no more than what a Jew understood by it; and, in His answer, the Lord drops the word “eternal,” and substitutes “enter into” for “have.” In the parallel passages, Mark and Luke omit all reference to “life” in the Lord’s answer; instead of “have” they use the word “inherit,” which always refers to the future, as indeed Matt. 19:28, referring to the “regeneration” (i.e., the millennium). So this only confirms what is stated above.

unchangeably the same, the eternal Son, the Word who became flesh, and who, having taken Manhood, never gives it up. He is Man now glorified and with the Father (John 13:32; 17:5, 24). All this is apart from dispensation. The blessed fact of the Son being with the Father stands out as of paramount importance for our souls. “If ye loved Me,” He said, “ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for My Father is greater than I” (John 14:28). So that while insisting upon the wholly new order of blessing introduced through the second Man, and expressed in His Person, and now, for us, in the place in which He is, it is evident that no idea of “eternal life” imported from elsewhere will ever give the fulness which we find in the Person presented to us in John’s gospel. In this sense it must be read apart. Jesus says, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life.” The simplest soul can believe it; the most learned cannot explain it. “Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” These things are “revealed to babes.” It is sovereign grace!

Let us now see how this paper deals with these truths. A simple soul that loves the Lord, when questioned as to “eternal life” would turn at once to Him who is both our life and righteousness, and say that Christ is it. Not so this new teaching, which delights in covert phrases, and prefers to consider eternal life as a new order of things, a “sphere” in fact, though owning “the objection that exists if the term be admitted to be “that eternal life, which was with the Father, and is the Father’s, and is the life.” The subject is needlessly obscured by confounding life with the conditions of life. A simple soul, subject to the Word, would say that God has communicated to us eternal life, which life has the relationships, affections, communion, joys, service, emotions, &c., which are peculiar to it; and if we would know what these are, we must find them expressed in the person of the Son of God, who was and is the life, who became Man to manifest it here on earth, and died to lay the ground on which God could righteously make it communicable to us sinners in the power of His resurrection; and the power of it in our souls is the Holy Ghost, who is given to take of His things and reveal them to us, and bring us thus into communion with Himself as to all that He enjoys as Man, of and from and with the Father (John 14:14, 15; 1 Cor. 1:9). But this new teaching is not so explicit; it only contemplates the blessedness of the life, and seeks to express this by the term “sphere.” But when the term, as so used, is shown to be inappropriate, why not give it up, and talk plain English which simple people can understand? Is there no need at the present time for the apostle’s anxiety, “I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtility, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ”?

Why cling to the use of the term {sphere}? The explanation is evidently to be found in a desire that souls should not content themselves with confessing that they have life, but go on to the apprehension of the new order of blessing into which they are introduced. But surely all must admit that this most desirable end can only be attained in God’s way; and does it not seem strange to hold to a term which necessarily excludes the best part of the blessing, the very mainspring and pivot, so to speak, of the believer’s soul? For it is admitted it cannot apply to Christ. Christ is not “a sphere.” The question for us is, What saith the Scripture? How can we allow human reasoning a place here, any more than a Kohathite was allowed to look on the holy vessels before they were covered. He had to bear them on his shoulder. Blessed privilege! But that was enough. Alas! this teaching knows but little of such holy reticence. It is not a word or a term merely that is objectionable, or we might well let it pass; it is an elaborated system, as this paper shows. Unconscious as Mr. R. may be of it, all his correspondence proves the same thing. He does not admit that “eternal life” is unfolded in John’s gospel. He treats it as God’s purpose of blessing for man, and therefore distinct not only from the Deity, but also from “the eternal Sonship of the Word.” Indeed, according to this paper, except in “purpose,” or in “essence” it had no existence before the Incarnation, so that in English “everlasting” would describe it better than “eternal.”

But controversy is not my desire; nor do I intend to take up in succession the phrases of this paper, seeking to unravel its confusion; much less misrepresent its teaching. We are bound to judge of this according to the Scripture. Brought thus to the light, it will not stand. Is it not significative that never once, all through this paper, in spite of remonstrance extending over eighteen months, is Christ admitted to be “that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us,” according to the simple statement of Scripture? He could not be it, if a theory is to be maintained which explains it as “the blessedness in which, as Man, He was with the Father.” And then this blessedness -- a wholly spiritual thing -- could not be shown to the unbelieving world, as Mr. R. says. And so again:

It was God’s purpose in Christ from eternity; it was, in essence, with the Father in eternity, but has now been manifested in the only begotten Son of God, who came here declaring the Father in such wise as that the apostles could see it, and afterwards declare it by the Spirit. But I regard it of all importance to maintain, clear and distinct from any purpose of blessing for man, the true deity, the eternal sonship of the Word. 177

174. And this is by no means confined to him, as two letters before me from different quarters painfully testify.
175. {What FER intended by such a statement is that 1 John 1:2 refers to when Christ was here, not to eternity.}
176. But, in another sense, even this can hardly be sustained in face of such scriptures as John 5:17, 19, 20; 7:28; 8:20-29, all spoken to the Jews publicly. And compare with the latter passage John 12:44-60, introduced by the words, “Jesus cried and said;” and ending thus, “I know that His commandment is life eternal; whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto Me, so I speak.”
177. {Observe that this distinctly means that in order to maintain the true deity of the eternal Son, it must be denied that the Son is, in deity, in Person, the Eternal Life. Now, this is a denial of fundamental doctrine of the Son and (continued…)}
This definitely ignores that the words of Jesus ever set forth what He was; such is indeed the true meaning of John 8:25. We will not attempt to follow the reasoning which may suggest itself to the mind in support of a conclusion made in the teeth of such a scripture as 1 John 5:20, even if there were no other. Of course, no believer is “divine,” though he is made partaker of the divine nature. Christ is my life, and Christ is God; but the reception of divine life does not make the receiver of it a self-existent being. As a Christian, I may say that God dwells in me, but that does not make me an incarnation of deity. Why then this anxiety to maintain the true Deity of the Word, which no one calls in question (for Scripture says, “The Word was God”), unless to insist upon the distinctness of the “blessing” spoken of from His Deity and Sonship, so as not to allow that Christ was the eternal life. Admit that He was, and the theory crumbles to dust.

But more. We read that “all that is seen is temporal,” and “has no part in eternal life.” “The believer still has part in seen things which the Son has not.” Have not the words, “Which the Son has not,” the effect of turning away the thought of life from what it was as set forth in Christ? And the believer’s part in seen things is most positively distinguished from eternal life. The words are:

But at the same time, the believer still has part in seen things here (which the Son has not), and all that is seen is temporal, and will come to an end. It has no part in eternal life, though it may be greatly influenced by it.

This language is at least consistent with the theory which views the believer in a “mixed condition,” while it dissects the Person of Christ. The consequence is twofold. First, that when the Son became incarnate, eternal life was to be perceived by the apostles, who however did not really see it; for they understood nothing of it while the Lord was with them (John 14:9). Secondly, in as far as the Christian is concerned, it is “in the Son,” and the Son, we are told, has no part in seen things here; so that in fact, except in a sort of ecstasy or mystical enjoyment difficult to describe, it has no real existence here at all. The only practical manifestation there can be is its influence on seen things here! Is the practical care for a brother in distress only the “influence” produced by eternal life? Is being righteous “as He is righteous,” and loving the brethren, only this “influence”? (1 John 3:7-10, 16-18). The conviction is forced upon us more and more that the term “sphere” just expresses what this doctrine teaches as to the life -- a sphere which is not to be “seen,” or “handled”; so that JESUS CHRIST is NOT it. It is not unfolded in John’s gospel. How should it be? The gospel speaks about Christ. You may learn something of it in the epistles as it concerns man. But will it satisfy you to consider it in its beauty in yourself, whether in the “mixed condition,” or in the glory to come? Would it not be self blessed, but still self?

And in arriving at this mysticism, the Person of the Lord is analyzed and dissected; His words and His ways are parcelled out and classified according to human intellect, and the reasoning of these new doctrines. Now, what effect can this have on the soul of the believer? As an aged servant of Christ once wrote:

To enter upon subtle questions as to the Person of Jesus tends to wither and trouble the soul, to destroy the spirit of worship and affection, and to substitute thorny enquiries, as if the spirit of man could solve the manner in which the humanity and divinity of Jesus were united to each other. In this sense it is said, “No one knoweth the Son but the Father.” . . . I recommend you with all my heart to avoid discussing and defining the Person of our blessed Savior. You will lose the savor of Christ in your thoughts, and you will only find in their room the barrenness of man’s spirit in the things of God and in the affections which pertain to them. It is a labyrinth for man, because he labors there at his own charge. It is as if one dissected the body of his friend, instead of nourishing himself with his affections and character. It is one of the worst signs of all those I have met with for the church (as they call it) to which ____ belongs.

I add that we have here surely the fruitful source of the shocking irreverence as to the blessed Lord’s person in which many have indulged, and which others have listened to and repeated, without feeling in their souls that holy indignation which these statements ought to have produced, and surely would have produced, had there been due sensitiveness as to Christ’s glory, and the remembrance of those words, “No man knoweth the Son but the Father.” Is this a light matter? and are there no evil effects remaining in the souls of those who have thus trifled with the holy Scriptures, and with the adorable Person of the Lord Jesus?

Let us now examine how far the statements of this paper are based, as some would have us believe, on teaching already received amongst us. One may constantly meet with familiar expressions; but how are they used? I will take up three or four examples only out of many.

First as to a “position” (or shall we say “sphere”) of blessing. I quote from an extract recently published, I know not by whom, in the form of a tract with J. N. D.’s initials attached, but with no indication of its origin: not a very honest proceeding, you will say, but possibly well meant. It is quite certain J. N. D. did not write it as it is now presented to the public, in view of our present controversy. It is taken from vol. 23 of Collected Writings, pp. 430-432 {33:222}.

177. (...continued)
falls under 1 John 9, 10.]

There are those whom the Father has given to the Son. It is the thought and settled purpose of the Father. They are given to the Son; the Father has committed them to His hands, in order that He may bring them into the glory, in order that He may fit them for the presence, the nature, and the glory of God; for all that was in this settled purpose; and that He may place them, according to God’s infinite love, in a position which should satisfy this love, and which is that of the Son, become Man to this effect. We can add that it is a position that answers to the value and efficacy of the work of the Son to place them there, not only externally (which, however, would be impossible), but in endowing them with a nature fit for such a position. Marvelous grace of which we are the objects! This position is eternal life, a word of which we must examine a little the meaning. It is spiritual and divine life — a life capable of knowing God and of enjoying Him, as answering morally to His nature, “holy and without blame before Him in love.” Eternal life, that is to say, a life not merely immortal, but which belongs to a world that is outside the senses; for “the things that are not seen are eternal.”

The striking contrast between this language and that of the paper before us must be evident to the most superficial reader. But if the end of the paragraph appears at first sight to give a certain color and support to what the paper says of “seen things,” a little attention will convince the reader that the positive assertion of Mr. Darby, a quotation of Scripture, has been turned into an exclusive negative statement which falsifies the truth in all its parts. According to the language of this paper, “all that is seen is temporal,” and “has no part in eternal life.” “The believer still has part in seen things here which the Son has not.” Mr. Darby immediately guards the truth by adding:

But there is something more precise than that. In 1 John 1 we see definitely what eternal life is; IT IS CHRIST. That which they had seen, contemplated, and handled from the beginning, it was Christ, the eternal life which was with the Father, and had been manifested to them.

[The italics, &c., are mine.]

So that, according to Mr. Darby, who is speaking of the character of the life, heavenly in its nature, origin, sphere, &c., the part the Son had in seen things served to set forth the eternal life; He was Himself the life. But this paper will only allow that what is seen “may be greatly influenced by it.” And where is the precision in which Mr. Darby delights, saying, “IT IS CHRIST”? That which was manifested of His life was eternal: He could say, “Before Abraham was, I AM”; and again, “My words shall not pass away.”

Let us take another example. Often have we heard and rejoiced in the scriptural statement, that the name “Father” is God revealed in grace. In Truth for the Time, part 2, pp. 130, 142, I find, three or four times over, this truth clothed in a negative form, which excludes the Son, and turns my thoughts in upon myself as the object of grace.

Scripture takes the greatest possible pains [it is said] to keep clear the Father’s name from everything but thoughts of grace.

Mr. Darby says, It is grace. This is true. Mr. R. says, There is nothing but grace. But Jesus is the Father’s Son; and does “grace” apply to Him? Or is He only a servant to carry out the Father’s counsels of grace toward me, as indeed one would suppose from reading this article? Scripture says, “OF HIS FULNESS have all we received, AND grace upon grace. But by this negative treatment of the truth, I am occupied, like Jacob at Shechem, with my own blessing, as if I were the object before God, and Christ is left out. Brother, let us get back to Bethel! How little weight with us have the wonderful words of the Spirit of Christ in His perfect self-emptiedness, dependence, and obedience, “My goodness extendeth not to Thee”! Did we know it better we should be more occupied with Him, less with ourselves.

But again, Is it possible that the objection to find “eternal life” unfolded in John’s gospel can be based on the following quotation from Collected Writings, 7., p. 511 {336, new ed.}?

The simplest, fullest, and most direct statements of what eternal life is, are to be found, perhaps, in John’s first epistle, the main object of the whole epistle being to show what that life is.

Again we find the negative exclusive treatment of what is a positive truth simply stated by Mr. Darby, who, after quoting 1 John 1:1, 2 and 5:11, 12, 20, adds:

This then is most definite and distinct. The life is in the Son. He is eternal life. So the gospel: “In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.” “As the Father hath life in Himself” (John 5). He is a life-giving Spirit. He quickeneth whom He will. All this is plain. Life is in the Son, or He is life.

Observe, Mr. Darby goes immediately to the gospel for the details of what the life was. The subject he is treating, be it remarked, is the communication of eternal life — how it is obtained. How opposed is this to the theory contained in this paper!

A fourth example may suffice us from “Life and Eternal Life,” in Notes and Comments, vol. 2, p. 316 {225, new ed.}, an extract from which, also printed as a tract apart, commences thus:

As regards eternal life. First, in its essence and nature it was in the Son with the Father (1 John 1:2). So in John 1, “In Him was life” — as man down here, the Person of Christ. He was given to have life in Himself.

Now, if this were really the meaning of the words of this paper, “It was in essence with the Father in eternity,” it is

179. [If this means that John 1:4 has the thought that He was given to have life in Himself, I dissent from the idea. John 1:4 refers to what was ever essentially in Him in eternity, as is the case in 1 John 1:2.]
suresly time to correct this obscure phraseology. Would indeed it were possible to suppose it truth badly expressed. But it seems impossible to admit this. Mr. Darby speaks clearly enough of the nature of the life as it was “in the Son.” But Mr. R. not only leaves “the Son” out, but distinguishes the purpose of blessing for man, i.e., eternal life, from His Sonship. It is the very opposite of what Mr. Darby teaches. The habitual exclusive, negative treatment transforms the meaning of the entire passage, occupying the soul with its blessing, to the exclusion of Christ. For we cannot suppose such profanity as to say that Christ was an “essence.” Mr. Darby is careful to quote 1 John 1:2, which Mr. R.’s doctrine flatly contradicts; and adds a few lines further down, “He is the true God and eternal life,” quoting 1 John 5:20. I continue the extract above made. It runs as follows:

Life and incorruptibility are brought to light by the gospel. But “eternal” life was in the counsel of God, and promised us in Christ Jesus before the world was. In its full result it is in resurrection glory, “In the end everlasting life.” “Springing up into everlasting life.” But we have it when we have Christ. “He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life” -- “is passed from death unto life.” “He is the true God and eternal life.” And whosoever believeth on the Son was to have “everlasting life.” Thus it is essentially in the Son, given us in Christ Jesus before the world was. But in counsel this is in glory with the Father, yet intrinsically in Him and received from Him. Before we are there we have it. . . . The place and character of eternal life is in John 3:14-16. As with the Father, we see it in the eternal person of the Son.

The truth as to Christ being the eternal life is carefully and constantly maintained in these “notes” by Mr. Darby, and that as distinct from the sphere to which it belongs, and in which the Son now is. But this paper makes another Christ; that as distinct from the sphere to which it belongs, and in which the Son now is. Mr. R. himself owns that the relationship with God is the highest part of the soul’s blessing; but he does not perceive how his doctrine really deprives the soul of it, by disassociating it from the Sonship of the Word become flesh. Besides, the fact of being a son is not a “sphere,” however much the enjoyment of the relationship might be so described; but the relationship does not depend upon our enjoyment of it; it depends upon the finished work of Christ. So that to pretend that “sphere” refers to “the relationship,” as if Mr. R. were guarding from the dangerous “mistake” of separating life from relationship is but creating a difficulty in what is quite simple, in order to solve it with a mystifying theory which in principle denies or obscures the relationship. His words are:

The fact is, life refers to the conditions, affections, relationship, &c., in which we are set and not simply to the fact that we are alive. And this holds good as to eternal life, in which we are introduced by the appropriation of Christ’s death into a whole new sphere of affections and relationships, in which we are alive by Christ being our life. This is what I meant by the use of the word sphere, though I see the objection that exists if the term be used in regard to Christ. The mistake is in separating life in us (Christ) from the relationship to which it refers, and in failing to see that eternal life is a comprehensive expression that takes in all.

Now, for simple people the idea of life without relationship of some kind is an absurdity, as would be the idea of nature without life. Life without enjoyment would be unendurable misery; life without affections and responsibilities, an abomination. For us the question is, What is the relationship which characterizes the life from God which the believer now enjoys? Scripture answers, “Sonship” (Gal. 3:26; 4:6-7). Paul was the first to preach Christ as the Son of God (Acts 9:20). He speaks of the Son being revealed “in him,” so that he was himself an example of the truth he preached, and which was expressed in the person of the Son of God (Gal. 1:16). So marvelous is it for us, that to give adequate expression to it, the Holy Ghost, a divine person, must be sent into our hearts in order to cry “Abba.” This relationship, as conscious blessing for man, was in fact introduced at the cross, when Christ died; the ground of the blessing was laid there; the first man is there set aside (Gal.2:20; 3:13, 14; 4:4, 5). God sends forth the SPIRIT OF HIS SON into the hearts of those that are sons, and because they are such, so that they may cry “Abba, Father.”

It may be asked, What is the nature of the life communiqued to us? It is sinless: “Whosoever is born of God doth not commit it; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God” (1 John 3:9). It
will not do then to excuse sinning on the ground that the flesh is still in me. The children of God are to be thus “manifested”; I must walk as Christ walked. “Birth” is a personal matter. “Ye must be born again.” “If ye know that He is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of Him.” The scripture only knows one character and rule for those so born; it is Christ.

Behold, what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the children of God! Therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not. Beloved, now are we the children of God, and if doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. And every one that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure” (1 John 2:29; 3:1-3).

I add a word as to what Mr. R. says of the necessity of redemption beyond “new birth,” in order to conduct into heavenly relationship and blessing. Does he not know that redemption was necessary even for the realization of the blessings promised under the new covenant, and which the Lord calls in John 3 “earthly things”? Did not the Lord in giving the cup to the disciples say, “This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins”? And from the moment that redemption was accomplished, now over 1850 years ago, how is it possible to separate the new birth from it as affecting a soul now? Let him answer these things. His doctrine is confusion and mischievous error, taking away from the value of Christ’s work, as it disfigures and dissects His Person. No man can believe in a Christ now, but in a Christ dead, risen, and glorified, and the sender of the Holy Ghost. It is the kernel of Peter’s gospel on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:31-33), though terribly obscured no doubt in Christendom. But such are the very elements of the gospel. There is no other Christ. Philip could preach no other to the Samaritans; and they, be it remarked, though they believed, did not receive the Holy Ghost until Peter and John went down to them. No soul can possibly get back into the condition of the disciples who accompanied with the Lord on earth before He had suffered.

Note too the strange way in which John 6:53 is, in this paper, introduced as it were to supplement the “new birth” of John 3, “He has also eaten. . .” The reason is well known, having been explained as the soul’s receiving the full testimony as to redemption or appropriating faith in the efficacy of Christ’s work and blood, which, from Acts 10:44, we know is coincident with the seal of the Spirit. This again confounds eternal life with the Spirit received in the heart. Thus by occupying the soul with its own knowledge of what accrues from Christ’s death, which is never made a matter of condition in Scripture at all, and could not be, the force of the passage is weakened, and the attention is diverted from its real object: first the communication of life, and then the blessing, and the responsibility attached to the life. This provoked the murmuring even of some of the Lord’s own disciples, so that they turned away from Him. Does it make me murmur to hear that my sins are forgiven? Surely not. But when I begin to understand how the death of Christ separates me from this world, and all that is of it, and the man in it, and that I have to bear about in the body the dying of Jesus, it sets me thinking as to how far I am prepared to accept it, and follow the steps of the devoted apostle. Many do say, “It is a hard saying, who can hear it?” All this is confused, if not frittered away, by this new doctrine which presents “the testimony received concerning the Son” as “the power of life in the believer,” rather than the Spirit Himself, stating that he has “been born of God to receive it.” This, I need hardly say, virtually denies that the word of Jesus is life-giving, and is a contradiction of such passages as 1 Pet. 1:23, James 1:18, “We are born of water” (that is, by the “word”) and of the Spirit.

Mr. R.’s doctrine necessarily separates “new birth” from faith; cuts John 3 into two distinct parts, as if the Lord were no longer speaking to Nicodemus, an unregenerate soul, when He said, “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should have everlasting life.” It separates between the two “musts” of verses 7, 14, which hitherto we have rejoiced to see so blessedly brought together by the Lord Himself. It ignores entirely the change in the Lord’s ministry as shown in Matthew, when, rejected as Messiah, He stands forth as the Revealer of the Father, and instead of seeking fruit on the “fig-tree” (privileged and responsible Israel), He takes the place of a Sower, introducing the divine seed, — the word that is received into the heart, — and looking for fruit from the seed He Himself casts into the ground. This is a divine operation. The gospel of John presents this in another way, as birth from above, “by the word of truth” producing faith in the heart of a “dead” sinner. Furthermore the Lord shows how He Himself is the seed cast into the ground, which in rising produces fruit from itself (John 12:24). But Mr. R. has an “objection to apply in an absolute way to the believer . . . what is true of him viewed as in Christ.” Where is faith? If I do not believe what the Scripture says, what self-judgment can there be when there is failure in practice? For instance, God says, “Ye are dead” (Col. 3:3). “No,” says this doctrine, “that is abstract; it is only a part of you, or conditionally true; you have the flesh in you,” and so on. What remains of Scripture with such treatment? Has not the word of God provided for the flesh being in us? (Gal. 5 &c.). May the Lord indeed open the eyes of His saints, and give them to resist this pretentious mysticism, which deprives them of an energy for a walk in the power of the Spirit. “We walk by faith, not by sight.” But with these doctrines faith in the Scripture is weakened, as it is eliminated from “new birth.” You are to decide according to your own “state” what scriptures you are to take as they are written and what not, which in principle is rationalism, though doubtless not so meant.

Beginning by considering the believer in his apprehension
and enjoyment of blessedness, it goes on to analyze the Lord’s person, and allows unholy reasoning upon His most precious utterances, rendering nugatory His words to Mary Magdalene, which owned His disciples as “My brethren” fifty days before the Holy Ghost came down upon them; and it reduces the practical life of a child of God to an “influence,” while weakening the fundamental truths of the Gospel both as to life and righteousness. I know well this doctrine has been defended by the rejoinder, that those who oppose it make everything of “new birth.” This is all a misconception. New birth is not the sealing of the Spirit. The Spirit is given to those who have life, and because they are “sons.” The Spirit is the power of the life, and enables the believer to cry “Abba.” But he is a son by faith in Christ Jesus, has eternal life in believing. Mr. R. however separates that which Scripture only distinguishes, limiting the sovereign act of the Spirit of God, and forgetting that Jesus said, “Thou canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth.” But, as J. N. D. has written, thus, born of the Spirit, Christ as risen is our life, and we are thus associated with the heavenly things in a nature suited essentially to it . . . 181

and again,

You cannot separate eternal life and new birth, however much the soul has to learn afterwards about the character and blessedness of the life communicated to it. This however can only be done through feeding upon Christ. 182

Again, I find,

Our life . . . is of and from heaven, divine like Christ; but suited, as He was, to a world and hearts which were the opposite of what was divine; and He and it are alone so; and we, if we eat Him and live by Him, and so follow Him. 183

But, by this new teaching, Christ as the manna or food of the life in the believer’s soul is taken away. Instead of which we are nourished with “blessedness” -- the blessedness in which He lived as Man, if you will, though this paper scarcely goes even so far as that; and, as to us, it only speaks of our blessedness as “in the Son; i.e., not communion, which is omitted; for “blessing,” however great, is still short of communion. But this blessedness is not Christ, nor is Christ it. The figure which would express it is, I conclude, the “water,” the energy of the Spirit preventing the soul from ever thirsting, as Mr. R. has himself expressed it, often quoting John 4:14, 6:35; so Psalms 36:8. We are not now speaking of taking the water of life in the first instance, as Revelation 22:17, Isaiah 55:1, &c., but of a believer’s joy and refreshment ministered through the Spirit. And, in this sense, we do not drink to live. Water alone will not support life. We must eat to live, as in the first part of Psalms 36:8. And there is a vast difference. Both are necessary, of course. But this doctrine, having lost the “eating,” supplies its place by the “drinking.” The Lord says, “He that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me.” The water He gives is truly a fountain springing up within the believer: and He says, “He who drinks shall never thirst.” But of Himself, as the bread which came down from heaven, the sent One of the Father, He says, “. . . that a man may eat thereof, and not die.” Yes, Christ is the life, and Christ is the food of the life. By feeding on Christ in the power of the Spirit, we do surely enjoy unutterable blessedness; and more, we enjoy it in communion with Himself, which is the most blessed part of it; and we do so without thinking of our joy, real as it is. The heart is too much occupied with Christ to be able to think of itself. But a soul that merely seeks the blessedness will not find Christ, and will end by feeding on itself, and will wither. I think I need say but little as to “righteousness,” dear brother, as you have informed me that the unscriptural expression of “sin being displaced in us by divine righteousness” has been at length withdrawn by Mr. R., 184 though certainly leaving his doctrine very much as it was, and now adding to it the “future” bearing of Romans 5:19 and the confusion as to “state,” defined to be “that which is true of us as new-created in Christ.” How many employ the word in this way? But I will say no more, preferring to see in a first withdrawal an indication that more, through grace, may follow. Would to God it might be so! But in the meantime these doctrines are being freely circulated on the responsibility of J. S. O. {Oliphant}. Can he know what he is doing?

I have no need to write to you, dear brother, of the anxiety and exercise of heart of these past eighteen months. You have been in the conflict as well as I, and know how slow I have been to recognize the gravity of much that was said, hoping against hope that it was not meant as stated. You have also watched the development of this teaching. Hitherto our attention has been directed to the fruits of it, “divisions and offences,” besides unscriptural utterances, some of which have been public, and have deeply grieved many of our brethren, who seem at the present time to regard them with less disfavor. Now it looks as if the root were reached in these “replies,” to which the agitation of the last few months has given rise. You know too that I and others have hitherto sought to consider them as errors merely, going no further than maintaining the negative attitude commanded us in Romans 16:17, feeling that that was the path of faithfulness to the Lord and brotherly love, hoping and praying that God would bless it, and graciously grant repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth. But does it not look as if the will of the flesh was now thrown into the scale of evil doctrine, and as if there were a determination to sow these bitter seeds more extensively? May the Lord grant that a public appeal may be blessed to bring our misguided brethren to their senses. We are in the Lord’s hands, and He is

181. Notes and Comments 2:382 {273, new ed.}.  
182. Letters 3:173 {140, new ed.}.  
183. Letters 3:175 {141, new ed.}.  
184. [This was a false report.]  
185. In Scripture it is just as absolutely stated that we are “in Christ,” as that we are justified (1 Corinthians 1:30). But Mr. R. Not so: he says the former is “abstract.” What are ignorant and unlettered men to make of this?
dealing with us all. Surely He will listen to our cry if there be true brokenness before Him. For this we may seek, while adhering at whatever cost to the course He has indicated for us in His own Word.

Your very affectionate brother in Him,

W. J. Lowe

To Mr. W. Bradstock.

(I append the following letter received in reply to mine. -- W. J. L.)

{Here follows a letter of reply from W. Bradstock, dated Feb 12, 1890, which the reader will find at the end of Chapter 1. This letter denies that FER withdrew the letters that he had written to W. Bradstock. I may add that when evil teaching is in question, withdrawal is not what is needed, but rather judgment and repudiation.}

Eternal Life and Righteousness

W. T. Whybrow

My dear Brother,

In addressing this letter to you, it is in no wise my thought to attack your opponent any more than to presume to defend you, but merely to draw attention to the two important points in question, Eternal Life and righteousness of God; the truth of which appears to me to be so seriously endangered by this new teaching.

The statement opposed by F. E. R., in his letter to you of Dec. 24th, 1889, is that Eternal Life, as spoken of in 1 John 1:1-3, is "the Eternal Person of the ever-blessed Son of God." What he says would amount really to this, that Eternal Life is not the Eternal Person of the ever-blessed Son of God. But this would be too fragrant [sic, flagrant] a violation of Scripture (1 John 1:1-3, and 5:20) -- too bold, and would shock even those who accept his teaching. He therefore sets up a theological fallacy, which he attributes to you, and then sets to work to refute it in order to prejudice the truth he challenges. This is an easy way of escaping a difficulty and at the same time of claiming a victory, but it is after all only an artifice.

According to him, to say that eternal life is the eternal Person of the Son of God, is to make the Son of God and eternal life strictly equivalent. His words are:

Thus the Son of God and eternal life are made strictly equivalent.

Is it so? Suppose I maintain that the true manhood of Christ is now essential to the Person of the Son of God, do I therefore make the Son of God and His manhood "strictly equivalent? Nay, I know He is more than man, "He was with God and was God," before "He became flesh and dwelt among us." Or again, if I say the true deity of Christ is the eternal Person of the Son of God, do I therefore make the Son of God and God strictly equivalent? Not so; as the eternal Word He was personally distinct from eternity, but not distinct in His nature; and He is "that eternal life which was with the Father"; moreover, now He is man for eternity. He says

the Son of God is more than eternal life,

and uses this to deny that "eternal life is a Person, the eternal Person of the ever blessed Son of God," whereas scripture says "He is the true God (and "not more than," but) and eternal life," {1 John 5:20} i.e., so far from using the one to deny the other, it precisely puts them together as constituting His Person. In quoting this last passage, F. E. R. adds his own comment, viz.,

It is what He is to Christians.

But it is true universally; it is "the witness of God which He has witnessed concerning His Son" . . . "he that does not believe God has made Him a liar."

A proof of the very alarming form these views are taking, is the terrible reasoning advanced by some, that just as you could not say "love is God," so it would be false to say "eternal life is the Person of Christ." Reason blinds them to the fact that they are treating as an abstract nature that of which Scripture says "we have heard, we have seen with our eyes, that which we contemplated and our hands handled" {1 John 1:1, 2}. This is the eternal life which was with the Father, and when manifested is seen to be Christ Himself; yet, presumptuous man dares to reason on it.

God is God. He can only be Himself -- "I am that I am." Yet in Jesus dwells, and dwelt, "all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." He is the true God (1 John 5:20). God manifested in flesh was and is Christ exclusively -- the Person of the ever-blessed Son of God. To deny it is Unitarianism.

Thus, too, if the question were asked what is eternal life according to its true Christian character, the Lord's words reply "This is eternal life that they might know Thee," &c. But in 1 John 5:20, it is not what, but who it is; and as the adorable Person of the Son of God, the blessed Man Jesus Christ is beheld by the Spirit, the reply is, "He is the true God and eternal life." Here eternal life is His Person just as Godhead is His Person.

To reason about or deny reversion of terms, in one case or the other, would be equally human intellect pretending to fathom that which no man knoweth, but the Father only. God manifested in flesh was, and is, the Person of Christ exclusively. Eternal life manifested was, and is, Christ and Godhead. That is His Person just as Godhead is His Person.
order of things come to pass -- not eternal in itself.

In contrast to eternal life being the Person of the Son of God, he says

it means for us a complete new order of things which has come to pass in man, in the Son of God having become man.

For him it only "means" something, i.e., it is something to man's apprehension, though a saint, and must therefore vary accordingly. He cannot say it is, for this would be something intrinsic, and not a moral sphere. It means, he says,

a new order of things.

This is not intrinsic life at all as Scripture speaks of it; nor according to his own showing, as we shall see later on, can F. E. R. get life out of it. But more, this new order of things has come to pass in man in the Son of God having become man. This is an adroit change. It is the "order of things come to pass"; then the scene changes and lo! It is the Son of God become man. Again the wand is waved, and the "new order of things" once more appears, and "we have entrance through His death, and in the power of the Holy Spirit." It would not do to say here "the Son of God become man." But the difficulty, as already noticed, is that according to this, we have as yet no life at all. Eternal life, he says, is

a completely new order of things,

the Son of God become man.

Into the former we have entrance though His death, &c; we are thus brought into a new order of things, but so far we ourselves have not life. To supply this lack he has to bring in another element, without calling it eternal life or its forming a part of his definition. He says "the Son being our life." Practically this ignores the whole of John's gospel as to the giving of eternal life by Jesus, and the having it by the believer, and moreover contradicts 1 John 1, which states as to the eternal life that it was "with the Father" without any limit being implied; whereas for F.E.R. it is the Son of God become man, implying that only as become man was He the eternal life. Does he mean to teach this? It is true that only in Him become flesh was it manifested according to its divine fulness, because He was and is it.

Again, as to divine righteousness, his definition is

that divine righteousness in its fullest sense sets and displays us in glory in the life and state of Christ.

This he seems to think quite incontrovertible, and maintains as fundamental, but it is incorrect in every particular. Our display in glory is the proof and demonstration of divine righteousness; but God's righteousness, of which it is the demonstration, is the setting Christ in glory, and our presence there is the proof of the value of His work -- the necessary result of His being there in reward of the work accomplished on our behalf. This, however, is not all; he adds

in the life and state of Christ.

This confounds and destroys the whole truth of what he pretends to define. It is utterly false in principle that righteousness sets us in life and state. Life and righteousness are both found in Christ, and nowhere else. Righteousness does not set us in life, nor life in righteousness.

If a law had been given able to quicken, then indeed righteousness were on the principle of law.

But there was not. Righteousness was not to be obtained by life, either under law or grace; but on the contrary, only through death. Nor was life to be obtained by righteousness. This indeed was proposed under law as a test; but a principle that has failed under law God has not re-established under grace. Life and responsibility were ever perfectly distinct things, meeting their answer indeed in the cross; and now that it is no longer man's righteousness, but God's, that is in question, life and righteousness for man are still distinct things, though both be found for us in Christ, and are inseparable in Him risen and glorified. We find life in Christ, the sovereign grace of God associating us in life with Him in whom we have believed, and we find righteousness, too, in Him, and that "out of many offences" -- a righteousness which is "towards all men for justification of life." Righteousness places us in a new position of acceptance with God -- not in life and state, though divine life in power is also found there.

If divine righteousness sets us in the life and state of Christ, whether in the glory or not yet there, then divine righteousness is actually effected so far as it is made good in us morally, and now of course, "as we walk in the power of the Spirit." But if life and righteousness are distinct things, ours through the death of Christ, but inseparable in Christ risen -- ours in Him glorified, who is become through grace life and righteousness to us, then God's righteousness is absolutely established in the highest possible way, and we are become it in Christ on the ground not that we possess this life and state (though this be ours in Him), but because He who knew no sin was made sin for us. In the same way Christ is our life not by righteousness, setting us in it, but by God who is rich in mercy, quickening us with the Christ when we were dead in trespasses and sins. We are saved by grace.

In conclusion, this teaching appears to me to attack the Person of the Son as the eternal life, and destroy the standing of the Christian in Christ as the result of the cross, making it merely divine righteousness setting us in life and state. And moreover, this if true in principle, would necessitate our being justified before we had life!

I have not seen anything as yet in which these new doctrines are more distinctly defined, than in this last letter of F. E. R.'s. I trust it may have the effect of clearing the saints generally from them.

I am your affectionate brother in Christ,

W. T. Whybrow.

To Mr. Charles Stanley.
My dear Brother,

Thank you for sending me a copy of Mr. Raven’s letter. I do not agree with it, nor do I accept as Christian the ground he lays down, and on which he would put the believer.

The raising of questions, and the creating of difficulties where none exist, and the turning and the twisting of things stated simply in Scripture into meaning more than they really do, in order to meet the questions and difficulties so raised, is most deplorable -- a sad sign of the times. What has been simply taught and received from the Word of God is called in question, and another construction is put upon words and phrases than that ordinarily received; new theories are set up, and souls are entrapped by them, all objections being met by assertions that certain truths are abstract and so not to be applied absolutely to the individual, and certain others not, and may be so applied -- men taking upon themselves to decide, as they please, what is abstract and absolute, and what is not so, until well nigh every truth is frittered away and lost, and the mind is set to work on what conscience alone can apprehend. Simplicity is lost, truth is made conditional, and deadly injury is done to souls; there can be little doubt of the enemy’s hand in all this.

The first sentence of the letter carries its own condemnation; he says:

The key to almost all that I have said lies in my objection to apply in an absolute way to the believer in his mixed condition down here statements in Scripture which refer to what he is, or what is true of him, viewed as in Christ. Such a practice results in the statements becoming mere dogmas, conveying little sense of reality.

What he here says may well indeed be ground for objecting to his teaching, for it is his objection to admit the application of positive truth in a positive way to the believer now which is refused -- thank God, widely and justly so. But it is not a mere question for us of his objection, but whether there is any such objection, or any such line of teaching in Scripture.

According to him, the Christian is viewed in Scripture in two conditions -- in what he calls a “mixed condition,” and “in Christ”; and the statements in Scripture which apply to the believer as in Christ do not apply to him absolutely in his mixed condition. Now the contrast here is a false one, for being in a “mixed condition” is contrasted with being “in Christ.” The only true contrast to being “in Christ” is being “out of Christ” -- and this at once exposes the delusion of his whole theory. I am bold to say unreservedly, and without any qualification whatever, that the believer in the Lord Jesus Christ is looked upon by God as “in Christ,” always and unchangeably, in Him the Risen Man, the Father’s Delight and Joy. It is a grave, a fundamental error, subversive of all that it taught in the Word, to admit that a Christian is ever looked upon by God, or considered by Him as out of Christ, or as in any other condition than in Christ before Him. “Out of Christ” means judgment and wrath. Call it “mixed condition,” if you please; but of what is it a mixture? Of Christ and sin, of flesh and Spirit, of death and life. or of what? “Out of Christ” is the simple unmixed condition of wrath, judgment, and condemnation -- “in Christ,” is the blessed fruit of His finished work, grace, peace, love, mercy, and acceptance in the Beloved. But his assertion goes further, for what he makes out is that the believer is in a condition “down here” in which the truth regarding him “as in Christ” does not apply in absolute way; if this be true, none of the truths concerning him “viewed as in Christ” can ever so apply to him until he is with Christ in glory in a sinless state, for what he calls the “mixed condition” would continue as long as the believer is “down here,” i.e., so long as he has sin and flesh in him. I will cite a few Scriptures that plainly refute his theory: Rom. 8:1, 2; 1 Cor. 1:30, 31; 3:1; 6:15, 16; 2 Cor. 1:21, 22; 5:17, 18, 21; 12; Gal. 5:16, 17; 6:15; and the whole Epistle to the Ephesians, &c., &c.

But the great error of the first two sentences is the leaving out God and His work in the soul, for He works by what, we are here told, are “mere dogmas, conveying little sense of reality,” if applied in an absolute way to the believer “in his mixed condition down here.” Why, it is the very essence of Christian teaching, that the great truths as to the believer are applied absolutely to him in his state down here, as the corrective of what is evil, and the incentive to what is good. Moreover it is just this application of truth to the believer that awakens and is the measure of his responsibility as to walk, and life, and ways, and leads him, through grace, to seek to walk up to what is true of him. As an example of this, take 1 Cor. 6:15, 16, here the positive truth of the believer’s position in Christ is specially insisted on in connection with the lowest state of walk. What according to him is of the “mixed condition,” Scripture speaks of as “Members of Christ.”

But further on he defines his “mixed condition” in reference to 2 Cor. 5:21. Admitting that the believer is in Christ, he adds, “and as there, is become God’s righteousness in Christ,” though why he adds “as there” is difficult to say, save that it is part of his theory. All true believers are in Christ, and in Him are become God’s righteousness, and in no other way.
But he says:

besides this he is still in a condition here, in which the existence of sin and the flesh are taken account of (the Spirit lusts against the flesh) and this is wholly distinct from our state in Christ, to which divine righteousness in its fullest sense applies.

Here again the contrast is false; there is not, nor can there be any “besides this,” with reference to God’s righteousness, and the believer being already become it. It makes God’s righteousness depend on our state, whereas Scripture says we are it “in Christ,” not in ourselves. Truth, God’s truth, cannot be true of the believer on the one hand, and untrue of him on the other. Make absolute truth conditional, and you sap the very foundation of Christianity. The great basis upon which Christianity rests is not what man is, nor what we are for God, but what God is for man, for us. He tries to get more out of the verse than is in it. What is said is that God made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might be made God’s righteousness in Him -- God reconciling us thus to Himself, and looking at sin, which we ever find to be in us, as that which He made Christ to be on the Cross. This, according to him, cannot be applied to the believer in an absolute way now, because of “the existence of sin and the flesh” in him. If this be so, we cannot know reconciliation absolutely while “down here,” and never shall know it until with Christ in a sinless state in glory. This for my own part, through grace, I refuse in the most absolute way. Christ in glory is the expression of God’s righteousness in glory, and the believer is the expression down here of God’s righteousness in Him; he is it now, and he will not be more it when with Him in glory than he is now. If this truth is applied in reality absolutely to the soul, exercise of conscience, and responsibility as to walk and ways, is aroused. Only think of it as the motive for what we do, and what we connect ourselves with -- the expression of God’s righteousness in Christ now, in this world of sin, and who is going to tell lies, or act dishonestly, &c.? Accept his theory, and the standard is lowered, indeed is taken away, and all that can produce any effect is lost, and we are turned in upon ourselves to grope in a “mixed condition,” in which positive truth cannot be absolutely applied, for any comfort we may find, and to feed our pride if we can make out any progress. It is all theory, unpractical, and unscriptural.

He talks about “the consciousness of the existence of the flesh in him,” but not one word does he say of its being a judged and condemned thing. “Dead with Christ”; “Ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God”; “Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead to sin,” he does not refer to even remotely. He speaks of “the existence of sin and the flesh” in us being “taken account of” -- he does not say “by God,” but slips in part of the first sentence of Gal. 5:17, in what is either ignorance, or dishonesty, for the conclusion of the verse, and indeed the whole truth contained in the verse, is positive, viz.: that the Spirit is in the believer sovereignly, the power to hinder him from doing the things he would. This he calls the “mixed condition,” but it is a condition of positive power for good, to control what is evil; he tells us this is “wholly distinct from our state in Christ” -- but it is our state in Christ. We are in Him, and we have the Spirit, and the Spirit lusts against the flesh. The very sentence he cites to prove that “the existence of sin and the flesh are taken account of” proves exactly the opposite to what he states that “it is wholly distinct from our state in Christ.” We have the Spirit not as being in a “mixed condition,” but as being in Christ, and this verse gives us simply the statement of the two powers in us, showing us which is the stronger, in order that there may be no excuse for license to the flesh.

What he calls “his mixed condition down here,” Scripture speaks of as “dead with Christ,” to which, as I have remarked, he does not allude. “Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God”; “Reckon yourselves dead to sin, and alive to God in Christ Jesus” i.e., reckon yourselves to be what God looks upon you as, dead to that of which Mr. Raven insists upon the existence being taken account of! According to him, it is “Ye are in a mixed condition, and your life is hid with Christ in God,” and this in view of promoting practical holiness! No true believer would for a moment deny the existence of sin and the flesh in him -- the question is how he regards it and treats it. God, blessed be His name, applies His truth to us absolutely, and it is our privilege, our blessing, and our joy to receive it from Him in His way, and not in the diluted form here proposed to us. Take Rom. 6:11, where we have indeed positive truth, are we to say “Likewise reckon yourselves to be in a mixed condition, and alive to God through Jesus Christ”? The very idea is ridiculous. No! God says we are dead, and we are enabled through grace to reckon ourselves to be what God says we are in Christ. Take Col. 3:1-5; where we have the absolute truth of Christ’s being at the right hand of God, and our having died, and our life being hid with Christ in God, His appearing, and our appearing with Him in glory, as the basis upon which we are to mortify our members which are upon earth. Let me quote a paragraph or two from beloved Mr. Darby,

We are dead: this is the precious, comforting truth with regard to the Christian by virtue of Christ having died for him. He has received the life of Christ, and all that Christ did for him in that life belongs to him. Thus he is dead, because Christ died for him. The life with which the power of temptation, guilt, the attacks of sin are connected, exists no longer to faith. By death all that was connected with it has come to an end. Now that which was connected with the life of the old man was sin, condemnation, weakness, fear, powerlessness against the assaults of the enemy -- all that is past. We have a life -- but it is in Christ; it is hidden with Him in God. We are not yet manifested in its glory, as we shall be manifested before the eyes of all in heaven and earth. Our life is hidden, but safe in its eternal source. It has the portion of
Christ, in who we possess it. He is hid in God, so also is our life: when Christ shall appear, we shall also appear with Him.

It is the life that will be manifested, he here says, not God’s righteousness, though, no doubt, that will be manifested too.

Our place, title, privilege, is not merely mercy, which it is to us in an infinite degree, but our salvation, looked at in Christ, is the display of God’s righteousness. He is consistent with Himself in it. We are the expression and display of this righteousness, not in contradiction with it; and this is a glorious truth wrought out by Christ’s work.

Our finding sin and flesh in us in no way qualifies the truth of our being already God’s righteousness in Christ absolutely -- indeed we are absolutely it now, or we never shall be. It is not what we see ourselves to be, or think or feel ourselves to be, that makes us God’s righteousness, but what He has made us to be in Him whom He has made sin for us. The inclination of reason, and of the natural mind is, in looking at what man is in himself, to throw our being made God’s righteousness in Christ into the future, when we shall be able to look at ourselves, and find ourselves wholly without sin. One thing however is quite certain, that, however we may look at ourselves now, when in that state we shall not look at ourselves at all, but at Him for whose sake and for whose glory we are in that state, and whose glory will overshadow us all, and shine through us all for His sake; and this is indeed a blessed prospect that may well exercise heart and soul and conscience in all, and form our lives, and ways. But it is a positive truth applicable to the believer in Christ, and to which “a mixed condition” has no sort of affinity or reference.

And notice again how he slips in, “Hence Paul looked to be found in Him, having the righteousness which is of God by faith,” to support his notion that no one is it in an absolute way, whilst in a “mixed condition down here.” This is really too bad, for it not only confounds two totally different Scriptures, but assumes that Paul himself had Mr. Raven’s notions in his mind as to 2 Cor. 5:21, when writing Phil. 3:9. But I will quote the whole verse:

That I may be found in Him, not having my righteousness, which would be on the principle of law, but that which is by faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God through faith.

Any one can see that Paul is here contrasting two things -- his own righteousness by law, and the righteousness of God which is by faith. And yet this is brought in to 2 Cor. 5:21, with a “Hence,” in order to support the theory of the “besides this,” i.e., that although Paul was in Christ, and “as there” was become God’s righteousness, he owned himself to be in a “mixed condition” in which he was not it, but looked forward to being it in a future day. It is utterly destructive of both truths to jumble them up in this way.

Again he says:

Such thoughts as . . . limiting divine righteousness to the believer being justified, . . . are to my mind not only erroneous but repulsive.

But who does so, or wishes to do so? Our being the righteousness of God in Christ is not mere justification -- indeed justification is not the main thought here; it is the basis of reconciliation with God, a just, a holy God -- a wondrous, a blessed reality! Reconciled by Him to Himself, for the glory of Another, and that Other, His own beloved Son, who knew no sin, being made sin for us, and we now for His glory, the expression of God’s righteousness in Him! -- and this we are told, is limiting it to the believer being justified, a “not only erroneous but repulsive” thought. Are the saints, harassed on every side, attacked by the enemy -- the scorn of the world, bewildered by false teaching, to accept this as God’s truth, or food for their souls, or even ordinary reverence for the Word of their God? May He keep us from it indeed, refusing such worse than folly, and, whatever we may be in ourselves, cleaving close to His simple, written word, in the simplicity of children.

Again, “Confining ‘in Christ,’ to a present position, so that it brings no light of eternal purpose or future glory,” 186 he speaks of as also “not only erroneous but repulsive” thought. But in his first sentence he will not allow that even this can be applied in an absolute way to the believer now, for he contrasts it with his “mixed condition down here”; now he talks of “confining” it “to a present position.” The truth is, with him it is all a theory, a present unreality, a future hope, not to be applied in an absolute way now, but to be looked forward to as “eternal purpose or future glory.” No doubt “in Christ” includes future glory and eternal purpose -- Scripture, thank God, is full it, and it is our blessed joy to think of the time when things in heaven and on earth will be headed up in Him fully and manifestly, but we are in Him now, in where He is, and it is the reality of this wondrous and blessed position that forms the soul, and produces the state now, not the state that produces the position, or even gives the certainty of it. Would indeed that the saints knew more of the power and reality of this truth as a present position, we should then have less of these strainings after unrealities and unpractical theories.

But further he adds:

Talking about Christ manifesting to the unbelieving world, eternal life -- the blessedness in which, as man, He was with the Father -- is to my mind not only erroneous but repulsive.

Here, at any rate, we have his theory of Eternal Life; and, sad though it be, we can thank God it has at last come out plainly. Eternal life, according to him, is the blessedness in which, as Man, Christ was with the Father. Scripture says:

186. {The quotation marks are as in the original.}
We declare and show unto you that Eternal Life which was with the Father, and has been manifested to us. -- This is the witness that God has given to us Eternal Life, and this life is in His Son

-- he says it is “the blessedness in which He was as man with the Father.” Scripture says:

We show unto you that Eternal Life which was with the Father, and has been manifested to us.

According to Mr. Raven, Eternal Life is not Christ personally, but, though it was in Him, it was the blessedness in which He was as Man. One looks in vain for anything like this in Scripture; there is no such thought even. Take John 17:3:

This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.

Let us read this according to his new definition:

This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and the blessedness in which I am as Man with Thee.

The blessed Lord Himself is lost in all this, and instead of the knowledge of Himself personally, as the Sent One, the blessedness He was in as Man is substituted. If he confines his definition to the simple meaning of his words, his assertion is blasphemy, for it would state that Eternal Life had no existence until the Lord Jesus was here on earth as Man; evidently He was not a Man until He came into the world as Man. But I presume this is not really what he means, and that what he does mean is that Eternal Life is the secret communion that ever subsisted between the Father and the Son from all eternity -- the state of blessedness in which He was with the Father before He became Man and which He was in as Man down here. 187 This is false and unscriptural, for it is clean contrary to Scripture to say “Eternal Life is a state of blessedness” for the Son; one verse alone (John 17:3) shows the delusion of it, for if it were so, that verse would make part of His state of blessedness the knowledge of Himself as the Sent One -- on the very face of it ridiculous.

Let me again quote Mr. Darby:

The simplest, fullest and most direct statements of what eternal life is, are to be found, perhaps, in John’s first Epistle (the main object of the whole Epistle being to show what that life is). “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; for the life was manifested, and we have seen and bear witness, and show unto you the eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us.” Here we have eternal life, erst {sic} with the Father, but manifested in the person of Christ. So in the last chapter: “This is the record that God hath given unto us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” “He is the true God, and eternal life” {1 John 5:20}. This, then, is most definite and distinct. The life is in the Son. He is eternal life. So the gospel: “In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.” “As the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself” (John 5). He is a life-giving Spirit; He quickens whom He will. All this is plain. Life is in the Son, or He is life. He has it in His person; He communicates it. It is given of God, not won. “The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom. 6:23). “I,” says Christ of His sheep, “am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.”

The error into which Mr. Raven has fallen is, making the blessedness of the believer’s position, as being “introduced in eternal life,” into a new sphere of blessedness his object, instead of Him who is Himself that blessedness. What he tries to make out, and to occupy us with, is not the Eternal Life we have in Christ personally, but the blessedness of it and thus our enjoyment of it; this, for him, is Eternal life -- a most specious form of self-occupation, destructive of all truth, reality, and certainty for the soul. Applied to the blessed Lord Himself, the error of his theory is clear enough, and therefore he draws a distinction between Him and us, saying

Eternal Life is given to us of God, and is in God’s Son -- for us, it is the heavenly relationship and blessedness in which, in the Son, man is now placed and lives before the Father.

This idea is insidious, because there is in every earnest soul a desire to answer to His mind; and it is just upon this desire that this notion acts, but falsely, according to the Word, for it turns the soul in upon itself to see whether it has the blessedness of the position, i.e., whether its thoughts and feelings correspond to what it thinks they ought, and to question its possession of Eternal Life by them.

But a little before, he says:

Eternal life was God’s purpose in Christ from eternity.

There is no such statement, nor even such thought as this in Scripture. I thought at first “purpose” must be a misprint for “promise,” but he repeats the word again lower down. Now what Scripture tells us of God’s “purpose” is in Eph. 1:9-11, &c., where it is not Eternal Life at all, but gathering together in one all things in Christ; Eph. 3:9-11, where again it is no question of Eternal Life at all; Rom. 8:28, and 9:11-17, and 1 John 3:8, in all of which it is no question of Eternal Life. In 2 Tim. 1:9, we have “who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given in Christ Jesus, before the world began.” This does not say “God’s purpose in Christ was eternal life from eternity.” Eternal Life never was and never could be said to be God’s “purpose” either in Christ or out of Christ. Christ Himself was and is Eternal

187. [Not so. FER meant to confine 1 John 1:2 to manhood only. And, yes, that is implicitly the denial the Son is the Eternal Life in His Person from all eternity.]
Life, and you could not say Christ Himself was purpose. God ever had His purposes, but Eternal Life was not one of them; it was "promised before the world began," but it was ever in Christ, and He was ever it, even before He came into this world as Man -- 1 John 1:2, is clear as to this. One surely would not wish to make any one an offender for a mere word, but this word "purpose," shows really the false ground he is on, for he says, eternal life "was in essence, with the Father in eternity," but it was in its essence and nature in the Son with the Father, and this he leaves out, as it is not part of his scheme, for he goes on "but has now been manifested in the only-begotten Son of God, who came declaring the Father," &c. Of course Eternal Life was manifested in Him. Scripture says so, because He was it -- "that Eternal Life that was with the Father," "He is the true God and Eternal Life" {1 John 5:20}. To go off into talking about it being of importance to maintain, clear and distinct from any purpose of blessing for man, the true deity, the eternal Sonship of the Word" is merely to throw dust in people's eyes, and to cover the real error of what he is teaching. No child of God would dream of denying the Eternal Sonship of the blessed Lord, it is his delight and joy to think of it, but Sonship is relationship -- Eternal Life is what He is.

As another has said:

In Him was life -- as Man down here, the Person of Christ.

Christ was and is Eternal Life, thus "the Son of Man who is in heaven" {John 3:13} was true of Him when Man down here.

He, Christ, was alone, in His Person, that eternal life which was with the Father, and was alone such in the world which was not it in any way. Hence "the only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father," "the Son of man who is heaven," who else was there [in this world] -- had ever descended? He was thus alone. He came "eternal life" into this world, but was alone in the out of the world heavenly condition of relationship and being in which eternal life consists.

But the relationship and being in which it was and is, is not the thing itself, any more than we are our bodies, or our bodies are we; you might as well say a man and the house he dwells in are the same thing. This is the error he has fallen into, and it is most important to be clear as to it, for if you admit his definition of Eternal Life, viz., that it is a state of "blessedness in which as Man, Christ was with the Father," and "in which, in the Son, man is now placed and lives, before the Father," we lose the blessed Lord personally, and all that is stated in Scripture as to manifestation of Eternal Life -- whether to his disciples or to the world, must be given up -- a most serious matter. According to him, it could only be discerned by the Spirit, but even the disciples had not the Spirit whilst the Lord was with them on earth: "The Spirit was not yet, because that Jesus was not yet glorified" {John 7:39}. Evidently then, if Eternal Life is what he says it is, there could be no manifestation of it either to the world or to His disciples whilst the Lord was here on earth, for neither the one nor the other had then the power to discern it.

Where, as I have said, he is wrong, is in severing Eternal Life from the Person of Christ, and making it out to be the blessedness in which He was as Man with the Father, and, though admitting it is in Him, making it out to be God's purpose in Him from all eternity. Here, I believe, he is fundamentally unsound as to the Person of Christ, for He ever was and is in Himself Eternal Life -- "that Eternal Life that was with the Father." Notice too how carefully he avoids ever once saying, Christ is or was Eternal Life.

But let us turn to Scripture, and read it in the light of his definition.

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have "the blessedness in which, as man, Christ was with the Father."

As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, thus must the Son of Man be lifted up that every one who believes on Him may not perish, but have "the blessedness in which, as man, Christ was with the Father.

He that believes on the Son has "the blessedness, in which, as man, Christ was with the Father," &c., &c.

Now this is false every way, because Eternal Life is ours absolutely in the Son now, the sovereign and free gift of God, while the blessedness in which He was as Man, here on earth with the Father, we only know through communion, and the power of an ungrieved Spirit. Eternal Life we have, and it being in Him, and He being it, we never can lose it -- the blessedness of communion all know, who know anything of Divine things, can be lost; thank God, through grace, it can be regained, but it can be lost -- Eternal Life never; it is the gift of God, sovereign, free, and wholly undeserved by us. The blessedness of communion is a conditional thing; the very opposite of life. Of course it is ours in and through His death, and by that alone.

I do not trouble about his saying Eternal Life was not manifested by Christ to the unbelieving world, because his definition of eternal life, lowering it to a state, and limiting it to a relationship and blessedness (I care not how high or great) is far more serious, for it is a denial of the Person of Christ, and this is far more important to us than its manifestation or not to "the unbelieving world." But as to Eternal life being what Christ was and is in Himself, we need only read such passages as John 11:42, 8:12-43, 6; 1 John 1, &c.

The whole thing, where not positive error, is a sad jumble of truths; truth judged by our state, instead of our state judged by it: the effect produced, the basis on which it rests, instead of its own Divine source. It is the outcome of reason and of man's mind. The whole system bears on it, nothing that is of God and for the glory of Christ, though both
are named to give a color to it. His whole scheme leaves out faith, and death with Christ, and substitutes sight, self, and feeling -- a state of blessedness, in which we are, for the Divine Person in whom we are and who is Himself all the blessedness to us.

Your affectionate Brother,

P. A. H.

January 22nd, 1890.

I add that of course the full fruition of Divine righteousness awaits manifestation, as indeed of every truth, our being with Him and like Him in glory, but this in no way makes the absolute truth of it now a dependent or conditional thing.

---

Present Troubles
by Charles Stanley
Jan. 30, 1890

If I can be of any real help to perplexed souls it will give me joy. I desire to write in the fear of the Lord, and to seek to please Him in helping His saints. I will first give you extracts from F. E. R.’s letters as to eternal life (copied from his own writings by me. The italics are mine).

Mr. R. says:

In regard to eternal life, it seems to me that it is a kind of technical expression, indicating an order and state of blessing purposed and prepared of God for man. With Paul it is viewed as a reward or end, or hope -- though the believer, being called to it, is to grasp it while on the road to it. With John, it is present and moral (not in display), formed for us by incarnation of the Son of God -- and we having entrance into it through His death. The Son where His voice is heard gives us the privilege and entry and freedom of this sphere of blessing, which is expressed in Himself as a man -- the privilege of blessed nearness to the Father, and of being the object of the Father’s joy and love and delight. Hence eternal life is in the Son. He is it. So that eternal life is objective and practical, rather than subjective -- a sphere and order of blessing. But not only does Christ give freedom of entry into this sphere. He gives also the Spirit as the capacity, the Spirit IN THE BELIEVER IS LIFE. Hence the believer has freedom, or entrance, and the capacity to enjoy this sphere of blessing which Christ has formed. And behind all he is born of God. This is no question of attainment, but I am quite sure there are many Christians who are not morally in it, and yet loudly claiming to have possession of eternal life. Faith is not in exercise, and they are not free of the world.

I grant it is most difficult to understand such obscure writing. I do not remember anything so obscure and bewildering. And further, I notice the absence of the plain distinct oft-repeated assurances of the Lord, that he that believeth HATH eternal life. This in itself is a great loss to souls. Let us now try to turn this strange mystic language into plain English, and test it by the word of God. The word of God is clear enough that eternal life is a Person, the eternal Person of the ever blessed Son of God. The true God and eternal life (John 1:1-4; 6:48, 51; 1 John 1:1, 2; 5:11, 20). Now what is eternal life in this new teaching? Read the extract:

A kind of technical expression, indicating an order and state of blessing, &c. A sphere and order of blessing.

And mark “He is it.” He is what? In plain English He is a myth, a sphere, a technical expression, an order and state of blessing. The glorious eternal Son of God is gone, and you have in His place a sphere, a myth! And then precious words mingled with all this about the Father and the Son. There is no escape that I can see from this Christ dishonoring explanation of His words. He states what eternal life is to him -- a sphere, &c. Can you say the Son of God is a sphere, &c.? and can you accept this teaching as eternal life? If he had said plainly, Eternal life is a myth, and the Son of God “He is it,” would it not have meant Christ was a myth? Then when he says Christ, or “He is it” -- and the it is a sphere, or a state or a technical term, &c., does it not in plain language mean Christ is reduced to a sphere, &c.? Surely, to say the least, this is utterly unsound teaching. And think of the sad havoc and effect on the sheep of Christ! What months of distraction, until they dread any one to speak on what was

---

188. If we take a few words out of Mr. R.’s letter alone, without their connection, they would present the truth. “Hence eternal life is in the Son. He is it.” These words would be the truth that He is eternal life; but then he immediately goes on to say, “So that eternal life is... a sphere and order of blessing.” He does not say Christ is a sphere or order of blessing; but suppose he means Christ is eternal life, and eternal life is a sphere, &c., it is then on the principle of a truth and an error put together, the error neutralizing the truth.
once so precious to us, and certain -- eternal life. The Lord grant that such as hold and defend this doctrine, may be convinced and really return to the plain teaching of the word of God.

On Righteousness

F. E. R. says:

The point as to divine righteousness, is as to the force of 2 Cor. 5:21. It is, as I understand it, the text of the ministry of reconciliation. It gives us divine intent in Christ being made sin for us. Divine righteousness is to be displayed in us in Christ. We are to have a perfect state in a heavenly standing. God has secured this for us in Christ in glory, and the moment he appears it will be absolutely true in us. So long as we have the flesh and sin, I could not say it is absolutely - - made good IN US, but it is made good IN US morally, as we walk in the power of the Spirit. Hence it is not any way a question of attainment, but of walking in the power of the Spirit in faith and hope. Paul looked to be found having God’s righteousness.

Again F. E. R says:

First as to 2 Cor. 5:21. The subject there is not justification. In Rom. 3 and 4, where the question is of offence, justification through faith in Christ’s blood is brought in, and the believer is justified now -- is accounted righteous. The righteousness of God is upon him. But in 2 Cor. 5:21, the point is not guilty, but STATE. This is met by reconciliation on the basis of Christ having been made sin for us, that we might become God’s righteousness in Christ. Surely to become God’s righteousness is more than to be held for righteous, as in Rom. 4. If it means anything, it means sin is to be completely displaced IN US by divine righteousness, and this cannot be till the Lord come. Looking at the believer abstractedly as in Christ, it may be true now -- but the verse involves more than this -- the full result of Christ being made sin ‘for us.’

According to this teaching, we are allowed to be justified now. But as 2 Cor. 5:21 is the subject of reconciliation, and that is divine righteousness in us, reconciliation is impossible now, until sin in us is entirely displaced by this divine righteousness in us. We are thus robbed of all certainty as to reconciliation and eternal life. So far as I understand it, it is undiluted Romanism.

Council of Trent, Chapter 7:

Lastly, the sole formal cause is the justice of God; not that by which He Himself is just, but that by which He maketh us just, that, to wit, with which we, being endowed by Him, are renewed in the spirit of our mind, and are not only reputed, but are truly called, and are just, receiving justice [righteousness] WITHIN US, &C.

Chapter 16:

Thus, neither is our own righteousness established as our own as from ourselves; nor is the righteousness of God denied or repudiated: for that righteousness which is called ours because we are justified from its being inherent in us; that same is [the righteousness] of God because it is infused into us of GOD, through the merit of Christ.

Where is the difference between this and the system of F.E.R.?

It has been said, Did not J. N. D. in Synopsis teach pretty much the same as F. E. R. on 2 Cor 5? Did J. N. D. teach divine righteousness IN US? That it will be displayed finally in glory “in us as in Him,” surely all hold -- that is, we shall be the display of God’s righteousness as in. Christ. But we will turn and see what our dear departed brother did say about this very doctrine, now used by the enemy to bewilders souls. If he felt its obscurity, what may we? I refer to Vol. 2 of his Letters, beginning p. 567 [p. 482, new ed.].

He says:

There is such thorough obscurity in the important passages, that it is not easy to lay fast hold of their import. Now I always found the effect produced by this teaching to be, not Christ before the soul, but self. They had got something wonderfully new and beautiful, what was not heavenly (that was common) but divine; and where Christ was spoken of, it was not Christ Himself, but Christ in them, conscious power of life in them.

You will see the doctrine identical with what is now distracting the saints as our brother shows:

Connected with this is that we are not merely justified, but actually and livingly God’s righteousness, we are it, we livingly (page 568 [p. 482, new ed.])

He being in God, such an identification with Christ as makes us to be actual divine righteousness, as so identified with Him, which sustains us wholly above nature (page 570 [p. 484, new ed.])

He is in the region of life hid with Christ in God; he enjoys the state, and breathes the breath of the new creation.

Righteousness is dwelling in life in new creation.

There is actual positive righteousness, not only justification by faith.

J. N. D. says all this is error. Page 571 [p. 485, new ed.], he says:

Resurrection is not looked at in scripture as victor-strength in man, but as a divine act towards man.

That is what J. N. D. says. He quotes further:

Co-quickened with Him in the same righteousness (2 Cor. 5:21).

He says there is no such statement or thought in scripture; it is the system of divine righteousness in actuality in us -- the exact doctrine of F. E. R., and read further, pages 574, 575, 576 [p.488ff, new ed.]. You will be astonished how much that is current amongst us is utterly condemned as a

189. So that we cannot be reconciled until Christ comes!
wilderness of error -- such as
life out of death, it is through death this life is reached.
He says: “All through I find the efficacy of Christ's death lost in our dying.” He further quotes,
God’s righteousness revealed in heaven for us, and in us below.
Life hid in God,
a SPHERE of profession where we receive the power of glory.
He shows how in this teaching, “redemption and Christ’s work are really lost in the work IN US.” He further says: “I cannot substitute this for redemption, not give up Christ my righteousness in me. I have lost Christ in Himself in your teaching.”

Thus we have the very judgment of our dear departed brother on the very doctrine continued and developed amongst us, and which we are to receive as the heavenly truth on pain of being left behind as pillars of salt. Indeed, this teaching is much worse in one respect, as it takes away all certainty to the soul, now, of having eternal life, as well as ignores the fact of BEING NOW reconciled to God. The teaching is divine righteousness IN US by sin being displaced by righteousness IN US. And we are not yet that, not in that state, so that we are only on the way to it, as we are on the road to the sphere, eternal life, and all certainty is lost to the soul. I beg you will compare Mr. R.’s statements with J. N. D.'s remarks. It is well known he dreaded this false teaching more than anything we ever passed through. I believe every word he says about it.

Now as to our beloved brother P.’s {Pinkerton?} letter. Whilst we have all been suffering from the effects of this teaching, for long -- it may be unconsciously -- he has been walking with God, and greatly used of God outside, far away. I do not doubt he has seen it, as a work of Satan, and no one can deny that the effects prove this. I do not think that he means that F. E. R. personally has hatred to Christ. But he looks upon it as the work of him who, though he comes as an angel of light, yet is always filled with deadly hostility to Christ. I do not believe that B. W. N. {Newton} was personally filled with such hatred to Christ, nor had he the least idea that Satan so used him. I have not a doubt Satan may so use any of us, if we are not in lowly dependence on the Holy Ghost. And this is the root of all our sorrows. He is rarely now owned in our midst. But man and his everlasting lecturing takes His place. And what is the result? The present low blighted state of all such places where man and this teaching prevails. And we are told criticism must be resisted to the utmost. This will not do. We must humble ourselves in the dust. Yet not in unbelief. It is said dear P. made remarks against a brother highly esteemed. He first sent a letter for that beloved brother, and I gave that letter to him. I do not know whether he answered it or wrote to our brother P. And then, do not forget our brother wrote this solemn warning to us as he lay in a Syrian fever. Do not think of division -- nothing will please Satan better. Surely brothers in London will have sufficient faithfulness to Christ to request that these false perversions of truth shall not be preached amongst them.

Mr. R. having seen the above, wrote as follows to C. S.

Greenwich, December 24th, 1889.
My Dear Brother, Mr. Stoney has sent on to me a letter of yours bearing no date, nor am I sure to whom it is written -- but I feel I cannot allow it to pass without sending a line to remonstrate against the injustice both of its basis, and of its reasonings and conclusions. All is based on extracts from letters obtained from me by a brother eighteen months ago, and these extracts (which you have not taken the trouble to authenticate) are treated as though they were a careful exposition of a system of doctrine. I never knew a brother judged before on such premises.

Then as to the reasoning, I venture to say that in regard to both subjects in question, it is fallacious, and leads to unjust conclusions. Eternal life is said to be “the eternal Person of the ever blessed Son of God.” Thus the Son of God and eternal life are made strictly equivalent, and expressions used in reference to the latter are tested by their applicability to the former, I am sure such reasoning will not hold. On the one hand the Son of God is more than eternal life -- He is God the Giver of eternal life; and on the other hand, expressions may be used in speaking of eternal life which cannot be applied to Christ personally. The righteous go into eternal life. You cannot here substitute Son of God. John in his first epistle declares unto us eternal life, manifested in the Son of God, in the character in which we possess it here. It is in God’s Son and we are in Him that is true. He is the true God and eternal life. It is what He is to Christians. Eternal life, viewed as a subject in itself has also other bearings.

Further, as to divine righteousness, it is reasoned that because it is maintained that divine righteousness in its fullest sense sets and displays us in glory in the life and state of Christ that therefore that life and state are held to constitute our righteousness before God. This latter idea is, I believe, Cluffism, but never had a place in my thoughts. The former, I have no doubt, is the truth, and gives the fullest place to redemption. The righteousness of God which is upon us (Rom. 3) has reference to our responsibility. We are freely justified in His grace through redemption; but this is not beyond the brass of the tabernacle. The glad tidings of God’s glory are far beyond the question of our responsibility, and through righteousness set us in a wholly new state and place for man. And here we come to the gold of the tabernacle. It is the fruit of Christ having been made SIN for us. This is
2 Corinthians 5:21. We have a place and state in Him who is righteous and holy in the holiest of all.

Anyone reading without prejudice my letters to Mr. B. {Bradstock} would see that the tenor of them is that eternal life means for us an entirely new order of things which has come to pass in man, in the Son of God having become man, and into which we have entrance through His death, and in the power of the Holy Ghost. The Son being our life. And that as to 2 Corinthians 5:21, the complete answer to Christ having been made sin for us is in our being perfected after His order in glory.

And now I add a word or two as to the details of your letter. On page 2 you endeavor to make me say that Christ is a sphere, and by inference that Christ is a myth. What I did say is that eternal life is in the Son -- He is it, that is, eternal life -- as I have shown at the beginning of my letter. I do not accept your method of reasoning between eternal life and Christ, and I add here that if eternal life does not denote to the believer a new sphere and order of blessing, he knows very little about it experimentally. “This is life eternal that they might know the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.” It is for us a wholly new order. The effort to charge me with Cluffism I wholly repudiate. I never had an idea that anything in us constituted our righteousness before God. Christ is made that to us. And I should have maintained this as strenuously as any. Hence the charge of undiluted Romanism means nothing, any more than the being robbed of a certainty as to reconciliation. The ministry of reconciliation is based on what has been done -- the death of God’s Son -- His having been made sin for us: and hence reconciliation is ever “now” though the state consequent on it, holy and unblamable and unreenovatable, be in its consummation future. I suppose I have in my measure urged this as strongly as most. In conclusion I must say that the attacks made on me present ideas so foreign to my whole habit of thought, are so erroneous in reasoning, and in virulence are so utterly out of proportion to the offence given, or the weight of the person implicated, that I am unable to recognize in them the work of the Spirit of God, and am very grieved for those who have taken part in them.

Believe me, your affectionate brother,
F. E. Raven.

Further Remarks

I do not know that I have much to add, -- as my object is not continued controversy, but just to present Mr. R.’s own words in his letters to our brother B. {Bradstock}, which I copied with my own hand from his own handwriting. I do not know how they could have been better authenticated.

I have compared them with what was so strongly condemned by our beloved and departed brother J. N. D., the root point being the danger of losing Christ Himself. There are points of contrast, but this is the root, divine righteousness IN US, that I refer to. I have also compared his doctrine with the Council of Trent. I also give you our brother R.’s reply. I have been much pressed in spirit to do this; it is also impossible for me, in my weak state, 190 to answer all letters on this most painful subject in any other way.

I will briefly notice Mr. R.’s reply to me. It will be seen from the above that he was totally mistaken in supposing I had not clear authority for these letters. You must carefully refer to those letters.

First, the doctrine is most distinctly taught, that eternal life is a sphere, or new order of blessing. I still maintain that this is unscriptural, and confusion -- a going beyond scripture. A sphere is that which surrounds a person or thing, as the heavens surround the earth, as water is the element or sphere that surrounds a fish, the air around the bird, &c. The heavens are very wonderful, but they are not the earth. The sphere of a fish, the water, is very wonderful; but the water is not the fish. The air is the sphere or order in which the bird is found, and full of wonders, but the air is not the bird. Now in whatever sphere we look at the Son of God, whether in the Father’s bosom, or down here in the sphere, the order of this world, surrounded by the darkness and wickedness of this world, or in that wondrous new order of things in the glory -- a very wonderful, very blessed sphere -- yet in each sphere, He was and is, the eternal life. It surely is very serious to confuse this, the order in which He was here, Himself all pure, or the new order or sphere in which He is now, is no more the Son of God, or eternal life, than the air is the bird, or water the fish. Surely a child should see this. Far be it from me to do any injustice, either in basis or reasoning, to our brother. But does he not teach in these letters that eternal life is a sphere, an order of blessing, and that Christ the Son of God is it? Indeed, I long that all such reasoning may cease on all sides, and that all may return to the plain clear scriptures.

If scripture said, “He that hath a sphere, or a new order of blessing, or enters morally into it, has eternal life,” then surely Mr. R. is right, and we must all begin and preach quite a different gospel. But unless Mr. R. can bring scripture for these new theories, I must keep to that, the Lord helping me, which I have preached for near fifty-five years. It is quite true the Son of God is more than eternal life. Yes, truly God. But that does not alter the fact that He is Himself the true God, and eternal life. “God is love.” God is also more than love, but that does not alter the fact that “God is love.” Mr. R. dare not deny that the Son of God is personally the eternal life. 191 as the scripture so abundantly shows in the texts quoted in my letter above. And I have not found a brother

190. {The Lord took brother Stanley home in 1890.}
191. {But that is what FER denied; namely, he denied that the Son is personally the eternal life, meaning by “personally” His Person.}
who does not see this, that eternal life is the Son of God, but tries to make it something else, a some “it,” “it” that can really say what eternal life is. The moment we depart from scripture it is, as one dear servant of the Lord said, “all fog.”

What I mean is this. After looking at all he has said about eternal life, as a sphere or order of blessing, until you are bewildered, just ask him, “Then do you hold that eternal life is really the Son of God?” “Yes, certainly.” And many are satisfied -- whilst the letters are not acknowledged to be error, and withdrawn. Thus one statement slides over the other as a dissolving view.

So with the subject of Cluffism and righteousness. Read his letter. Mark how it points to righteousness in us. He could not say God’s righteousness in us. But Divine righteousness is to be displayed in us in Christ. Whilst there is sin in the flesh, I could not say it is absolutely made good IN US, BUT IT IS MADE GOOD MORALLY IN US.

If it means anything, it means sin is to be completely displaced in us by divine righteousness, &c.

The mind is directed to self -- divine righteousness IN US. It is not God’s righteousness; it is not His act. It is not what Christ is for us before the face of God. And mark, this is all connected with reconciliation, the effect of the atonement -- 2 Cor. 5:21. Now, whilst still holding all this, ask Mr. R. at a meeting for examination, on this very verse,

Do you then hold that Christ is our righteousness before God now?

And in a moment the slide is altered, and the answer is “Yes.” Now is not this an illusion? The former teaching is not withdrawn, with confession of its evil, and the effect will be utter confusion.

I will not comment on the slight put on redemption as “the brass of the tabernacle.” It came to my heart like a cold wind from Greenland’s icy mountains. I have to learn yet “the brass of the tabernacle.” It came to my heart like a cold wind from Greenland’s icy mountains. I have to learn yet “the brass of the tabernacle.”

If you believe that eternal life is not the Son of God Himself, but a sphere, and you are seeking to lay hold on that sphere, an order of blessing, then you have not the Son of God, but a sphere, &c. And thus, if you have the Son Himself you have life; and if you have not the Son you have not life. So that according to F. E. R.’s letters, which I have read, or his teaching, he and his followers would not have eternal life.

I think my reader will now see the difference. We hold the truth so plainly set forth in scripture -- that Christ HIMSELF is the eternal life, not the sphere, or anything else. F. E. R. holds the error that THE eternal life is the sphere or the blessing. And I do believe that the mass who have fallen under his power will soon see, and say, that they hold the truth above with us, and not the error with F. E. R.

I have looked to the Lord to show me if I should expunge one word before printing this; and He gave me Jer. 26:2, “Diminish not a word.” In dependence, then, on Him, I send it to my brethren. If you will read verses 3-9, you will see I may have to suffer at the hands of my brethren.

It is said that Mr. R. has withdrawn a sentence in his letter to Mr. B. {Bradstock}, a sentence which I have shown to be Romanism. But his printed letter by J. S. O. {Oliphant}, has not been withdrawn, at least I have not heard it has; and that letter contains his errors unconfessed. And what is so strange, accepted by many younger brothers. I would ask your attention to that printed letter.

Mr. R.’s Letter of December 6th, 1889, printed by J. S. O.

It was said that at the meeting of Mr. H.’s, Mr. R.’s explanations satisfied every one (?). But now this printed letter upsets all again. It is very difficult to understand.
Many times have I read it. This, I think will help you. There seems to be the uniform principle of putting a truth and an error together so that the error neutralizes the truth. Take the first statement. It seems dangerous to take simple scripture statements of what is true of a believer,

*viewed as in Christ.* Such a practice results in the statements becoming mere dogmas, conveying little sense of reality.

Then follows the sample of truth and error.

This may be seen in regard to divine righteousness as spoken of in 2 Corinthians 5:21.

Mark,

The believer is in Christ, and as there, is become God’s righteousness in Christ; but besides this, he still is in a condition here, in which the existence of sin and the flesh are taken account of (the Spirit lusts against the flesh), and this is wholly distinct from our state in Christ, to which divine righteousness, in its fullest sense applies.

The serious error is that sin and the flesh are taken account of in 2 Cor. 5:21. Sin has been judged. “For he hath made him to be sin tor us, who knew no sin.” Was this that our state, or sin, or the flesh, might be taken account of? No; it was for the very opposite: “That we might be made the righteousness of God IN HIM.” And mark, this is the gospel subject of reconciliation! If this error were true, we are lost, and the gospel is destroyed. If, in this matter, sin and the flesh be taken account of, then Christ died in vain. And then to hide this error a scripture is quoted from Gal. 5, on quite a different subject -- the conflict of the flesh and the Spirit in our walk. It is a marvel to see brethren falling beneath such soul-deluding errors. And yet he says,

The above in no sense weakens, or sets aside the reality of the believer’s present standing in Christ!

Reconciliation is my standing in Christ, through His death and resurrection. I am brought into a new standing, where my sin has been so judged, according to 2 Cor. 5:21, that sin in me is not taken into account, but I am the righteousness of God in Christ. Mix up the question of your state and sin in the flesh, and reconciliation is gone, certainly for all present enjoyment, as the embracers of this error will soon find to their cost. Compare Rom. 8:3; 2 Cor. 5:21. If this new doctrine, of sin and flesh being still taken account of, it is a different gospel, and must not be received, though presented by an angel. Every one that receives this error will virtually give up the gospel (Gal. 1:6-9).

It is just the same as to eternal life. All the old error is maintained, and the truth just admitted. It is not Christ Himself the eternal life.

It was God’s purpose in Christ from eternity: *it was, in essence,”* &c.

The apostles could see *it,* and afterwards declare *it,* &c.

Then follows the truth and the error.

**Eternal life . . . is in God’s Son.**

Then the error.

For us it is the heavenly relationship and blessedness in which, in the Son, man is now placed and lives before the Father, &c.

Eternal life is thus still, with him, the sphere, a blessing. This subverts all that is said in scripture. There eternal life is the Son of God Himself, “his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life” {1 John 5:20}. With Mr. R., eternal life is heavenly relationship and blessedness! Thus the gospel that has been blest to thousands of late -- the blessed assurance of Jesus in John 5:2 -- must be given up, as I hear some are doing.

All is utter confusion that follows in his printed paper {letter}. On page 3, eternal life and the Holy Ghost are confounded,

separating, in the believer, eternal life from the Holy Ghost and talking about Christ manifesting to the unbelieving world, eternal life -- the blessedness in which, as man, he was with the Father -- are to my mind, not only erroneous, but repulsive.

I will quote no more, it is too painful. May the Lord open the eyes of His saints to see the irreverent way these subjects, yea, even the Son of God, is treated.

Only another word. What is the Lord’s voice in all this sorrow? Why is it allowed? Why have so many fallen under the influence of this new teaching? Is it not that we have been making “the brethren” the testimony, instead of the Lord Himself? I do not remember anything like it, since I passed through the sorrow of B. W. N. {Newton}, more than forty years ago. May we humble ourselves before the Lord.

Yours in Christ. C. S.

January 30th, 1890.

---

192. {This sentence contains the evil. The truth is that the Son is eternal life *personally,* i.e., in His own Person. FER’s teaching was that the eternal life was always there but was not part of Deity.}
There is nothing in the world so simple as God's Word -- indeed, when we think it is God Himself who speaks, and that it is His mind and object to make us understand what He has to say to us, we see that it must be so, for He ever speaks plainly, simply, and straight to heart and conscience, not to mere mind and reason. What then is so important to seek to maintain, is simplicity in reading and studying His Word, His blessed Word. What people speak of as high truth, or deep truth, is really only apprehended and entered into by the simple soul who accepts God's Word in its simplicity, not by any effort of the mind or reason, but by taking it as His Word in dependence upon Himself. Simplicity and dependence are his security; the Holy Spirit, his power and his guide.

On the other hand, effort to understand, reasoning over, or reasoning out any part of His Word is ever the enemy's opportunity to introduce error and evil doctrine, to confuse and bewildert the simple, and to puff up and feed the pride of those who thus deal with His Word, instead of yielding and losing sight of persons, and to look at the things put forth as the Word to deal with them. Thus, it is not so much ignorance of the Word, deplorable though that be, but seeking to draw out of the Word what really is not in it, that damages and leads away souls. All believers, I presume, would agree that therein lies the greatest danger, viz., a defining, or seeking to define, in a way that suits the mind of man, and his reasoning powers, what God has stated in a way that appeals to heart and conscience. Take, for instance, the great truth of Eternal Life; and nothing is plainer or more simple than this as set forth by God in His Word. And here let me say that what is of God is ever brief and to the point, not long and wordy.

Take the Epistle to the Romans, the argumentative book of the Bible, and even here the Holy Spirit goes straight to the point -- there is no beating about the bush, so to speak. The truth of man's guilt and of his utter ruin is fully and plainly unfolded, and all in perfect keeping with the ground on which the Holy Ghost addresses man, viz., the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus, "declared the Son of God in power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by resurrection from the dead" -- all told out in such a way that man's conscience bears witness to its truth and reality, while his mind fails to grasp the bearing of it, and his pride leads him to resent such a full and plain exposure of his heart and of his ruin.

The object of the enemy is ever the defilement, wholesale defilement of the people of God -- if he can effect this, by introducing evil, or producing neutrality as to it, his object is gained and the testimony is gone; whilst failing to achieve this he will seek to cause division, and sad though it be, it is the lesser evil of the two, for in the former nothing remains as a witness, while in the latter some at any rate, though it may be but a few, remain to bear witness, and they become the object of his concentrated wiles and attack. The loss of simplicity, and lack of reality in the things of God are his chief opportunity. Division, in the sense of separation from evil, is enjoined in Scripture (2 Tim. 2:21) -- or evil must at all times be gone on with. What is condemned is division, "contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned" (Rom. 16:17), while heresies are declared to be necessary "that the approved may become manifest among you" {1 Cor. 11:19} -- heresies being schools or parties after a man's own opinion. The Christian being in possession through grace, of God's thoughts, and the mind of Christ, has no need for, and indeed no right to his own opinions. His privilege, and his blessing is to follow God's thoughts and to have all his own thoughts and ways formed thereby. Exercise of conscience there will always be where there is a work of God in the soul, but exercise of conscience is not opinion, though, alas! it is often pleaded as an excuse for it.

Where error has been taught, and even persisted in, in spite of entreaty and remonstrance, every one would readily and thankfully accept withdrawal of it, and confession that it was contrary to the truth as set forth in the Word of God. The value, however, of all retractation and confession is its thoroughness, and its hearty condemnation of what is erroneous. Where these are wanting, some may be led from personal feeling for the teacher, to accept what is said, though it leave the error untouched -- sheltering themselves under the plea of "unfortunate expressions, but no unsound doctrine." Fellowship, however, goes on other lines; 1 John 1:7, "In the light as He is in the light," necessitates entire repudiation of what is not of Him, and not saving just as little as can be said, by way of so-called explanation, whilst maintaining that it is still "substantially the truth." It is indeed an insult to God, to His Spirit, and to His poor, distressed, and bewildered people, to treat error in doctrine and evil statements regarding their Lord in this way.

I am fully aware that any who refuse such explanations, and who still decline to accept these notions are charged with personal feeling, and are said to be actuated by a bad spirit towards the authors of them, but I would beg my reader to lose sight of persons, and to look at the things put forth as truth, and ask himself whether this is what he can accept as truth, for the glory of Christ, and for the blessing of his own
soul, according to the Word.

But I will turn to what is in print that the reader may judge for himself. I refer to the letter of Dec. 6, 1889, signed F. E. R., and printed by our brother Oliphant on Dec. 21, and Mr. Raven's reissue of the same, dated March 21, 1890. First, the letter is reprinted in full with the exception of the last paragraph, which he says "is omitted for the reason that I believe some of the thoughts therein referred to have been withdrawn or modified." He does not tell us by whom; he merely says that some thoughts, which he called "not only erroneous but repulsive," being modified or withdrawn, he omits this paragraph. The reader will notice here the assumption that others have changed, but that Mr. Raven has been right all through, and that he is so still. I will give the paragraph just as it stood:

I have not written the above with the idea of defending myself. I can leave that. At the same time, I must say that such thoughts as are now current, limiting divine righteousness to the believer being justified -- and therefore to Christ being raised -- confining "in Christ" to "a present position, so that it brings no light of eternal purpose or future glory -- separating, in the believer, "eternal life from the Holy Ghost -- and talking about Christ manifesting to the unbelieving world, eternal life -- the blessedness in which, as man, He was with the Father -- are to my mind not only erroneous, but repulsive. That the light and character of the Life shone out in Christ, I do not think any one ever thought of disputing.

The paragraph is omitted, not retracted, nor owned to be in any way erroneous. Yet it is this very paragraph that defines Eternal Life as "the blessedness in which, as man, He," Christ, "was with the Father." There is no judgment whatever of this evil statement. No modification or withdrawal by any one of any thought he speaks of there, could in the slightest degree justify his definition that eternal life is "the blessedness in which, as man, He was with the Father."

With the exception of this paragraph, "the text," he says, "of the original letter remains unchrenched." He then avows, "in the most distinct and emphatic way," that he "never had" in his mind "the thought of separating eternal life from the Person of the Son of God, or of asserting that eternal life is, for a Christian, any other than Christ." Be it so; we can now fairly take all he says about Eternal Life as applicable to Christ. I will quote from his letter as it still stands:

Eternal life is given to us of God, and is in God's Son -- for us it is the heavenly relationship and blessedness in which, in the Son, man is now placed and lives before the Father, the death of Christ having come in as the end before God of man's state in the flesh.

To this he now adds a note:

This is not intended as a definition of eternal life but an endeavor to convey the thought that eternal life means for a Christian a wholly new order of things, which is in its nature outside the world and seen things -- it 'belongs to another scene.

Admitting his note to convey his meaning, we are now told that Eternal life means for a Christian a wholly new order of things, &c.

We may fairly take his present avowal that he never had the thought of asserting that eternal life is, for a Christian, any other than Christ, and fit it into this note, and see how it then stands. We thus have Christ means for a Christian a wholly new order of things, which is in its nature outside the world and seen things -- it belongs to another scene.

The Person is displaced, indeed lost, and a 'new order of things' is substituted for Him. Let me ask, dear reader, can you afford to be thus deprived of the Person of your Lord -- will you consent to give Him up in exchange for a 'wholly new order of things,' no matter how beautiful they may be? And let me ask, Is this the Scriptural view of Him? Scripture says "If any man be in Christ, there is a new creation; the old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new: and all things are of the God, who has reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ" [2 Cor. 5:17, 18]. "Christ" does not mean for the Christian, nor for anyone else, "a wholly new order of things, in its nature outside the world." Scripture tells us that for him who is in Christ, "all things are of God," and, when it speaks of things above, it says "where Christ is." The new creation for the Christian is Christ, he himself being of God in Him. Scripture never leaves Him out -- as to this, Mr. Raven never really brings Him in. He gives us a theoretical and purely imaginary Christ, that may suit those that have not His Person before them, but which is as unpractical, unscriptural, and false, as his notion of Eternal Life being a sphere of blessing. His present avowal that he never had the thought of separating eternal life from the Person of the Son of God, or of asserting that eternal life is, for a Christian, any other than Christ may be correct; {however,} his words distinctly did so, and those words are allowed to remain, with an explanatory note which only makes them worse, while the final paragraph of his letter is omitted with the insinuation that his opponents have come round to his view, and abandoned their "erroneous and repulsive" thoughts. "Charity hopeth all things," but it is never said, "Charity hopes falsehood is truth."

His assertion of "exercise of heart and sorrow before the Lord in regard to the strained and painful state of feeling existing amongst us"; and regret on his own part for "the measure in which it has been contributed to by obscure or defective expressions" of his "which have gone abroad, taken from letters to individuals, or reports of readings" is impudent contempt of fact, and the consciences of others. The "strained and painful state of feeling amongst us" comes
solely from his teaching error as to the Person of Christ, and a deluding souls into following him by verbal explanations. If he had any real exercise of heart and sorrow “before the Lord” in the matter, he would have repudiated the error pointed out to him, instead of excusing it as mere “obscure and defective expressions,” but still “substantially the truth.” And here I do not refer to letters to individuals, or reports of readings,” quotations from which he objects to; what we have before us has been already in print, and is now issued again by himself, and explained by him too, so that obscurity and defect of expression can here at least be no excuse. But sheltering himself behind “letters to individuals, or reports of readings,” is only proof of want of openness, and of endeavor to hide up, instead of letting all come out in the light of God’s presence, and be fairly weighed and judged. Another has exposed the letters to our brother Bradstock; to which, I presume, allusion is made. I know of no others published -- and these were carefully written, and repeated again and again the ground and line of his teaching, concluding with “I should be thankful if the Lord use this to set your mind at rest.” Other letters (some I have read), worse than these, because going further, are extant, but being held by partisans are refused publicity for fear of causing division and separation from him -- they thinking the evil and its defiling character better ignored and gone on with, than exposed and separated from. Privacy where the truth of God is in question, and the Person of our Lord assailed, is certainly not of God; indeed, in such matters privacy is but another name for complicity with evil, and this God will judge, sooner or later. It is curious that whilst objecting to quotations from “letters to individuals,” he should credit himself with “rendering explanation in patience, by letter,” and yet, when letters are brought up, they are dismissed as having “obscure and defective expressions.”

Besides, its being in “letters to individuals” or “reports of readings,” has nothing to do with the matter; the question is, does he hold or does he not hold the views he has expressed, and regarding which he says he has “since sought to make all the amends in his power,” though reprinting them in the original text unchanged? The question before us is, are we to accept them, and abandon what we have, or at least profess to have received as truth for our souls from the Word of God. It may be said, things are not so bad as this -- right is meant, though the expressions are reprehensible and faulty. I give therefore at the end of this paper extracts, at length, from a letter from one of his followers, who has further stated that

the main issue of what eternal life is, is with Raven and not with those who oppose him. God is with him and not with his opponents.

I give no names -- my object being merely to show the fruit of the evil at work amongst us. Many, all I trust, will be shocked at the thoughts contained in it, but as it has been widely circulated in MS. amongst us, it is well to have it in print that all may see it, and be clear, through grace, of both it and its spirit.

However, not to pursue his introduction further, we need merely notice that he maintains all he has taught as substantially the truth, as to Christianity in its proper heavenly character, such as brought before us by those most highly esteemed, [and his] confidence that the Lord will care for the simple who desire God’s will, and assure their hearts as to what is or what is not of God.

Who “those most highly esteemed” may be, he does not say -- it is after all a lower standard than the Word of God, and a failing one too. No doubt he makes use of phrases and expressions used by some of the Lord’s beloved servants, one especially, now with Him, but he attaches a meaning of his own to their expressions. I refer particularly to the refuge sought to be found in a paper by Mr. Darby, A man in Christ, for the use of the term “mixed condition,” applied to the believer now. Mr. Raven uses the term “mixed condition,” as meaning “a condition here, in which the existence of sin and the flesh are taken account of.”

I will quote from Mr. Darby’s paper:

We cannot doubt that such revelations as Paul received in the third ‘heaven strengthened his own faith, made him understand that it was well worth sacrificing a miserable life, such as this world’s life is, for it, and gave him a consciousness of what he was contending for, a sense of the divine things he had to do with, which must have exercised an immense influence upon his career in this world. But it was not immediate power in conflict in the mixed state in which he found himself when he had to speak of “myself Paul.” He had, and so have we, “to walk by faith, and not by sight.” Some Christians are apt to confound these two things -- special joy and abiding communion, and to suppose, because the first is not always the case, the discontinuance of the latter is to be taken for granted and acquiesced in. This is a great mistake. Constant fellowship with God, and with the Lord Jesus is the only right state, the only one recognized in Scripture. We are to rejoice in the Lord always. This the flesh would seek to hinder, and Satan by the flesh. But if the flesh be not changed, how is this realized in practice? It is which is taught us here. It is first the giving conscious nothingness and weakness in the flesh. This is not power, but it is the practical way to it. We are entitled, as to our standing before God, to reckon ourselves dead unto sin, and alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord, and in practice to hold ourselves, as in this condition, not debtors to the flesh to live after the flesh; and sin shall not have dominion over us, for we are not under law, but under grace. But our chapter goes further than this: it shows us power so to walk. The flesh is then practically put down. The measure, as stated by the Apostle, is this -- “‘Always hearing about in the body of the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus Christ our Lord, and in practice to hold ourselves, as in this condition, not debtors to the flesh to live after the flesh; and sin shall not have dominion over us, for we are not under law, but under grace. But our chapter goes further than this: it shows us power so to walk. The flesh is then practically put down. The measure, as stated by the Apostle, is this -- “‘Always hearing about in the body of the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our body.” His object was not to gain this life. Alive in Christ we have it. But he held every movement, thought and will of the flesh under the
I might quote a great deal more, indeed the whole paper, to show that Mr. Darby never speaks or thinks of Paul's being in a mixed condition of sin and Christ, but that he speaks of him as being in Christ and yet in infirmity. Thus he could glory in his infirmities that the power of Christ might rest upon him -- he could not glory in sins, with this object, but his infirmities were Christ's opportunities for manifesting His power and His grace.

Mr. Raven adds a note to his definition of “mixed condition” which now runs thus:

a condition here, in which the existence of sin and the flesh are taken account of not in a judicial way, but in fact. But let me ask, in what way does God take account of sin and flesh, except judicially? Are we to be told that God, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, takes account of sin in us, as a tolerated thing, “in fact,” and “not in a judicial way” as condemned and dealt with? That He will vindicate His own honor, we may be sure. But this notion is mere trifling with Him and His Word -- really setting it at defiance. Mark, too, that this is the explanation of the “mixed condition” of the professed maintainer of “Christianity in its proper heavenly character.” The fact is there is nothing heavenly, in any sense, in it at all -- it is all earthly, and a plea for sin and the flesh being taken account of by God otherwise than judicially. Dear reader, will you be duped by this? Will you accept this as a trait of the character of our God -- of Him who forsook His own Son on the Cross, when He was made sin for you? If we are told he does not refer to God's so taking notice of it, but to the believer's doing so, then we have the believer, on other ground than God's ground, and trifling with what cost His Savior all that unutterable depth of woe on the Cross.

But let him define “mixed condition” as he pleases, what he asserts is that a believer, as such, is in a condition in which truths concerning him viewed as in Christ do not apply to him in an absolute way. This he now explains in a note as

That is, in such a way as to exclude every other thought about him. Now the truth as to the believer “viewed as in Christ” either applies to him absolutely, that is, in such a way as to exclude every other thought about him, or it does not apply to him at all. Mr. Raven's idea is that there is some other thought about the believer in the Lord Jesus, over and above, or outside and below that of him “viewed as in Christ”: what that thought is he does not specify -- it is sufficient for him to assert it, in the teeth of Scripture, and, in spite of all that has been said, and shown from Scripture in refutation of it, to repeat it as “substantially the truth as to Christianity in its proper heavenly character,” so he says. The truth is that the believer is looked at by God as in Christ wholly and completely, and in no other way; indeed, any other view of him could only be one of judgment.

But we may go on to his note upon “in Christ”; and I would ask the reader's careful attention to this note, and comparison of it by the Word. We have here the same strained and altered phraseology, as is found in the letter itself, the same bringing in of more than is to be found in the Word, and the same confusion of terms. First, he tells us that in Ephesians the believer is seen in Christ, according to the sovereign purpose and counsels of God who has raised Christ from the dead and set Him at His right hand by the working of His mighty power.

So far, well; only that he omits to state that the believer is looked at as having been dead in trespasses and sins, and as alive now in Christ by the mighty power of God. In Eph. 1, Christ is looked at as dead, and raised from the dead by the mighty power of God -- in order to give us to understand what the same power of God acting towards us who believe is, in quickening us when dead in trespasses and sins. It is said “Hath quickened us with Christ,” not “in Christ,” and it is important to bear this in mind, for it meets all this system of false teaching. Leave it out, and at once we have room for the speculations and theories of the human mind as to some other condition of the believer than dead in sins or under wrath and judgment, when not “viewed as in Christ.” But he goes on to say

Hence, as “in Christ,” the believer is looked at as quickened together with Him by the same power of God.

Here again we have the same qualifying of Scripture, as in the case of Divine righteousness; there he said “as ‘in Christ’ the believer is become God's righteousness,” so here “as ‘in Christ,’ the believer is looked at as quickened,” &c. It is making an arbitrary distinction to suit his system, it is qualifying Scripture, and going beyond it too, to say that “as ‘in Christ,’ the believer is looked at as quickened,” &c., and is intended to infer that as not in Christ he is looked at otherwise than dead and under wrath and judgment. What Scripture says is that prior to the working of Divine power in him, the believer was dead in trespasses and sins, walking according to the spirit which now works in the children of disobedience, but now quickened by God with Christ, he is raised up with Him, and has been made to sit down in the heavens in Christ Jesus.

He goes on to say:

He is thus of a new order, morally of a new creation, which is outside the present creation or order of things in which he actually is, though the character and beauty of it are to come out in every sphere owned of God.

At first sight, this looks well, but where is the Scripture for it? It is mere theory and fancy; he substitutes a new order and a morally new creation for Christ personally. This is the basis he lays for the notion that Eternal Life is a new sphere into which we get by exercise of faith, and by getting clear of the world. I am aware it is said he has given up this idea;
indeed some of his adherents now say he says he never said it, but it is in print and has been repeated again and again. But let us turn to Scripture. The Christ raised from the dead, and at the Father’s right hand, is the same Christ that was Man here in this world of sin, and who here suffered, and died for us -- the same Christ in whom we are through grace. “Of Him” (God) “are ye in Christ Jesus”; “We are His workmanship, having been created in Christ Jesus”; “Renewed into full knowledge after the image of Him that has created him.” The contrast in Ephesians between the two states is this: We were dead in trespasses and sins; we are quickened by God with Him, and placed in Him before God Himself, in His own blessed and perfect acceptance as the Beloved. It is not that the beauty and character of a new creation, are to come out in the Christian in every sphere owned of God, but that Christ is to be seen in him, in every connection and in every detail of life. Mr. Raven’s notion is a mere theory, defined and limited by feeling, imagination, and fancied experience, and not Christ personally at all. No doubt being “in Christ” we are born of God, but Scripture does not so put it. “Quickened together with Him” is not in regard to our being “in Christ,” though most assuredly we are in Him, but in regard to our having been dead in trespasses and sins.

But he goes on to contrast Romans with Ephesians, saying:

In Romans the believer is, on the other hand, seen as alive on the earth. He is justified, has peace with God, the Holy Ghost is given to him, he is dead to sin, and to reckon himself so, and alive to God in Christ Jesus, and sin is not to reign in his mortal body to obey its lusts; he is dead to the law to be to Christ; not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, the righteousness of the law is to be fulfilled in him, and not a debtor to the flesh to fulfil flesh’s lusts, has to deal with the groaning creation, though he has the firstfruits of the Spirit. It is the life of responsibility here, though carried out in divine power.

This statement one would not object to, were it not followed by the assertion that,

Truths which view the Christian in one aspect cannot be used to weaken the force of the truth about him in another aspect.

But this is just what Mr. Raven does; he uses the truth of “in Christ” in Romans to weaken the force of its use in Ephesians. He has two definitions as to “in Christ”; for him “in Christ” in Ephesians has one meaning, in Romans, “in Christ” has another, unless, indeed, he holds that “alive to God in Christ Jesus “does not mean “in Christ” at all. Now there is no doubt there are two distinct aspects of “in Christ,” viz.: that in Ephesians and that in Romans, but it is the same Christ in whom the believer is in both Epistles, and in both aspects. And whether it be the aspect of Ephesians or that of Romans, the believer is really and absolutely “in Christ,” and has no other position or standing before God, or indeed in the world. Mr. Raven concludes his note with

A Christian is of God in Christ, a new creation, where old things have passed away and all things become new, in which is neither male nor female; but the truth which describes him in that aspect does not describe what he is in himself.

The reader will notice here the jumbling up of part of 1 Cor. 1:30, part of 2 Cor. 5:17, and part of Gal. 3:8, as if the truths conveyed in each passage were identical. A simple reference to the three passages will suffice to show the difference. He does not tell us whether it is to be applied to the Ephesian or Roman aspect of “in Christ.” But what he seeks to base upon it is that although the truth which describes the Christian in that aspect, i.e., as of God in Christ, it does not describe what he is in himself. Here we have again the error and evil of his whole system. For him, the Christian viewed as in Christ, is not what the Christian really is in himself. Scripture, thank God, is clear enough, and we need not turn in upon ourselves to find out what we are in ourselves, if we are content to take God’s Word simply as to it; and if we have made the least experience of what we are in ourselves we shall not turn in upon ourselves any more to find out. We may take the first three chapters of Romans to begin with, and, through the grace of God, find, each for himself, his place there as a child of Adam. We may turn to Rom. 7:18, Gal. 2: 19, 20, and finally to I Cor. 1:30, where, as admitted by Mr. Raven, the believer is distinctly stated to be of God in Christ Jesus, and this, not in the Ephesian aspect of “in Christ,” for he would hardly, I presume, admit the Corinthians to have been {in} an Ephesian state, but in their state of going on really badly, with sin in their midst unjudged and unnoticed even. His theory is that the “being of God” does not describe what the believer is in himself. I admit that it does not describe what the believer was, but it is the plain statement by the Holy Ghost of what he is, and of how he is it. All that he is outside and beyond this is vile and evil, under the wrath and judgment of God, and he is through grace, through the finished work of Christ, privileged and enabled to count it as already judged and condemned in His death, and he himself delivered from it through His death. Of this Mr. Raven has evidently neither sense nor knowledge. It is true he says the believer is dead to sin, and to reckon himself so, and alive to God in Christ Jesus, but the Christian, for him, is something else in himself. What the Christian is in Christ is for him a mere theory, an unreal something mentally to be studied, and left for the imagination to conceive according as each one feels himself to have progressed by faith and to have shaken himself free from the world -- of the reality and the blessedness of being entirely set aside as to himself, and of being wholly, solely and unreservedly in Christ, he knows nothing, and thus can afford to fritter it away with such a definition as

A Christian is of God in Christ . . . but the truth which describes him in that aspect does not describe what he is in himself;
as if, out of Christ, he could be otherwise than condemned.

The next note merely defines “as there” as meaning “as in Him.” No one had any doubt about this; but the question is why say “as” in Him -- Scripture says “that we might become God’s righteousness in Him.” Mr. Raven says “as” in Him the believer is so, thus qualifying the meaning and extent of it. All these additions to and qualifications of Scripture are merely trifling with the Word, and show that he has made it a sort of study for the mind without any reality of it for soul, or conscience, or heart either.

We now come to his explanation of 2 Cor. 5:21. The assumption that the Apostle in Phil. 3:9 meant what Mr. Raven means as to the believer becoming God’s righteousness when in a sinless state in glory with Christ, has already been pointed out as without foundation, and mere ignorance of the meaning and bearing of the two passages. But here he repeats it, and says that

2 Cor. 5:21, in its full scope, refers to the saints becoming in Christ in glory the witness or expression of God’s righteousness; because that righteousness was displayed in setting him there. [He adds] The believer is made the righteousness of God “in Christ.”

It is [he says] in no sense a progressive thing in him, nor dependent on his practical state or experience.

In other words the believer is it now, and will become it in glory; but we had better adhere to his own words, to prevent mistake.

The believer is made the righteousness of God in Christ.

The saints become in Christ in glory the witness or expression of God’s righteousness.

Are the saints in Christ now or not? Will they be more in Christ then than now? He has before drawn a distinction between the Christian “in Christ,” and the Christian “in himself.” So here, he puts a future sense to the word “become,” in 2 Cor. 5:1, which shows he really gives it no present sense at all. The full fruition of Divine righteousness awaits manifestation no doubt, but the believer will not become God’s righteousness then in any further measure than he is it now. What 2 Cor. 5:21, gives us is the wondrous fact of our being God’s righteousness in Christ, and the ground and reason of our being so; it says nothing about the “expression” of it, but that we are it. He trifles with and adds to Scripture just as he pleases. It is cause and effect, simply and plainly stated. That we “might become,” does not necessarily involve a future meaning, at some distant date. I might say “I wrote to him that he might know my mind” -- “I made this coat that I might wear it” -- “I sleep that I might be refreshed,” &c. But let me quote from Mr. Darby’s writings:

There are, so to speak, two parts in God’s nature and character: His righteousness, which judges everything; and His perfect love. These are one for us in Christ, ours in Christ. If indeed we realize what God is, both will have their “place: but the believer in Christ is the righteousness which God, from His very nature, must have before Him on His throne, if we are to be with Him and enjoy Him. But the Christ, before whom we are in the judgment seat, is our righteousness. He judges by the righteousness which He is; but we are that righteousness, the righteousness of God in Him.

Thus Paul (it is conscience in view of that most solemn moment) possessed the righteousness which he saw in the Judge, for that which judged was his righteousness.

But this view of judgment and our complete manifestation in that day has a present effect on the saint according to its own nature. He realizes it by faith, He is manifested. He does not fear being manifested. It will unfold all God’s past ways towards him when he is in glory, but he is manifested now to God; his conscience exercised in the light. It has thus a present sanctifying power.

The truth is, the judgment-seat is what most brings out our assurance before God; for as He is, so are we in this world; and it is when Christ shall appear in glory we shall be like Him.

It is all confusion to say we shall “become” it in that day, just as it is irreverent to speak of the “full scope” of God’s righteousness. Indeed, it only shows, as another has said, a lack of all sense of God’s righteousness. He may say “it is in no sense a progressive thing in him, nor dependent on his practical state or experience,” but he still maintains that it was what Paul was looking forward to having, and that though the believer is made it in Christ, he becomes it in Christ hereafter. One’s comfort indeed is that “the Lord will care for the simple who desire God’s will, or will assure their hearts as to what is or is not of God,” and that He will preserve them from all this unreality, and bewildering folly.

On page 3, we have the note that

Eternal life is given to us of God, and is in God’s Son -- for us it is the heavenly relationship and blessedness in which, in the Son, man is now placed and lives before the Father, the death of Christ having come in as the end before God of man’s state in the flesh, is not intended as a definition of eternal life but an endeavor to convey the thought that eternal life means for a Christian a wholly new order of things, which is in its nature outside the world and seen things -- it belongs to another scene.

Nothing is really altered by this note. It is the same old root evil of all his error and fancy. Eternal life is now said to mean for a Christian a wholly new order of things. Why “for a Christian”? For a Christian, Christ is the Eternal Life -- a Divine and Blessed Person -- not a mere new order of things, either wholly or partially. From not being really before God in his soul as to either, he has confounded Eternal Life and new creation, and would make Christ new creation “a wholly new order of things,” etc. This is but a repetition of his former theory, and gross irreverence as to the Person of the Lord.

Further he still maintains that “He that has the Son has
the life”; “the testimony he has received concerning the Son is, by the Spirit, the power of life in the believer, he having been born of God to receive it.” To receive what? The testimony or the life? Where does Scripture say “the testimony is the power of life in the believer”? He adds in a note that “it is by the Son that the believer lives, he is in Him that is true, that is, in His Son Jesus Christ, who is the true God and eternal life.” But according to his definition that eternal life means a new order of things, he must read it as “In His Son Jesus Christ, who is the true God and a wholly new order of things.” etc.

But there is another note on this page that I would beg the reader’s earnest attention to. He says “The believer still has part in seen things here (which the Son has not),” he adds in a note “Though in the days of His flesh He had.” That is, that the Lord Jesus in the days of His flesh had part in seen things here which He now has not, but which part the believer has. “It has no part in eternal life, though it may be greatly influenced by it.” Let me ask anyone with the least heart for our Lord: Was there anything in which our Lord had part here on earth in the days of His flesh, that had no part in eternal life, or which for Him was influenced by it? It is a subtle insinuation as to the Lord Jesus, as if the part He had in things here in the days of His flesh is that which the believer now has, but which He no longer has. The believer has to reckon himself dead, to walk in connection with things here, as dead and risen. What would you think of such a thought being attached to our blessed Lord? Will “errors of interpretation or questionable expressions” satisfy your soul as to this? I am aware some of this school say, “The Lord sitting by Sychar’s well was weary, and eternal life is never weary” -- it is all of the same character. Scripture says: “He was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners,” &c. He who was this, entered into circumstances of fatigue, hunger, and thirst voluntarily on His part in grace and love to us.

The questions and answers that appeared at the end of the original letter, and which were printed with Mr. Raven’s permission, are now omitted, without a word of regret or explanation of any kind. Yet in them it was stated that “To talk of a person having eternal life without the Spirit is absurd,” and that being made God’s righteousness in Christ is “the Christian is in Christ and Christ in Him,” an “abstract” thing as “sin and flesh are still in the believer,” and that “eternal life is a comprehensive expression that takes in all” -- all what?

* * * * *

Since writing the above some letters, of which I give extracts, have come into my hands. The originals are before me, and the italics are his.
as there. His denial of responsibility “in Christ,” and really under condemnation and wrath, in sin and responsible needlessly. What is important is the further downward step, Comment on the boasted “patience” of his explanations is finished work of Christ on the Cross, and of the liberty and.

According to him, the believer is under it, and thus again under wrath and condemnation.

Raven would resuscitate this, and put the believer back again aside wholly at the Cross -- gone in Christ’s grave; Mr. Darby’s remarks apply to the latter -- my observation, that there is no such thing as responsibility in Christ, to the former.

F. E. Raven

Comment on the boasted “patience” of his explanations is needless. What is important is the further downward step, and departure from truth of the reiterated assertion of “no responsibility in Christ,” and the disconnection of Christianity wholly from human life. The folly and unreality of it will strike all; but it is only another proof that Mr. Raven has no sense whatever of Christian responsibility, nor of the meaning of the term “in Christ” at all -- he has defined it all away until nothing remains. I quote a word from the Synopsis:

We are dead then, and our life is hid with Christ in God. We have members on earth -- no recognized life; and we have to put to death all these members of the old man.

Putting to death is an act of power in that which is good -- the new man.

This, according to Mr. Raven, would be putting to death that to which alone, for him, responsibility attaches, and nothing is left.

But the truth is the responsibility of the first man is set aside wholly at the Cross -- gone in Christ’s grave; Mr. Raven would resuscitate this, and put the believer back again under it, and thus again under wrath and condemnation. According to him, the believer is abstractedly “in Christ,” really under condemnation and wrath, in sin and responsible as there. His denial of responsibility “in Christ,” and insisting on its still attaching to the flesh, is not only destructive of the Christian position, but is a denial of the finished work of Christ on the Cross, and of the liberty and blessing in which it places the believer.

* * * * *

The following is the letter referred to on page 7, the italics are the writer’s:

As to London it seems very serious indeed, but this time the subject matter is clear and defined, not like the Reading business; and if ______ separate, the ground of their action will be plain enough. I am a poor judge in these things, but it looks to me very like the old ground of “the sufferings of Christ” over again. Christ had relationships with the Father from eternity, other than those He assumed with man; these relationships were consistent and unchanging, while also “the Eternal life that was with the Father was manifested to us,” and that in “the Word made flesh.” His Messianic relationships with men were not that Eternal life, though the Eternal life was manifested in Him who was also the Christ. But I do not think that Scripture ever says that Christ was the eternal life, save in 1 John 5:20, but there it is in His Son -- and Eternal life is without the article, which makes it characteristic, and not definite. And in Rom. 6:20, it is “in Christ Jesus our Lord.” But though in a general way, we say “Christ was the Eternal life,” yet I think it is significant that Scripture never uses, as far as I remember, such an expression. “Eternal life” is, as far as I understand it, the capacity of knowing and enjoying God in the relationship in which the Son ever stood to Him. Therefore it is for us through redemption, and in power of the Spirit putting us with Jesus in the same life and relationship in which He ever was, and is, with the Father. Now the relationship is for Him uncreated and unchanging, and above and beyond any other relationship He may assume with men through incarnation, in which latter relationship He can be born and suffer and die. That is He was eternally in relationship with the Father, which was unaffected by any relationship which he assumed by incarnation: and though as incarnate He could express to His own this relationship, and thus manifest the Father to them, still all He did, as incarnate, was not the expression of this relationship {cp. this, and the following, blasphemy with John 5:19, 20}, but the fulfillment of other relationships, e.g., messianic, or otherwise human relationships, outside of the range of this abiding, unchangeable, eternal relationship with the Father. Thus, when “He grew in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man,” who would intelligently affirm that of eternal life? How could eternal life grow “in the favor of God?” Again He was subject to His earthly parents. How could eternal life with the Father in full divine unbroken communion be expressed by obedience to those who were wholly ignorant of it, and who rebuked Him because He was engaged in His Father’s business, of which they knew nothing? That He was rightly and beautifully obedient to them in another sphere and relationship is true, but proves, it seems to me, that it was a wholly different sphere from that of eternal life, and therefore could not be the expression of it. The opposite idea seems to me the confusion between the ineffable mystery of His own Person or “being,” and the human relationship He was pleased to assume. It is quite evident
He had a life in which He never died. He commended His spirit into His Father's hands. He said to the thief, “To-day thou shalt be with Me in Paradise” — while it “is equally true that He also died. The same is true of us all in one sense. Men are dead while at the same time, “all live to God.” But He was born into the life to which He died, a thing true of Him as of any other man, while above and beyond that, there was in Him that Eternal life, which was with the Father, which Scripture never speaks of as “born” at all. It is said in John 1: “The Word was with God, and the Word was God,” and “the Word became flesh.” That it did so at the time of His birth, which is recorded elsewhere, as also the manner of it, is true, but Scripture is wiser than man. And the word “born” is not predicated of it in John 1:1. He is there “the only begotten of the Father,” not born of a woman, nor so “begettable.” The life, in which He was “born,” was the expression of entirely different relationships. To confound them is to confound things divine and human — things heavenly and things earthly — things Christian and things Jewish — things spiritual and things carnal. In His manhood He fulfilled all the lower relationships, but that was not the expression of the higher relationship. All He could possibly be to man could not express what He was to God. This He might express to man and bring man into; that is, into His own relationship with the Father by the Spirit — but then it was what He was Himself to God the Father He so expressed, and not what He was to man. A babe in the manger could in no wise express what He was as the only begotten with the Father, one with Him from before all worlds in undefined fulness and infinite perfection of unclouded communion. A babe has not such communion. That such a thought should enter an intelligent Christian’s mind seems strange in the extreme. Now if Christ was not able to enter into relationship and sympathy with Israel, in the place where they were suffering governmentally from the hand of God, independently of his own eternal relationship with the Father, in which He did not suffer, and could not suffer at His hands, we have lost all the preciousness of His sufferings, as depicted in the Psalms, and we have lost His Eternal Sonship. That He was, is the Eternal Son, Jehovah Himself, the “I am” whom we find in the Psalms “lifted up” and “cast down,” “withered like grass” and humbled to the lowest pit, even unto death, is the stronghold of faith, the refuge of the suffering people of God, the assurance of their deliverance and glory; but that shows plainly that these sufferings and this humiliation are not the expression of that glorious power which He will manifest by and bye on their behalf — that in fact this one range of relationships is distinct from, and in no way expressed by the other, although He is the same Person who is found in them both. That all He did and was in one set of relationships was in divine harmony with all He was in the other is surely true, but to say that what He did in the lower life was the expression of all He was in the upper is surely to reduce the upper to the level of the lower, while His great desire for us is to bring us to the upper. John 17:24 — a thing which as regards the sphere of display is impossible here below — and, if what I say is true (in the main with perhaps more in detail) Christian men will do well to consider ere they divide, seeing that Christianity is involved in the division.

The blasphemy of this letter is only equalled by its audacious dictating as to what God could do, and what He could not do, what He could beget and what He could not beget. It is the outcome of mind and reason — mere mind reasoning in its own finite and infidel capacity upon what is beyond it and infinite. I need not point out the two Christs made out in it, one who could die and one who could not, one who could be begotten and one who was not begettable, but I would remark that if our Lord died merely in “a life of relationship with men,” He never died to God at all, and no Atonement whatever was made.

Many, I am sure, will feel with me that it is not a mere matter of brethren, but of Christianity amongst Brethren, if these views are permitted amongst us. I have seen letters, in the same strain, alas! by others, too surely showing how the evil spreads.

I cannot, dare not, dear reader, leave you with this poison alone before you. I will give a quotation from the Synopsis, speaking of “the life of Jesus on earth: “

God shines through His position in the human body: for He was necessarily God in the act itself of His humiliation; and none but God could have undertaken and been found in it; yet He was always and entirely and perfectly obedient and dependent on God. That which revealed itself in His existence on earth was the expression of that which was accomplished in the eternal abode, in His own nature. That is to say (and of this Psal. 40 speaks), that which He declares, and that which He was here below, are the same thing; the one in reality in heaven, the other bodily on earth. That which He was here below was but the expression, the living, real, bodily manifestation of what is contained in those divine communications which have been revealed to us, and which were the reality of the position that He assumed.

I add a quotation from a warning letter by beloved Mr. Darby:

Our precious Savior was Man, as truly as I am, as regards the simple abstract idea of humanity but without sin, miraculously born by divine power, and more than this, He was God manifest in flesh.

Now having said so much, I entreat you with all my heart not to try to define, and to discuss the Person of our precious Savior. You will lose the savor of Christ in your thoughts, and you will get in its place only the barrenness of the human mind in the things of Christ, and in the affections which belong to them. It is a labyrinth for man, because he works from his own resources. It is as
if one were to dissect the body of one's friend, instead of delighting in his affections and his character. In the Church, it is one of the worst signs I have meet with. It is very sad to get into this way; very sad that this should be shown in such a light before the Church of God and before the world. 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 may 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 presume 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 upon the other, and to live in every way according to the grace of the Holy Spirit.

P. A. H. {Humphreys}

May, 1890

{A Letter dated May 31, 1890 by J. S. Oliphant, a defender of FER, was printed. W. T. Whybrow replied in print to that paper, J. S. O.'s “Four Subjects” Compared with the Teaching of Scripture, but it is undated. Four pages are missing from my copy and I have not included any of this paper.}
Chapter 3

The Bexhill/Greenwich Correspondence

Preliminaries

On Feb. 16, 1890, J. Corbett, who was of the Greenwich assembly where F. E. Raven was, did, after the breaking of bread, challenge FER concerning his teaching. And, having written to FER, refusing him as a teacher, ceased attending the Greenwich assembly on Feb. 26, 1890.

On Mar. 14, 1890, Greenwich informed neighboring assemblies that J. Corbett, having refused to be visited, could no longer break bread without question.

On May 8, 1890, J. Corbett issued a circular letter describing conditions at Greenwich and noting that he, his daughter and another brother and sister had separated from Greenwich. This letter is here quoted in full before we come to the Bexhill-Greenwich correspondence.

8th May, 1890

Dear Brethren in Christ,

When I took my stand, now about two months ago (having been in fellowship here over 16 years), in protest against the evil in the Greenwich meeting, I did not think of intimating the fact to Brethren generally, for several reasons, which I purpose stating further on, having done so as an individual action, under the circumstances in which I was placed.

But as the Lord’s honor and glory are concerned, and as I owe it to you to state what I heard and saw, I felt led to communicate the same to you as briefly as possible.

For a long time I have been aware, and it has not been attempted to conceal the fact, that a “new character of teaching” has been introduced at the Greenwich Meeting, i.e., in contrast with what I found was taught, when I was received into fellowship more than 16 years ago.

At first I thought it was only a peculiar and novel way of defining the truth, and it was not till I found that I was getting robbed of the realization and enjoyment of the blessing, made good to faith in the Word of God, and of Christ in me the hope of glory, that I awoke up to the true character of the teaching. But I was not exceptional, others have told me that they experienced the same. While I refused it in my own mind, I have watched its development since, and find that my suspicions were not in any wise unfounded, for it develops and thrives by slandering and vilifying the saints of God, and its adherents cannot fail to manifest the effects of it. The plausible argument advanced in its favor, viz. -- the elevation of the saints from their low spiritual condition -- under the plea that it is subjective heavenly truth, although specious, only beguiles. For we do well to take heed to the Apostle’s monition to the Elders of the Church of Ephesus (Acts 20:32); and looking into that Word we find from a few of the numerous passages therein: John 12:26; Col. 3:1-4; 2 Cor. 3:18; Heb. 12:1, 2; and 1 John 1:3, 4; it is the objective and positive occupation with Christ in the power of the Spirit which produces the formative effect in the believer -- of course, as he is walking in the light.

The truths which this “new teaching” assails and attempts to darken, are the Person of Christ -- New Birth, Eternal Life, the gift of God through faith in His Son, Divine Righteousness, and the believer’s standing in Christ.

As to the Person of Christ it teaches that He was not the Eternal Life personally and eternally with the Father (1 John 1:1-3), and which was manifested in the Person of the Son, seen, looked upon, and handled in the world, and, in reply to questions, how John 17:3, 1 John 1:1-3, were understood, Mr. Raven stated that it is “an essence” or “in essence,” but did not refer to Christ personally, and did not exist, except as a purpose of blessing for man in the mind of God until incarnation, and further explained the non-existence of Eternal
Life before incarnation, by the statement, “that the Lord was there.”

As to New Birth, which Scripture plainly and clearly states to be the quickening operation of the Word of God by the power of the Holy Spirit, whereby the believer is born of God, and has the life of God, John 1:12-13; 1 Peter 1:23; James 1:18; Eph. 4:18; Gal. 3:26; is affirmed to be a process of cleansing, or at most a “stock,” which God may act on. Eternal life, the gift of God to the believer in Christ as a present possession through faith in Christ (John 3:36; John 5:24; John 20:31; 1 John 5:10-13) is reduced to a future hope, depriving the soul of its present power and blessing by separating it from Christ its source. The truth of the believer being God’s righteousness in Christ now, -- denied, and the error taught abroad by the disciples of this new teaching. The believer’s standing in Christ through death and resurrection, and his being introduced into the new creation, where all things are of God, is set aside to make place for the believer of the “mixed condition,” who will, no doubt, be more fully developed by this new teaching, and scope given him in “a sphere” where “seen things” are likely to have a most important place; but where death and crucifixion with Christ, and the reproach of Christ, are not likely to find much place. Dull, indeed, must be the consciences and hearts which fail to discover that the tendency of this teaching is to dishonor the Person of the Eternal Word, the Christ of God, and to depreciate His Word and work.

A quotation from the writings of a beloved brother (The Son of God, p. 49, by J. G. Bellett) now with the Lord, might be in place, not only as bearing on the momentous truth, the personal glory of the Son of God, now involved, but in these days of infidelity and rationalism, the development of which principles, in this new teaching, we have had timely warning of, in a pamphlet recently published (Life and Its Manifestation, by W. J. Lowe). I also venture to state that it is a book which the saints would do well to place in the hands of their children, that they may be awake to the subtle and deadly suggestions of Nestorianism, which are to my own knowledge poisoning the gatherings of the saints.

Patience in teaching, patience with the simply ignorant, is surely the Divine way, the way of the gracious spirit. The Lord exercised that way Himself (John 14:9). But no allowance of any depreciation of Christ is the Divine way also. John’s writings prove this to us -- the most awful portion of the oracles of God, as well as being so peculiar and precious, because they so concern the personal glory of the Son. And they seem to me to show but little if any mercy to those who would sully that glory, or carelessly watch over and around it (John 5:23).

After I learnt that Mr. R. was unsound and heretical as to the Person of Christ, and that he still persisted in taking the place of an overseer, I wrote to him on the 26th February, and informed him that I and my daughter, and the members of my family, refused to own him as a bishop or deacon, or teacher in the Church of God.

I went to a Reading Meeting, subsequently, and found that he took the place of a teacher there, and that other ministering brothers supported and encouraged him. I broke bread once at another meeting afterwards.

About a fortnight after two brothers called on me with reference to the letter which I wrote to Mr. R., and certain questions as to Eternal life, which I asked him, informing me that some in the meeting were grieved at my having done so. I refused to admit them, telling them that they were identified with Mr. R., and did not bring the doctrine of Christ (2 John 10-11), and in reply to one of them said, “that I believed Mr. R. to be an heretic.” I have not since gone to the Greenwich Meeting, but I have gone to other meetings, and taken part in prayer, but have not broken bread. The reasons which influenced me in not asking to have an assembly meeting were, that at the time referred to, I did not know of another brother who was so exercised as to move with me; and Mr. R., continually sought to persuade his supporters that all who opposed his teaching were instigated by Satan, to prevent him bringing out these new doctrines -- which he said was a movement of the Spirit of God -- and which they fully accept, as truth, in their present blinded condition. Also, about the first week in March, an influential brother, who I heretofore held in the highest esteem, came to Greenwich and he identified himself with them, and encouraged them to maintain Mr. R’s teaching. And further being aware that brethren generally, who heretofore refused his teaching and acted on Rom. 16:17 were accepting his explanations, identifying themselves with him, even circulating his letters, as guarantee of his orthodox and reliable teaching; I therefore considered that it would have been hopeless, individually, under such circumstances, to ask for an assembly meeting.

After prayerful consideration, I felt, that for the Lord’s honor and my own soul’s peace, my best course would be to wait outside on the Lord; and which, after this lapse of time, I feel fully convinced to be according to His mind.

My reasons for going outside the Greenwich meeting were, that they supported and encouraged Mr. R. in teaching heresy as to the Person of Christ, accepted and also taught publicly the false teaching which he introduced; also being grieved at the irreverent and contemptuous manner in which the blessed Lord was referred to by ministering brothers. Further that my children should not be exposed to the blinding and corrupting influence of this new teaching, and being deeply exercised by the Scriptures 2 Tim. 2:19, 2 Cor. 6:14, 17, 18, Rev. 3:11, 13: as to my conscience and judgment, it ceased to be an assembly of God. And my own daughter, and another brother and sister, who also came out, are of the same mind.

Yours affectionately in Christ,

J. Corbett
Then on May 19, 1890, J. Corbett’s letter was before the brethren at Greenwich.

On May 25th, a letter of commendation for G. Boddy, with F. E. Raven’s signature on it, was refused by the assembly at Bexhill.

On May 30, 1890, a letter went from Greenwich to Bexhill asking for the reason for refusing the letter of commendation signed by F. E. Raven.

That brings us to the correspondence between Greenwich and Bexhill. H. A. Hammond’s most excellent paper gives this correspondence and in an appendix to it, makes observations upon different statements in the June 23, 1890 letter from Greenwich. These notes are placed in footnotes at the appropriate places.

The Letters

2, Gloucester Place, Greenwich, 30th May, 1890.

Dear Brother,

I enclose a letter from and on behalf of the brothers in our Meeting. Will you kindly lay the same before the brethren at Bexhill.

Yours in the Lord,
(Signed) Geo. Broomhead

MR. KENT, Truscoe House,
St. James’ Road, Bexhill-on-Sea

Greenwich, 30th May, 1890.

Dear Brother:

At a meeting of the Brothers held here after our usual reading meeting last evening, we were requested to write to you and ask your reasons for refusing a letter of commendation given to a brother and sister on behalf of the gathering here, and signed by a brother in whom the meeting has the fullest confidence [i.e., F. E. Raven].

An answer is requested to either of the brothers who have signed this letter. We are, dear Brethren,

Yours faithfully in the Lord,
(Signed) Geo. Broomhead
(Signed) Geo. Chesterfield
(160, London St., Greenwich)

To the Brethren gathered in the name of the Lord Jesus at Bexhill-on-Sea, Sussex.

June 2, 1890, Monday

Trescoe House, Bexhill, 3rd June, 1890.

Dear Brother:

Your letter to me, with the enclosure for saints here, was duly received and read to them last evening at the Prayer meeting.

Their reply to the question asked will no doubt be sent to the Assembly at Greenwich in the course of a few days.

Yours in Christ,
(Signed) Robert Kent

To Mr. Geo. Broomhead.

2 Gloucester Place, Greenwich, 4 June, 1890.

Dear Brother:

If the reply to the Greenwich Assembly is not sent off till after tomorrow night’s post, will you be kind enough to see that the letter is addressed to our brother Chesterfield, as I am leaving home for a few days on business.

Yours in Christ,
(Signed) Geo. Broomhead

June 4, 1890, Wednesday

194. W. T. Wadeson’s letter to G. Chesterfield, Greenwich, made generally known; withdrawing with his wife from the Greenwich meeting. (Note here, Mr. G. Boddy was, on this day, received at the Folkestone meeting, notwithstanding his having been refused at Bexhill the previous Sunday, a leading supporter of Mr. Raven, from a distance, being present. In this way disintegration was being fomented...), [N. Noel 2:518].

195. The Greenwich meeting’s judgment against Mr. James Corbett, for “having printed for general distribution (what they deemed) a false and slanderous paper, purporting to give an account of things which he saw and heard in the Greenwich meeting,” was arrived at. On the ground of this judgment, Greenwich informed Ebury Street, Pimlico, London, against Dr. Cotton, for his having circulated Mr. James Corbett’s letter [of May 8, 1890] at the 145 Cheapside [London] meeting for brothers’ information.

196. (Note -- hat a letter informing Ebury Street, Pimlico, London, against Dr. Cotton, for circulating J. Corbett’s [May 8, 1890] paper at the 145 Cheapside [London] meeting, was sent to them by Greenwich on June 2nd, i.e., six days before the judgment against J. Corbett was read from the Table. Also, that Corbett’s case was communicated to Ealing (as a ground of representation against Mr. Cowell of that meeting, for printing “a paper (continued...)
(June 8, 1890, Lord’s day, judgment against faithful J. Corbett pronounced at Greenwich)

8th June, 1890.

To the Saints gathered to the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, at Greenwich.

Dear Brethren:

The letter from brethren in your Assembly to brethren here has been laid before us, and considered upon two evenings, and the following is our reply as an Assembly here, to the Assembly at Greenwich.

The question asked is, our “reasons for refusing a letter of commendation given to a brother and sister on behalf of the gathering here, and signed by a brother in whom the meeting has the fullest confidence.”

The ground we take is this: -- that you have in your Assembly a brother, Mr. F. E. Raven, whose teaching is, we judge, derogatory to the glory of the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ, and contrary to Scripture.

The effect of his teaching has been to cause sorrow and contention far and wide, amongst those gathered to the Name of our Lord Jesus; and to raise questions leading to discussions concerning the Person of our Lord, which are, to us, irreverent and profane.

Secondly: -- from a printed letter written by one of your brethren, Mr. J. Corbett, {his circular of May 8, 1890} we find some of your number have separated from you in consequence of these doctrines, and that your Assembly is, thus, in a divided state.

We believe it is according to the exercise of godly care with those gathered upon the ground of the one Body, when grave charges are brought against a teacher who is sheltered and supported by the meeting with which he is connected -- or where a meeting is in a divided state -- to request those coming from it to other meetings, to sit back, until matters are investigated or settled.

We have thus acted, and deeply regret, beloved brethren, the necessity for it.

If you ask for proof of the unsoundness of Mr. Raven’s teaching, we refer you to his own printed letters of 6th December, 1889, and 21st of March, 1890, also to the protests and refutations of it, in tracts written by well-known brethren amongst us, viz.: McCarthy, Pinkerton, Humphrey, Lowe, the late Chas. Stanley, Maynard, and others.

We remain, dear brethren,

Yours faithfully in Christ,
Signed on behalf of the Saints gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ at Bexhill,
(Signed) Albert Wickham
Robert Kent
Henry Jeckell

60 London Street, Greenwich, S. E.
10th June, 1890.

Dear Brethren:

Your letter of the 8th instant has been duly received, and was laid before the brothers last evening, and with a view to its consideration, we are requested to ask you to be good enough to state the evidence on which you assumed that a teacher against whom grave charges are brought, was sheltered and supported by the Assembly here, at the time the letter of commendation was presented; at the same time we send for your information a copy of the judgment of the Assembly in regard to James Corbett.

We are, dear Brethren,

Yours faithfully in Christ,
(Signed on behalf of the Brothers)
G. Chesterfield
James Hepher

To M. Albert Wickham
Mr. Robert Kent
Mr. Henry Jeckell

[Copy]

James Corbett having printed for general distribution a false and slanderous paper purporting to give an account of things which he saw and heard in the Greenwich meeting, and having subsequently confirmed the same by his own hand, while at the same time he has not attempted to adopt any step to which godly exercise as to the existence of real evil in a meeting would lead, is put away from amongst us as a wicked person.

Greenwich, 2d June, 1890. 198

196. (…continued)

of... a disgraceful character”), and thus came before the brethren for discipline, at Ealing, on June 4th, 1890, in this case also, before the judgment against J. Corbett had been read from the Table.)

June 4. Wednesday. Information from Greenwich (on the same ground) against Mr. Cowell, for having printed Mr. J. Corbett’s circular letter, was brought before the Ealing brothers. (Mr. J. Corbett wrote this letter, Mr. Cowell printed it, and Dr. Cotton circulated it; which was a strong threefold testimony against evil, which should have been heeded.)

197. Note by copier: -- The Bexhill letter referred to here, was to the Assembly, not to “Brothers.”

198. (It is noteworthy that a letter informing Ebury St. [London] against Dr. Cotton, for circulating Corbett’s paper at the Cheapside Meeting [London], was sent to them by Greenwich, on June 2nd, six days before the judgment against Corbett was read from the Lord’s Table. Also, that Corbett’s case was communicated to Ealing (as a ground of representation against Cowell, for printing “a paper of... a disgraceful character”), and thus came before the brethren for discipline, at Ealing, on June 4th, 1890, in this case also, before the judgment against Corbett had been read from (continued…)
Chapter 3: The Bexhill-Greenwich Correspondence

Milton House, Bexhill, 12th June, 1890.

Dear Brethren

I am requested by the saints here to reply to your letter of the 10th instant and to say that the communication from here of the 8th inst. was to the Assembly at Greenwich, and was from us collectively as was plainly stated, it having been before us upon two evenings, and finally read at the Lord’s Table.

Until that letter has been read to the Assembly at Greenwich, and a reply sent to us from that Assembly, we cannot enter into any further correspondence.

I remain,
Yours faithfully in Christ,
(Signed) Henry Jeckell

On behalf of Saints gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus at Bexhill.

To Mr. Geo. Chesterfield and Mr. Jas. Hepher, Greenwich. {June 15, 1890, Lord’s day}. 199

2 Gloucester Place, Greenwich, S. E., 24th June, 1890.

Dear Brethren:

Will you kindly see that the enclosed is laid before the brethren at Bexhill?

Yours in the Lord,
(Signed) Geo. Broomhead 200

Greenwich, 23rd June, 1890.

Dear Brethren:

The communication from the saints gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ at Bexhill to the saints gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ at Greenwich, dated 8th June, 1890, has been read before the Assembly here; and the following is the reply of the Assembly.

We observe that you do not furnish the reasons which were asked for, in the letter of 30th May last, for refusing a letter of Commendation given to a brother and sister on behalf of the gathering here, but, that you inform us of “the ground you take.” 201

Any subsequent consideration of the matter is not a justification of a step previously taken. 202

The question of the teaching of any particular brother is scarcely a matter to be discussed between Assemblies, and we are surprised at your reference to the various pamphlets, which have been abroad, and which are hardly of a character to be endorsed by an Assembly. 203

The pleas put forward in justification of your action, however right they may be in principle, 204 are inadmissible in the present case.

The first supposes “grave charges” being “brought against a teacher who is sheltered and supported by the meeting with which he is connected.”

In answer to this we have to say that no charge against our Brother, Mr. Raven, has been preferred before the Assembly here by any person whatever, within or without the meeting. 205

The case supposed of a teacher under grave charges being sheltered and supported by the Assembly falls, therefore, to the ground. 206

198. (...continued) the Lord’s Table. [See the dates in the last footnote to the June 23, 1890 letter from Greenwich to Bexhill.]

199. Mr. G. Boddy (Raven’s partisan) received at Tunbridge Wells. On this date the larger portion of the Ealing meeting left the Sunnyside meeting room (including Messrs. W. T. Whybrow, W. J. Lowe, Colonel Fitzgerald, and others).

The Ealing facts were published in a paper entitled “To F. E. R.” by W. T. Whybrow.

200. (Note by Copier. -- The above was sent to Mr. Kent, Bexhill.)

201. “We observe that you do not furnish the reasons which were asked for, but you inform us of the ground you take.”

N. B. This is not so. They do furnish the “reasons” that were asked for, in their reply of June 8th, and these “reasons” are as they state “the ground” they “take.”

202. “Any subsequent consideration of the matter is not a justification of a step previously taken.”

N. B. The same remark applies. They took their step in consequence of a prior consideration which compelled them to act as they did, and thus did not take the step, previously to the considerations which led to it. [The above two statements of Greenwich are therefore an inversion of the facts.]

203. “The question of the teaching of any particular brother is scarcely a matter to be discussed between Assemblies.

N. B. Therefore, if there is heresy in an Assembly, even an adjoining meeting may not, if the occasion arises, bring it before the notice of that Assembly. This is the principle of the “letter of the ten,” in the Bethesda question.

204. [Underlining by Ed. {H. A. H.}].

205. “In answer to this we have to say that no charge against our brother, Mr. Raven, has been preferred before the Assembly here by any person whatever, within or without the meeting.”

N. B. This is true in the letter, but not in the spirit: this having been written on June 23nd, when a distinct charge, contained in Mr. J. Corbett’s “printed paper, purporting to give an account of things which he saw and heard at the Greenwich meeting, ‘had been already taken under the formal consideration of, and thus had been ’before’ * the Greenwich Assembly (so as to lead up to the exercise of discipline on Mr. J. Corbett), if not actually ‘preferred before’ it.

* [Note “before.” -- Though, thus, actually “before” them, it was authoritatively stated at 145 Cheapside, July 26, 1890, that the Greenwich gathering, in judging Mr. J. Corbett, did not go into the doctrines.

206. “The case supposed of a teacher under grave charges being sheltered and supported by the Assembly, falls, therefore, to the ground.”

(continued...)
The second plea supposes the meeting to be in a divided state.

The only ground on which you can have assumed this as regards Greenwich is an unsupported statement by one person (Mr. J. Corbett) who avowedly left the meeting in a disorderly way, and whose letter does not bear the semblance of truth.

Though we are not disposed to question the right of the meeting to protect itself from fellowship with another meeting where evil is deliberately sheltered, still, we do not consider that such a course should be adopted except in the presence of distinct and unquestionable evidence.

Thus, the main matter at issue is set aside, and a secondary point insisted on; and yet the plea is, to this day urged, that no charge of false doctrine has ever been preferred against Mr. Raven before the Assembly at Greenwich!

As Greenwich objects to the reception of Mr. J. Corbett’s testimony as unsupported, the fact of Mr. W. T. Wadeson’s subsequent documental withdrawal will be seen by a reference to the following dates.

These will also show that in presence of the prior challenge of Greenwich by Bexhill (which formed the ground of the contention at Ealing), those who left Sunnyside room, Ealing, waited a month after Bexhill’s final decision, before breaking bread.

It will be further evident by a comparison of the events of May 25, *June 1* and June 15, *that the unity of the Spirit was deliberately broken by Mr. Raven’s supporters at Folkestone and Tunbridge Wells {re G. Boddy’s reception}; and that the division was, in consequence, practically initiated by them.

Mar. 1890. J. Corbett (having specifically challenged F. E. Raven as to his teaching at Thornton House, Greenwich, on Feb. 16, after breaking of bread; and having written to him, refusing him as a teacher and otherwise, on Feb. 26 ceased attending the Greenwich Assembly.

Mar. 14, Friday (about). Greenwich informs neighboring gatherings, that Corbett, having refused visitation, cannot break bread again without question.

May 8, Thursday. Corbett’s circular letter issued, in which he coupled “another brother and sister” with himself and his daughter, as having come out from the Greenwich Meeting.

May 19, Monday. Corbett’s letter came before brethren at Greenwich.


May 26, Monday. Corbett’s letter, again before brethren at Greenwich.


* June 1, Sunday. Wadeson’s letter to G. Chesterfield, withdrawing, with his wife, from Greenwich Assembly.

G. Boddy received at Folkestone notwithstanding his refusal at Bexhill the previous Sunday: a leading supporter of Mr. Raven from a distance being present.

June 2, Monday. Judgment against Corbett, for “having printed for general distribution a [allegedly] false and slanderous paper, purporting to give an account of things which he “saw and heard in the Greenwich Meeting,” arrived at by Greenwich.

Greenwich (on the ground of the judgment thus agreed to), informs (continued...)
In the present case no such evidence was before you, and therefore we consider your course unjustifiable and a grave breach of fellowship.

Yours faithfully in the Lord
(Signed on behalf of the Assembly at Greenwich)
(Signed) Geo. Broomhead

To the Assembly at Bexhill.

June 29, 1890.

To the Saints meeting at Thornton House, South Street, Greenwich, Kent.

Dear Brethren:

The consideration of your letter of the 23d instant is a source of sorrow and unfeigned grief of spirit to us: Where is the simplicity which is in Christ, and godly uprightness and transparency, which would surely be apparent in your letter, were you really before God in your consciences at the present time as to all this solemn and grievous matter? We say it with grief, we fail to trace any guidance, or expression in your letter to us, of the Spirit of Christ, or desire to clear yourselves.

You carefully avoid answering the question that is really at issue between us, viz: Your identification with Mr. F. E. Raven and his teaching, and seek to escape by raising quibbles that are unworthy of the consideration, much less the practice, of Saints, and would be scarcely admissible in a court of law, or amongst the men of the world.

We have given our reasons clearly and simply in the fear of the Lord, why we refused your letter of commendation: It was your identification with Mr. F. E. Raven and his teaching; this you have never attempted to deny.

The principles that come out in your letter are those of Bethesda, which we repudiate; and are not those of holiness and truth, or agreeable to the unity of the Body of Christ, and practically a denial of our corporate responsibility.

From the tenor of your letter we gather that you are determined to identify yourselves with Mr. F. E. Raven and his teachings.

Our earnest prayer is that our gracious God and Father may work in consciences and hearts for the deliverance of many amongst you from these Christ-dishonoring and defiling doctrines.

It is with the deepest sorrow and with a sense of the solemnity of our act, that we feel before the Lord our responsibility to clear ourselves from association with manifest evil, in refusing any further fellowship with you, and in rejecting you as an Assembly.

Signed on behalf of the Assembly at Bexhill, gathered to the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

(Signed) Henry Jeckell
Robert Kent
Albert Wickham
Brother in Canada

A certain W. I. issued a printed paper titled Letter from a Brother in Canada whose initials are H. G. B., dated Toronto, July 29, 1891. A letter of FER, dated Dec. 9, 1890, to a sister in the United States, contains this, following unscriptural remarks as to judging evil:

Now as to the matter of Bexhill in particular, I believe there are only three brothers there, one is a person of no weight whatever, a second admits he has no head for doctrine, and a third is the brother who in the main acted, so that virtually a most serious question of doctrine and fellowship affecting, so to say, the whole Church is settled among brother and he a brother comparatively little known.

In the next section we will learn from a Bexhill brother that there were seven brothers at Bexhill, and the charge that someone else wrote their letters for them is rebutted. Denigrations and slanders by defenders of evil are often seen in times of contending earnestly for the faith once for all delivered to the saints, and it is not singular in the attacks on the Bexhill saints.

What Robert Kent, of Bexhill, Wrote

H. C. Anstey also did what he could to denigrate Bexhill. In a paper dated Elberfeld, March 1891, in answer to H. C. Anstey, and to J. B. Stoney and C. H. Mackintosh who countersigned it, who had sent a letter sent to Continental brethren, there is a long letter of response to inquiry, written by Robert Kent of Bexhill. Here is some of it:

Tresco House, Bexhill, Sussex, 27 January, 1891.

My dear Brother,

. . . But to turn to your questions, first as to Mr. Boddy’s visit to Bexhill, he did not call upon any brother that I am aware of, either before or after the Lord’s Day, when he presented himself with his wife at the meeting, that is, he never visited any of us during his stay at Bexhill. I know not how many days he was in the place, probably about a week, but as to the exact time I do not know. So you see the first thing is without a shadow of truth. The only word I spoke to Mr. Boddy was previous to the meeting when I asked him if he would respect the consciences of the saints here by sitting back and in not presenting his letter. This, as you know, he refused and made a public refusal of it necessary.

Secondly as to our consulting Mr. Maynard prior to our action and his advising us what to do, the fact is he did not know Mr. Boddy was in Bexhill; the first thing he heard was, what the Bexhill assembly had done.

The dear brethren mentioned by you as managing things here had no more to do with our action than you had. It is a statement made in letters of Mr. Oliphant which I trust in the Lord’s goodness he may one day ere long judge and confess as sin; to stigmatize the action of a company gathered to the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, as a “party move” &c. and that too, without the slightest vestige of proof for the statement, is to me very dreadful. But through His grace we have never attempted to vindicate ourselves; we leave the matter with the Lord, but when asked, as in the present case, we simply state the facts and leave it with the saints to judge before the Lord as to it.

We were all conversant with the facts of what had transpired in London and Greenwich and the doctrines taught by Mr. Raven and his supporters. It had been going on over two years, and several brethren had visited us who had imbibed these teachings, and sought to get our acceptance of them. So here again what is said as to our ignorance of facts is entirely without foundation. The gathering numbered about 24 [7 brothers] beside visitors at the time; four sisters after the decision as to Greenwich left us and went with Mr. Raven, 2 other sisters have gone from brethren altogether. Otherwise we remain together, though we have had to find another meeting-room, as the old one belonged to our brother Mr. Oliphant and he, as was to be expected, gave us notice to quit.

The last point in your letter as to Mr. Maynard writing our letters is as untrue as all the other statements; together we waited upon the Lord, came toget her for prayer again and again and laid all our exercises before Him and sought His gracious guidance, which we have never for one moment doubted He afforded us, and drew up our replies and amended them as we judged any alteration in the wording required, though in truth we felt it was a matter that required but few words; and there was no attempt or pretense to write anything, but our simple convictions before God as to the character and effect of the teaching dividing and scattering the beloved sheep of Christ.

I trust, dear brother, this is a sufficient reply to your requests; if you need anything further I will endeavor to write you more fully, but it is really all summed up in a word: all the statements so diligently circulated are without a particle of truth, and the work of Satan to blind the eyes of the saints as to what is really in question -- the person of our ever blessed Lord Jesus Christ, and the truth of God.

With warmest love in Christ,

Your affectionate Brother in Him,

(Signed) Robert Kent
H. D’Arcy Champney’s Ludicrous Claim

It is not meant by this heading that there was only one of them writing ludicrous things. No, supporters of evil have a litany of them. W. T. Whybrow, who thoroughly and ably responded to H. D’Arcy Champney, wrote:

He says “Bexhill had simply refused the letter of commendation, because they thought the assembly at Greenwich was in a divided state.”\(^209\) Now while it is true that some 4 or 5 had gone out from Greenwich, it is not true to say that Bexhill had simply refused the letter from Greenwich on that account. The bad doctrine was the real and simple ground; the other was a side matter. In proof, I append extracts from a Bexhill brother, in reference to their action on May 25\(^{\{1890\}}\), when the persons bringing the letter of commendation\(^{\{G. Boddy\}}\) from Greenwich left the room, instead of sitting back as requested. He writes as follows:

After they had left, I said that we had not rejected Greenwich as an assembly by our action that morning, but raised the question of their identification with Mr. Raven’s teaching by refusing their letter . . . As an assembly we did not formally reject Greenwich (on May 25). I believe we did what was right, and as led of the Lord; morally I admit we did put them in ward, but the question had not been before us as a gathering, though I believe most of us were perfectly clear that the doctrines were wrong, and we were thus prepared to act should occasion arise, as it did. What we have given prominence to, and put first, is the doctrine; the question of the divided state of the meeting is quite a secondary matter with us. What we refused was to be identified with false doctrine.

This letter is dated June 27\(^{\{1890\}}\), two days before the door was finally closed.\(^210\)

\(^{209}\) It seems that he is making the Bexhill brethren look quite stupid, whereas he really exposes his own state of soul as a supporter of evil!

Chapter 4

F. E. Raven’s Paper on Eternal Life

The following paper was published by FER within a week after the division. It was issued July 3, 1890. It is taken from Letters of F. E. Raven, 1963 ed. The paper which follow FER’s was written as a response, in Aug. 1890, by P. A. Humphreys.

Eternal Life
July 3, 1890

(Notes have been added on pages 43 and 45 because of questions raised).

I doubt the truth of eternal life in its connection with either Christians or Israel can be rightly understood without an apprehension, on the one hand, of the general force with which the term is employed in Scripture, and on the other, of its modifications in connection with dispensations. To use the term, in the literal meaning of the words, would convey little definite idea, since we are conscious that every living soul has an eternal existence with God or without God. But if we first look at the subject as referred to in the Old Testament we shall be helped in apprehending its moral force. The Old Testament, though it may give us glimpses of resurrection and heavenly hopes, in general occupies us with the world as the scene of man’s responsibility and God’s moral government; hence, as to the judgment and penalty of sin, whatever may have been involved, it did not go beyond death, i.e., the cutting off of man’s life here; and that death was thus dreaded by saints we find with Hezekiah, “I said in the cutting off of my days, I shall go to the gates of the grave: I am deprived of the residue of my years. I said, I shall not see the Lord, even the Lord, in the land of the living: I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world” (Isa. 38:10, 11), and so continually in the Psalms. Now it is in the Old Testament that we have the first allusions (prophetically) to eternal life. They are contained, as has been often pointed out, in Psalm 133, “For there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore”; and in Daniel 12, “and many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.” I do not think it can be contested that the thought in these expressions is of a life of continued blessing here on the earth in the favor and under the government of God consequent on the power of sin being broken, and creation delivered from the bondage of corruption. Now we know that this will be brought about by Christ as the fruit of redemption (the creation awaits the revelation of the sons of God), and will be enjoyed by the godly remnant in Israel, they being born again of water and of the Spirit, and the law written in their hearts, and by many among the Gentiles. They will be in the conditions of human life down here, while the foundation of their moral being will be the new birth. Christ will be the source of their life as of all life for man. The ministry of all earthly blessing will be to them through Christ as David’s Son, and consequent on His having entered within the veil, as the High Priest, and come out to them. Heaven will pour out by the Spirit its blessings on the earth. Under such conditions will eternal life be known by the earthly saints. I have referred to this because it seems to show that eternal life stands in contrast to human life marred by sin and under the power of death which is its present condition here.

When we come to the New Testament we find the thought of eternal life evidently having a certain place in the minds of the Jews; and in the synoptic gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke) though connected by the Lord with the coming age, the testimony as to it does not generally go, in its scope, beyond life and blessing in this world. I have said ‘generally’ because the Lord spoke in Matthew 19:29, and parallel passages, not only according to what had been
predicated in the Old Testament, but according to His perfect knowledge of the fulness of the words.

But when we come to the later writings of Paul (Timothy and Titus) we not only find peculiar prominence given to the truth of eternal life, but a scope and bearing connected with it, such as is not found in the Old Testament or hardly even in the synoptic gospels, though the same thought remains of a life and state of blessing in contrast to man’s transitory life here under the power of sin, and liable to death. It is shown as promised of God that cannot lie before the world began, connected with a purpose and grace given to us in Christ Jesus before the world was, and Paul speaks of himself as apostle according to the hope of it. But what gives to it its peculiar and distinctive character, and even contrast to the thought in the Old Testament, is that it is life ‘in Christ Jesus’ -- the risen, glorified Man, the heavenly Man in contrast to the earthly, the new man in contrast to the old. Eternal life is to be known and enjoyed in Him in the glorious scene into which He has entered as Man, in the virtue and power of redemption. “As he is, so are we in this world.” The consequence of this is that we must connect eternal life now with the new and heavenly condition of man in glory, as is seen in Christ glorified, instead of (as will be the case hereafter) with man in human life and circumstances down here.

Now when we consider the application of this to the believer we must bear in mind that the new and heavenly Man, with which eternal life is connected, is distinct and apart from the life and circumstances of men down here. This is clearly seen in Christ, whose life is taken from the earth. It is as the risen glorified Man He is said to be the true God and eternal life.93

Hence new birth, always necessary if man has to say to God, does not wholly bring in that of which I have spoken. Christ, the heavenly Man, must be received, and that too through the testimony to a work by which He has removed, as before God, all that we were morally in the flesh that every one believing in Him might not perish but have eternal life. Thus we begin in Christ, having received Him, and live in Him where He is, in the Spirit, not in the flesh -- we begin thus as babes, and by the ministry of Christ to our souls, increase and grow up in Him, and Paul always looks to our being full grown in Him; but it is evident that this, in itself, is distinct from human life, circumstances and relationships here below. It is a life which has its source and spring and seat in Christ, and in which the believer, in the power of the Spirit, realizes by faith the new and heavenly being which He is in Christ for God, in which he grows from the babe to the man, and in which he will be perfected in glory according to the image of the heavenly. It is Christ.

But there still remains to be considered the way in which eternal life is presented to us in the writings of John. I doubt if a complete idea of what eternal life is can be gathered from any single statement, as very often two sides of a truth are shown separately in Scripture, and this appears often to be the case in John’s gospel. For instance, in John 3, we have the statement that the Son of man must be lifted up as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, pointing to the judgment in the cross of man’s moral condition in the flesh, and the removal thus of the distance that stood between God and man by reason of sin, so that man might be in the presence of God, revealed in the Son, consistently with divine righteousness. Thus we have one side of the truth connected with the free gift of eternal life, and in chapter 4 we have the other, the water that Christ gives, the well of water in the believer springing up unto eternal life. Christ formed and living in the believer in the energy of the Holy Spirit. Man as in the flesh here is completely set aside. As the fruit of redemption he finds himself in a new and blessed order of things with a new and suited being, and an energy within given of Christ. We have much the same thing in John 20. Redemption being accomplished Christ first announces to the disciples the new and blessed place of association with Himself in the presence of His Father and their Father, and His God and their God, which He had secured for them. He afterwards breathes on them, communicating to them the Holy Spirit, to be the energy of life within them, while they waited for the risen glorious condition in which they would be fully conformed to Himself. Thus again we see the two sides of the truth. It may be added that in John truths are seen in their nature and principle, or as we might say abstractly, rather than in the mode in which they connect themselves with saints in spiritual growth. The blessings which are peculiarly ours, and the divine nature of which we are partakers, are thus shown to us in their own proper characteristics without modification because of the actual condition of saints.

It may be added further that with John eternal life is seen in its essential nature rather than in form, and this, whether as in Christ, or as given to believers -- and it is for this reason I judge that we do not find quite the same line taken in regard of growth, though the principles are the same. Eternal life is given, and is in the Son, and we have it as having Him. We are in Him, though not yet out of the old condition here, save morally by His death, and we live by Him in the power of the Holy Spirit. It is not so much with John the question of stature, or of our being perfected, as of eternal life in its principle and nature; hence with John it is viewed as present.

Eternal life has been spoken of as consisting in the ‘out-of-the-world heavenly condition of relationship and being,’ in which the Lord was here alone in the world. (See

93. So declared to be in full revelation, but ever such as to the essential glory of His Person.
This condition has its full display and perfection in the Son as the risen glorious Man out of death, in which, as Son of man, He had glorified God. ‘He is the true God, and eternal life.’ Eternal life is in the Son. But as to what eternal life is essentially (in relationship and moral being) it was ever with the Father in the Person of the Son, and manifested in Him to His disciples here in the days of His flesh, though they also saw and handled the Lord in His risen condition. It was ever an integral part of the Person of the Eternal Son, but such as could according to the divine counsels be connected with manhood and be imparted to men. But we must remember that in addition to this is the incomunicable glory of His Person as the only-begotten Son. The apostles, however dull they may have been as to intelligence, contemplated His glory as of an only-begotten one with a Father. Some of them were eye-witnesses of His majesty on the holy mount. We, real and blessed as is our completeness in Him, worship Him as One in whom dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. Further, the Lord prayed for all those whom the Father had given Him that they might be with Him where He is so as to have the unspeakable blessedness of beholding His glory, which the Father had given Him, for He loved Him before the foundation of the world. All this maintains before the soul the peculiar proper glory of His Person, which every Christian heart would cherish above and distinct from all the blessing into which He is himself brought in the Son. ‘He is the true God, and eternal life.’

It is evident that the above statement of what eternal life consists in, involves a wholly new sphere for man, and a new man in that sphere. The garden of Eden would not have suited an ‘out-of-the-world heavenly condition of relationship and being.’ It belongs to and demands another scene and order of things. Hence, when for the first time the Lord refers to the subject (in John 3) He speaks of “the Son of man which is in heaven,” though bodily He was then on earth. And when in John 17:3 He describes its form and character for us now that He is in glory, He says, “This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” I think the above is sufficient to show how essential the idea of a new sphere, or order of things, is to the consideration of eternal life. In fact, the truth of eternal life as a present blessing cannot be grasped without it. Now eternal life was essentially ever in that sphere in the Son with the Father, nor did it cease to be so when it was manifested here, though there was another side to the Person of Him in whom it was manifested, in that He had entered into human life in its earthly conditions. But now eternal life has its full and perfect expression according to the counsels of God in Him as the risen glorified Man with the Father, and we are in Him there. We see thus with John the two great thoughts, a new and heavenly Man and a new sphere for man, and both to be realized and enjoyed by the soul that has received Christ now, even before he has done with his earthly existence here.

The way in which eternal life is given to us, is not yet in the glorified condition which properly belongs to it, but in the power of the Spirit and in faith; we are not yet perfected. It must be remembered that for us eternal life consists in a new man, and not simply in a new vitality. It is a new creation in us by the quickening power of God.

I add a word to show how, in God’s ways, righteousness is intimately connected with life. There is a divinely formed state which accords with the believer’s standing, as may be seen in the expression, ‘justification of life,’ in Romans 5. This is manifestly beyond justification from offences.

The latter refers to us as men down here. We are justified in the scene of our responsibility, where we had been guilty, and, as a consequence, have peace with God. But divine righteousness in its fullest sense is seen in that the One that was in death for the glory of God, is now the living Man in the glory of God, in a state wholly suited to that glory. Christ went to the Father, and the disciples saw Him no more. The ministry is now of the Spirit and righteousness in the light of the glory of Christ; and we, for whom He was made sin, have life in Him there, are a new creation in Him, and as such become God’s righteousness in Him. The full expression will be in our being with Him in the same glory from whence the ministry of righteousness has come. We have the justification of life. We are alive to God in Christ, and in being so, are the expression of God’s righteousness in which man has been set in glory.

This is the full height of the gospel, the answer to Christ having been made sin for us.

I might have said something as to the effect and influence of eternal life in the character and walk of the believer -- for he that saith, he abideth in Him, ought himself also so to walk even as He walked -- but I forbear not wishing to lengthen the paper.

F. E. Raven
In a paper entitled “Eternal Life,” signed F. E. Raven, we have now, I presume, the writer’s thoughts distinctly and definitely put forth by him; the errors he has fallen into are manifest enough, if we refer to the written Word -- our unfailing and simple guide -- and judge simply by it.

He begins with a “doubt if the truth of Eternal Life in its connection with either Christians or Israel can be rightly understood without an apprehension of the general force with which the term is employed in Scripture, and of its modifications in connection with dispensations.” Now, here it is evident that Christ is not personally before him at all, but “Eternal Life “in its varied use in Scripture. “Christians or Israel,” are spoken of as if both were on the same ground, and as if Eternal Life for the Christian was a matter of enquiry as to the Old Testament use of the term. Of course, if it is the discussion of the use of the words merely, none would object, but when he asserts that Christians can only know what their meaning is by apprehending “the general force” and “modifications” of the term, can we be surprised at his arriving at an erroneous result as to Christ? What the Christian has is Eternal Life in Christ -- Christ Himself being Eternal Life -- “The Eternal Life which was with the Father” {1 John 1:2}-- wholly unrevealed until He came into this world in the form of man, and made it manifest -- He Himself being it.

It is said:

To us the term [Eternal Life] in the literal meaning of the words would convey little definite idea, since we are conscious that every living soul has an eternal existence with God or without God.

It is evident that the use of the term here again has nothing whatever to do with Christ. It is made the basis for discussing the use of the term in the Old Testament, in order that “we” may apprehend its “moral force,” so he says. That is we, believers, are to search out the use of the words “Eternal Life” in the Old Testament, in order that we may apprehend the “moral force” of their use as to us. Now, for believers, Christ is Eternal Life, and Mr. Raven has asserted that he never had

the thought of separating eternal life from the Person of the Son of God, or of asserting that eternal life is, for a Christian, any other than Christ;

and yet he now proposes to discover the “moral force” of the term by Old Testament research as to its use. Will he say that we shall be helped by this means to apprehend the “moral force” of the term “Christ”? He cannot, he dare not; and does not this plainly show that for him Eternal Life is a thought wholly apart from Christ, in that enquiry?

Further it is said: -- The words “Eternal Life” would convey little definite idea to us, because we are conscious of our own eternal existence. To mere mind and reason this might be the case, for reason leaves out God, but to the soul that is born of God, the consciousness of eternal existence would be no barrier to understanding what “Eternal Life” meant, for conscience connects all with God, and he would at once go beyond eternal existence, and connect the Eternal Life given him of God with God, and to him it would, to go no farther, convey the thought of God’s presence, and of how this “Eternal Life” was his, and what it was in itself, as wholly beyond and outside the eternal existence of which he was already conscious. With what an unbeliever’s thoughts on the subject may be, we have nothing to do; the consciousness of an eternal existence without God, may be a subject for the metaphysical discussions of scientists -- it is a strange thought to enter any believer’s mind in relation to Eternal Life.

But let us turn to John 10:27, 28. Are we to believe that those of whom the Lord Jesus spoke as “My sheep,” and “I give unto them Eternal Life” would not then and there go beyond consciousness of their own eternal existence? Had His words no more power, or sense, or reality in them than that? When the young man said to Him “What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life” -- had he no “definite idea” of anything but of his own eternal existence? This it is admitted he had -- “every living soul has it” -- but the young man knew he had not “Eternal Life,” or he could not have asked the Lord how he was to get it. He never thought of connecting the two, for one he knew he had, the other he knew he had not. Otherwise, what sense would there have been or need either, in his asking the Lord what he should do to inherit it -- inherit eternal existence which he had already. It is mere reason -- shallow scepticism, for Scripture plainly shows that Eternal Life is wholly apart from one’s consciousness of one’s own eternal existence, and has nothing whatever to do with it. It were not distinct from it, there would be no seeking after it by any. The soul in earnest with God does not connect Eternal Life with existence, but with God. It is the craving of every soul in earnest with Him -- a craving fully and eternally satisfied for every one who has

---

"I Come Quickly:
Hold Fast What Thou Hast, That no One Take Thy Crown"

by P. A. Humphreys

August 1890
Christ personally.

Eternal Life is not, to begin with, connected, in his mind, with Christ, but with our own existence. Is it not clear that Eternal Life and Christ are really two distinct thoughts in his mind?

With regard to what is said as to the Old Testament giving “glimpse of resurrection and heavenly hopes,” but that “as to the judgment end penalty of sin, it did not go beyond death, i.e., the cutting off of man’s life here”; surely such passages as Eccl. 12:14, Psa. 139, especially verse 8, et seq. 55:15, 9:17, 16:10, 11, 49:14, 15, etc., 116:3-8, Isa. 5:14, Ezek. 31:16, etc., 32:27, etc., show that “the judgment and penalty of sin” went “beyond death, i.e., the cutting off of man’s life here.” Indeed as to the sacrifices, are we to be told that death, mere physical death here, was the extent to which they pointed, to which anyone in Old Testament times could go as to the “judgment and penalty of sin”? That with God’s earthly people, under His direct government, death was the judgment or wages of sin in cutting off from earthly blessing, no one would deny, but to say that “the judgment and penalty of sin” did not, in its scope then, go beyond death, i.e. the cutting off of man’s life here,” is to deny God’s Word, and all sense in them of God’s judgment hereafter. Moreover if it went no further, all from Adam downwards, including Noah, Abraham, Moses, Samuel, David, and the Prophets suffered death “the judgment and penalty of sin,” and were on the same ground as Cain, Achan, Ahab, and the wicked generally. That there was a clinging to life down here, as in the case of Hezekiah, which is cited, is true enough, heavenly hopes and joys, and full blessing and pardon not being entered upon, as the finished work of Christ was not and could not be before the soul, but Scripture says distinctly “as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law, while of Gentiles it is said the work of the law is written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness. I ask, did the law give no sense of some “judgment and penalty of sin” beyond “the cutting off of man’s life here?” Did “dying in his sins” not “go beyond death”? Has Psa. 32 no meaning beyond life down here, and the avoidance of mere physical death? The passage quoted from Dan. 12, “and many of them that sleep in the dust of death shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt,” he tells cannot be contested as referring to anything but “a life of continued blessing here on earth. Are those then who awake to “shame and everlasting contempt” to do so here on earth? Was there no hell and eternal torment for the wicked in Old Testament days? Had saints then no sense or knowledge of this? Was the mere “cutting off of man’s life here” the reason that “death was thus dreaded by saints?” Mr. Raven says so, but no one who reads his Bible will agree with him.

But he goes on to say that

in the synoptic gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) though

connected by the Lord with the coming age, the testimony as to it” [Eternal Life] “does not generally go, in its scope, beyond life and blessing in this world.

He explains that he uses the word “generally,” because he finds “Matt. 19:29, and parallel passages” somewhat of a hindrance to his theory, though, he says, the Lord there spoke “not only according to what had been predicated in the Old Testament, but according to His own perfect knowledge of the fulness of the words.”

But what about such passages as

These shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal;

Fear Him who after He hath killed, hath power to cast into hell;

Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

And did Abraham’s bosom, in Luke 16, and the rich man in torment, not go “in its scope beyond life and blessing,” or the reverse, “in this world”? But leaving this part of the paper, which Scripture so fully refutes, we next find “Eternal Life is to be known” and enjoyed in Him in the glorious scene into which “He has entered as Man, in the virtue and power of redemption.” Now this, more than ever, makes it clear that the writer does not look upon Christ as Eternal Life, or upon Eternal Life as Christ, at all; it is something to be enjoyed in Him, not Himself; he says He is it, but when he comes to speak his mind about it, he speaks of Eternal Life as something to be enjoyed in Christ -- it is not Christ Himself, but something “known and enjoyed in Him.” This explains really his meaning of the words “Eternal Life is in the Son.”

So, further on, he says, “It was ever an integral part of the Person of the Eternal Son.” Some may, perchance, take this as a great and sound admission, covering the whole question at issue; but a little thought will show it is quite the reverse. We could not speak of a man being an integral part of himself. A man is either himself or he is not. We could not speak of the sun as an integral part of the sun. So as to our Lord -- He is that Eternal Life which was with the Father, or He is not it; to say it is an integral part of His Person is to deny Himself really as being it. We are then told that Eternal Life was

such as could be connected with manhood and be imparted to men [-- the] integral part of the Person of the Eternal Son [which] could be connected with manhood and be imparted to men! 95

So that it is not Christ Himself that we have as Life, but an integral part of Himself: I do not think Scripture ever says Christ is “imparted” to us. And this in the teeth of such Scriptures as Gal. 2:20, Rom. 8:10, Col. 3:4, and “Christ in you, the hope of glory,” to say nothing of numberless other passages to the same effect. All this is mere dissecting His

95. [This involves his idea of the eternal life-in-essence and the humanity-in-essence which was ever in the Son but not part of deity.]
Person. If Eternal Life is only an integral part of Himself, we really have not Christ Himself at all as our life, but only something that is an integral part of Himself. I am aware of what follows on the same page as to our worshiping “Him as One in whom dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily,” but it is merely stating a truth of another character regarding Himself, in order to gloss over the deadly denial of His Eternal Personality as Eternal Life. Besides Col. 2:9, is not connected with our worship of Him, but with our being complete in Him. It is another instance of the loose way in which the writer quotes Scripture in order to support his new theory.

He then quotes from the Bible Treasury for 1867. I will here give the whole of the sentence parallel with the version he gives of it. He says:

Eternal Life has been spoken of as consisting in the “out-of-the-world heavenly condition of relationship and being,” in which the Lord was here alone in the world.”

The original gives:

He, Christ, was alone in His Person that Eternal Life which was with the Father, and was alone such in the world. Hence the only-begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, the Son of man who is in heaven (who else was there, or even had ascended?). He was this alone. He came, Eternal Life into this world, but was alone in the out-of-the-world heavenly condition of relationship and being in which Eternal Life consists: which was before the world not only in God, but in counsel for us, given us in Christ, manifested in Him alone in the world, and now, consequent on His being lifted up and gone out of it into the heavenly place of which He brought word, that into which we are introduced in Him.

I have given this quotation at length, in order to show how the sentence has been perverted. The original speaks of Christ as Eternal Life here below in that condition; Mr. Raven says that condition itself is Eternal Life. Any one can see the difference between the two, and what is involved. He says:

This condition has its full display and perfection in the Son as the risen glorious man out of death, in which, as Son of man, He had glorified God.

He says Eternal Life has been spoken of as this condition -- he now says this condition, or Eternal Life has its full display and perfection in the Son as the risen, glorious man out of death. This is blasphemous, for it is making out that Eternal Life had not its full display and perfection in the blessed Son when in this world as Man. And this is not an isolated statement; he repeats on the next page:

Eternal Life has its full and perfect expression according to the counsels of God in Him as the risen glorified Man with the Father.

It is as the risen glorified Man He is said to be the true God and Eternal Life.

Said by whom? Certainly not by Scripture. Scripture says, He, the Son, was that Eternal Life which was with the Father -- He was that fully and perfectly before He became Man -- as Man, here below, He was its full display and perfection in Himself -- He came, Eternal Life, into this world, and it was in this world that He fully and perfectly manifested what He ever was before the foundation of the world, that Eternal Life that was with the Father -- in the out-of-the-world heavenly condition of relationship and being truly -- but He was as much the true God and Eternal Life when in lowly wondrous grace He lay as the Babe in the Manger, as He was before He took upon Him the form of man, or as He is now at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens.

He cites, “He is the true God and Eternal Life,” and then slips in the “disciples also saw and handled the Lord in His risen condition,” as if 1 John 1:1, and 5:20, refer to our Lord only as risen. I will quote the whole verse, and the reader can then see for himself the use made of it:

And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding that we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, in His Son Jesus Christ.

This is the true God and Eternal Life.

Scripture both in letter, and in Spirit, maintains that our blessed Lord was, as Man here on earth, that Eternal Life which was with the Father, that He was from the very moment of His coming into this world to His going out of this world back to the Father, the full and perfect expression of the Eternal Life, wholly, absolutely, and completely -- He Himself being it, alone in His own Person. Mr. Raven’s theory as to this is, whilst admitting Christ is Eternal Life (not that He was ever it but that it “ever was an integral part of His Person,”) that Eternal Life is the life which the Lord led here upon earth, completed as to earth at the Cross, and consummated in “its full and perfect expression as the risen glorified Man with the Father.” For him Eternal Life is not what the Lord was, and ever was, but what the Lord did in His life down here, and for him it is now consummated in glory. And this is why he condemns as a “monstrosity” the assertion that “the Lord never ceased to be the exhibition of Eternal Life from the Babe in the manger to the Throne of the Father.” He says it is what Christ is now as risen and glorified. Scripture says it is what He ever was with the Father from all eternity, manifested as Man down here, heard, seen, looked upon, and handled of men, from the beginning, that is before the Cross at any rate.

I have said enough to point out the evil and heretical character of this paper, though there is more that could be shown to be unscriptural. But one statement needs especial notice; he says, speaking of Eternal Life,

it is a life in which the believer realizes by faith the new and heavenly being which he is in Christ for God, in which he grows, and in which he will be perfected in glory.

Here indeed is self-occupation, and self-satisfaction too -- the
real root of all this new and evil system of doctrine, as far from Scripture, as far from Christ, and as far from the light, as the East is from the West. That we do realize, through grace, what we are in Christ is true, thank God, and we can bless Him for it, but it is through an ungrieved Spirit, and apprehending through Him what Christ is to God, and what He has made Him to be to us. It is not that through Him we are occupied with or realize our own growth, or prospect of perfection, but that through Him we are occupied with Christ, and with Him alone, and the prospect of perfection is that of being in glory with Him, like Him, and for His glory.

But whatever may have been thought and said heretofore, it is now clear that Eternal Life, according to Mr. Raven is an advance on early Christianity, and is matter of attainment and growth:

It is [he says] a life in which the believer grows from the babe to the man, and in which he will be perfected in glory.

That souls may have defective views of Eternal Life in regard to themselves, is not to be wondered at; but he really makes it out to be a matter of attainment with our Lord too. He says:

But now Eternal Life has its full and perfect expression in Him as the risen glorified Man with the Father . . . We thus see with John the two great thoughts, a new and heavenly Man and a new sphere for man. [The capitals are his].

I have referred to this before, but return to it again, as it is important to see the real matter at issue, and this is only done by seeing how it affects our Lord. If Eternal Life has its full and perfect expression in Him as the risen glorified Man, it is evident that all that He was as Man here on earth was something short of it, and that He only became or attained to the full expression of it through death, and resurrection, and being glorified. Eternal Life is now said to be “a new and heavenly Man.” Christ our Lord a new Man! And this as Eternal Life, risen and therefore perfect in expression! And a new sphere for man! There can be no mistake here as to what is meant. Eternal Life ever was an integral part of the Person of the Son -- He, as the new and heavenly Man is it fully and perfectly. So that it was never fully displayed here on earth at all, nor heard, nor seen, nor handled at all, for

It is as the risen glorified Man He is said to be the true God and Eternal Life!

A more thorough contradiction of Scripture could not be.

Here again we have a flat denial that He ever was the Eternal Life. The bare idea of His attaining to or becoming it, in its full and perfect expression in any way, is the denial of His Person as ever being it. It matters not what references may be made to His Godhead glory and Deity. Here is the denial of Himself as ever the Eternal Life, and it is simple blasphemy. Mr. Raven appeals to Mr. Darby for support of his theories, but Mr. Darby ever taught that John’s ministry was the manifestation of Eternal Life, the Divine nature, God Himself in a Man down here, whilst Paul’s ministry was that the Man who had glorified God down here had gone back into the presence of God on high, and was glorified there. Mr. Raven reverses all this, and assuming (for it is mere assumption) that when John says “This is the true God and Eternal Life” [1 John 5:20] he is speaking of Christ as the risen glorified Man, he weaves out his theory and destroys the whole truth, and, what is more, introduces a blasphemous notion in regard to our Lord. Christ ever was, is, and will be for all eternity, Eternal Life, no matter where He may be, whether with the Father before the world was, or Man here in this world, or on the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens; and as to the expression of it, He could not but be what He ever was, the full and perfect expression of it in every place. It is blasphemy to say or insinuate otherwise.

But touching this question of Eternal Life, I will now give extracts from two letters which state the matter more simply than usual with Mr. Raven. The first extract is from a letter of one of his followers, and the second is from his reply. Extract No. 1:

I shall feel obliged if you will kindly send me a word or two as to the enclosed question as to Eternal Life, and as to whether you maintain now, as I think you did at Witney, that neither the little children, nor the young men had Eternal Life, because they could be tempted by the world; and whether you would say now that Eternal Life was not a principle of living.

Remark on this letter is needless, save as pointing out that the impression left on the writer’s mind by Mr. Raven’s teaching at Witney meeting two years ago was, that the babes and young men had not Eternal Life, the reason being that “they had not received, yet that no one could, as to his Christianity, go beyond the testimony he had received, and hence there might be Christians who, in this sense, had not Eternal Life. The early Christians had forgiveness of sins, and the Spirit, and were waiting for the kingdom. The truth of Eternal Life came out with Paul’s testimony. As to the other point, I should still hesitate to say that Eternal Life is presented as a principle of living, and for the reason that for us Eternal Life means a new man, and not simply a new vitality. Hence it is “He that has the Son has life,” and “He that eateth me shall live by me.” I think Eternal Life describes generally the blessing in which we are placed before the Father. The principle of living is Christ assimilated, and effective in us by the power of the Spirit, so that we are formed in the new man.

Sd. F. E. R., July 16, 90.

Now I ask any child of God to weigh what is said here in the light of the Word of God. What was understood to be said at
Witney is not denied, but repeated in another form -- babes and fathers are said to have received equally from God, but at once a distinction is made, and “his Christianity,” i.e. the individual Christianity of each one is spoken of; just as if there were different grades, and forms, and standards of Christianity, each one going up to his own standard according to “the testimony he has received” -- the testimony varying, and thus producing a different result in each. Where is any such thought to be found in Scripture? varying testimony and a varying standard in Christianity! And this is his ground for saying that “there might be Christians who had not Eternal Life.” As an example he cites the early Christians who had forgiveness of sins, and the Spirit, and were waiting for the Kingdom. The truth of Eternal Life came out with Paul’s testimony -- i.e. afterwards. Now the early Christians, whether looking for the kingdom, or heaven, had Eternal Life, or they were not Christians at all. “He that hath the Son hath life”; (Mr. Raven quotes only thus far, let us read the remainder) “He that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” So that according to his theory the early Christians had “forgiveness of sins, and the Spirit,” but not the Son, because he insinuates they had not Eternal Life. Let us turn to Scripture, “Verily verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word and believeth on Him that sent me hath everlasting life.” “At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you” -- was “that day” only having forgiveness and the Spirit, or are we to be told “that day “began with Paul’s testimony, and not before. It is admitted they had the Spirit, and to what did He testify? Was “He shall guide you into all truth,” “He shall glorify me for He shall take of mine and show it unto you,” a dead letter until Paul’s testimony began? Had Acts 2:33, no then present reality in it? Was not that Scripture Christ ascended and glorified, and sending from “the Father” too, as Son, the promise of the Holy Ghost? And again Acts 3:13, “Hath glorified His Servant Jesus”; and Acts 5:31, “Him hath God exalted by His right hand and we are His witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost.” Had not the early Christians the Son? If not they could not be Christians at all, and of course had not life. If they had the Son, which is undoubtedly true, they had life, Eternal Life in Him -- He was their life, just as much as He is ours. Paul’s testimony did not alter the state of believers as to life or Eternal Life. God might and did raise him up to bring out wonderful and blessed truths regarding our Lord and His Church which is His Body, and the standing of the believer before God, etc., but his testimony did not make one atom of difference as to the possession by the believer of Eternal Life in Christ. Moreover, Paul’s testimony as to Eternal Life is rather how the believer gets it, not what it is in itself; John’s testimony is as to what Eternal Life is in itself: And mark too that the early Christians referred to would include all the Apostles as well. Are we to believe that they had not Eternal Life till Paul came? Had they till then, the Son but not the Life? Or had they neither? How then had they forgiveness, or the Spirit, and for whose kingdom were they looking? Had John not Eternal Life until Paul’s testimony came? It is all part of the same system of error, that tries to make out progress where there was none, and development in revelation, in order to make room for man’s thoughts instead of God’s.

But there is still more. Eternal Life is now said to be “the blessing in which we are placed before the Father” -- the old error is here repeated though the writer says elsewhere he never had “the thought of separating Eternal Life from the Person of the Son of God, or of asserting that Eternal Life is, for a Christian, other than Christ.” Here Eternal Life, or admittedly Christ, is now again defined as “the blessing in which we are placed before the Father” -- merely another form of calling it a sphere. But I pass this by; here is what follows -- worse indeed than all that has gone before.

The principle of living is Christ assimilated. Christ, the Christ of God, the Holy and the True, the Blessed One, assimilated to the believer! Assimilated to what? To himself? And this the principle of living! The believer has life, but in order to live Christ must be assimilated! And then Christ is effective in Him by the power of the Spirit, so that he is formed in the new man!

We may ask in vain for Scripture for this blasphemy concerning the blessed Son of God -- His Anointed. What is this that so thinks, and so speaks of our Lord as assimilated, or converted into a substance of his own nature by the believer; what but infidel reason? We have had many irreverent statements, alas! made as to our Lord, in all this sad controversy and trial amongst us, but nothing has been said, so grossly irreverent as this. It is not so much that it has been said, deliberately written as a definition of the principle of life, but that such a thought should have found a place in the heart and mind of any child of God, and yet not fill him with horror. And this assimilation of Christ is said to be the work of the Spirit in us!

May He preserve us, dear reader, in simplicity as to Himself, and above all in reverence for His Person, and in subjection to His blessed Word that speaks of our being like Him when we see Him in glory, and that never could tolerate for a moment such a thought as His assimilation to ourselves down here whether by the Spirit, or by our own effort (2 Cor. 4:10; Phil. 3:10).

I would close with one word of warning: “Touch not the unclean” -- let no explanation, no mere withdrawal satisfy you -- your Lord is blasphemed, your Lord’s name is dishonored, and if you are His, you are bound to Judge, and refuse, and stand apart from it for His sake -- it is the only way in which you can show your fidelity to Him down here; 2 Tim. 2:21 is the only way to be fit for His service. Alas for those who fail to discern the evil.

August, 1890, P. A. H.
The separation from evil unto the Lord had formally begun on June 29, 1890; and a few days later, on July 3, 1890, F. E. Raven unleashed his paper, *Eternal Life*, contained in Chapter 4, which also contains P. A. Humphrey’s answer, “I Come Quickly: Hold Fast What Thou Hast, That No Man Take Thy Crown,” August, 1890. We will now trace FER’s letters from *Letters of F. E. Raven*, 1963 that are subsequent to the June 29, 1890 division. The first one, however is not in that printed edition but is a composite culled from two papers by A. C. Ord. This letter, written within the week after the separation from evil unto the Lord contains his blasphemy concerning Christ as the Eternal Life, and what he wrote about the Babe in the manger (see Chapter 7 for how he lied about this). And, as before, the material in braces {} is added from other sources, not being included in *Letters of F. E. Raven*, 1963.

**1890**

My Dear Brother, I am glad to answer your letter; and as to the various points you mention would say that the statement about John 5:26 is untrue, and has no foundation. I refer the passage, as every one else, to the hour that now is.

As to eternal life not being a Person, a Person is eternal life -- Christ is it; but when it was said that eternal life is a person by C. S. [Stanley] and that school, they meant that the eternal life and the eternal Son were strictly equivalent. This I believe to be very wrong, and clouding to the glory of the only begotten Son. As the risen glorious Man He is the Eternal Life; but then all that in which Eternal Life essentially consists (nature and relationship) was in the Son, ever with the Father, and manifested in Him when here after the flesh. But the eternal Son is a much greater thing than eternal life.

I send you an extract from the letter in which the statement “Think of an helpless infant,” &c. occurs. I think it speaks for itself. The exhibition of eternal life is in the risen Man who has annulled death.

June 29, 1889. Then, again, as to life, he [H. H. McCarthy] 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.

The reference in my printed paper to certain statements having been withdrawn or modified was to statements by _____ &c., not to statements of my own.

I think in the beginning of 1 John 1 the apostle gives prominence to the condition rather than the person -- though the condition is inseparable from the person -- at the same time the person is greater than the condition.

Believe me,
Your affectionate Brother,
F. E. Raven

P. S. The moment is a trying one, but made less difficult through the mistakes of those who have acted.

From, *Collected Writings of A. C. Ord*, pp. 87, 127. See also p. 113.

---

96. The date is given by H. A. Hammond, *A Record of Some Correspondence*. . ., p. 23.
My Dear Brother, Referring to our conversation here on June 21st, I have thought it well to send you a few lines to indicate my position and feeling in regard to things which have lately transpired amongst brethren. And first I would say, that I am not in any way identified with the letter published at the end of a pamphlet entitled ‘Be not deceived,’ which has been recently circulated. I have not read the pamphlet. I have heard others refer to the letter quoted in it, but I have neither seen nor read it, nor had I any part in its being written, nor did I know of it before it was printed; and as it has been withdrawn by the author, I do not feel called on now to read it. I esteem the writer highly as a brother, but I am sure he would not regard himself, nor care to be regarded, as a follower of mine. To still circulate the letter as though it had been written with my sanction so as to be an expression of my thoughts, is unjust. As to the idea of my having a following, I am not aware that I ever desired, or had, or courted such. I feel rather to stand in the position of one needing consideration when suffering under charges without truth, but often readily accepted, made and spread against me, and that by some whom I have, in time past, highly esteemed. As to anything I have said or written lacking in clearness (and of this others must judge) or tending to confuse, I have already expressed publicly my regret; but I think if my letter of December 6th, 1889, with the notes, be read with unbiased mind, its purport must judge) or tending to confuse, I have already expressed publicly my regret; but I think if my letter of December 6th, 1889, with the notes, be read with unbiased mind, its purport will be understood as seeking to lead souls into a more practical apprehension of the calling on high of God in Christ Jesus. No cherished truth is touched or given up, or its force lessened or unduly pressed. I can honestly say that I absolutely accept the teachings of our deceased brother Mr. Darby, which are circulated as if I were opposing them -- though I would use them as a means of help and instruction for myself, and not as a standard of doctrine, for which I am sure they were never intended by the writer. I do not claim to have found new light, but I have desired as a servant of the Lord, and of the saints, to remind those who will receive it of truths well known, but apt to be let go. My wish is, in my measure, small as it may be, to serve the whole church of God on earth. I have plenty of defects, but I am clear in my conscience that I have desired no following; and I maintain that neither in heart nor fact do I hold or teach other than sound doctrine, nor have I done aught to justify the charges of heresy and blasphemy attempted to be put upon me, though never presented before the assembly here. I write this with difficulty and pain; but already divisions have begun, and though humbled under the hand of God upon us, I can with good conscience say that I love the Lord and His people, and reverence His holy Person.

Believe me, Your affectionate brother,
F. E. Raven

What I thought, and I think maintained at Witney was that, though the fathers had not received anything from God that the babes had not received, yet that no one could, as to his Christianity, go beyond the testimony he had received, and hence there might be Christians who, in this sense, had not Eternal Life. The early Christians had forgiveness of sins, and the Spirit, end were waiting for the kingdom. The truth of Eternal Life came out with Paul’s testimony. As to the other point, I should still hesitate to say that Eternal Life is presented as a principle of living, and for the reason that for us Eternal Life means a new man, and not simply a new vitality. Hence it is ‘He that has the Son has life,’ and ‘He that eateth me shall live by me.’ I think Eternal Life describes generally the blessing in which we are placed before the Father. The principle of living is Christ assimilated, and effective in us by the power of the Spirit, so that we are formed in the new man.

Signed. F. E. R.


My dear brother, It is Mr. Darby who over and over again maintains that eternal life consists in a condition of relationship and being, and he brings forward Eph. 1:4, 5, to illustrate it, and (seeing that that condition existed, and was manifested, and is now fully expressed, even as to bodily condition, in the Son) he says it is Christ. His words are: “It is Christ Himself, and that revealed as man in glory,” and quotes 1 John 5:20 for it.

I strongly object to the talk about the personality of Eternal Life, because (as the reference is to Christ) it makes Eternal Life commensurate with the Person of the Eternal Son, and this I believe to be very wrong. In the Epistle of John, the apostle is not, as I understand it, unfolding the Person of the Son; but declaring something that came to light and is now perfectly expressed in Him, and in which, in having him, we, too, have part.

Believe me your affectionate Brother,
(Signed) R E. Raven

To Mr. Edwards.

From Collected Writings of A. C. Ord, p. 75. See also p. 98.

My Dear Brother, I will endeavor to answer your questions, though it must be shortly, for I am much pressed.

(1) I should not like to say that Christ was not eternal life until after the resurrection, because all in which eternal life essentially consists in being and relationship was as true in
Him before His death as after. Still it is when eternal life is in the heavenly, glorious condition, which the counsels of God purposed, that Christ is said to be “the true God and eternal life” [1 John 5:20].

(2) All I meant by ‘in essence’ was that it was not in form with the Father until the Son became Man, but, as I said, the being, and, in a sense, the relationship was there, but I judge the thought of eternal life always had man in view. 97 The wonderful thing being that the Son should connect Himself with manhood (become Son of man), and that we should be brought into that which is morally divine.

(3) I do not like the expression ‘exhibition of eternal life,’ but if used at all, it could only apply to Christ as He is now -- the last Adam -- the glorious Man. When here in the flesh He had taken part in the life and circumstances of the first man (though as to His Person, the second), and hence in that condition it was no question of exhibition of eternal life, but of its manifestation by divine grace to chosen vessels, and to this John refers in the beginning of his epistle. In John 3 the Lord speaks of Himself as “the Son of man which is in heaven,” though bodily He was on earth.

(4) In 1 John 5:20 you could not make ‘Jesus Christ’ and ‘eternal life’ reciprocal. It is predicated of Him that He is eternal life in the same way as He says of Himself, “I am the resurrection,” etc. 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. But then that same Person is the true God and the only-begotten Son.

(5) What I meant by condition in 1 John was heavenly condition of relationship and being before the Father, which was manifested in the Son, and which we have in having Him. This is the subject of the epistle.

(6) When I think of the only-begotten Son, I think of Him in His own peculiar glory (we beheld His glory as of an only-begotten one with the Father) and the Giver of eternal life. If I think of Him as the eternal life, I think of Him as the glorious Man, though what gives its character to His manhood is what He was eternally and in a sense divinely.

(7) 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 here on earth, the two things must be distinct. It is the difference between what He brought and what He entered into here, and this last He left to enter into a new condition wholly suited to what He brought. I do not quite like the sentence you quote as the substance of a letter written by me early last year.

Eternal life when Christ was here was still with the Father; but this life before men was wholly consonant with it, and in words and works He bore testimony to the Father. I add that I have never wished any letters of mine to be kept secret, but at the same time I very much doubt the propriety of all correspondence between brothers becoming public property. It will soon put an end to all liberty of communication between brethren.

Finally we must distinguish in our minds between the eternal Son and eternal life; for the Son is the object of our adoration and worship. He had part in seen things here, but looking at eternal life abstractedly, I should say it has not, either in the Lord or in us.

F. E. Raven

1890 { August 5, 1890.

. . . But what is born of the Spirit is Spirit, and Eternal Life is Christ, and that (as J. N. D. said) revealed as man, in glory -- He has to be digested into the life of our own being, and that is more than new birth. . . .

From, To the brothers H. C. Anstey, J. B. Stoney and C. H. Mackintosh, p. 3, Elberfeld, March 1891.}

1890 { August 14, 1890.

. . . As to manifestations in the Lord’s life here, we must remember that Eternal life is heavenly; but the Lord also took part in human life down here, and hence had to say to things and circumstances which in themselves have nothing to do with what is heavenly. He was known after the flesh, but is not so known any longer. The true God was in the babe in the manger, but those who worshiped Him there had been enlightened as to who He was. What they saw was “the sign” -- the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes lying in the manger. It was not a question of exhibition, for, for the moment, everything was veiled. . . .

1890 August 15, 1890.

. . . It is when every link has been broken with the responsible man, that Christ is revealed as being Himself the Eternal life, though of course He never was less. . . .

From, A Brief Statement of F. E. R.’s Doctrines, and Their Effect in Bristol, 1890, p.13.}

1890 August 25th, 1890

I do not accept the assertion of some that eternal life is an essential title of the Son of God. I am sure it cannot be maintained. I believe it to be a term indicating a condition. 98 which, according to the counsel of God, was to characterize man, and which has now been made manifest by the

97. {See Collected Writings of A. C. Ord, p. 113.}

98. {See Collected Writings of A. C. Ord, p. 97.}
appearing of Jesus Christ. That which was to characterize man was what had been in the Son eternally with the Father, and was in due time revealed in the second Man, the One out of heaven. But what characterized the second Man could not include all that was true of a divine Person, as self-existent, having life in Himself, omnipotence, omniscience, and many other attributes of a divine Person;\textsuperscript{99} and yet it does include what He was morally in righteousness, love, holiness, truth and nearness to the Father.\textsuperscript{100} Hence I said it was an integral part of His Person, but such as could be connected with manhood -- could characterize the second Man and be communicated to men. I cannot see how there can be any difficulty in it. Christ is “the true God, and eternal life.” We see the same thing in “that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.” It partakes of the nature of the Spirit morally, but is \textit{apart from any question of divine attributes}. The proper glory of the Son we shall see but could not share. I cannot imagine how anyone could think that the second Man covers all that is true of the Son; yet the second Man was out of heaven, as eternal life was with the Father. The only time that it is predicated of Christ that He is eternal life is 1 John 5:20, and then He is presented as the One who has come through “water and blood,” is thus \textit{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}.

We are in Him and He is eternal life as the full expression and revelation of it, besides being the true God.

I trust that the above may meet your inquiry.

F. E. Raven

1890

September 17th, 1890.

The first remark I would make on Mr. R \textsuperscript{____}'s letter is in regard to purpose as connected with eternal life. I fail to understand his difficulty. I suppose it was God's purpose that eternal life should be revealed as the condition of the second Man, and that we should have it in Him. I am not surprised at his being unable to understand my statements as to eternal life, for we look at things from different points of view. As far as I can gather he regards eternal life as the life of the Son as a divine Person, as, in fact, equivalent to “In him was life,” while I regard it as a condition which, although ever existing essentially in the Son, is presented in Scripture as characteristic of the second Man. In fact, it is difficult for me to understand that he sees in Christ a real Man, the pattern (though the 'Firstborn') of the many sons God is bringing to glory. The failure to see the position of mediation which belongs to the man Christ Jesus "is the cause of half the present difficulty.

I fail to find in any of the gospels the statement that Christ is eternal life. On the contrary, eternal life there refers without exception to something given to man, or into which man is to enter. In 1 John the object appears to be to unfold the eternal life, which had been revealed in Christ, in order that saints might know that they had it. I do not believe that the idea of its being an essential personal title of the Son can be maintained; not but what God's purposes of grace and eternal life for man were in Him. He has this glory, He is a quickening Spirit.

Now if eternal life means a condition which (though existing eternally in the Son) characterizes the second Man, it is evident that the full revelation of it could not be until Christ was wholly separated by death from the first or responsible man lifted up from the earth. In His own Person He was of course the eternal life, the second Man, when here in the days of His flesh (and was manifested as such to the apostles), but the revelation was veiled by the part which He had taken in the responsible life of man on earth, “made in the likeness of sinful flesh,” so that He might become a sacrifice for sin; and this condition was real, so that He was a real Babe, grew in wisdom and stature, and hence any displays of heavenly relationship and being were until after the cross moral. But in death He was wholly separated from the condition into which He had entered, and in resurrection He is the full and complete revelation of God's purpose -- the second Man, the eternal life.

As to the communication of eternal life, 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. Eternal life is in Christ, and in receiving Christ eternal life is received, but it is in Christ (the second Man) “God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.” He that has the Son has life. But eternal life is \textit{to live} in Christ, and though it may be said that a soul in receiving Christ is alive in Him, there is no power by which the believer can be formed in the heavenly man until the Spirit is received. Hence in John 20 the communication of the Spirit was connected with the breathing of Christ. Eternal life for us is not simply 'a vital principle,' but a new man.

As regards speaking of eternal life as a sphere or order of blessing, I think it is justified by such scriptures as John 4: 36; chaps. 12:5 and 17: 3; but it is as living in Christ we enjoy the sphere. I may speak of my home as being objectively my life, but I have in it.

The truth of relationship (as children) runs with eternal life, is in fact inseparably connected with it. In receiving Christ relationship is received, it is that of the second Man, and we are formed in it by the spirit of Sonship.

I do not regard new birth and quickening as equivalent. In the first I believe a new foundation is laid by the Spirit in

\textsuperscript{99} \{See Collected Writings of A. C. Ord., p. 136, note 10.\}

\textsuperscript{100} \{See Collected Writings of A. C. Ord., p. 114.\}
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.

I add one word in regard to 2 Corinthians 5:21. My object in my letter to Mr. O. was to exclude from the passage any thought of mixed condition, and to show what was true of the believer abstractly, as in Christ, apart from any question of what he is practically here. Still ‘in Christ’ involves not only a spiritual but an actual quickening (1 Cor. 15:22), and it is when the saints are in this condition of life that they will be fully the display of God’s righteousness, though for faith they are already become that righteousness in Christ.

F. E. Raven

September 18th, 1890.

I solemnly and sincerely declare that I have never taught, nor thought of teaching, that ‘eternal life’ is not in its fullest aspect the inheritance of every true believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, directly that believer is born again, and I now state that it is and has been my belief and I have endeavored so to connected and associated with all the infinitude of blessing and life purposed and given in Christ to the believer; but at the same time I believe that like Israel of old we must go in and possess the land and that the actual conscious possession and realization of all that is comprehended in the words ‘eternal life’ is limited to the extent in which by faith Christ has been digested into the life of our own being and we thus, in our life down here, appropriate to ourselves heavenly blessings and live in the enjoyment and power of them; though the eternal certainty of them all is not affected by our want of realization or intelligence. This is what I have sought to teach with a view to stirring saints up to actual possession in experience, believing, as I do, that too often the facts of Scripture have been accepted without entering in sufficient measure into conscious possession of that which is our eternal portion. Anything which has been stated concerning any teaching which is contrary to what I have stated above is a misinterpretation of the meaning, as I never intended anything different. I fully and most distinctly believe that “Jesus Christ is the true God and eternal life” though I would not say ‘eternal life’ means and comprehends all that is comprehended in the words ‘the true God’ nor do I think anyone will say so.

If any ambiguity of language has given rise to the misinterpretation of my belief I sincerely regret it as I have already stated in my published letters.

F. E. Raven

1890 { October 1, 1890

... Scripture states that Christ IS eternal life. I do not know where it says He was {italics F. E. R.’s} it, ... nor where it says -- Christ as He was with the Father {1 John 1:2}, and as he was seen, in the world. ...101

It is when He is wholly apart from that condition (after the flesh), and in the condition into which resurrection leads, that He is said to be eternal life. ... To J. W.


1890 Greenwich, October 4th, 1890.

My Dear Brother, I send a line to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 1st inst. entreating me for thee Lord’s sake and for the sake of those so infinitely precious to Himself to withdraw the word ‘helpless’ in my letter to brother ____.

I gladly respond to your entreaty and have written to Mr. ____ accordingly. I am sorry I ever used the word, as it gives an air of irreverence to the sentence, though I believe the context is sufficient to show that irreverence was not in my thoughts. I purpose to make this in measure public.

With love in the Lord,
Believe me, Your affectionate brother,
F. E. Raven

1890 Greenwich, October 12th, 1890.

My dear O, I return you the enclosed papers. I am rather astonished at the way in which H. uses J. N. D. against me, for the truth of mediatorship in connection with life is what I have maintained, and I do not know how I could be said to leave out entirely the revealed truth that the life of which we are made participants is not ‘the same’ life which was proper to the Son of God in His eternal existence, 102 though of the same moral qualities. I should have thought H. might have seen that this is really what I had maintained. What he meant about the eternal life being constituent in Deity I fail to understand, unless he means the same as I did in saying it was an integral part of His Person.

The way in which he strings together John 5:26 and chap. 17:2 is to me most extraordinary. I could not make “So hath he given to the Son to have life in himself” and “eternal life” to be the same. The former is what is proper to the Son (though because He is Man said to be given), and involves self-existence and the power to call the dead into life, while eternal life is what is given to us, and is what is true in Christ and in us, and does not involve self-existence or the

101. {See Collected Writings of A. C. Ord, p. 98.}
102. {See Collected Writings of A. C. Ord, p. 98.}
quickenling of the dead. Christ is Man, and the pattern of the heavenly family; at the same time He is a quickening spirit (in Him is life), and I could not draw a line between the two. So, too, in regard to ‘eternal life’ and the having life in Himself: but I see things in Scripture in certain connections -- life in Himself when the Son is seen as a divine Person in John’s gospel -- and eternal life (which He gives) when He is seen as Man (“from the beginning,” “handled,” etc.) in connection with others, the pattern of the heavenly family, the children -- when He is manifested we shall be like Him. Hence I conclude that eternal life is a truth which is connected with man, whether in Christ or in us; but, as I said, when I think of Christ, though I see certain things connected with Him as Man-firstborn among many brethren, Head of the church, etc., and other things with Him as divine, such as life-giving, etc., I could draw no line between the human and the divine. I believe eternal life is what He is now as Man, but then it takes its character from what He was eternally as divine. But I believe eternal life to be the life of man 103 according to the purpose of God and what has come out fully in Christ in resurrection, though manifested in Him even before. In a word, I believe eternal life to mean a new man in a new scene for man.

I should hardly connect John 1:4 with life-giving. T. in his paper quotes some beautiful remarks of J. N. D. on it, contrasting it with “the darkness is past and the true light now shineth.”

F. E. Raven

October 17, 1890.

I should not like to say that eternal life is the life of God. . . .

From, Collected Writings of A. C. Ord, p. 127.

Greenwich, October 29th, 1890

It is, I judge, a grave mistake to make any essential difference between eternal life as presented in Paul’s writings and in John’s. It is the same subject wherever presented. The apostleship of Paul was especially connected with eternal life. (See 2 Tim. 1:1.) It is evident that he unvaryingly connects it with the second Man -- Christ in glory. “The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ,” the One who has annulled death and brought life and incorruptibility to light by the gospel. We have in principle the same truth taught in John’s first epistle, “God has given to us eternal life and this life is in his Son.” Christ is seen in this epistle as with the Father (an advocate, etc.), and in the last chapter God’s Son is carefully identified as Jesus Christ who has come through water and blood, and it is of Him that it is predicated “He is

103. {See Collected Writings of A. C. Ord, p. 113.}
point of man after the flesh. Christ is not honored by it; and the perfect setting forth (in the power of the divine nature) of man after the flesh is ignored in order to connect the display of eternal life with the details of human life down here -- the life of the first man -- instead of apprehending the truth conveyed in the fine flour mingled with oil of which the memorial was burned with the sacrifices.

All that is now passed; Christ never can be known again after the flesh, and the out-of-the-world heavenly condition of relationship and being in which eternal life consists is now fully revealed in Christ, in whom it ever was both essentially and in the purpose of God. He is declared to be eternal life, as He is the last Adam and the second Man, all fully revealed in His risen glorious Person.

F. E. Raven

1890 Greenwich, October 29th, 1890.

Mr. J. Edmondson.

My Dear Brother, Looking at things from the divine side I do not think there is any intermediate state between being dead after the flesh, and the out-of-the-world heavenly condition of relationship and being in which eternal life consists is now fully revealed in Christ, in whom it ever was both essentially and in the purpose of God. He is declared to be eternal life, as He is the last Adam and the second Man, all fully revealed in His risen glorious Person.

1890 Greenwich, October 30th, 1890.

Mr. J. Watt.

My Dear Brother, I saw a letter of yours (to Cutting, I think) in which you expressed a difficulty in understanding a sentence in a paper of mine, viz., “It (Eternal life) was ever an integral part of the person of the blessed Son, but such as could according to the divine counsel be connected with manhood and be imparted to man.” I thought, therefore, I would send you a line as to it. What is meant by it is this, that while Eternal Life would cover all that Christ is morally, it does not include attributes which are properly divine, and which belong to the eternal Son. He has His own proper glory which is given to Him, even though He has become Man.

There are things which are common between the Father and Son as are seen in John 5 and there are things which are common, so to say, between the Son and us, what is true in Him and in us -- as eternal life. In the connection in which things stand in Scripture I do not see that eternal life ever goes beyond man whether Christ or us. In the First Epistle of John it was what was from the beginning (the incarnation) in a man (though essentially it was ever with the Father, as the Second Man is out of heaven). When we come, as in John’s gospel, to the revelation of Christ’s person, other expressions are employed, as, “In Him was life” -- as self-existent -- which cannot be common between Christ and us. It is here what was in the beginning.

The same glorious Person who is now the full revelation of eternal life -- the pattern of the heavenly family -- is also the true God; He has life in Himself, we have life in eating Him, but morally we are as He is.

I trust this may serve to make the point plain.

I fear you have trying times in the States as we have in England. There is a distinct retrograde movement from the truth.

With love in the Lord, Your affectionate brother,

(Signed) F. E. Raven

1890 {I do not find that the term Eternal life is employed save in connection with manhood either in the Son or us.

From, Collected Writings of A. C. Ord, p. 113.

1890 { I do not apprehend that eternal life as revealed in Christ -- and as we have it (heavenly things) -- connects itself with the sphere and relationships of human life down here.


1890 Greenwich, November 21st, 1890.

Mr. J. Watt.

My Dear Brother, I return your letter. I think Mr. Hornsby misunderstands my position in this business.

At the Witney meeting I was a learner rather than a teacher, though I cannot say there were many from whom I got help. It was becoming dear to me that the term ‘eternal life’ meant for us a wholly new order of relationship, object, knowledge, and blessing, as well as a new being suited to it, outside this scene of sight and sense, and that this had 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. But I saw also that He was in His own Person more than this, for He was the Quickener, the Giver of eternal life. I do not find in Scripture that the term ‘eternal life’ is employed, save in connection with manhood, either in the Son or us. When the Son is viewed, as in the gospel, as a divine Person, other terms are employed, such as “in him was life.” Now while eternal life has its application to us (what is true in Christ and in us), such terms as I have mentioned would not. Morally there is no difference between life as eternally in Him and eternal life, but it is evident that divine life must be in a way affected by coming into manhood, must connect itself with qualities (obedience, subjection, dependence, etc.) which have no place in the proper life of God.

I believe the truth is that, on the one side, the Son, as God, is one with the Father, having life in Himself, and able to quicken; and on the other, as Man, is the pattern of the heavenly family (the second Man out of heaven), and here it is that the truth of eternal life comes in, though what characterizes Him now as Man is what He ever was essentially with the Father. I think this maintains the glory of His Person, and shows the character of our blessing. I am printing something in regard to the charge of prevarication which will, I hope, be out next week.

Your affectionate brother,

F. E. Raven

1890

November 25th, 1890.

As I gather the truth, Christ is the last Adam -- a life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45), and the second Man (1 Cor. 15:47). As the last Adam He stands alone as Head; John 17:2; 1 Cor. 11:3. He gives life (who but God could do this?). As the second Man He is the pattern of the heavenly family -- "as is the heavenly, so are they also that are heavenly," 1 Cor. 15:48. Hence, when I view Him thus (though in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily), I think of Him in connection with the family -- of what is true in Him and in them; 1 John 2:8. "As he is, so are we in this world," 1 John 4:7. And this in itself does not involve all that is true of a divine Person, as self-existence, having life in Himself, etc., etc., or it would be true also of us, which is impossible. Christ is the second Man, and there is that which we have in common with Him. We "are all of one," Heb. 2:11. But then He is more -- as well as being eternal life He is the true God (1 John 5:20), and in Him dwells all the fulness of Godhead, every divine attribute. There is that which He has in common with the Father (John 5:26); though He as Son is the eternal source of it. I cannot imagine how anyone could think that "the second Man "covers all that is true of the Son, yet the second Man was out of heaven.

As regards the second passage underlined, I judge we have Jesus presented as the last Adam in the virtue of redemption in John 20:22; 1 John 5:6; the One coming, not by water only, but by water and blood (the Spirit also bears witness), and He is the second Man, for when He is manifested we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. In resurrection (1 Cor. 15) He is revealed as last Adam and second Man, though ever such in His own Person, for the second Man is "out of heaven."

F. E. Raven

1890

November 28th, 1890.

I have felt the desire on my own part, and as due to those with whom I am in fellowship, to state the light in which the late most sorrowful division, and matters which led up to it, present themselves to my mind.

I have been greatly tried in it all by the unreal position in which I have myself been unhappily placed by the writings of those who have left us. In December, 1889, in writing to Mr. Stanley, I expressed my feeling that the attacks made on me were utterly out of proportion to the weight of the person implicated.

As to my own sense of things, I was not a distinguished teacher, but simply a brother who had desired to search things out for himself from Scripture, and who was not unwilling to state what he had gathered in the presence of brothers equally or better versed in the word than himself.

I had long been dissatisfied with the way in which certain terms in Scripture were commonly handled, it appearing to me that they had in many minds simply a dogmatic force with little clear understanding of their moral import. (In saying this, I have no thought in any way to weaken the positive force of Scripture statements, or to make their authority to the soul to be dependent on state, or on the understanding of the things they reveal.) This seemed to be specially the case in reference to divine righteousness and eternal life -- the former of which merely went beyond the question of our responsibility and guilt, while the latter conveyed at the utmost but the idea of the divine nature in the believer.

As it gradually became clear to me that in its full sense and display divine righteousness is connected in Scripture with Christ in glory, and the believer as a new creation in Him -- and that eternal life implies not only a divine nature but a new and heavenly being, formed by the Holy Spirit in the believer, and also the relationships, objects, knowledge, and sphere proper to it, outside this scene of sight and sense -- I doubt not that I blundered in expression, which I much regret. I was not disposed to print or publish anything on these subjects, being hardly confident in my own mind. Certain remarks made at readings, at Witney in particular, were reported abroad, often entirely out of their connection, and I received in consequence some letters of inquiry, which

---

104. {See Collected Writings of A. C. Ord, p. 114, note 22.}
I answered readily, according to the best light I had.

I had no system of doctrine nor the faintest idea of propounding any.

After a strong expression had been used at a brothers’ reading in London, in reference to a remark of mine, I wrote a letter to Mr. Oliphant, in answer to one from him, giving my thoughts on various points which had been in question, and in regard to which an agitation was going on; this letter was read at the close of a meeting, in December, 1889, of sixty or seventy brothers, at Mr. Hewer’s, and, as far as I remember, little or no exception was taken to it. Mr. Oliphant was pressed afterwards for copies, and, with my consent, he printed it together with some extracts from correspondence with another brother. This was the first paper printed with my consent. Questions having been raised on various points in this paper, I thought it well to reprint the text of my letter to Mr. Oliphant, with some explanatory notes, and prefaced it with an expression of sorrow for the measure in which the painful state of feeling existing amongst us had been contributed to by obscure or defective expressions of mine. This was done in March last, the paper having first been submitted to many brothers of weight. Subsequently to this, being still further pressed for a simple statement of my thoughts, I wrote and printed the paper ‘Eternal Life,’ with which I circulated the printed letter of July 2nd, which I had been urged to put out by a valued brother. I trust that consideration of the above will dispel any notion that I have been holding the position of a teacher pressing some new system of doctrine, and will prove that I have been ready enough all through to act in subjection to my brethren.

I think that I have through grace received light on these subjects, and have sought in my measure to help others. Whatever defective statements I have made have been on the road to light, and my unwillingness to withdraw formally expressions objected to, which I may have used in correspondence, has arisen from fear of compromising what I believe to be the truth.

The virulence and persistency of the attacks made on me, and the unhappy readiness betrayed to seize on expressions in letters to individuals, on casual and unguarded statements, and on details of conduct, to fasten on me evil intent, should, I think, have satisfied anyone that the attack was not of God, not the fruit of the Spirit of Christ.

In conclusion, I would earnestly beg that it may not be thought that I have viewed with indifference all the sorrowful work of scattering that has been going on. For two long years and more I have been under exercise and pressure which few can understand but those who have passed through it. Nor can I claim to be without reproach in the matter, for the use of expressions capable of misconstruction, and possibly defects in conduct (the effect of human weakness, in circumstances of exceptional difficulty) have given a handle to the enemy of which he has not been slow to avail himself to discredit the truth, and further the work of scattering. As to all this I am humbled before the Lord, but I could not make this confession without recording my conviction that the conflict has been for the truth, from which the mode in which divine things have been handled amongst us, apart from any failings of mine, has exposed us to be turned aside.

I append a statement of the matter on which a charge of prevarication or evasion against me has been based. Those who read it must form their own judgment as to the justness of the charge.

F. E. Raven

Major M., {McCarthy} in a published paper, entitled ‘Divine Righteousness and Eternal Life,’ made the following statement: That ‘He (Christ) never for an instant ceased to be the exhibition of it (eternal life) from the Babe in the manger to the throne of the Father.’

Writing to a brother at Ealing, in June, 1889, I commented thus on this statement: --

Then again as to life, he says that 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 downhere, “The Word was God”; and further that 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.

Some time after, another paper by Major M. appeared, entitled ‘Is the Snare Broken?’ and beginning as follows:

“Fancy a helpless Babe an expression of eternal life.” The above in reference to our blessed Lord is taken from a circulating document among Christians.’

The discrepancies between Major M.’s sentence and mine, and the strictures in his paper on a word (fancy) which I had not used may be thought matters of secondary moment, or attributable to misunderstanding. What is important is that Major M. had not seen my letter which had not been circulated, and yet the sentence was set in inverted commas as a quotation, and was said to be taken from a circulated document among Christians. His conduct as to this and other matters arising out of it, came seriously under question at Ealing.

When Mr. Snell, through Mr. Barker, asked in March last if it was true that I had owned myself the author of the sentence printed by Major M., I replied,

I am not aware that I ever penned the sentence supposed to be mine -- it is for Major M., who I believe is the author of the paper in which the sentence appears in
A few days later when asked by Mr. Barker to put him in a position to deny not only that the sentence as it stood but that any such sentence ever came from me, I gave him in the following paragraph (3) of my reply of March 20th, the purport of my comment in the letter of June, 1889: -

When an earlier paper of Major M.'s appeared, in writing to a brother at Ealing, I pointed out the monstrosity of an assertion of the Major's that the Lord never ceased to be the Exhibition of eternal life from a Babe in the manger to the throne of the Father. It was no question of what was there in the Babe -- God manifest in the flesh, eternal life, and all else; but of what He was the exhibition, for Major M. meant in detail. He was as a Babe the Exhibition of infancy in its helplessness, for all else, though there, was for the moment veiled, and it was His glory, for in being made of a woman, becoming Man, He came truly and really into humanity in its conditions here, grew and increased in wisdom and stature.

I was not at liberty, while Major M. was being pressed at Ealing for many reasons to withdraw his paper, to make known the text of my letter, and indeed it was at the time out of my power, not having a copy: nor was I willing, by it in any sense but as descriptive of the true condition of my power, not having a copy: nor was I willing, by

To assume that I had anything to conceal is wholly unjustifiable. Save that, in deference to an appeal from a brother, I have withdrawn the word 'helpless' (not that I used it in any sense but as descriptive of the true condition of infancy) I adhere as firmly as ever I did to the refusal of Major M.'s [McCarthy] statement implied by my sentence; and further, when, in July last, the letter to Ealing was returned to me with permission to use it as I pleased, I furnished an extract to anyone who desired it, and it is thus my own words have become known. I am sorry that my letters have given color to a charge of prevarication. I can only say I had no intent to prevaricate or evade.

F. E. Raven

December 9, 1890.

The principle which seems to be pressed in the States is an entirely false one.

When any Assembly deals with any matter within its own circle its decision is binding, and every other meeting must accept it, but when it acts for itself in refusing communion with another meeting no other Assemblies are bound, for though a meeting may so act in order to protect itself it cannot pretend to judge any other meeting in such a way that its judgment is binding on all.

I cannot judge a meeting if the Lord is there, and if I judge He has left it I simply say for myself I cannot go on with it."

Others must judge for themselves whether there is sufficient ground. The principle is of all moment; if it were allowed we should get into hopeless confusion.

Now as to the matter of Bexhill in particular, I believe there are only three brothers there, one is a person of no weight whatever, a second admits that he has no head for doctrine, and the third is the brother who in the main acted, so that virtually a most serious question of doctrine and fellowship affecting, so to say, the whole Church is settled by one brother and he a brother comparatively little known among us.


1890

Royal Naval College, Greenwich, December 16th. 1890.

My dear Brother, I am glad to answer your letter, and I trust to clear up the point you mention. I doubt if the words you quote are exactly what I have written; but I have said more than once that the term Eternal Life in Scripture always stands in connection with manhood whether in Christ or in us. To deduce from this that Christ became Eternal Life in incarnation is wholly unwarrantable, and contrary to Scripture.

In declaring that Eternal Life which was with the Father the apostle speaks of what was "from the beginning," i.e. from the incarnation. This indicates that he speaks of the Son as man; but then Eternal Life is not what He took in becoming Man, but what He brought into manhood. As to what it is essentially, it was ever in Him with the Father. Hence Christ could say, "No man hath ascended to heaven but He which came down from heaven, the Son of man which is in heaven." And again, "What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where He was before." And Paul says, "The Second Man is out of heaven."

This certainly could not be said of the Son of man as to form; but it could and is as to purpose, and as to all that He is essentially. What the Son ever was in nature (or moral being) and in relationship with the Father now, gives its character as far as it can to manhood, and is fully revealed in Christ risen, though He is also the true God Hence Eternal Life was with the Father, and ever so. I have objected, and do object strongly, to the deification of Eternal Life on the one

105. [The paper contains a letter by W. I. in which FER is quoted and the extract is headed by "Extracts from a letter of F. E. Raven, dated Dec. 9th, 1890, to a sister in the States, compared with scripture." And at the end of these extracts, W. I. wrote: "Could there be a more complete denial of THE LORD’S presence and authority in the midst of two or three gathered to His name?"]
hand, and on the other to its connection with man in his state as a living man here on earth. It reaches us through death and resurrection, and involves a new order of being.

It has been said by a brother in Dublin that Eternal Life is the life of God. This is what I should call irreverence. May the Lord give grace and courage for the defense of the truth. I am sure it is a critical moment.

With love in the Lord, Your affectionate Brother,
(Signed) F. E. Raven
Written to A. J. P.

From, Collected Writings of A. C. Ord, p. 127.

1891

Greenwich, January 17th, 1891.

Mr. J. Edmonton.

My Dear Brother, I think some minds attach to the words ‘in an absolute way’ quite a different force from what I do. I have explained it as meaning ‘so as to exclude every other thought.’ And if you apply this to the text you quote, you will see the force of what I say -- “as he is so are we in this world.” This is evidently viewing the believer abstractly, i.e., according to what he is in the Son -- if you apply it in an absolute way it would make it mean that we are like Him as He is in glory -- while the fact is that we are still living and walking ‘in flesh’ here, and by faith. In the same epistle we read “it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him for we shall see him as he is.” You could not say absolutely of a believer ‘he cannot sin’ yet John says of one born of God “he cannot sin” because he views the believer abstractly as born of God.

The same thing applies to 2 Corinthians 5:21 and to other passages which speak of the believer as ‘in Christ.’ He is a new creation in Christ, a man of a new and heavenly order -- but he has not yet done with old creation and its order -- so that in my point of view, to apply new creation truths in an absolute way would make nonsense of them. They are none the less positively descriptive of what the believer is in Christ. It presents itself to me in something of the way we see, in dissolving views -- the new one has come into new before the old has completely faded away. Hence the mixed condition. Two things are true to a christian: the calling and the way -- the calling abides eternally -- the way comes to an end when we reach Christ where He is. I trust that this may tend to make things clearer.

Your affectionate brother,
F. E. Raven

Greenwich, January 29th, 1891.

My Dear Brother, I return you R ____’s {A. H. Rule?} papers. In the larger one there is nothing very new; we have had the same things in England. There are many statements in it as to Christ which I should readily accept in themselves apart from the object with which he makes them. But the defect which marks his paper is that he does not rightly divide Scripture. His object is to identify eternal life with the life of the eternal Son as a divine Person (in Him was life). If this were meant simply in reference to what the life is morally I would make no objection, but there is no hint with Mr. R. of any such limitation. As a consequence of this he confounds the revelation (in John’s gospel) of a divine Person, as such, with the unfolding (in the epistle) of the features of eternal life in the Son as man -- that which is true in Him and in us. My conviction is that what the Son ever was in nature as divine gives its character to manhood in Him (and in us). But I do not believe that the Son has therefore ceased to have life in Himself in the conditions suitable to Deity. He is “The true God and eternal life” {1 John 5:20}. The statements as to the Son in the gospel are not all to be merged and lost in the truth of eternal life. Mr. R in his zeal for eternal life seems to me to be fast letting go the true deity of Christ. He says the eternal Son “Ever was, is, and ever will be in His own glorious Person and eternal being the eternal life.” The phrase is high-sounding, but where does he find it in Scripture?

In his little paper he evades the force of the scripture -- ‘The second man is out of heaven’ -- by saying that the Person who became second Man was from all eternity. The point of the scripture is the origin of the second Man, as the pattern of the heavenly family; and so it says immediately, “as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.” Certainly he reads Scripture in a different way from what I do. He seems unable or unwilling to seize an abstract thought.

F. E. Raven

P.S. I add a further word in regard to the last paragraph. It is said (1 Cor. 15:45-48) that the last Adam is “a quickening spirit,” and the second Man is “out of heaven,” heavenly. It need scarcely be remarked that Christ did not become a quickening spirit nor heavenly by taking manhood -- for He was already such; but the last Adam and second Man is characterized by what was eternally true in the Person of the Son. This in no way touches the fact of His having actually entered on manhood in being “made of a woman” -- though, I doubt not, it was of God in Him eternally purposed. --

F. E. Raven

1891

Greenwich, March 9th, 1891.

Mr. J. Edmondson.

My Dear Brother, I thank you for the enclosures to your letter. I am sorry that I am unable to do anything for you in regard to the printed papers of December 6th and March 21st, they are sold out and the type broken up. I send you now three copies of the paper of July 3rd {1890, Eternal Life}.

What I have understood by the expression ‘our standing in Christ’ current amongst us, was that we were before God ranged under a new head in whose acceptance we stand. But
then there is a corresponding subjective state of soul produced by the quickening power of God, so that we are alive in Christ -- are new created in Him -- and this, one can hardly call standing, and I have spoken of it as state. It is state that corresponds to the standing.

I think there is a distinction between what we are and what we have in Christ. We are in Christ a new creation -- of a new order, heavenly, as He is. We have in Him redemption, peace, acceptance, etc.

Believe me, Your affectionate brother,

F. E. Raven

P.S. Both ‘standing’ and ‘state’ in the way we use them are human terms.

1891

Greenwich, March 25th, 1891.

Mr. J. Edmondson.

My Dear Brother, I was glad of your letter which was an encouragement to me. I think you have acted wisely at Rathmines in the position you have maintained. At Westland Row they have gone beyond their proper function as an assembly and it will only involve them in difficulty. I had seen something of Mr. Hendessey’s thoughts previously in letters he had written. He blunders because he does not see that the thought of eternal life is taken up from the Old Testament -- and that it means “the blessing” (Psa. 133) for man -- though it must needs have had a peculiar place in Christ, who came here at the consummation of every thought of goodness for man -- and we have it in having Him. Mr. H. insists that eternal life is actual vitality, and that it is by faith. If such were the case, where does new birth come in? He seems to me to ignore the necessity of new birth. Then he makes ‘eternal life’ to be the actual life of Christ when here after the flesh. It is Major McCarthy’s error. If it were true there could have been no real death. I call it shocking doctrine. I believe too that he would hold that it was the life of the Son before incarnation, which is profanity -- for who knows anything of the divine life, save morally. His expression ‘God in flesh’ in his letter of February 2nd is in my judgment very wrong and unscriptural. I wish for his own sake he could be silenced.

I have looked over your reply -- and have run out a few words in pencil as I think they may lead to question. I understand you mean in general by ‘life’ the result of new birth. The letter seems to me alright, but I do not think you will convince Mr. H. in his present mood. The spirit abroad is that of fanaticism, I think what you say as to John 3:36 and John 6:53-56 is right. A man comes, so to say, to the death of Christ for life (though if he does so it is really divine drawing) and keeps in touch with that death all the time that he is here. As to the correspondence between Paul and John I should connect rather with quickening than with new creation (the latter though evidently coincident, compare Ephesians 2:5 and 10, seems more connected with walk) and save as to aspect (in our case quickened by the Son, in the other together with Christ) I see no difference between John 5 and Ephesians 2. I think the result of quickening is that we are of a new order, of a new nature according to Christ. I think that Paul connects the blessing of eternal life with the thought of full conformity to Christ in glory in the full place and condition of sons according to eternal counsel (Eph. 1:4, 5). John connects it with the relationship of children which we have in a world which knew not Christ and knows not us (John 1:10-12 and 1 John 3:1) and it supposes the divine nature. The thought of the divine nature in 2 Peter seems different and practical. I see nothing about eternal life as to those absent from the body. It stands in Scripture in connection with saints on earth in or under Christ, and in full conformity to Christ in glory.

I enclose you some thoughts in regard to ‘soul’ and ‘life’ which kindly return when done with. I have not a copy. Also some of the answers to Dr. Evan’s allegations.

With love in the Lord, Your affectionate brother,

F. E. Raven

1891

Greenwich, April 10th, 1891.

Mr. J. Edmondson.

My Dear Brother, I am sorry that yours of the 3rd should remain unanswered so long, but I have been away in the Isle of Wight. I cannot very well answer the points raised in your note without looking carefully into them, and comparison of the use of words in the Old and New Testament always presents some difficulty, the language and conceptions are so different.

‘God in flesh’ is an expression that I do not at all like. The Son of God, the Word, became flesh, and His body is the temple of God, and God has been manifested in the flesh, but none of these seem to me to warrant the expression ‘God in flesh.’ If it were simply a thought as to what was there morally I should not object, but as to actuality the flesh was the veil which hid the glory of God. It remains true of God “Whom no man has seen nor can see,” Deity and humanity were and are united in the Person of Christ, the union of the two is of course inscrutable, but I do not believe it lay ‘in flesh,’ so that we could say ‘God in flesh.’

As regards the pneuma it is evident that in Scripture it stands distinct from psyche (see 1 Thess. 5:23). I could not connect pneuma with the beast. It is true in God as well as in man; 1 Cor. 2:11. Such appears to me from 1 Corinthians 15:45, 46, to be the natural, earthy, or animal condition, so to say, and is common to man and beast, only that in the case of man it was ‘living’ as breathed in of God. It seems to me that psyche may in its use sometimes cover pneuma, but if the latter is distinguished it is since consciousness in man in which he can withdraw from the outward and can have to say...
My Dear Brother, I am very glad indeed that you have written to Mr. Hewitt.

My Dear Brother, In our way of speaking ‘quickening’ has often been used (after the analogy of nature) as the first movement in the soul -- as the equivalent of ‘new birth.’ It has, I think, a different force in Scripture. It is used, I think, about eleven times in the New Testament and means making alive the dead for blessing (spiritually or physically), see John 5:21; Eph. 2:5; Col. 2:13; 1 Cor. 15:27; and the significance of it is that those quickened live before God after a new order. A dead man never lives again after the old order. A man quickened is of the heavenly order in spirit now, and in body hereafter. New birth has hardly this force but refers directly to the kingdom in which men live after the order of man on earth. It is no use attempting to adjust the two expressions as to point of time. The importance is in seeing their moral distinction. I return your enclosures.

Believe me, Your affectionate brother,

F. E. Raven

1891

Greenwich, April 13th, 1891.

Mr. J. Edmondson.

My Dear Brother, In our way of speaking ‘quickening’ has often been used (after the analogy of nature) as the first movement in the soul -- as the equivalent of ‘new birth.’ It has, I think, a different force in Scripture. It is used, I think, about eleven times in the New Testament and means making alive the dead for blessing (spiritually or physically), see John 5:21; Eph. 2:5; Col. 2:13; 1 Cor. 15:27; and the significance of it is that those quickened live before God after a new order. A dead man never lives again after the old order. A man quickened is of the heavenly order in spirit now, and in body hereafter. New birth has hardly this force but refers directly to the kingdom in which men live after the order of man on earth. It is no use attempting to adjust the two expressions as to point of time. The importance is in seeing their moral distinction. I return your enclosures.

Believe me, Your affectionate brother,

F. E. Raven

P.S. I fear Mr. H. means no good.

1891

Royal Naval College, Greenwich, May 25th, 1891.

To Mr. Hewitt.

My Dear Brother, I am very glad indeed that you have written to me in reference to Mr. G.’s construction of statements of mine -- but first I have a right to ask that you should not adopt other people’s constructions of my statements. In this way anything and everything may be grossly perverted. For instance, in a printed letter of his which I saw, he would make it appear -- because I have used the expression ‘in essence’ or ‘essentially’ -- that I have little talked of ‘essences’ in reference to Christ. Now anyone a little versed in language would know that the two expressions are commonly used with quite distinct force and sense. It is the effort to fasten on me a term or idea which, applied to the Lord, is offensive.

I have not by me the paper of his to which you refer -- but I think I can show you where he is at fault. He seems unable or unwilling in his mind to distinguish, in regard to the second Man, between the form and habit (Phil. 2:7, 8) of manhood -- and what gives character morally to the manhood. The first (the form and habit -- the real human soul) Christ took of a woman and it was ‘perfected’ in resurrection, the second (what gives character to the manhood) He brought into it -- hence as incarnate He was the living and true bread from heaven -- the second Man is “out of heaven.” The same distinction we have to make as to ourselves for we are ‘heavenly’ in nature as is the heavenly (holy and without blame before God in love) while still here in the form and habit and condition of the earthly.

I think the above will answer the points you have put to me -- Mr. G.’s assertion of what I believe I wholly refuse. All that he says seems to me marked by assumption and ignorance.

I am at the same time exceeding sorry for the mischief he has caused in your meeting.

With love in the Lord, Your affectionate brother,

F. E. Raven

1891

Greenwich, June 15th, 1891.

Mr. J. Edmondson.

My Dear Brother, I will do my best to answer your questions according to such light as one has on Scripture.

(1) It seems to me that all the statements as to eternal life in John’s gospel are really grounded on the death of Christ and the gift of the Spirit (see John 3:14, and chap. 4:14). John 5 seems to give the rights of His Person (Son of God) and John 6 the great truth of incarnation -- and as to these, they were there before or after death -- John 20:17-22 surely means the same thing -- but I would not wish to weaken the force of the ‘now is.’ It seems to me that the Lord in John recognizes nothing save the heavenly things He brought which however involved the power of the Spirit (John 6:63). How far Christ fulfilled when here the office of the Spirit I cannot say -- the Spirit another Comforter.

(2) A soul is not quickened by faith. It comes into salvation by faith and receives the Spirit. This latter is on the responsibility side. When the soul is once there, i.e., in salvation, God can and does view the whole thing as His own work (Eph. 2:5), for indeed He was foremost in it. I do not think the gospel and new birth are ever mixed up in Scripture. It appears to me that those who are in the faith of the gospel are told that they are born again, i.e., that the real foundation in them is of God.

(3) 2 Timothy 1:10 is the great truth that life and incorruptibility have been brought to light by the glad tidings entrusted to Paul. It appears to me that this refers to an actual heavenly conviction of life in a man. This life came out in a moral way in Christ as a Man here and the eyes of the apostles were opened to see it. They saw it because they were in His company (saw Him, too, in resurrection). It was a different thing from the testimony addressed to the world, and could be discerned only, I judge, by those familiar with Him.

(4) I do not think John by his testimony takes us into Canaan
-- his great thought is eternal life here on earth though it is heavenly -- "He that eateth me even he shall live by me," comes after "he that eateth my flesh," etc. I think that as being here we have to appropriate and to be abidingly in touch with Christ's death so that we may be in the sense of deliverance and at the same time such appropriates and enjoys and digests the heavenly grace expressed in His incarnation and thus lives on account of Him.

(5) Life in Colossians 3:3, 4, refers, I think, to life in the sense of its sphere, associations, objects, joys, what we live to and these for the believer are hid with Christ in God. The object is to lead the mind there and hence I should rather say it is objective though it involves our being quickened.

(6) I believe the expression 'this life is in His Son' conveys an abstract thought, viz., that it is life distinct and morally apart from what we are and have naturally as men down here. I believe it to refer to what there is in actuality in the Son and not yet in actuality in us -- to the relationship and knowledge in which eternal life practically consists and into which faith enters. He that has the Son has life.

(7) "The Spirit is life" (Rom. 8:10), I take to be potential. He cannot be life in any objective sense -- Christ is this -- but He is the answer in the believer to what is true for him in Christ. I would connect it with John 4:14.

(8) I believe John 12:59 refers to Psalm 133:3, and I think the same idea is found in 1 John 2:8. Commandment is, so to say, the ordinance of God -- what He has ordained, what it has been in His will to establish, and to this faith bows.

(9) I entirely agree with you. Eternal life is connected with manhood in Scripture -- but what in the second Man gives character to manhood was ever in essence in the Eternal Son. I say 'in essence' because it was not in human form or condition.

(10) I think life is used in Scripture in two distinct though connected senses -- both in implied contrast to death morally, first in the sense of blessing and thus given, and secondly in the sense of character, i.e., what is moral, and in connection with this of what is inherent in God.

The close of your letter was an encouragement to me. Many statements of mine have been thought bad because opposers did not see the sense in which I was using life. On the other hand I am convinced that in their own minds is an entirely wrong thought as to life. They conceive of it as the life of the Eternal Son and as something having a substantive existence so that it can be communicated as water into a vessel, thus virtually setting aside the reality of quickening and ignoring the truth that the Eternal Son who was in the form of God now lives as man. The fulness of the Godhead resides in Him bodily.

I thank God there is general readiness to receive me in England.

With love in the Lord, Your affectionate brother,

F. E. Raven

1891
July 22nd, 1891.
I was encouraged at ____ . The brothers there were very hearty. There are some who will not have what for God has been effectuated in Jesus -- the bringing to an end of the old man, and the bringing in of the new. I suppose one must make up one's mind for conflict till the end.

... As regards what you say as to John, I believe we have there what is essentially heavenly, i.e., what is out of heaven, and what is out of heaven is heavenly and cannot change its character. It does not bring before us the exaltation of man in virtue of redemption, as does Paul, but the moral excellence of what has come forth from heaven-the living bread and the Father's love. Hence eternal life is to know the Father and Jesus Christ His sent One (not exactly His glorified One), and into all this heavenly grace which has come out of heaven we enter while we are here; but it does not lose its heavenly character; and by Christ's death we are free from the system in which flesh has its life. I think that to enter into and enjoy what is essentially heavenly, as having come thence, is greater privilege than to enter into the divine counsels which have their place in Christ in glory, which is more Paul's line. If a concordance were consulted I take it heaven would be more often found in John than in Paul, only with the former it is more what comes thence, but without changing its character, and with the latter, what goes there. This may be rough, but I think it gives the idea.

1891
Greenwich, July 27th, 1891.
Mr. J. Edmondson.

My Dear Brother, Just a line to thank you for your note of the 22nd and for the suggestion contained in it. Though I should naturally be a little shy of Westland Row I should not be unwilling to visit Dublin -- if the way were otherwise clear, but I could hardly say at present that I see it so -- for next week I am going, D.V., to a meeting at Newcastle and may stay a bit elsewhere on my way back to London. Should I see any possibility of getting to Ireland I would let you know. Had you been coming over here I should have been glad to see you.

I trust things are quieting down as I think they are generally in England.

With love in the Lord, Believe me,
Your affectionate brother,

F. E. Raven

1891 {I would not apply to the eternal Son, as descriptive of His existence as a divine Person, a term connected in Scripture with blessing for man and consequently with Christ
viewed mediatorially as man.

From, Collected Writings of A. C. Ord, p. 98, note 3. }

1891

1891

September 8th, 1891.

... I am extremely sorry to hear of having been so poorly viewed mediatorially as man. and being still so weak. Even when there is not acute pain I think weakness is a trying experience, but perhaps to some of us it is needful -- giving us opportunity of proving the sympathy of Christ. One comfort is, we shall not always be weak, for we shall live by the power of God. I think weakness is what is best suited to one’s present mixed condition.

1891 { Extracts from Mr. Oliphant’s Letter, Dated September, 1891

You say nobody thinks that Christ became last Adam and Second Man till the incarnation, and He was not declared such till the resurrection; and you add, “but I believe that He was always such in the counsel, and, I could almost say, in the presence of God; and we find many allusions to this in the Old Testament, Psa. 8, 40.” Now no one would have any difficulty about the Lord being the Man of God’s purpose, and I have always understood Psa. 8 and Prov. 8 to refer to God’s counsels. But the sentence, “I could almost say,” shows a want of Scripture basis for the thought; or 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... No doubt He who was born brought what He was into the world, but *what was born was a new thing in the world* -- “that holy thing which shall be born of thee” {Luke 1:35} -- and neither man, manhood, nor humanity had any existence in fact before the Word became flesh. But this sentence, I must own, gives a handle to those who accuse you of making humanity in some shape or form exist before the incarnation, and I am afraid souls will be stumbled by it, and others kept in a wrong position by it. I wish you could see your way to withdraw it with the letter quoted by Gladwell, as to which I wrote before, and give a distinct and emphatic denial to the accusation that you hold any such doctrine which would weaken the truth of the incarnation.

**Extracts from Mr. Raven’s Letter, Dated Greenwich, 25th September, 1891**

I should be very ready to withdraw the sentences you quote in your letter of September, in deference to your wish; but it is now difficult to take any step in the matter, since, though I have no reason to doubt the sentences are mine, they have not appeared in any published paper, and I have no recollection when or to whom they were written, nor can I readily trace them. My fear is that a construction will be put upon the withdrawal very different from my meaning in it, for though I have no disposition to disregard the judgment of others, the sentences, in my reading of them, do not convey anything contrary to truth and sound doctrine.

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 construction.

In fact the charge against me of making manhood eternal in Christ is monstrous and inconsistent on the part of those who have made it.

I add a word as to the particular sentences you criticize. I believe the title “Son of man” to be personal. It is the way in which the Lord most commonly referred to Himself; and that He said, “Son of man which is in heaven” by virtue of what He was in His own divine Person; but from the characteristic form in which the expression is couched it has seemed to me to imply a contrast to man as created for earth, and if so, the expression carries the idea of a new order, but I should not press it. The use in the other sentence of the words, “I could almost say,” sprang from an unwillingness to speak in too positive a way on a profound subject which is gathered from the general tenor of Scripture, and on which I felt there was much to learn.

But we must call attention to the fact that the preexistence of humanity in essence is the keystone upon which Mr. Raven’s system rests, to which he is shut up by his own words, and without which the whole fabric falls to the ground. What otherwise was this “something,” which existed in Christ before He took flesh, which was not Deity? Nay more, which he calls “ irreverence” to identify with Deity. Distinguishing it also by various expressions from His life and His Sonship, as also Mr. Anstey and others have done. That, notwithstanding his disclaimer, Mr. Raven still fundamentally retains the same thought is evident when he says, not only, “In the Word becoming flesh it could not but be, as you say, that manhood received its character from the Word,” but further, that “manhood is not seen as something added to the Word,” but the expression is, “The Word became flesh”

---

106. [That italicized phrase means, of course, that since manhood was not added to the Word, the Son brought that humanity with Him. Thus once again he lied about what he said. This shuffling and shiftiness characterize his writings on these subjects. Moreover, he also held that Christ had no human soul and spirit, as we have. What he soon believed was that the divine took the place of the real human soul and spirit, and in 1895 he was justly characterized as an Apollinarian. And this accounts for his teaching... (continued...) ]
October 21st, 1891.

...We began the fortnightly meetings last evening, and had a good time on the armor in Ephesians 6... I look for the mercy of God.

Hebrews 12 has come home to me (referring to the illness of one of his children), and I think with you that God in a sense prepares us for what we have to pass through, though perhaps when we come to the point we are sometimes spared it.

Greenwich, October 23rd, 1891.

My Dear Brother, I certainly owe you an apology for not having written sooner -- but I have been very much occupied one way and another since I saw you at Birkenhead. As far as I remember the brother was not right in his having pressed on you 'obedience' that is to the judgment (so called) arrived at by Bexhill. Now I need hardly say that no one can rightly call in question the decision of a meeting on any matter properly within its jurisdiction. We do not 'deny' the decision of the meeting -- but we recognize the authority of our Lord -- and, further, any meeting is justified in protecting itself by declining to receive into its fellowship a person coming from a meeting lying under strong suspicion of sheltering evil -- but one meeting has no sort of authority to pronounce an authoritative judgment on another meeting -- and call on others to obey -- for the Lord is equally in both meetings, and it is an invasion of His rights. It may become manifest that the Lord has left a particular meeting and no one should then receive from or commend to it, but even then no one would venture to pronounce authoritative judgment though it is true we virtually refuse it by declining to receive from or commend to it.

Bexhill presumed authoritatively to reject Greenwich and they expect every other meeting to bow to what they have done. They had nothing before them but what was before everyone else. If this principle were to be admitted, any unsatisfactory meeting which chose to be first in the field might pronounce on the most momentous questions and issue a decision which is to bind every assembly on earth. It would be worse than popery.

A brother within an assembly is to hear what the assembly says, but I do not see that the assembly has a voice of authority on matters lying outside its jurisdiction, and if not...
Chapter 6

Some Papers Against F. E. Raven
Just After the Separation

The last half of Chapter 4 contains a paper by P. A. Humphreys, *I Come Quickly . . .*, which was printed in Aug. 1890 in response to FER’s paper *Eternal Life*. It was thought best to include P. A. Humphreys’ paper there rather than here, though it was printed after the separation from evil unto the Lord. Here we will consider a number of papers written relatively soon after the separation on June 29, 1890. Papers examining various aspects of FER’s system are found in Part One, while facsimile of some other papers appear in the Supplement to Part Two.

Remarks
by A. H. Burton
Sept. 1890

I am more and more struck with the way in which Mr. R. shifts his ground, and the unwar are completely thrown off their guard by his apparent acquiescence in truth contained in their questions put to him, whereas the fatal errors still remain in his own written statements of what he holds -- these statements still unjudged and unretracted.

 Though it may be honestly done, I believe it to be a very serious mistake to go and parley with the introducer of error. We have his teaching in black and white, and we are responsible before God to know whether this teaching be sound or not. The babes have an unction from the Holy One, and know all things -- they know the truth, and that no lie is of the truth; and their part is simply to cleave to the one and reject the other. Like the sheep in John 10, they need not go and listen to the voice of strangers. This new teaching is not what we have heard from the beginning -- "Let that therefore abide in you which ye have heard from the beginning," &c. -- 1 John 2:18-29.

Almost all who go to Mr. R. for explanations come away supporting the teacher, and upholding his views. Scripture says that we are to “mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned” and that we are to avoid them. If, instead of avoiding them, we go in our own wisdom and strength, and in direct antagonism to the Word of God, to see and speak with them, is it to be wondered at that we come away with our hearts deceived by their good words and fair speeches? -- Rom. 16:17, 18.

We are none of us safe unless we recognize in this movement a direct attack of Satan upon the truth, and upon Christ, who is the Truth. The moment we see this we shall give it and its promoters as wide a berth as possible.

For the simple soul we have a very simple test in 1 John 4:1-7.

We are surely responsible to try the spirits, whether they are of God; but in these late teachings, we are told, there are merely obscure statements, unhappy expressions, and so forth. And again, many people read the papers and say they cannot understand them, &c., and so they give up the attempt, and having a natural dislike to division, they make up their minds to go on hoping against hope that the teaching is sound, or at any rate, not bad enough for division. Thus their consciences become benumbed, and their spiritual intelligence beclouded. When Christ is in question there must be no compromise.

But we are not told to investigate all the utterances of the “many false prophets” (for one false teacher, alas! soon produces adherents and upholders, who, being the outcome of the same evil, are all morally identified, though each may try to excuse himself under the plea of not being responsible for the statements of the others, as has been done of late) -- no, “hereby know ye the Spirit of God!” How? “Every spirit that confesseth Jesus Christ come in flesh is of God,
and every spirit that confesseth not Jesus Christ come in flesh is not of God.” Note carefully the force of these words! It is not merely confessing the fact that He came in flesh but confessing Him as so come. In other words, Christ is the touchstone; and every teaching that in the smallest degree tarnishes the glory of His person is that spirit or power of the anti-Christ whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world -- hereby know we the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

And what shall we say of the sorrowful and soul-defiling expressions as to the person of the Lord that have been going about of late?

I scarcely like to commit to paper the blasphemous utterances that have been current, and that have gone about unchallenged by the party who are banded together to screen and support the J. B. S. {Stoney} and F. E. R. school of teaching. They have been handed about unchallenged for months in letters, &c., and when some more faithful than the rest have exposed them, they have been denounced as liars and slanderer, and when exposed, greater indignation has been expressed at so-called private letters being made public (i.e., the letters which contained these statements) than that the expressions should ever have been used, or the thoughts which they express ever held.

It has been said by more than one (showing how the leaven spreads) that the Lord had to get back into communion with the Father after speaking with the woman at the well. At the Malvern meeting A. L. had publicly to confess that he had said so; and instead of people shrinking with horror from such dreadful words, they areexcused, palliated, and explained away.

Another spoke of the Lord as a carpenter, breaking His tools like any other man. Now, all these and others like them are the outcome of a system of teaching which has for years been in vogue in certain quarters, which has already produced what is known as Cluffism, and which, while for years it has been a source of trouble amongst us, has of late, with new developments as to eternal life and divine righteousness (2 Cor. 5:21) swept away a multitude of saints, as to whom one might have expected better things.

Many, no doubt, have been ensnared through an honest desire to attain to a higher spiritual state, and inasmuch as in this school there is a pretension to higher spirituality, greater unworldliness, and a more heavenly state, they follow in its wake, not liking to be left in the lurch if there is anything to be attained better than what the rest enjoy. But this never can be reached by a denial of the very essence of Christianity, which I am persuaded is done by these new teachings; for new they are, though the school may have existed for long.

It is useless Mr. R. and others trying to prove that J. N. D. taught the same; their very adherents used to glory in the novelty of the teaching. J. N. D. in their eyes was nowhere, useful, no doubt, and used in his day up to a certain point; but Mr. S. and Mr. R., say they, were raised up of God to bring out this “beautiful new truth,” which was considered far and away better than what J. N. D. ever taught. We must “go on to perfection,” said some; others went so far as to say that there were only two men “in the testimony,” Mr. S. and Mr. R.!

You may say that of these some were only “silly women”; but this was the outcome of the system; and however painful and humbling it is to have to write thus, it is well in these days, when so many are being deceived by “fair speeches,” that all should know that these things have been and are being said. In order to allay the fears of the simple, alarmed at the thought of novelty, it is now sought to be proved that the teaching is not new, but contained in the Synopsis, &c. But this is all of a piece with the shuffling so painfully manifest amongst the promoters of these views; and this, added to the terrible lack of common honesty and straightforwardness, makes it almost impossible to bring home to people statements that are made. For things may be said one day, and the next day it is denied that they were ever said, and the one who in faithfulness to the Lord may have exposed these things is denounced as a liar and a slanderer, because, though morally certain that the things have been said, he cannot bring forward the evidence in black and white.

One glaring instance of this may be seen {proven} in the correspondence printed in Mr. Ord’s pamphlet, which evidences a want of truthfulness and honesty too sorrowful to think of.

You send me “Questions put to Mr. R. and his answers,” which has apparently allayed your fears. I take up one:

Q. Are we absolutely the righteousness of God in Christ now?
A. Yes, now absolutely in Christ, but we are not yet perfected in glory.

This seems very fair, though why he should introduce the “but” is difficult to understand, for whoever thought we were yet perfected in glory? It is, however, still more difficult to understand how he reconciles this answer with his own statement, which runs as follows:

Surely to become God’s righteousness is more than to be held for righteous as in Rom. 4. If it means anything, it means sin is to be completely displaced in us by divine righteousness, and this cannot be till the Lord come. 107

107. Having but recently returned from abroad, I was not aware, when this was sent to press, that Mr. R. Has made a so-called withdrawal or this sentence, on the ground that it “involves confusion between a state in us conformable to God’s righteousness, and that righteousness itself.” That is, after having set brethren by the ears with “the key to all that I have said lies in my objection, &c.,” he coolly withdraws one sentence which expresses, more clearly than anything else he has written, what he really does hold on (continued…)
True, he admits that “looking at the believer abstractedly in Christ it may be true now” — “it may be,” that is all! but “so long as we have the flesh and sin, I could not say it is absolutely made good in us.” I should like to know how anybody could reconcile these conflicting statements?

I merely bring forward this one instance to show how useless it is to go or write to Mr. R. for explanations, while we have his own written statements still unjudged and unwithdrawn, in spite of all the efforts made by others to show him their unsoundness.

It is a system of doctrine which I reject and repudiate with all my heart. It degrades and dishonors our Lord and Savior by analysing and discussing His blessed person, as to whom the Word says, “no man knoweth the Son but the Father,” — and it destroys the foundations of Christianity, by insinuating doubts as to the “babes” possessing eternal life, and by denying that through the Cross we are now become the righteousness of God in Christ.

“The substance of a letter” by J. A. T. {Trench} has been sent me. It is to me perfectly surprising that Mr. T. does not see the difference between what J. N. D. taught and what Mr. R. teaches. In the extract which J. A. T. gives from the Synopsis, with which we have all been long familiar, however important to be reminded of them afresh, Mr. D., is insisting upon the two distinct spheres of the manifestation of the same life, whereas Mr. R. sees no difference between the “heavenly life” and “eternal life.” To him they are interchangeable terms, and this forms the well-grounded foundation for the assertion that he teaches two lives for Christ as well as for the Christian; for if the “heavenly life” is “eternal life,” be “pilgrimage life” must be some other life. This is the mistake that underlies the whole of J. A. T.’s pamphlet. Who doubts the distinction between the heavenly life, and the life of pilgrimage down here? The important question is, What is meant by the term “heavenly life”? and what did Mr. D. mean by it? He himself tells us in the foot note to page 340 {p. 260, new ed.}, Synopsis, Vol. 1 (last edition):

By heavenly life I mean, living in spirit in heavenly places.

What could be plainer than this? I beseech my brethren to notice carefully this all important point. Mr. D. is distinguishing “two spheres of life,” but it is the same life which manifests itself in these spheres, and that life is Christ, and if, moreover, we manifest any other life, it is the flesh.

I cannot close without expressing my horror of the way in which the adherents of this party have freely hinted that our beloved brethren, C. S. {Charles Stanley} and B. F. P. {Pinkerton}, were removed in judgment. It makes one tremble to think to what lengths the determination to uphold a system of false teaching will lead its upholders. To speak thus of men whose graciousness and lives of devoted service might put us all to shame, is unworthy of Christians who have been privileged to know them; to seek to influence the minds of the simple by hinting such a thing (which, alas! has been done) is worthy only of the threats of the Church of Rome.

“The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart: and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come” (Isa. 57:1).

Alfred H. Burton

Sept. 1890.

107. (...continued)
that point. The most cursory examination of his letter of Dec. 24, 1889, will show how absolutely worthless it is; for, when a whole system of doctrine is in question, the withdrawal of one sentence while adhering to the substance of the rest, and is included (for this is the position taken in his letter of withdrawal), amounts to nothing whatever.

108. {What he is saying is that some FER adherents hinted that the recent deaths of CS and BFP were the judgment of God on them for their opposition to FER.}
Reflections on the
Park Street Notice

by A. H. Burton
Oct. 1890

The Park Street manifesto of October 13th {1890} does indeed reveal a state of demoralization and indifference to the glory of Christ which is simply inconceivable, and we call upon every heart that beats true to that worthy Lord and Savior who bought us at such a price, and who claims our allegiance for time and eternity, to purge themselves from association with the evil principles therein contained.

Deeply conscious of our own unworthiness so to write, and of the infinite mercy that has kept us from falling into the snare which has overtaken so many beloved brethren with whom for years we were linked in fellowship, worship, and service, we feel it to be our bounden duty to make this earnest appeal to the many who are at this very moment obliged to decide whether they shall identify themselves with those assemblies where such evil is “taught or propagated,” or with those who have through grace taken a stand against it.

The following is the notice, which speaks with painful and sorrowful clearness:

London, October 3th, 1890
Brothers (about 500 in number) assembled in Park Street on Tuesday, 7th October, in accordance with the following notice read in all the meetings in London on Lord’s day, the 5th October:

In consequence of the circulation amongst us of various statements reported to have been made dishonoring to the Person of our blessed Lord, it is purposed that meetings of brothers shall be held, D.V., at Park Street, on Tuesday, at 3 and 7 o’clock, in order to give expression to our united repudiation and abhorrence of such Christ dishonoring statements; yet we have unabated confidence in the power of the Lord in the midst by His Spirit to deal with the evil in those assemblies where such evil may be taught or propagated.

Whilst not admitting the truth of all the charges recently published on the testimony of one witness, contrary to Deut. 19:15 and 2 Cor. 13:1, the brothers with one heart and mind repudiated and utterly condemned certain statements dishonoring to the Lord, which it is admitted have been made amongst those gathered together to His name.

At the same time the fullest confidence was expressed in the faithfulness of God, and in the continued presence of the Lord, with the twos or threes gathered together to His name, and that by His grace and power, all unscriptural statements, savoring of irreverence, speculation, or levity on such a holy subject, if not already judged and withdrawn with true confession by the authors, will be dealt with in a scriptural way by the local gatherings responsible to maintain what is due to the name of the Lord.

Brothers agreed earnestly to exhort brethren everywhere to distrust themselves in conversing on the deep and holy things of God, and to discountenance and abstain from all unprofitable and vain discussions, especially on subjects relating to the Person of the blessed Lord, outside that which is revealed in Holy Scripture for the comfort and edification of God’s people.

The recent practice of printing and publishing every statement (without first having brought them home to their authors, and sought their restoration; and then, if necessary, before the local Assembly responsible to deal with the matter,) was absolutely condemned as evil; the evil being aggravated in the case of A. C. O. {Ord}, by his refusal to furnish the name of the author of the blasphemous statement given on page 46 of his pamphlet.

We need not enlarge upon the doctrines which have of late been taught amongst us, and which have been exposed by others (see “The Manifestation of the Divine Nature in the Person of Christ” by A. C. O.; also, “To F. E. R.; Remarks as to his Doctrine and the Propagation of It” by W. T. Whybrow). Men have arisen of our own selves who have drawn away disciples after them, and their teaching, erroneous to begin with, has resulted in blasphemous and irreverent statements as to the Person of the blessed Lord. Our Lord has been dishonored and blasphemed. Oh! may it be ours, amidst much weakness, to keep His word, and not deny His name! “I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown”: if ever this exhortation were needed we believe it is the very time in which we live.

The leaven of this evil teaching has spread with appalling rapidity. Not one only, but many, have given utterance to statements regarding the Person of the Lord which are truly shocking, and which are the immediate
Imagine a Christian man saying that the blessed Lord was not always in communion, and then withdrawing the fearful statement merely “because of the use that has been made of it.”

We are thankful that there are still some who do not “absolutely condemn as evil” the practice of publishing evil statements -- sad, indeed, that amongst those 500 brothers there were none who had the courage to denounce such an evil principle. Has it come to this, that, for peace sake, and the reputation of teachers, it is better to let the evil work and leave the whole than to expose it? It may be urged that the parenthetic clauses qualify the startling paragraph that closes this notice; but how little is to be gained by seeking to “bring them home to their authors” may be seen by referring to the correspondence between W. B. {Bradstock} and F. E. R., published in A. C. O.’s pamphlet. The evasiveness and prevarication of F. E. R.’s replies, under date March 6th and 20th, are painfully noticeable; but what can any honest man think when, after having said, “I am satisfied I never used these words,” it turns out that almost the identical words had been used. “No lie is of the truth.” Where can those have got to who, instead of resenting such dishonesty, are found excusing it?

But we are told that F. E. R. has withdrawn the word “helpless,” and this is looked upon as a wonderful concession. We believe that this in no wise alters the matter, but, be this as it may, we look in vain for any expression of sorrow, regret, or self-judgment for being the instrument in the enemy’s hand of such havoc and distress among the assemblies of God’s people, and for having persisted in misleading the Lord’s people in the matter of the letter so disgracefully concealed at Ealing.

We sincerely trust that the perusal of this notice may open the eyes of multitudes of saints who are being ensnared by the present movement.

Let us earnestly exhort one another to be true to our Lord in this critical moment, cost what it may.

“How shall recompense His smile
The sufferings of this little while.”
A Brief Statement of F. E. R.’s Doctrines, and Their Effect in Bristol, 1890

To Those Who Love our Lord Jesus Christ in Sincerity

Bristol, Nov., 1890

Dear brethren,

No one interested in what concerns the honor and glory of our blessed Lord can look with indifference at the contention and strife which exists amongst many of God’s people at the present moment, or ignore the necessity for inquiry into the cause. The heart may become pained and the mind wearied in seeking to disentangle the subtle and intricate errors which the invention of the enemy, through the instrumentality of the human mind, has interwoven with the truth; but, however deep the exercise, our responsibility is to separate the “precious from the vile” in the power and with the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Where honesty of purpose exists in seeking only what God would have us hold or follow, the Spirit of God will enable the seeker to find, discerning and separating that which is true from that which is false.

Personal considerations, prejudices, and social influences, or other motives of a worldly character, hinder in us the Holy Spirit’s power to lead the Lord’s people into an increasing knowledge of the truth, or to retain in our hearts what He has already taught. Conscious as we all must be of this, how carefully should we seek to be before God with honest hearts, desiring Him to search them, lest there may be any root of bitterness lurking there, which would militate against the work of the Holy Spirit. Especially so should this be our position at the present time, in humble dependence upon Him, knowing as we do that He is sifting His people in order to separate them in faithfulness and love, not from one another, but from the state of things which they have encouraged, dishonoring to His Name. But, alas! how often is it the case in such times of sifting that many of God’s people having become accustomed to the unlovely things they cling to, unworthy of them as belonging to Him, are so wedded to them that they blindly refuse to allow Him to detach them, and so are separated with the evil instead of being separated from it. That this is a time of sifting and sorrow, all of us must admit. It is only too painfully apparent, but as He has permitted it, the question with those of His people who are exercised about it must be to ask themselves which is His voice and which is that of the stranger; for beyond question, the stranger’s voice has been heard, and the result of listening to it is observable by our divided state, which calls for our prayerful thought and action in considering the following facts well-known to all of us, viz.: --

Firstly, that the doctrines taught by Mr. F. E. Raven are rejected by many.

Secondly, that these doctrines have had the effect of causing division amongst Assemblies of Brethren in many places.

Thirdly, that the doctrines which have produced this painful division and contention, are endorsed and taught by well-known teachers and prominent evangelists in many places.

In relation to these facts, we have been led, we trust of God, to place before you, in His fear, in the grace of Christ, and with all lowliness of mind, the following statements, feeling that the time has arrived when each one gathered out to the Lord’s name is called to maintain what is due to it, and to consider what is involved in the fellowship of Mr. Raven and the Greenwich Assembly which support and shelter him.

A Brief Account of what Led up to the Paper of October 11th, Read at the Brothers Meeting, Orchard Street, Bristol

During the previous five or six weeks repeated requests had been made by brethren connected with the Bristol gatherings, for an Assembly meeting to consider the doctrines of Mr. F. E. Raven and our relations with the Greenwich Meeting, and several preliminary Brothers’ meetings had been held at the Orchard Street room to consider the matter, on the express understanding that they were to lead to Assembly meetings for the purpose of arriving at a judgment on the question. Owing, however, to the persistent efforts of three or four brothers, -- two of whom at least for many months past have been avowed acceptors and supporters of Mr. R’s doctrines -- the ultimate aim and purpose of these meetings was entirely set aside in the following way. At the first Brothers’ meeting, August 28th, 1890, it was stated at the outset that the object was to enquire into certain charges against Mr. F. E. Raven of Greenwich, and those who considered his doctrines to be false were invited then and there to state the ground of their belief. As, however, very few of the objectors to Mr.
Raven’s doctrine were present, the meeting was adjourned till the following Tuesday, when the character of the enquiry was suddenly changed, owing, as it was stated, to a private pre-arrangement among the supporters of the doctrines, who (so they alleged) had in the meanwhile discovered that it would on any ground be “contrary to divine order” to allow any enquiry, as to Mr. Raven, to be held in Bristol; and if the objectors wished to pursue the matter they must go to Greenwich and meet Mr. Raven there face to face, in (as they termed it) a “competent meeting.” To take such a course would have been to recognize the status of the Greenwich Meeting which had already been disavowed by the gathering at Bexhill, as well as by other assemblies with which the Bristol gathering had never disowned fellowship.

The question of the doctrine was thus in danger of being altogether suppressed. But a brother present, having called attention to the fact that the doctrines complained of had been introduced into our midst by Mr. E. D., in March last, and by Mr. D., in June, as well as by local brothers, the meeting agreed that the question of doctrine could now be gone into as far as local brothers were concerned, but that no direct charge was to be preferred against Mr. Raven. Here again arose another difficulty. We felt that we could not disconnect Mr. Raven from the doctrine of which he was a chief promoter, and that a limited enquiry, besides being unjust, inasmuch as it would represent the local brothers to be the authors of the system of doctrine we deprecated, would necessarily prevent its thorough exposure.

Eventually, this brother was allowed to bring his statements forward, which he did; and their accuracy was admitted by each of the three local brothers concerned. He then pointed out their unscriptural character, and his reason for rejecting such teaching; another brother followed, condemning the doctrines, and after the three local brothers had replied, it was proposed to bring the matter before the Assembly, and the date of the Assembly Meeting was definitely fixed and publicly announced for the following Tuesday. But at the next Saturday care-meeting, Sept. 27th, (none of those who opposed F. E. R.’s doctrines being present), this decision was set aside without the slightest intimation beyond a notice read out on the Lord’s-day morning “that another Brothers’ meeting would be held on Tuesday”; the reason given being “that the charges against ‘local brothers’ had completely collapsed,” -- they themselves being the judges!

In this manner the Assembly Meeting, at first agreed to, was continually put off, by some on the ground that each was free to hold his own views and interpretations of the scriptures in question, as they were immaterial; by others on the ground that those who refused this latitudinarian course had better at once retire from fellowship.

This unhappy state of things induced a few of those who refused the doctrines to meet together for the first time to wait upon God as to their future course, with the result that they drew up a paper which, with a few corrections and additions, is here appended in order that all may have the facts of the case before them, and judge of them in their true light. It was felt that as no appeal had been made to the Assembly, owing to two or three leaders assuming to dictate in spite of patient and earnest protest, this paper should be drawn up and signed, setting forth in a simple way the doctrines which were refused, and the reasons why the Assembly should come together to arrive at a judgment on the question at issue. This paper was accordingly read at the Brothers’ care meeting of October 11th, with the intimation that it would be printed and a copy sent to everyone in fellowship. The Assembly Meeting was then reluctantly granted; D. L. H. [Higgins?] still protesting, and saying that he “certainly objected to the Assembly being dragged through the mire,” and certain other brothers remarking that “the paper was false from beginning to end” before they had heard a dozen sentences!

It ought to be mentioned that at this Brothers’ meeting of Oct. 11th, it was proposed on the part of Mr. R.’s supporters that they should read at the Lord’s table the following day, for the acceptance of the Assembly, either the circular issued by the Croydon meeting, 109 or a similar paper drawn up privately by Dr. B. and D. L. H., identifying this Assembly with Greenwich. In spite of protest against this overbearing course, there is every reason to believe it would have been done, had it not been stated that the paper drawn up by those who protested would in this case be also read. The Croydon notice was then read, and also the paper compiled by Dr. B. and D. L. H., after which the paper of those who protested was read likewise, with the intimation that, as we have before stated, it would be printed and circulated amongst all in fellowship, where- upon it was decided to place on the Notice for the following day, an Assembly Meeting for Oct. 16th, in order, as was stated, “to get the matter over” before there was time for the many who were ignorant of how matters were being arranged to see the contents of the paper, and judge for themselves of what was really at issue!

The result of the Assembly Meetings is now, alas, too well known. We have not the shadow of a doubt, but that many are left in entire ignorance of what Mr. R. really teaches, and are deluded into thinking there is no connection between his doctrines and their blasphemous fruits. As to the manner in which the objections were met by Mr. Raven’s supporters, we would instance the sarcasm and contempt which D. L. H., in a long address, heaped upon the brethren who opposed him, stigmatizing what one brother had said on

---

109. We affectionately entreat the attention of our brethren to the sad proof which this Croydon Notice gives of the state into which Mr. Raven’s supporters have brought Assemblies formerly owned as divinely gathered. If ever a notice purporting to come from an Assembly of God bore on its face the evidence that 1 Thess. 5:19 had been slighted, surely this Croydon Notice is one.
a certain point as “downright, thorough-paced ignorance.” One could scarcely realize that the speaker was the same person who only a short time before in writing to a brother anent F. E. R.’s doctrines, had said:

Let us, my dear brother, be emptied of all self-sufficiency, and with meekness receive the engraven word; otherwise we shall fight with carnal weapons, and shoot arrows of sarcasm and irony instead of in meekness ‘instructing those who oppose themselves, if God peradventure may give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.’ Knowing my own liability to the wrong, I can only pray to be kept in the right spirit, and in this prayer I venture to join your name before the Throne of Grace.

Another brother, at the close of the meeting on the 17th, stated the following:

The sum and substance of the errors promulgated by Mr. C. E. S. {Stuart}, of Reading, in our last sorrow, consisted in his adding to Scripture, proved by his using the words “justified and in Christ,” instead of “justified in Christ”; on the other hand, the sum and substance of the errors sought to be forced upon them by those who resisted Mr. R.’s teaching, consisted in their taking from Scripture, proved by their endeavor to rob them of the “and” in the passage, “He is the true God and Eternal life,” [quoting] Rev. 22:18, 19

as a warning to both. This assertion, assented to by several leaders present, is a positive untruth.

All that we have ever sought to maintain on this point is that the word “and” in 1 John 5:20, has no such force or meaning in Scripture as is attached to it here by the promoters of these new doctrines. We have publicly said that “and” is never used in the New Testament in an adversative sense, and that to say the first part of the sentence, “He is the true God,” is personal, in opposition to “Eternal life” as characteristic, is a grammatical inference unknown in the Greek. In short, what we have done is to resist the use made of the “and” in rationalistic arguments freely used by the chief leaders of this system.

We may here note, in regard to A. C. O’s pamphlet, 110 that much has been said about his “refusal to furnish the name of the author of the blasphemous statement given on page 46.” Now that the name has been given, and that against the judgment of many who considered there was no real gain to truth, unless those responsible to judge were prepared to deal with the root which produced such fruit, the result has only been what was anticipated. The fact of the expression having been used, is amply verified, and the brother to whom the statement was originally made has been examined by several of F. E. R.’s supporters, who cannot destroy his testimony in the slightest degree, but notwithstanding, there is no desire to deal with the one who is certainly responsible for suggesting the awful thought. Until the suggestor of the thought is dealt with, the evil remains still unjudged, and those in fellowship with F. E. R. are identified with it.

Here we find what has throughout characterized the apologists for F. E. R.’s evil doctrines, viz., when reluctantly driven to acknowledge the blasphemous character of the illustrations -- which, by the way, are perfectly true to the doctrine, dividing as it does, the Person of Christ -- they have taken refuge in their virtuous abhorrence of the way in which the evil has been exposed, and sought to shield the evil doctrine under this plea. The same thing may be observed in the Park Street notice of Oct. 13, two of those who signed being certainly themselves guilty of that which they condemn in others. But presuming that these brethren are perfectly sincere in their “repudiation and abhorrence of such Christ-dishonoring statements,” are they not indebted to those whose ways in exposing this evil they absolutely condemn for their present sense of obligation to deal with it? As a matter of fact, it is only when the opposers of the doctrines have dragged these abominations to light, that there is any proposal on the part of the supporters of the doctrines to either condemn them or even ask for their withdrawal. This was particularly manifest in the case of a certain notorious letter which had been in private circulation for six months, and two copies from different sources had actually been sent out to Switzerland to show the saints there the “beautiful new truth they were getting in England”! The writer, moreover, admitted at a brothers’ meeting at Orchard Street, Bristol, May 31st, that he had shown his letter to several brethren at Quemerford {where J. B. Stoney was}, a day or two previously, none of whom had, he stated, found any fault with it; and it was only when its real character was exposed by the opposers of the doctrine it was written to support, that the supporters of the doctrine, in order to save their party from shame, urged its withdrawal. Now, this letter was perfectly true to the doctrine it was written to uphold, and the clearest exposition of it that had appeared from any of its advocates. The inconsistency, therefore, of certain leading brethren in Bristol, and their injustice to the writer of the letter which they urged him to withdraw, must now be manifest to all, seeing they have openly and publicly identified themselves with the doctrine of which, he was, perhaps, the most honest exponent. That this letter has been formally withdrawn we admit; but considering that quite recently the author asked a brother “to point out anything which was unscriptural in it,” we feel more than ever convinced that its doctrine has never been judged, and that we are perfectly justified in making this allusion to it. We have seen other so-called withdrawals, which are really reiterations of the evil, leaving the doctrine untouched, the writers excusing themselves for “unguarded language.” This made us emphatically declare to the brothers at Orchard Street, that we refused to accept any explanation or withdrawal, that was not accompanied with the most absolute judgment of, and separation from, the evil system of

In refusing to accept the orthodox statement that “The Life Eternal” in 1 John 1:2, and 5:20, has a personal application to Christ not less in any sense than “The Word,” in John 1, and “The Wisdom of God” in Prov. 8, and that any argument which weakens in any degree the one, can be used with equal force to weaken the other two, -- it has been publicly stated as to the sentence in John 1:3, “and the Word was God,” that it is not nearly as strong or expressive as it stands in the original Greek, which when accurately translated reads -- “and God was the Word.” On the folly and untruthfulness of this statement, we would remark that, this false rendering, and “God was the Word” identifies the Supreme God with “the Word,” thus shutting out the Father and the Spirit, and precludes all possibility of more than one Person being in the Godhead. It thus strikes a fatal blow at the atonement, and all truth. It is the pith and marrow, the beginning and end of the Unitarian system. Every Scholar would reject such a rendering; which overlooks the rule that the subject has the article, and the predicate has not; and no soul sound as to the Trinity and the divinity of Christ could possibly allow the inference. It is anti-christianism.

If

The Life Eternal in 1 John 1:2 and 5:20 is Christ Himself in His own essential personality and Being, then it follows the believer is introduced into Deity when Eternal life is given to him.

A reply to this flimsy and anti-scriptural deduction of the fleshly mind, was on one occasion given in the following words:

As to the word “essential,” I wish to make it unmistakably clear that *I do not hold communication* of what is the prerogative of God alone, and I wish to make it equally clear that *I do hold* the mediatorial character of the Son, as life-giver, as revealed in the Scripture: “So hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself” (John 5:26).

Lastly, in private and in public, local and other leaders have not hesitated to descend to the use of the following argument, which is probably far more serious than much else of the kind, inasmuch as it is nothing short of an attempt to make Scripture contradict itself, and that in reference to the mystery of the Person of Christ.

If you say Eternal life is a Person, then, as Scripture states that “This life is in His Son,” you have as a result, a Person in a Person;

referring to 1 John 5:20, and Rom. 6:23.

This profane and irreverent argument might and can be used to deprive the soul of every truth that we have received as to the inscrutable mystery of the Lord’s Person.

Shame and sorrow that this style of reasoning should ever have been heard amongst us, alone prevent our giving its past and present history, and intimating the serious use to which it may be put.

**Statement**

Bristol, October 11th., 1890

1. Mr. Raven denies that Christ was and is in His own blessed Person, as such, *the Eternal life* that was with the Father in Eternity, thus depriving the Son of God of an essential part of His divine intrinsic glory.

2. By exalting the position in which the Son now is, at the expense of His Person, Mr. Raven perverts the real character of Eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested in this world. Consequently he calls it,

A sphere, and order of blessing.

A kind of technical expression indicating an order and state of blessing.

For us it is the heavenly relationship in which, in the Son, man is now placed. In contrast to these declarations, Scripture states:

God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son

*Christ liveth in me* --

*When Christ who is our life shall appear* --

*Your life is hid with Christ in God.*

The new life given to the believer, is a life which cannot be separated from Christ Himself, the true expression of it being in His own Person, and He Himself being the source and sustenance of it.

In speaking of Eternal life, as communicated to us, the substitution of a sphere, or condition, or state of blessing and relationship prepared for man, for what Christ is personally (whilst we all admit and believe that such state or condition is included in “the promise of life” Titus 1:2), destroys in effect its true character, which is set forth in what Christ is personally, as expressed in the latter part of John 17:3: “Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” The life is thus reduced to an abstract, mystical, and unreal thing.

The above thoughts of *Eternal life* put forth by Mr. Raven are therefore derogatory to the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ.

3. The public manifestation of the Son of God as the *Eternal life* is also limited and disparaged, whereby the perfect witness in this world to the Father’s glory, is seriously impaired, as well as both the blessing and the responsibility of the world in consequence.

---

111. Anyone who will take the trouble of reducing the argument to logical form will readily admit that though there is deep spiritual subtlety in it, there is no logical coherence.
4. The denial of “the Eternal life” being an expression of the glory of His Person, with the denial of its display in this world, except to believers, has, where listened to, necessarily set souls to speculate on, define, dissect, and divide the sacred Person of our precious Savior; and many who have fallen under such teaching, apparently without conscience about it, divide the Person of our Lord, saying, This is human life, that, Eternal life, and this, and that is not.

These unholy and irreverent inquiries trench upon His blessed and glorious Person; and His glory is insensibly diminished or lost, to the great damage and loss of all those who are thus drawn into this snare of the enemy.

5. The expression used by Mr. Raven, that it is a monstrosity to state that the only begotten Son of God was the exhibition of Eternal life from a babe in the manger to the throne of the Father, and other similar statements, are also confirmatory of the above, and evidently form a part of the same system of doctrine.

As to Divine Righteousness, we add that with regard to the finished work of Christ, and our having become the “righteousness of God” in Him, Mr. Raven objects to its being now applied to the believer in an absolute way, which is not only contrary to Scripture and seriously false, but lowers the present value of His accomplished redemption.

**Extracts from Mr. Raven’s Writings**

*Ni dans les évangiles, ni dans l’épître de Jean, il n’est parle de Christ comme de la vie éternelle.*

*En 1 Jean 1:2, il s’agit evidemment de Christ comme ayant manifeste la condition de vie éternelle, mais il n’est pas parle d Lui comme etant la vie éternelle. -- Dans le seul cas ou il est parle de Christ comme de la vie éternelle (1 Jean 5:20), l’article est omis.*

(Trans. -- Neither in the gospels, nor in the Epistle of John, is Christ spoken of as the Eternal life.

In 1 John 1:2, it evidently refers to Christ as having manifested the condition of life Eternal, but it is not spoken of Him as being the life Eternal. -- In the instance in which Christ is spoken of as Eternal life (1 John 5:20) the article is omitted.)

I think I would bow to Scripture in a moment, but Scripture does not speak of Christ having been the Eternal life which was with the Father before the world was. That the Eternal life was with the Father (as I should say essentially) Scripture says, and I have no doubt whatever that the reference is to the Son, but the importance of the difference is that John in his Epistle is giving prominence to the condition because we have part in it -- March Th, 1890.

It was ever an integral part of the Person of the Eternal Son -- “Eternal life” (p. 6).

I strongly object to the talk about the Personality of Eternal life, because (as the reference is to Christ) it makes Eternal life commensurate with the Person of the Eternal Son, and this I believe to be very wrong. In the Epistle of John the apostle is not, as I understand it, unfolding the Person of the Son, but declaring something that came to light and is now perfectly expressed in Him, and in which, having Him, we too have part -- July 4, 1890.

Separating, in the believer, Eternal life from the Holy Ghost, and talking about Christ manifesting to the unbelieving world, Eternal life -- the blessedness in which, as man, He was with the Father -- are to my mind not only erroneous but repulsive -- Dec. 6, 1889.

It is when every link has been broken with the responsible man, that Christ is revealed as being Himself the Eternal life, though of course He never was less -- Aug. 15, 1890.

As to manifestations in the Lord’s life here, we must remember that Eternal life is heavenly; but the Lord also took part in human life down here, and hence had to say to things and circumstances which in themselves have nothing to do with what is heavenly. He was known after the flesh, but is not so known any longer. The true God was in the babe in the manger, but those who worshiped Him there had been enlightened as to who He was. What they saw was “the sign” -- the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes lying in the manger. It was not a question of exhibition, for, for the moment, everything was veiled -- Aug. 14, 1890.

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 -- July 25th, 1890.

Scripture states that Christ is Eternal life: I do not know where it says that he was it -- October 1st, 1890.

Eternal life (when Christ was here) was still with the Father, but His life before men was wholly consonant with it -- July 25, 1890.

On being asked, “If our Lord’s sayings on the Cross to His mother and the loved disciple were the manifestations of Eternal life?” Mr. Raven replied, “No, but consistent with it -- Jan. 1889."

With regard to the painful illustrations of the evil doctrine that has been taught, we feel they are so entirely opposed to all that is of God, that it is incumbent on us to bring to your notice by citing them, the true nature (Matt. 7:18) of the root of evil doctrine by the fruit it has, alas! abundantly produced. Many of them are already in print. We would specially refer to those given in the well-known pamphlet by our brother,
Mr. A. C. Ord. To these we have added as below several others which have come to our notice. We have fully authenticated them, and can vouch on adequate testimony for their having been publicly uttered by well-known and accepted leaders and supporters of Mr. Raven and his doctrines, in different meetings, and in localities widely apart. They are of recent date, and this fact affords additional proof of the wide-spread acceptance of the doctrine and its profane fruits, and also proof of its subtle, systematic, and persistent character.

Statements referred to in addition to those given in Mr. Ord’s pamphlet:

1. “Did God die?”
2. “When His Humanity was in the grave, where was His Divinity?”
3. “As my arm is an integral part of my body so eternal life is a part of Christ.”
4. “I maintain that the ‘life of Jesus,’ in 2 Cor. 4, is in no sense the display of Eternal life; it is what characterized the human life of Jesus on earth that is in question.”
5. “I don’t for a moment believe that the Lord Jesus rose from the grave with the same body that went in.”

The irreverent, profane, and blasphemous nature of statements such as these, at variance with the plain declarations of Scripture; the unwarrantable intrusion of the creature-mind into the holy subject of the mystery of the Person of Christ; their distinctly infidel origin and wide-spread use, not only among Mr. Raven’s supporters, but also among those who are on openly rationalistic ground; the necessity to which those were driven, whose aim was to explain, justify, and properly set forth these doctrines, to do so by the use of such illustrations; the fact that they have, without exception, proceeded from Mr. Raven and his most prominent supporters and followers, and have been forced out into the light and exposed by those who oppose these doctrines; and furthermore the fact that they have been indulged in for a long period of time without conscience (as it seems) or exercise by those who originated or borrowed them; all these combined, make it an absolute necessity for all who desire to maintain the holiness which becomes God’s house, to declare their abhorrence and complete rejection of these unholy fruits, as well as of the doctrines which produce them, and with which they are inseparably connected.

But this is not all. In view of the exposure of these doctrines and the wide-spread righteous indignation which has been awakened against them, now that they are exposed root and fruit, we humbly and meekly, but with all earnestness and purpose of heart, most solemnly call upon you and all who care for the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Holy and the True, not to accept any explanation in any sense whatever, nor any withdrawal of the evil expressions, that is not accompanied by the fullest self-judgment, and most contrite confession that a system of doctrine subversive of the very foundations of Christianity has been taught, and is persistently maintained.

We further feel bound in faithfulness to the Lord, and love to the lambs and sheep of the flock of God, to express our conviction that by nothing but Assembly judgment, and the rejection of all, who teach, hold, defend, or sympathize with the evil doctrines, root and branch, can we, or any saints anywhere gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, approve ourselves clear in the matter. And our conviction, therefore, is that any Assembly which does not act thus in accordance with the imperative injunctions of the word of God, for the maintenance of the principle of unity in separation from evil and departure from iniquity, forfeits all claim to be considered as gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ on the ground of the One Body, and that the table there cannot be owned as the Lord’s Table.

Signed:
J. Marks,
G. R. Scammell,
F. J. Hyde,
J. Spencer Palmer,
A. E. Scammell,
J. Mine,
Hy. Kerkeek.

Far be the thought from us to judge any brother for a word, or a phrase, written or spoken, contrary to the truth -- for in these things we do all offend; but when objectionable words or phrases, characteristic of a certain line of teaching, are employed to support and propagate a system of doctrines, it becomes the duty of all to ascertain the thought suggested by what is expressed, and, if it is found to contain error, to expose it, lest the unwary be entrapped. The phrase used by Mr. F. E. R., “God was in the Babe,” certainly does not tend to exalt the blessed Lord Jesus in the minds of His people, but suggests a thought contrary to that which the Holy Spirit would convey. He ever guards with jealous care the glory and dignity of the Person of Christ under all circumstances and conditions, whether as what He was in all eternity, God, and with God, or as the Babe whom the angel declared was Christ the Lord from the moment of His birth, and for whom the aged Simeon blessed God as he held Him -- “Thy Salvation” -- in His arms. Whether as the One smitten, spit upon, crucified and put to death, or as the glorified Man crowned with many crowns and seated at God’s right hand for us; it is ever the Holy Spirit’s delight to guard the sacredness of His Person from the rude familiarity and unhallowed curiosity which the unspiritual mind betrays in forming an estimate of Him by the lowly circumstances in which He may be found. Circumstances may alter our apprehension of what and who He is, if we are not subject to the mind of the Holy.
Spirit, but they do not affect Him in what He is or ever was, in any degree or distinction. What a joy to faith to know that “this same Jesus” is the same in the past, as He is today, and is in the future! The One who was ever His Father’s delight, before angels or men were created, was the same when He took little children up in His arms and blessed them, as He is now seated at the right hand of the Majesty on High, sympathizing with us in all our troubles and difficulties, cheering and encouraging His feeble and weary ones, with the refreshing power of His companionship with them by the way.

If it can only be said of him that “God was in the Babe,” He, the Babe, Jehovah Jesus, is at once lowered to the same level as the believer, and brought at once down to an equality with him in that respect, inasmuch as every believer has God the Holy Ghost dwelling in him. The Babe was God manifest in the flesh. A Unitarian would say that “God was in the Babe.” And how vast is the difference! But are not such dishonoring thoughts the outcome of this system of teaching, not alone confined to this particular instance, but throughout, wherever He is spoken of with regard to what He was in the days of His flesh? Is not a similar distinction made between what He was then, and “as the risen glorified Man” in a tract published by F. E. R., called “Eternal life,” which suggests the thought that not till He was glorified was He “the true God and Eternal life?” If not intended, it nevertheless depreciates and sets the mind to work upon the holy and inscrutable Person of our blessed Lord.

What God in His grace supplies by the Holy Ghost for faith to delight in, and feed upon, becomes, when reduced to these and suchlike thoughts, merely the letter for the vapid faith to delight in, and feed upon, becomes, when reduced to these and suchlike thoughts, merely the letter for the vapid faith to delight in, and feed upon, becomes, when reduced to these and suchlike thoughts, merely the letter for the vapid mind to investigate and analyze. When such is the case, intellect usurps the place of faith, and affections flee away. The object of faith, -- Christ, -- is displaced and, the substitute, creed, begins to assume a definite form, as in this instance, which appears either to be Arianism or Irvingism. When a teacher, however used of God he may have been, allows his mind to work to discover the thoughts and things of God; however pious his words, or commendable in works or life he may be, it is little wonder that his thoughts should gravitate to the source from which they sprang, and that is, SELF, and that all his efforts to grasp what alone is known and enjoyed by faith will be abortive. Is not this observable in Mr. F. E. R.’s failure to distinguish the “sign” from the Object? The “sign” was not the Babe, but the circumstances in which the Babe was to be found by the shepherds; just as being three days in the earth was not the Son of Man, but the sign, though, thus interpreted, the circumstances themselves acquired a new and divinely given value. Faith recognized the sign given of the Lord even to those who refused His ministry.

If Mr. F. E. R.’s teaching is adopted, or for that matter any other brother’s teaching, without discerning what manner of spirit they are of, the result will be that hearts and minds will feed upon it, and will receive and hold the interpretation of the Scriptures according to their judgments, instead of being fed with Christ and instructed by the Holy Spirit. We do not deny that blessing may in some cases have resulted from attention being called to forgotten or neglected truths, nor even that the teaching itself may for a moment satisfy the cravings of an undelivered soul. But we have abundant proof that it presents a marvelous attraction, as reasoning ever does, to man’s mind, and produces a temporary elation, which feels like “blessedness,” and is readily called by this name. Habit soon destroys the power of distinguishing it from what is real and true, and the newly acquired knowledge becomes fixed in the mind and is mistaken for the God-given wisdom of a now absent faith. This may account for its having been often asserted that what is taught is that which has been ministered for these last fifty years.

With these thoughts suggested to our minds, we would still seek in humble dependence upon our God to place them, simple as they are, before our brethren for their consideration and exercise regarding the occasion which calls for them, that each may ask himself, Can I be identified with this evil, and remain true to the blessed Lord, “who loved me and gave Himself for me?”

May He enable each of us to cling to Him alone, and be entirely separate from everything or everyone contrary to His holiness; and in seeking to know Him increasingly and to be preserved from the evil induced by our own unfaithfulness, “we commend you to God and the word of His grace,” as the instructor and safeguard against that of which we have sought to warn you.

H. K.
J. S. P.
A. E. S.

Appendix

We append a few extracts from some of the notices we have received from different gatherings showing their matured judgment of the matter, “after weeks of patient waiting on God,” and in some cases having “for several months . . . been deeply exercised,” and having “had before . . . [us] . . . the correspondence between Bexhill and Greenwich Assemblies, the circulars of both sides of the division at Ealing, also the doctrine of F. E. R. in his tract, “Eternal Life” and printed letters, Dec. 6 {1888} and Mar. 21 {1889}.”

* * * *

Chatham, Ontario, Oct. 3rd, 1890

We take this means of advising our brethren gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that having learned of the action of the gathering at Bexhill in declining fellowship with, and final rejection of, the Meeting at Greenwich -- principally for supporting and
sheltering Mr. Raven, and then adopting his evil doctrine, we recognize that in accordance with the principles of the Church of God (Matt. 18:18; 1 Cor. 10:16, 17; Eph. 4:3, 4), the action must be owned by every assembly of God; and that in receiving and commending we shall continue to govern ourselves accordingly.

With reference to the doctrine of R., we reject it as an irreverent attack upon the Holy Person of the Son of God; as an effort to undermine the assurance of His Word, rob the saints of their present enjoyment of Eternal life in the Son in His relationship with the Father, and the fellowship of the family of God (1 John 1:3). The whole movement leading on to the rejection of the authority of Christ in His Assembly, and the renouncement of the principles and communion of the Church of God (1 Cor. 10:16, 17).

First. -- That the cause of these sad occurrences and divisions is to be found in the teachings of Mr. R., which, in spite of repeated exhortations, he holds to, and which are in greater or lesser degree contrary to Scripture, lead souls astray, and are dishonoring to the blessed Person of our Lord and Savior.

Secondly. -- That under the providence of God the Assembly in Bexhill was led to take action in this painful matter.

Thirdly. -- That, in order to keep the unity of the Spirit, the decision of the said Assembly of June 29th, this year -- to refuse all further fellowship with the Assembly at [Thornton House] Greenwich, because they will not judge the evil in their midst -- is decidedly to be recognized.

From Elberfeld, Nov. 1890

(Where were gathered a large number of brothers laboring in Germany, Holland, German-Switzerland and Belgium.)

Their unanimous judgment is as follows:

First. -- That the cause of these sad occurrences and divisions is to be found in the teachings of Mr. R., which, in spite of repeated exhortations, he holds to, and which are in greater or lesser degree contrary to Scripture, lead souls astray, and are dishonoring to the blessed Person of our Lord and Savior.

Secondly. -- That under the providence of God the Assembly in Bexhill was led to take action in this painful matter.

Thirdly. -- That, in order to keep the unity of the Spirit, the decision of the said Assembly of June 29th, this year -- to refuse all further fellowship with the Assembly at [Thornton House] Greenwich, because they will not judge the evil in their midst -- is decidedly to be recognized.

Philadelphia, Sept. 29, 1890

It is with deep sorrow and humiliation that we express our judgment as follows:

First. -- We accept Bexhill’s care for the Lord’s table in withholding fellowship from Greenwich. We notice that Greenwich express their fullest confidence in Mr. Raven showing us that Greenwich was leavened with Mr. Raven’s doctrine. We accept also their final decision in disowning the Greenwich Assembly.

Secondly. -- We believe that those meeting at Victoria Hall, Ealing, did right in withdrawing from their brethren at the Sunnyside Room.

We see no other course for them to pursue, and maintain a good conscience, in the light of what had developed at Greenwich, and their use of 2 Tim. 2:19, was all that was left for them.

Thirdly. -- Our judgment of the doctrine contained in paper entitled “Eternal life,” and printed letter of Dec. Th and March 21st, were sufficient to pronounce it evil and profane, affecting the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, and undermining the faith once delivered to the saints.

We therefore declare ourselves in separation from it, and refuse fellowship with all who sympathize with it.

Brantford, Ontario, October 3, 1890

We believe this action at Bexhill (refusing the Meeting at Thornton House, Greenwich) was forced upon them in faithfulness to the Lord Jesus.

At the same time, while we accept it as having the authority of . the Lord Jesus we fully agree with it ourselves, believing that Mr. Raven has taught doctrines undermining the authority of Scripture, dishonoring to the Person of the Blessed Lord, and robbing the saints of their portion.

We believe, therefore, that if no Assembly had acted, we are responsible according to the Epistle of John, to refuse Mr. Raven, and his adherents as not bringing the true doctrine of Christ, and as being characterized by a subtlety which always accompanies a work of the enemy.

Halifax, Nova Scotia, Oct. 9th, 1890

As to the doctrines, we have had no difficulty, as before stated, from the first, in utterly rejecting them. We see them to be of such a nature, so deprecatory of and disparaging to our ever blessed and adorable Lord, that any one with the smallest desire for His honor and glory, can with difficulty allow his pen to inscribe the awful statements made. It is, however, important that saints should be fully informed of the irreverent manner in which the blessed Lord is spoken of, in order that they may judge it and separate from it: as not to do so is to be identified with it. The object of the enemy, as it has been said, is not division, but defilement of the mass, in order that the testimony of brethren may become nugatory before the coming of the Lord, and thus more easily prepare the way for the “Man of Sin.”

The following irreverent statement has been made by Mr. Raven in a letter to a brother at Ealing.

Think of a helpless infant being the exhibition of Eternal life, whatever might be there.

This is his dreadful comment upon the following beautiful Scriptural utterance:

The tree of life was connected with Him who was the fountain of Eternal life before He became a man at all; and I need not say He never, for an instant, ceased to be the exhibition of it, from the Babe in the manger to the throne of the Father."

The doctrines given to us from the Head, are those in which we are called to continue (Col. 2:6-7). Those who teach otherwise, though they speak “with enticing words,” though they are full of “good words and fair speeches” (Rom. 16:18), deceive “the hearts of the simple.” The Word to us is, “Avoid them.” We are enjoined also to be “wise unto that which is good.” Dear brethren, may our obedience come abroad unto all. Waiting till the God of peace shall bruise Satan under our feet.

Brooklyn, Oct. 19th, 1890

We desire to state briefly and plainly that we accept the judgment of the Assembly of God at Bexhill in refusing fellowship with and finally in rejecting as an Assembly the Greenwich Meeting, which is identified with Mr. F. E. Raven—a teacher of false doctrine affecting the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in doing so we are carrying out the Word of God, “endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Eph. 4:3). The brethren there gathered
to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, with the Lord in the midst, were competent to judge the matter, and their judgment was binding on all according to Matt. 18:18, “Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.” And we are thankful to the Lord that He in His mercy and faithfulness to His own permitted the question of fellowship to be raised at Bexhill.

The separation of a portion of the saints in Ealing now meeting in Victoria Hall from the remainder took place on June 15th. Unjudged evil in their midst had been exercising the consciences of those who went out {separated from evil}, but their action in separating was precipitated by the declaration three times made, that “we break bread this morning in fellowship with Greenwich,” thus identifying the Lord’s table with manifested evil. But they waited on God for 6 weeks and did not break bread until four weeks after the Bexhill decision rejecting Greenwich had been given.

* * * * *

Extracts from the Circular Letter of our Swiss brethren. Translated.

In short, in maintaining this destructive system, views worse than irreverent, -- heretical views have come to light regarding the Person of the Savior. He is no longer in Person, but only in essence, the Eternal life with the Father; He is no longer the full and perfect manifestation of this Life to men, from the manger to the Cross; it is only “as the risen and glorified Man that He is said to be the Eternal life.”

Should we not rather reject such doctrines with holy indignation, and walk with those, who, in the midst of great conflict, have been faithful enough to point them out, and to separate themselves from them? In conclusion, we desire to put our brethren specially on their guard against all writings emanating from the avowed defenders of Mr. R.; we are in possession of his own writings, and have no need that he or others should explain them to us. The greatest snare of well-intentioned brethren, -- but who are wanting in that spirit “of a sound mind” (2 Tim. 1:7) which the believer especially needs in these perilous times, -- has been to apply to the false teacher, or his adherents, in order to ascertain whether or no his doctrines are evil.

Finally, let us remember, in the words of a brother, that “it is not, (and we should notice it) the sheep’s knowledge of the stranger, which keeps it from the snares which he tries to set for it; but there is a Voice which is known by the sheep, the Voice of the Good Shepherd, and they know that what they hear is not that; thus the simple are kept, whilst the wise, who wish to know everything, are deceived.” (See “Voice to the Faithful” 16, p.357).

* * * * *

Extracts from “A Word of Warning.” Translated from the French.

Oct. 1890

Our warning relates to the rise of evil doctrines, which, for a considerable time already, have been a trial of faith, and which now have brought division and sorrow into the Assemblies of our brethren in London [England].

In consequence of the obstinacy of a party who cling to Mr. R., the brethren who remain faithful have had no alternative but to withdraw, which they have done in decided testimony against these notions, so repulsive to faith.

Mr. R.’s doctrines throw discredit on the Person of our Lord. He and his party have the boldness to affirm that the Lord, when He was on earth, was not always the manifestation of Eternal life.

A doctrine which refuses to admit that the Lord was uninterruptedly the manifestation of Eternal life, just as He was “God manifest in flesh,” casts dishonor upon His adorable Person.

To disintegrate His Person as God manifested in the flesh, exceeds all that we ever thought to meet with. Assuredly it is not the “doctrine of Christ.” Our duty is clear, to have nothing whatever to do with it.

The Assembly has to keep itself pure as regards true doctrine, as well as in the ordinary matters of daily life.

* * * * *

346, Goswell Road, August 6, 1890

After solemn consideration in the presence of the Lord, we have come to the decision that to remain true to the Divine principles upon which we have hitherto been gathered, we are bound to own the act of the Bexhill Assembly refusing fellowship with Greenwich.

* * * * *

East Finchley, August 24, 1890

Having had before us papers, both printed and written, showing the teaching of Mr. Raven, and others of like views, about the Righteousness of God, and Eternal life -- which teaching we believe to be utterly contrary to the Word of God, and having also heard of the irreverent statements as to the Person of our Blessed Lord, which we see to be the direct result of that teaching; we are sorrowfully compelled to declare that we refuse to commend to, or receive from, the Meeting at Greenwich, or any others, which sanction and support those who teach such grievous errors, while we desire to acknowledge all those Assemblies which, like Bexhill, St. Leonards, Hammersmith, North Row, &c., refuse in any way to countenance such teachers or their doctrines.

* * * * *

Tottenham, N., Sept. 7, 1890

For over 35 years it has pleased God by His grace and Spirit, to gather a few of His redeemed ones in this room to the name and Person of our Lord Jesus Christ on divine ground -- Matt. 18:20; 2 Tim. 2:22; Rev. 3:8; Eph. 4:4, &c., in separation from all human sects and systems. A test has now been introduced, which amounts to this; -- that all who do not accept the teachings of a certain brother at Greenwich, which are obscure and erroneous, are off divine ground. This notice is to state, for those who do not accept these teachings which have so divided and scattered God’s dear people, that all who are in fellowship with Greenwich gathering, where Mr. R.’s teachings are maintained, and all who accept these doctrines cannot, in future, have fellowship at the Lord’s table in this place.

* * * * *

St. Leonards

The Apostle Paul warned the Church of God of two forms of evil by which, after his departure, they would be assailed -- viz., 1st. -- grievous wolves from without entering in; and, -- that “of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.”
Eternal life is coincident with Faith (He that believes has it), and sets and identifies it with the reception of the Spirit by the believer. It denies that the possession of Eternal life coincides with New Birth, forcing a term of communion which they well knew we could not achieve, and that would result in the severing of the relation to the doctrine of Christ.

This teaching weakens and virtually denies the absolute truth of the believer’s being now made the righteousness of God in Christ. It denies that the possession of Eternal life coincides with New Birth, because in the Scripture Eternal life is coincident with Faith (He that believes has it), and sets forth other “perverse things” contrary to sound teaching. 2 Tim. 3:13, 14, 15; 4:3, 4; 1 Tim. 6:20, 21, are salutary exhortations in such times as these for the people of God.

[This notice is signed by some of the oldest, as well as the most sober, grave, and godly brethren amongst us.]

* * * * *  
Acton, July 27, 1890

Having had before us the correspondence between the Bexhill and Greenwich Meetings, and the facts respecting the separation which took place at Sunnyside Room, Ealing, W., on June 15th, 1890, it was decided that we are one with Bexhill, in clearing itself from, in refusing fellowship with, and in rejecting as an Assembly, the Meeting at Greenwich, which is identified with Mr. F. E. Raven and his teachings, which we consider contrary to the sacred and simple Word of God, and dishonoring to the Person of the Son of God.

A party, we judge, has been formed in the midst of the gathered saints around these doctrines, who appear determined to maintain them. This, to us, is heresy, “which is in principle, the playing of the flesh with truth and is the sending into parties those who should be one.”

* * * * *  
Ealing, July 27, 1890

The very principle of our meeting as gathered to the Lord’s name was violated by open insubjection to the action of the Assembly similarly gathered at Bexhill. After six weeks of waiting upon the Lord in prayer and humiliation, we have felt that the time has come for us to break bread in fellowship with those who are standing apart from this evil; and for the present we meet at Victoria Hall, Ealing.

Those remaining at Sunnyside Room, have since endeavored to maintain their ecclesiastical position:

1st. -- By issuing a heartless notice to the neighboring gatherings within 24 hours after the separation, warning the saints that certain brethren, some of whose names were mentioned, had left the Lord’s table -- an act on their part, which they must have known to be an abuse of the confidence reposed in them by the saints in general. The fact that by publicly identifying the Lord’s table with Greenwich, in full fellowship, they were themselves responsible for forcing a term of communion which they well knew we could not accept, only makes the character of this act the more evident.

2nd. -- By consummating, after the separation, their so-called act of discipline in the case of our brother Cowell, thus carrying into effect the will of a party, instead of seeking the mind of the Lord and unity of judgment in the gathering.

3rd. -- By sending forth a printed statement of the case, signed by Mr. Felby and the two Messrs. Chater, which we grieve to say contains many misrepresentations, thus giving to those unacquainted with the facts a wrong impression of what has taken place. At the same time, they repeatedly, unjustly, and without proof, charge their brethren with falsehood and slander.

4th. -- By inviting Mr. Raven into their midst on the 23rd inst., for the purpose of allaying any misgivings as to his system of teaching.

The inevitable outcome of these doctrines, analyzing and dissecting as they do the Lord’s Person, and leading thus to unholy and irreverent questions and reasons about Him, has long been evident to many. Other evil fruits, in the subverting of the fundamental principles of the Gospel, are proving their corrupting effect increasingly, and leaving the saints with Laodicean Luke-warmness, self-satisfaction, and indifference to the glory of Christ.

* * * * *  
Southampton, Aug. 31, 1890

Your decision to go on (as you imagine) as you were before, with Greenwich, has forced a number to go outside of your Meeting.

We consider it a mistake on your part to think that fellowship with Greenwich last Lord’s day is of the same character as fellowship with it a year or more ago, and for this reason: within that time Greenwich has been charged with “association with evil doctrine.” (See letter from the Assembly at Bexhill to Greenwich, June 8, 1890.)

You will see by this charge that it is impossible for you, or any, to go on, “as before,” in fellowship with Greenwich, and we feel it is merely a delusion of the enemy which has been put before you to this effect.

[From Saints who withdrew from the Meeting at Southampton, now meeting at Bedford Reading Room, Bedford Place, Southampton.]

* * * * *  
Dorchester, July 6, 1890

Mr. Raven distinctly refuses the truth of the Personality of the Eternal life, so plainly taught in 1 John 1:1, 2; he qualifies the absolute statements of Scripture regarding the believer, such as God’s righteousness, New Creation, &c., which faith accepts without reserve, positively denies the manifestation of Eternal life to the world, which is a result of denying it to be a Person; he teaches that Eternal life for a Christian is “heavenly relationship and blessedness,” -- “a wholly new order of things,” thus displacing the Person of Christ, so that the substance of Christianity -- Himself -- is thereby lost to the believer; and he also clearly separates Eternal life as communicated to the believer, from the life received in the New Birth, thus plainly contradicting John 6:53, 54. And therefore,
whilst with sorrow owning the Lord’s hand upon us at this time, we cannot but refuse to be identified with such systematic error and doctrinal evil; and our prayer is, that any who are as yet unconscious of the enemy’s effort may be awakened and that indifference to Christ’s Person, and truth may not characterize the saints of God.

* * * * *
Ilkestone, Oct. 8, 1890

We cannot receive Mr. F. E. R.’s teaching. We therefore bow to the judgment of the Lord in the midst at Bexhill, and own Him. His Lord of all. We “withdraw” from iniquity . . . and pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace, with those that call upon the Lord out of a pure heart” (2 Tim. 2:19, 22, N. T.). We therefore desire to have fellowship with those gathered to His name, and to Him as the Head of the body, and own His authority as revealed to us in the Word (Rev. 1, 2, 3).

* * * * *
Nottingham, Oct. 12, 1890

At two full Assembly Meetings here, the question of Mr. Raven and his special doctrines, as set forth in his own printed statements and letters, together with his conduct in connection with these doctrines, having been before us, we now feel it due to the Lord, and our brethren, to declare:

1. Our entire rejection of these doctrines, as deeply dishonoring to the Person of the Son of God, and subversive of the faith of God’s elect.

2. Our judgment that Mr. Raven, in addition to being a false teacher, has deceived his brethren in connection with his teaching, and formed round himself, as a heretical teacher, a distinct party.

3. Our acceptance, in the unity of the Spirit, of the judgment of Bexhill, rejecting the Assembly at Greenwich, as being completely identified with Mr. Raven and his heretical teachings, effect to which judgment they gave in their letter to the Greenwich Assembly, of June 29th, 1890.

* * * * *
Oughtibridge, Sept. 29, 1890

On Lord’s day morning, 28th Sept., it was announced at the Lord’s table that there would be an Assembly Meeting in the afternoon to decide this question, the result being that, after relating a few of the statements which have caused, and are still causing, so much trouble, and pointing out how irreverent, unscriptural, and derogatory to the Person of Christ they were, we together decided as one man to accept the action of Bexhill in their rejection of Greenwich as an Assembly of God, and to refuse all who are in fellowship with it, or teach the doctrines taught by those in it, or by others elsewhere, for which we believe they are responsible.

* * * * *
Sheffield, Sept. 29, 1890

Having had repeatedly before us the doctrines of Mr. Raven, and the statements made by him, and by others who are associated with him, as to the Person of our Lord, we now declare our fellowship with Bexhill in refusing fellowship with, and in rejecting as an Assembly, the Meeting at Greenwich, which is identified with Mr. Raven and his teachings, and which we believe to be contrary to the doctrine which is according to godliness, and dishonoring to the Person of the Son of God. Our Lord would have us keep His “Word” and not deny His “Name.” (Rev. 3:8).

We would remind our beloved brethren everywhere that lukewarmness is the mark of the last state of the church on earth, and that this is nauseous to the Lord. “So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth” (Rev. 3:16).

This Notice was signed by over fifty brethren, representing the five Meetings in Sheffield.

* * * * *
From “A Protest” sent out by those who withdrew from the Meeting at Blackrock, Dublin, Nov. 24, 1890.

The present circular from Blackrock states that “the sad division has been forced upon us,” whilst it is we who have to complain that because we would not consent to be in fellowship with Mr. Raven and his teachings, we are obliged, in deep sorrow, but in faithfulness to the Lord, to separate from our brethren at George’s Avenue, Blackrock, a gathering which—so far as used of the Lord—we have loved and cherished many years.

We cannot but express our conviction that if the same energy had been evinced in protecting the Person of the Lord as has been shown in sheltering Mr. Raven’s theories, the unity of the Assembly would have been better secured, and His blessing—a priceless blessing—with it.

Extract from “Let no Man take thy Crown”
by H. G. Brand (Japan)

My ground for rejecting the doctrines of Mr. Raven I will state in a few words.

In the Spring of 1888, through the gracious forethought of our God, I was at the Conference at Witney.

I think that is acknowledged to be the time when these new doctrines were first definitely declared. And there was no mistaking their meaning then. They were put forward with undisguised clearness of speech. I mention this because I find a general dislike to go back to the origin of this controversy.

The subject of the evening meetings at Witney, was Eternal Life. A statement was made which astonished those who heard it for the first time, that neither the young men nor the babes had Eternal life, only the fathers. This was immediately contested. And the expression was modified thus, that though they “had” it, they “had not got it”—a distinction hard to be appreciated. It was also remarked that though they might have it, they were not “in it.” Eternal life was stated to be a “sphere,” as we might speak of “Australian life” and “Bush life.” Two things were thus prominently put forward:

First, WHAT ETERNAL LIFE WAS. Up to this time we had always known Eternal life to be, and defined it at once to be, the Person of the Son of God. “This is the true God and Eternal Life.”

Thus to accept these new doctrines, all we had before learned must be unlearned. Eternal life was not in us, but outside us—not a Person but a “sphere.” The examples were plain enough as to this, for there may be hundreds, all with their different personal lives in the Bush, yet they all lead “Bush life.” A man does not live by the
A simple Christian was at once struck with the thought, that those who put forward such things were talking of what they confessed they knew practically nothing about.

It seems impossible for an honest Christian to fail to see that at that time a complete revolution in our confession as to what eternal life was, was inevitable.

A Word on Principles

by P. A. Humphreys

Jan. 1891

It is a blessed thing that we can always count on our Lord’s faithfulness to His people, and on His watchful care and tender love for them, no matter how evil and difficult the days may be. He has given us, and He maintains before us, Divine principles and truth on which we are to act, and on which He will be with us in sympathy and power. The foremost of these are, our nothingness and His sufficiency, our emptiness and His fulness, our feebleness and His power, whilst, over all, we have His holy Spirit to make good to us all that He is, to take of the things of Christ and show them to us. We can trace this Divine principle all through Scripture, though, in Old Testament times, man under probation did not learn the lesson nor the blessedness of dependence upon Him -- being unsubdued, “rebellious from the day that I knew you” as Moses said. Still, what characterizes the Christian, under the light of New Testament truth, is the acceptance, to start with, of these Divine principles, fully made good to him on the ground of the grace that has shown him what he was as a child of Adam, and what he now is as a child of God by faith in Christ Jesus. These Divine principles always apply.

And never was there a time when it was more important than the present, to be clear as to the Divine principles God has preserved to His people, and the Divine basis upon which all truth rests; for surely none of His people can fail to see how, in the present-day, all that is of God is called in question, and all that has Christ and His glory for its object is ignored, if not actually derided. But beyond this, every true soul must be conscious of the drive that is going on amongst the people of God everywhere, and of the pressure that is brought to bear upon them in every quarter. And here I do not refer merely to the systems of men, and what may be seen of the organizing power of the enemy as shown from Romanism downwards -- that most pretentious form, where the unity of the Church is the great basis of argument, and

where all without the pale of their communion are looked upon as dammed -- but to his power over individual souls, setting the mind to work, and introducing enquiries touching the Personality of our Lord, enquiries which lead to irreverent remarks concerning Him, which the makers thereof do not themselves perceive to be irreverent; and then in producing difference of judgment as to the meaning and bearing of these enquiries, showing indifferentism on the one hand, and on the other the acceptance of the opinion of others who declare they see no harm in what is being taught -- conscience and feeling for our Lord being thus handed over to the control of others, and on such a subject too as His Person, and name, and glory. All this shows clearly enough the power at work -- the hand of the enemy of Him who came to bind the strong man and to spoil his goods. One need but look around to see the fruit of his efforts, his wiles on every hand in Christendom; scarcely a book on any religious subject can be opened without finding the varied forms of his success in mixing up error with the truth, so as to depreciate the value and to detract from the power, as far as he can, of what God has accomplished in spite of man, and of the blessed and eternal victory our Lord has won.

Certain it is, however, that no opinion of any person or of any number of persons, let them be ever so spiritual or pious, can satisfy a conscience that is exercised by God, or a heart that feels where the glory of its dearest Object is touched. Each believer has to do directly with God, with our Lord, and with the Spirit acting directly upon the conscience by the Word; gifts indeed there are, and helps too, but any gift or any help that comes between the soul and God is a positive hindrance. God intends all that He ministers through any channel to be received by each one directly from Himself and with Himself. Where this is not the case practically, the truth presented has neither power nor weight with the soul, the conscience not being exercised with God in regard to it, and what passes for truth (and Satan always seeks to imitate truth, in order to introduce error) will thus be imbibed, and its evil effects seen in strife and scattering, because it is insisted upon as truth, and those who see its falsity and its
error are held up to scorn for refusing it, and every bad motive is attributed to them if they seek to expose it. The cry is raised that ‘The unity is attacked,’ ‘The unity is in danger,’ and souls are distressed and misled, forgetting that true unity rests on quite another basis, and flows from a totally different source -- that which is hidden and secret, that which subsists between Himself and His people, and between His people themselves in consequence -- the unity of that Spirit that always and invariably has Christ and His glory for its object.

It is this hidden unity which is always in danger, and which is ever the object of the enemy’s attack. It may be urged, perhaps, that Satan knows nothing of this unity, and this may be granted; but he knows well enough when a company of God’s redeemed are occupied with their Lord and His glory, and are thus seeking to be for Him in the enemy’s land. And this would apply equally to each individual believer, no matter how feeble, or howsoever deeply tried. Satan most assuredly does not know what communion with our Lord is, but he knows full well, from the testimony borne, whether any believer, or any company of believers, is in such communion or not; and his object ever is, to draw all such out of it, and to prevent others getting into it. And, in saying this, I do not speak of communion as a high or exalted state, into which souls may be seeking to get, but of the measure of communion each may have -- even the very feeblest believer -- in occupation with Him, and Him alone, His glory, His perfections, His love and His grace, His mind and His will.

That outward unity may take the prominent place before the soul, no one can deny; we are surrounded by proofs of it. But it is not of God that it should be so; His word is, “Using the soul, no one can deny; we are surrounded by proofs of it. It is this hidden unity which is always in danger, and which is ever the object of the enemy’s attack. It may be urged, perhaps, that Satan knows nothing of this unity, and this may be granted; but he knows well enough when a company of God’s redeemed are occupied with their Lord and His glory, and are thus seeking to be for Him in the enemy’s land. And this would apply equally to each individual believer, no matter how feeble, or howsoever deeply tried. Satan most assuredly does not know what communion with our Lord is, but he knows full well, from the testimony borne, whether any believer, or any company of believers, is in such communion or not; and his object ever is, to draw all such out of it, and to prevent others getting into it. And, in saying this, I do not speak of communion as a high or exalted state, into which souls may be seeking to get, but of the measure of communion each may have -- even the very feeblest believer -- in occupation with Him, and Him alone, His glory, His perfections, His love and His grace, His mind and His will.

That outward unity may take the prominent place before the soul, no one can deny; we are surrounded by proofs of it. But it is not of God that it should be so; His word is, “Using the soul, no one can deny; we are surrounded by proofs of it. It is this hidden unity which is always in danger, and which is ever the object of the enemy’s attack. It may be urged, perhaps, that Satan knows nothing of this unity, and this may be granted; but he knows well enough when a company of God’s redeemed are occupied with their Lord and His glory, and are thus seeking to be for Him in the enemy’s land. And this would apply equally to each individual believer, no matter how feeble, or howsoever deeply tried. Satan most assuredly does not know what communion with our Lord is, but he knows full well, from the testimony borne, whether any believer, or any company of believers, is in such communion or not; and his object ever is, to draw all such out of it, and to prevent others getting into it. And, in saying this, I do not speak of communion as a high or exalted state, into which souls may be seeking to get, but of the measure of communion each may have -- even the very feeblest believer -- in occupation with Him, and Him alone, His glory, His perfections, His love and His grace, His mind and His will.

Again, as to another Divine principle, specially recovered by our Lord to His scattered and distressed people, nearly sixty years ago -- ‘Separation from evil, God’s principle of unity.’ This principle, coming as light in the midst of darkness, was, through grace, acted upon thankfully, at first by a few, then more generally; and in the measure in which it was carried out in simple obedience and dependence, the Lord gave both individual and collective blessing -- communion of heart and Spirit in occupation with Himself, and in separation from that which was dishonoring to Him. Those who sought to carry this principle into practice were always comparatively few, and found themselves opposed, derided and despised, especially by those who, while professing to know the Lord Jesus as their Savior, and to own Him as their Lord, shrank from entire separation, and, saying that the ground was too narrow, asserted a broader principle, and one more calculated to suit the natural taste and mind of man. Thus the path for those who sought to act on the true principle, from never being popular, became more and more difficult and trying; still the Lord’s approval, the knowledge of His favor, and the sense of obedience to His will, and the realization of the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, more than compensated for all the distress and contempt, and the Lord blessed largely and numbers were added. Testings arose -- testings that called into practice the principle professed; and certain it is that every test that was permitted to come upon His people reduced their numbers -- still the principle remained ever the same, and there was the same blessing and joy for those who acted upon it, and so it will be, thank God, to the very last.

But now a different principle has been evolved -- not new, for it is precisely the same in spirit though differing in form, as was shown at the first by the opposers to the Divine principle -- it is the principle of estimating the amount and character of evil, and deciding whether it is sufficiently great to call for separation from it. The spirit of obedience is here lost, and the judgment of man is set up in its stead -- the corrupt judgment of man, swayed by his tastes, inclinations, and natural wishes and ties, asserting itself to decide what amount of evil makes separation permissible (I do not say ‘necessary,’ for the ground taken is too low for that). This, of necessity produces division -- those who seek to act as heretofore on the Divine precept of separation from evil, and those who take the ground that evil must be sufficiently gross and pronounced to warrant separation from it; the latter declaring the former to be guilty of schism, and causers of division. Evidently the grounds of these two actions are opposed to each other. I need only cite 2 Cor. 6:17, 18, to show which is according to Scripture, and to the fact that “It is commonly reported” was sufficient evidence upon which to write the Apostolic command to “put away from among yourselves that wicked person.” True, we do not live in Apostolic days now; but we may well ask what would have been the consequence, if the reply from Corinth had been,

We will enquire as to the extent of the evil you write to us about, but we must ask you first to be “good enough to write the Apostolic command to “put away from among yourselves that wicked person.” True, we do not live in Apostolic days now; but we may well ask what would have been the consequence, if the reply from Corinth had been,

We will enquire as to the extent of the evil you write to us about, but we must ask you first to be “good enough to

Or if, as one has said

I do not believe what is laid to Mr. ___’s charge; if I did, I would not go on another moment with him;

or as another has said

Mr. ___’s teaching is very bad, and his doctrine is shocking, but division is worse.

Such statements as these are but rebellion against the
command, and a setting up of one's own capacity to judge and to decide how much evil can be tolerated without separation; obedience is lost, and even the spirit of obedience cast aside -- let us hope it is but for a time, and then, if our Lord permit us to remain here a little longer for Him, there may be recovery, and a reseeking the true ground of unity, even though driven to it by the bitter fruit of departure from it. This departure has not been as recent as some would suppose; the spirit of it has, alas! been working for some years past, and questions have been raised which showed where the mind was at work, and the conscience unexercised. I refer to discussions as to how far a believer could be said to be dead with Christ, whether actually, morally, or merely judicially -- forgetting the blessed word which says "Ye are dead," "Reckon yourselves indeed to be dead," "Crucified with Him," and "Buried with Him." This was followed by the assertion that 2 Cor. 4:7-13, applied only to the Apostles of that day, and has no direct application to the believer now. Many tacitly receiving this, if not actually accepting it, the next question raised was as to Eternal Life, and further departure was seen, questions being raised as to who were in possession of it, or "in it," and when, and how it was received, and was it Christ, and was He it, and when, and how, and where? Some becoming alarmed, and endeavoring to stand against this, every effort was made to explain away what was shown to be wrong, and even to deny what had been written and printed, in order to maintain outward unity, forgetting that any so-called unity without separating from evil was not true unity in His sight, and could not but be displeasing to Him. We need only refer to the notices issued from Croydon in Sept. {1890}, and London, on the 13th Oct.; and Greenwich {FER's meeting}. The notice then says they at Croydon decided to receive a letter of commendation from Greenwich, which about three months previously had refused such a letter. However, it is then added as a sort of saving clause, to calm some who no doubt were still distressed, and the conscience unexercised. I refer to discussions as to how far a believer could be said to be dead with Christ, whether actually, morally, or merely judicially -- forgetting the blessed word which says "Ye are dead," "Reckon yourselves indeed to be dead," "Crucified with Him," and "Buried with Him." This was followed by the assertion that 2 Cor. 4:7-13, applied only to the Apostles of that day, and has no direct application to the believer now. Many tacitly receiving this, if not actually accepting it, the next question raised was as to Eternal Life, and further departure was seen, questions being raised as to who were in possession of it, or "in it," and when, and how it was received, and was it Christ, and was He it, and when, and how, and where? Some becoming alarmed, and endeavoring to stand against this, every effort was made to explain away what was shown to be wrong, and even to deny what had been written and printed, in order to maintain outward unity, forgetting that any so-called unity without separating from evil was not true unity in His sight, and could not but be displeasing to Him. We need only refer to the notices issued from Croydon in Sept. {1890}, and London, on the 13th Oct.; and Bristol, on 15th Oct., and Dublin, on Nov. 30th last, all of which plainly show the departure from the true ground, and the adoption of a new and unscriptural basis for keeping together.

The first of these notices (page 22) states that charges of heresy and blasphemy . . . have been brought, but never proved against a servant of the Lord. [It goes on to say] We have failed to find blasphemy, heresy, or false doctrine in the teaching assailed, or anything contrary to the word of God.

The notice then says they at Croydon decided to receive a letter of commendation from Greenwich {FER's meeting}. It is to be noted that no mention whatever is made of Bexhill Assembly, which about three months previously had refused such a letter. However, it is then added as a sort of saving clause, to calm some who no doubt were still distressed, and to keep them outwardly together, that Brethren in Croydon were not thereby necessarily pledged to accept all Mr. Raven had said or done. Where in all this, is the unity of the Spirit, or the slightest effort to maintain it? It is simply saying they are decided to go on with Greenwich and Mr. Raven, though not pledged thereby to accept all he has said or done, although they had said before there was nothing in the teaching contrary to the Word of God! What it is he has said and done is left vague enough -- each one may define it to suit himself. The principle, or we may say the lack of it, is what is sadly manifest -- it is the spirit of Bethesda -- an undefined something they decline to be pledged to accept (because some are troubled at the teaching), but at the same time determination to go on with the teacher and doer of it. First they declare there is nothing contrary to the Word of God in the teaching, and then they say they do not accept all the teacher has said and done! Here it is evident that a basis of outward unity is set forth, which flatly contradicts 2 Cor. 6:17, 18, both in letter and spirit.

It is then added that they are not gathered to any particular set of doctrines, no matter how true they may be -- this is wide enough and vague enough to suit the loosest in principle; indeed, those in Bethesda would, one may hope, repudiate such uncertain ground. But mark what follows;

Nor do we mean (by God's grace) to tolerate dishonor to the Person of our Lord. [It is then said] By doing either we should be off the ground of the Church of God.

Do these dear brethren consider it no dishonor to the Person of our Lord to say, speaking of Eternal life,

It was ever an integral part of the person the eternal Son;

[and that] Talking about Christ manifesting to the unbelieving world eternal life -- the blessedness in which as Man, He was with the Father -- is to my mind not only erroneous but repulsive;

[and that] It is a monstrosity to say that Christ never ceased to be the exhibition of eternal life from a Babe in the manger to the throne of the Father;

[and that] In the Epistle of John, the Apostle, as I understand it does not set forth the person of the Son, but announces something which came to light and is now perfectly expressed in Him;

[and that] Scripture does not speak of Christ as having been the eternal life which was with the Father before the world was, etc., etc.?

The notice concludes, after accusing those who separate from this evil with schism, with the belief that if there had been true brotherly confidence and waiting on God, the difficulties might have been removed, the truth clearly unfolded to the edification of the saints, and thereby this terrible dishonor to the Lord's name in the scattering of His people, prevented.

What "brotherly confidence" of any kind could there be between the defamer of our Lord and those who were distressed by his statements? Statements, mark, which he does not feel to be, in the least degree, defaming or wrong; the Croydon brethren only speak indeed of removable difficulties in the way of a clear unfolding of the truth for the edification of the saints. Besides Mr. Raven was besought by
many to give up these views, and to withdraw his statements, and invariably refused. I have now before me an original letter of his, concluding with

am a little weary of strife -- but think that too much is at stake to allow of drawing back;

this was as far back as February, 1889 -- the efforts made since to induce him to retract, are too numerous to mention. And indeed why should he retract anything, for the Greenwich meeting, when their attention was drawn to his teaching, declare they have “the fullest confidence” in him? And thus he withdraws nothing at all.

But those who see in what is taught, mere removable difficulties, to the clear unfolding of the truth “to the edification of the saints,” are not likely to see that separation from the evil teachings and unholy surmisings is more to the Lord’s honor than going on with them, and is indeed incumbent upon all who call upon His Holy Name. It is not the objecting to the evil, and the separation from it that has caused the scattering, but the persistence in teaching what is evil, and alas! its acceptance by so many, that has scattered the Lord’s people. The evil itself no doubt has scattered, but it is by means of the unholy spirit of indifference to it. Had they but judged and dealt with the evil, there would have been no scattering at all. An admission, however, is made “that certain expressions that have troubled many have been withdrawn and condemned by their authors?” The condemned expressions are not given even vaguely; but unless they are pointed out, who can tell what they are, and what it is that is condemned. Evidently something wrong is taught, and many are troubled by it; but the value of any withdrawal and condemnation lies in its definiteness, its publicity and thoroughness.

In the London notice of Oct. 13th, 1890, it is first stated that “statements reported to have been made dishonoring to the Person of our blessed Lord” had been circulated amongst us, and that the meetings were purposed “in order to give expression to our united repudiation and abhorrence of such Christ-dishonoring statements.” In the next paragraph it is said,

Whilst not admitting the truth of all the charges recently published on the testimony of one witness . . . the brothers with one heart and mind repudiated and utterly condemned certain statements dishonoring to the Lord, which it is admitted have been made amongst those gathered together to His name.

We can indeed thank God for such a plain and distinct assertion; but, where is the action that should correspond with it? Where are those now whose statements were felt to be so dishonoring to the Lord as to call for repudiation and utter condemnation? Are those who made the statements and those who condemn them still breaking bread together -- still going through the outward form of unity? And what are these statements? Surely simple uprightness before God would lead to their being as openly repudiated as they were openly made, i.e., if the condemnation of them is accepted by the makers of them, and is real on the part of those who profess to condemn them. And if it is not accepted, and they are not separated from, what is the value of this alleged repudiation? It is mere delusion, a solemn mockery -- a profane pretense to refuse what is Christ dishonoring, whilst still going on with those who dishonor Him.

The writers of this paper pronounce their own condemnation. They profess unabated confidence in the power of the Lord in the midst by His Spirit to deal with the evil in those Assemblies where such evil may be taught or propagated.

And yet when it comes to be tested by facts, this dealing with the evil goes no further than words. Where is the dealing with the evil at Greenwich, and at Plaistow, and at Ventnor, and at Lincoln -- to go no further for examples? Has any Assembly action of any kind taken place at Ventnor regarding Mr. Cross’s letter? It may be said he has withdrawn it; I reprint his so-called withdrawal (see pages 26, 27). It cannot be said that he here withdraws one letter of the doctrine or statements he made. He withdraws it “from print,” and expresses “uneigned sorrow for having written it,” and “withdraws it as far as is in” his “power,” and this because “grave objections regarding some statements” have “been pointed out” to him! Judgment of the thoughts themselves, that could deliberately argue that in John 1

He [our Lord] is there the only begotten of the Father, not born of a woman, nor so begettable -- He was born into the life to which He died, a thing true of Him as of any other man -- A babe in the manger could in no wise express what He was as “the only begotten” with the Father, one with Him from before all worlds in undefined fulness and infinite perfection of unclouded communion.

A babe has not such communion. [Cp. Psa. 22:9.] Judgment of these thoughts, and of the source from which they come, is wholly wanting in the so-called withdrawal. And we are bound to ask: What has Ventnor done with reference to them? Has it accepted this alleged withdrawal, and publicly notified it, declaring the Lord’s name cleared and His honor satisfied with it, or has it refused to accept it and dealt with the writer of the letter? Is it aware that three months after issuing this so-called withdrawal, the writer said to a brother that he would be thankful if anyone would show him anything in his letter that was unscriptural?

It is said that at Plaistow the one who said our Lord had to return to communion with His Father after conversing with the woman in John 4 has to be silent for the time being in the meetings, he explaining that he meant “returned to the joy of communion,” or “communing.” And supposing he has “withdrawn” the whole thing, is imposing silence a Scriptural or adequate notice to take of such a statement? Can a company that deals thus triflingly with the holiest and most wondrous things ever manifested on earth -- our Lord’s
communion with the Father, be owned as an assembly gathered to His blessed name? And has Lincoln dealt with the one who said that one touching our Lord’s hand when He was on earth would only have touched a human hand of flesh? And what has Greenwich done but justify Mr. Raven fully in all he has said and done, declaring itself to have the fullest confidence in him? It is idle, nay it is untruthful, to talk of confidence in the power of the Lord by His Spirit to deal with evil in assemblies where only verbal notice is taken of the evil, or where the teacher of the evil is defended, and declared to have the assembly’s “fullest confidence.” How then too about Croydon’s saving clause, that they are not pledged to accept all Mr. Raven has said, etc.? Scripture knows nothing of repudiation or condemnation of evil that is not either put out or separated from unless the evil speakers or doers confess and fully judge their words and acts, and the source from which these came. Neither of these courses has been taken by the writers of these notices; on the contrary, the first Assembly that put into practice the principle owned to in the London notice, and which the Croydon brothers say they “should be off the ground of the Church of God” if they did not act upon, has been ignored by these notices, and those who follow that judgment are accused of schism, &c., one printed paper speaking of Bexhill Assembly as “a small out of the way little gathering calling in question the status of Greenwich.”

The first signer of the London notice {j. S. Oliphant} accuses all who separate from the evil as “seceders from the Lord’s table,” but this is begging the question, for a table that is connected with evil persistently, in spite of all remonstrance, is not the Lord’s table at all. There have been no seceders from the Lord’s table, in all this sorrow and trial, but those who, following Mr. Raven and his evil notions, have left the true ground of gathering, viz. separation from evil, and who denounce Bexhill for acting on the Divine principle, whilst they themselves applaud Greenwich for ignoring it as to the evil teaching concerning the Lord’s Person, and for putting away as a liar and slanderer one who objected to that teaching {faithful Mr. Corbett}. Energy -- pursuit of the one who raised his voice against the evil teaching, and who withdrew from the teacher; blindness -- refusal to deal with the defamer of our Lord, and determination to support him as enjoying their fullest confidence!

If anything further were needed to confirm the justice of refusing Greenwich, here it is. It asserts itself as an Assembly, and decides what it considers evil and what not, what it will judge and what it will go on with; and, in result, it maintains the defamer of our Lord and his evil teachings in its midst, and puts away as a wicked person one who had protested against and withdrawn from them on that account. And the upholder of this writes of those who separate from this evil as under “a delusion of the devil” and as “sowing the seeds of delusion . . . through overweening confidence in their own views, and uncharitable distrust of their brethren”!

He adds “Better to be still with two or three cleaving to Christ, than going with the multitude to do evil.” Most assuredly true -- but can Christ and His defamer go on together? To cleave to Him we must leave His defamer, and this is all we have sought to do; the multitude is the other way, those who, deceived by specious explanations, go on with the evil. And he concludes with:

Let us be alive to the fact that the question raised by the course of the leaders who have gone out from amongst us is: Has God given up brethren, and are they the new witnesses who are to take the place of those whom God has set aside?

Many no doubt find this a stumbling block, and, in order to avoid it, stay with the evil. But it is not a wholly false issue, and no fact at all. The question really is: Will you go on with evil for the sake of an outward unity, or will you for Christ’s sake stand apart from it to be with Him? Do not be deluded, dear brethren, by the accusation that we, who refuse to walk in fellowship with defamation of our Lord, are seeking to take the place vacated by others who have been and still are unfaithful; let it suffice us that we are content to be nothing but a few feeble souls cleaving to our Lord, and seeking to act in obedience to His word, and to put into practice His precepts; content through His grace rather to be defamed ourselves than that any defamation by those we are associated with should rest or even appear to rest upon Him.

But to return to the London {Park Street} notice, it goes on to say that the fullest confidence was expressed in the faithfulness of God, and in the continued presence of the Lord with the two or threes gathered together to His name, and that by His grace and power, all unscriptural statements savoring of irreverence, speculation or levity on such a holy subject, if not already judged and withdrawn with true confession by the authors will be dealt with in a scriptural way by the local gatherings responsible, etc.

There can be little doubt of the constitution and character of this meeting of “Brothers (about 500 in number).” It was not an Assembly meeting, but a meeting convened to calm those whose consciences were troubled by Christ-dishonoring statements, with a profession of confidence in God that they would be judged eventually, if not already judged and withdrawn with true confession by the authors. Can one single such statement be said to have been really judged as yet, and withdrawn with any confession at all that can be called true or adequate; if so, what is the statement? If it cannot be publicly pointed out, what is such an assertion worth? Indeed it is because nothing will be judged or withdrawn at all, and that discipline is refused to be exercised towards those who have made these statements, that the separation in the form it has taken has been forced upon us. And even now they only see division in it, and deny that there is any evil to separate from.
They then condemn the printing and publishing of evil statements without first having brought them home to their authors and sought their restoration. But what more bringing home of their evil statements to their authors can be needed when they put them forth repeatedly by word of mouth, by letters, and even in print? It is all of a piece with the spirit of the whole movement -- a resenting of the bringing to light what they themselves see no evil in, but what they are willing to admit is dishonoring to the Lord, and to be repudiated and condemned when it is made public, simply because some of their party (thank God) are distressed at it.

But we may note that being gathered to the Lord’s name, and His presence in the midst, necessitates separation, actually and practically from evil, and that there is no such thing as being gathered to His name without it. I will give what is open to all, a quotation from the paper on “Separation from Evil” before referred to. Its application to the present system of ecclesiastical tyranny will be manifest to any who have eyes to see and ears to hear.

There is a constant tendency in the mind to fall into sectarianism, and to make a basis and opinion of the opposite of what I have here just alluded to, that is, of a system of some kind or other to which the mind is attached, and round which saints or others are gathered, and which, assuming itself to be based on a true principle of unity, regards as schism whatever separates from itself -- attaching the name of unity to what is not God’s center and plan of unity. Wherever this is the case, it will be found that the doctrine of unity becomes a sanction for some kind of moral evil, for something contrary to the Word of God; and the authority of God Himself; which I is attached to the idea of unity, becomes, through the instrumentality of this latter thought, a means of engaging the saints to continue in evil. Moreover, continuance in this evil is enforced by all the difficulty which unbelief finds to separate from that in which it is settled, and where the natural heart finds its ties, and, generally, temporal interests the sphere of their support.

The Bristol notice (page 24) appeared in the same week as that of Park Street, London, the latter on Oct. 13th, and the former on Oct. 19th. The Bristol notice declares that there is no proof in support of the charges brought against the “brother at Thornton House, Greenwich” (Mr. Raven), and then goes on to assert that the present confusion is, in great part, the result of the abandonment of Divine principles on the part of those who first made these accusations, because they did not go to Greenwich and prefer them “with supporting evidence.” These dear brethren appear to be ignorant of the responsibility of a local Assembly, that is professedly gathered to our Lord’s Name. It is for the Assembly, locally, to perceive and to deal with the evil in its midst, and were it necessary for any to go to the local Assembly and prove it, the very status of the local company as an Assembly would be questioned. Lev. 14:35 says,

He that owneth the house shall come and tell the priest, saying, It seemeth to me as it were a plague in the house.

It was because Greenwich failed to do this that Bexhill Assembly was forced to call attention to it, and to protest against infection from the leprosy, and to close the door. The Bristol notice then whilst condemning what they term the “ignoring this,” Greenwich, “Assembly” -- a leprous company -- themselves deliberately ignore the Bexhill Assembly for endeavoring to prevent the contagion. Moreover, the Apostle did not go, nor send witnesses to Corinth, when the evil was in the Assembly there, nor did he furnish or suggest any evidence whatever with regard to it. He merely stated “It is commonly reported” etc., and “Wherefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person.” No name even was given; the Assembly was left to find out, and to clear itself before the Lord, of the case of evil in its midst. The Bristol notice then regrets and deprecates that there have been in some quarters discussions as to our Lord’s blessed Person which have resulted in expressions dishonoring to Him.

It does not specify the expressions used, nor the quarters whence they came, and advisedly so, for the persons who have used these expressions are still in fellowship with the signers of this notice; one of them indeed, although admonished by them as a heretic (Titus 3:10), is still with them and has always been so.

The Dublin (40, Westland Row) notice (page 25) furnishes a still more striking example of where determination to keep together, and to maintain outward unity leads. First the notice acquits Mr. Raven of the “charges of blasphemy, heresy, and of teaching doctrine subversive of Christianity,” and those who separate from him are condemned for division “without Scripture warrant.” Then the notice condemns him for “the one-sided defective and unguarded manner in which he has presented the truths he desired to unfold.” What these are is not stated -- they are said to be “truths,” and the only error lies in his manner of presenting them. This is so serious as to require that the signers’ condemnation should be placed on record! One may well stop and ask how anyone in his soul with God could in unfolding “truths” fall into a manner that needs to be so thoroughly condemned. The notice then condemns the irreverent form (however unintentional) of his statement relative to the infancy of our blessed Lord, [and considers] that our brother should cease to minister until confidence be restored. [It then desires] to express our utter abhorrence of the attempts of some to divide the life of the Lord Jesus, whom “no man knoweth,” leading to the unholy expressions which have been uttered, though thankful, that, so far as we know, these expressions have been judged and withdrawn.

Here again “the attempt to divide the life of the Lord Jesus,” and “the unholy expressions” were made by those with whom these dear brethren still remain in communion, sheltering...
themselves behind “been judged and withdrawn, so far as we know.” The principle of separation from evil is virtually abandoned, and the maintenance of outward unity all that is sought for. And we may well ask how do they know that “the irreverent form of his statement relative to the infancy of our blessed Lord,” was unintentional? Has the maker of it ever confessed to such irreverence, and pleaded that he was unintentionally betrayed into it? And how comes it that a teacher in desiring to unfold “truths,” should fall into irreverence, and regarding such a subject too -- the Person of our blessed Lord? It is so grave (and this indeed is but too true) that they consider he “should cease to minister until confidence be restored.” Then, we must presume he has not confessed and pleaded “unintentional” falling into it; and if not how can they honestly go on with him? Evidently they have no confidence in him -- will silence in the meetings restore it? And where is Scripture for this course? And is he silent in the meetings, and has he ceased to “minister”? I think I am right in saying, he has not.

But let us sum up the result of these notices, and see where they land the writers of them. The Croydon brethren state that the separation from Mr. Raven’s teachings has hindered the clear unfolding of the truth to the edification of the saints; evidently referring to Mr. Raven’s teaching.

The Dublin brethren condemn Mr. Raven for “unintentional” irreverence relative to the infancy of our blessed Lord, and consider he should cease to minister until confidence be restored.

The Greenwich brethren say Mr. Raven is “a brother in whom the meeting has the fullest confidence,” and see nothing whatever about which to call him in question.

The Bristol brethren say “there is no proof against him.”

The London (Park Street) brethren “repudiate and utterly condemn certain statements dishonoring to the Lord, which it is admitted have been made amongst those gathered together to His name”: but from beginning to end they do not mention Mr. Raven’s name; he being present and taking part in their meeting, they could not well do so.

And this is the result of seeking to maintain outward unity -- “to keep the sheep together, and to preserve the testimony”! Where, it may be asked, is God in it all? Where the seeking to maintain the unity of the Spirit? It is idle to speak here of communion or fellowship “in the light as He is in the light.” No two notices agree save in determination to begin apart from evil -- a mere carnal and evil thing.

But let us sum up the result of these notices, and see where they land the writers of them. The Croydon brethren state that the separation from Mr. Raven’s teachings has hindered the clear unfolding of the truth to the edification of the saints; evidently referring to Mr. Raven’s teaching.

The Dublin brethren condemn Mr. Raven for “unintentional” irreverence relative to the infancy of our blessed Lord, and consider he should cease to minister until confidence be restored.

The Greenwich brethren say Mr. Raven is “a brother in whom the meeting has the fullest confidence,” and see nothing whatever about which to call him in question.

The Bristol brethren say “there is no proof against him.”

The London (Park Street) brethren “repudiate and utterly condemn certain statements dishonoring to the Lord, which it is admitted have been made amongst those gathered together to His name”: but from beginning to end they do not mention Mr. Raven’s name; he being present and taking part in their meeting, they could not well do so.

And this is the result of seeking to maintain outward unity -- “to keep the sheep together, and to preserve the testimony”! Where, it may be asked, is God in it all? Where the seeking to maintain the unity of the Spirit? It is idle to speak here of communion or fellowship “in the light as He is in the light.” No two notices agree save in determination to begin apart from evil -- a mere carnal and evil thing.

I have not referred to the various statements put forth by Mr. Raven’s partisans as individuals, though they are easy enough to be answered and refuted; they one and all applaud him and his teachings, though some confess to having had qualms of conscience at the beginning, which they got rid of by personal intercourse with the teacher -- disobedience to the command of Rom. 16:17. I have confined myself to noticing briefly the varied action of the companies who support him, and to pointing out what is sadly evident, that each company acts for itself, and makes its own terms as to what it will go on with, and what it will judge as evil. The refusal of principle, the denial of the application of Divine principles, as if they did not always apply, is distressing beyond expression. One’s only resource and comfort is that our Lord sees and knows it all, and that He will, and indeed can, only accord His blessed presence -- an inestimable treasure -- to those who in brokenness of spirit, and in humbleness of mind, stand apart from evil for His sake -- slowly, stumblingly, and hesitatingly it may be -- but feeling where His honor and the glory of His Name and Person are touched, and shrinking from it, and standing apart from those who think and speak thus of Him, content to bear all reproach, and shame, false accusation and hard words, rather than suffer a word or thought that is slighting to Him. The days are evil indeed, and it is little we can do for Him; but at least we can refuse communion with that which defames our Lord, and we can well leave all effort to keep together by lightly treating evil regarding Himself in the hands of Him who, more than two thousand years ago, said to His faithless people,

Associate yourselves, O ye people, and ye shall be broken in pieces: and give ear, all ye of far countries: gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces: and give ear, all ye of far countries: gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces: and give ear, all ye of far countries: gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces: and give ear, all ye of far countries: gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces: and give ear, all ye of far countries: gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces: and give ear, all ye of far countries: gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces: and give ear, all ye of far countries: gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces: and give ear, all ye of far countries: gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces: and give ear, all ye of far countries: gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces.

Take counsel together and it shall come to nought, [and what is added] Sanctify the Lord of hosts Himself: and let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread. And He shall be for a sanctuary.
P. A. H.

January, 1890

Appendix
For the Assembly.

Croydon; Sept., 1890

As saints from other places have desired to know our position with reference to the present sorrowful position, we send forth a few words in the hope of being able to help some of the Lord’s dear people who have been distressed, and even terrified, by charges of heresy and blasphemy which have been brought, but never proved, against a servant of the Lord [FER]. In consequence of a letter of commendation from Greenwich having been brought here, it was decided, without dissent at an Assembly meeting of the three gatherings in Croydon that we still continued as we had ever been, in fellowship with the Assembly in Greenwich. It was added “That brethren in Croydon were not thereby necessarily pledged to accept all Mr. Raven had said or done.

We wish it to be clearly understood that we are not gathered to any particular set of doctrines, no matter how true they may be; nor do we mean (by God’s grace) to tolerate dishonor to the Person of our Lord. By doing either we should be off the ground of the Church of God.

We have failed to find heresy, blasphemy or false doctrine in the teaching assailed, or anything contrary to the Word of God. The same truths are distinctly taught in the writings of our late dear brother Mr. Darby, which are accessible to all. We only wish our brother Mr. Raven had stated them as clearly. We are thankful to be able to say that certain expressions that have troubled many have been withdrawn and condemned by their authors.

In our judgment the responsibility of the division lies at the door of those who raised unwarranted, and, in some instances false reports, by circulating pamphlet after pamphlet wherever there were saints gathered to the Lord’s name.

We deplore the action of those who have gone out, and are thus guilty of schism, believing that if there had been true brotherly confidence and waiting on God, the difficulties might have been removed, the truth clearly unfolded to the edification of the saints, and thereby this terrible dishonor to the Lord’s name in the scattering of His people, prevented.

Signed on behalf of the Assembly,

* * * * *

London; October 13th, 1890.

Brothers (about 500 in number) assembled in Park Street, on Tuesday, 7th October, in accordance with the following notice read in all the meetings in London on Lord’s Day, the 5th October:

In consequence of the circulation amongst us of various statements reported to have been made dishonoring to the Person of our blessed Lord it is purposed that meetings of brothers shall be held D.V., at Park Street on Tuesday, at 3 and 7 o’clock, in order to give expression to our united repudiation and abhorrence of such Christ dishonoring statements; yet we have unabated confidence in the power of the Lord in the midst by His Spirit to deal with the evil in those assemblies where such evil may be taught or propagated.

Whilst not admitting the truth of all the charges recently published on the testimony of one witness, contrary to Deut. 19:15, and 2 Cor. 13:1, the brothers with one heart and mind repudiated and utterly condemned certain statements dishonoring to the Lord, which it is admitted have been made amongst those gathered together to His name.

At the same time the fullest confidence was expressed in the faithfulness of God, and in the continued presence of the Lord, with the twos or threes gathered together to His name, and that by His grace and power, all unscriptural statements, savoring of irreverence, speculation or levity on such a holy subject, if not already judged and withdrawn with true confession by the authors, will be dealt with in a scriptural way by the local gatherings responsible to maintain what is due to the name of the Lord.

Brothers agreed earnestly to exhort brethren everywhere to distrust themselves in conversing on the deep and holy things of God, and to discountenance and abstain from all unprofitable and vain discussions, especially on subjects relating to the Person of the blessed Lord, outside that which is revealed in Holy Scripture for the comfort and edification of God’s people.

The recent practice of printing and publishing evil statements (without first having brought them home to their authors, and sought their restoration, and then, if necessary before the local assembly responsible to deal with the matter), we absolutely condemned as evil; the evil being aggravated in the case of A. C. O. {Ord} by his refusal to furnish the name of the author of the blasphemous statement given on page 46 of his pamphlet.

* * * * *

Bristol; Lord’s Day, 19th Oct., 1890.
A question having been forced upon us by some in our midst as to the continuance of our fellowship with the Assembly at Thornton House, Greenwich, in view of alleged heresy charged against a brother there (FER), and said to be countenanced by that Assembly, we gathered to the name of our Lord Jesus Christ at Bristol, having heard and weighed before the Lord what these brethren have brought before us in support of such charges, have judged that there is no proof of the accusation. We therefore refuse to separate from that Assembly, believing that to do so would be the sin of schism.

We believe that the present confusion amongst us is in great part the result of the abandonment of Divine principles on the part of those who first made these accusations, who according to godly order, should have preferred them with supporting evidence, before the Assembly at Greenwich. Having ignored this Assembly, neglecting Divine order, they circulated their statements far and wide, thus throwing the saints everywhere into confusion, and causing division amongst those gathered to the Lord’s name. At the same time we regret and deplore that there have been in some quarters discussions as to our Lord’s blessed Person, which have resulted in expressions dishonoring to Him.

We desire utterly to repudiate these, and have confidence in the Lord that the assemblies generally will refuse to allow unholy speculations to be entered upon or to remain unjudged if made.

In conclusion, we would own before the Lord that there has been a need be for His chastisement, and we desire to humble ourselves under His mighty hand, while still counting in His unfailing grace.

On behalf of the saints gathered to the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ at Bristol, and meeting at Orchard Street; 31, Victoria Street, Clifton; Providence Road, Stapleton Road; Lower Redland Road, Redland.

* * * * *

At an Assembly Meeting of the Saints gathered to the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, at 40, Westland Row, Dublin, held on 30th November, 1890, the following Declaration was accepted, and is now issued by the Assembly.

Having for some time past had under our serious consideration, the writings of our brother F. E. Raven, contained in his papers and letters on the one hand, with the charges of blasphemy, heresy, and of teaching doctrine subversive of Christianity made against him on the other; resulting in much distress, distraction, and division amongst the saints gathered to the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ; we desire to express our deep humiliation and sorrow before the Lord, for the low spiritual state of which this is the outcome, owning it as our common shame, whilst bowing under His chastening hand upon us.

With regard to these charges of blasphemy, heresy, and of teaching doctrine subversive of Christianity; after patient, prayerful, and most careful investigation, we do not find proof in his writings to substantiate them, and regret that they should have been made and are still persisted in, and we cannot therefore but deplore and condemn the division that has taken place, as being without Scripture warrant.

Furthermore we condemn as contrary to God’s order, the action of brethren who initiated this division at Ealing and Bexhill, in that they did not first prefer these charges before the gathering with which the brother charged was locally connected, and failing to obtain the results they desired, they did not then take counsel with brethren generally, with the view of acting in the “unity of the Spirit” as inculcated in Eph. 4.

Nevertheless, we feel bound to place on record our condemnation of the one-sided, defective, and unguarded manner in which Mr. Raven has presented the truths he desired to unfold; and also the irreverent form (however unintentionally) of his statement relative to the infancy of our blessed Lord, and we regret that brethren did not accept his offer made at an early stage of this trouble, to cease from ministering; and we consider that our brother should cease to minister until confidence be restored.

We desire to express our utter abhorrence of the attempts of some to divide the life of the Lord Jesus, whom “no man knoweth,” (Matt. 11:27.), leading to the unholy expressions, which have been uttered, though thankful, that, so far as we know, these expressions have been judged and withdrawn.

With confidence of heart in our ever-gracious Lord, and fully assured of His continued presence “till He come” amongst the two or three gathered together to His Name, on the ground of the one body, and in fellowship as heretofore with all so gathered we turn to our ever-blessed God and Father, who is able to maintain us “in all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of Spirit in the bond of peace.” -- Eph. 4:2, 3.

Signed on behalf of the Assembly,
We feel it right to add that we believe some have withdrawn from fellowship, owing to this Declaration having been adopted by the Assembly.

* * * * *

As regards my letter, printed by P. A. H., grave objections regarding some statements contained in it having been pointed out to me, I would say, on reconsidering it, that had I printed it I would at once withdraw it from print, and I now publicly express my unfeigned sorrow for having written it. As it is I have withdrawn it so far as is in my power.

As to dissecting the holy and inscrutable mystery of the incarnation, or of the Person of the blessed Lord the idea of it is abhorrent to my mind. I should not approach it vittingly, save to adore and worship, and I would condemn every expression in my letter which has even the appearance of
Two sub jects at the head of this paper, Scripture keeps ever distinct; the confounding, or mixing of them up is what has led to well-nigh endless confusion, and indeed ever tends to cast a doubt in the soul as to the truths that are the portion of every believer in Christ Jesus -- the youngest as well as the oldest. I am aware that Josh. 1, especially v. 3, and Deut. 1:8 are used in support of a doctrine of progress, even so far as to assert that nothing is possessed unless there be an accompanying experience. Now there is no question, that truth is held in power only when it is held by the soul individually with God, but truth does not hang upon our experience of it, nor does our lack of experience affect it. Surely one would desire to give all room for exercise of soul and of conscience -- would, indeed, that there were more of it! But we must not reduce the realities of divine truths to our poor experience of them -- on the contrary, these truths subsist in all their reality and power, whatever our experience or thoughts regarding them may be; rather therefore let us seek to press upon souls the reality of those truths, if they are true believers, and we can then count upon their laying hold of the soul and producing fruit for God. If I say to a soul ‘You must experience such and such a truth before it is true of you,’ or if I say, ‘you must enjoy it before it is yours,’ I am turning the soul in upon itself, and the maze of its...
feelings, doubts and fears, instead of seeking to lead it by faith to what is outside of itself. I am, in short, putting experience in the place of faith -- my own feelings and experiences in the place of Christ and His glories. Enjoyment is the result of possession, not possession the result of enjoyment.

I am prepared to be told by this school of progress so called: 'This is not what we mean, or hold.' But such expressions as 'we have to substantiate by faith what is true of us,' are sufficient answer, for it is mere unbelief to talk of substantiating by faith what is true. We either believe or we do not believe. Faith is always absolutely certain -- it is a simple thing -- a simple believing God and His testimony, not a morbid turning in upon ourselves to ask how far, or if one does at all, one substantiates what is true by drinking into it. This school of so-called progress would turn us in upon ourselves, and make a party of those who have so far advanced as to substantiate the truth instead of simply believing it, and who speak of all others as not being 'in it,' and 'not going on.' May the Lord indeed keep us from party spirit, party making or party seeking in every form! Nothing, surely, is more hateful to Him than party, and the worst of all is the party that arrogates to itself a position (call it by what name you will, 'fathers' or those 'lured on by heavenly light,' or any other term) that is based upon such a ground as the substantiation of the truth by faith. When, how, and where, I ask, did Peter and John substantiate the truth by faith, when they healed the impotent man at the Beautiful gate of the Temple? 'Such as I have give I thee,' said Peter, and he acts in simple faith, not turning it over in himself to see if it were true or not, but acting and speaking in the power of the Name, by simple faith in that Name. And in v. 12, he repudiates wholly all idea of power and holiness in himself having anything whatever to do with it. Take again Acts 16, where and how was the truth substantiated when Paul and Silas sang praises to God at midnight in the prison? Are we to be told they were then and thus substantiating the truth by faith? Or were they in the simple enjoyment of the truth, and giving back to Him in praise what they had received, being thankful that they were 'counted worthy to suffer for His Name? It may be said these are isolated and special instances that it is not fair to judge from; but they are instances that upset this theory of progress and substantiation. Had they been occupied with, or even thought of their own drinking in, neither Peter nor John would have spoken as they did to the impotent man, nor would Paul or Silas have sung as they did. When will saints ever learn that occupation with self, save to judge and condemn it, is never of God -- that it always comes from the enemy, and the pride of our own hearts, its most insidious form being our own growth or fancied growth in truth, experimental, substantiated, or any other? "Faith is the substance" (substantiating or assurance, firm conviction) 'of things hoped for, for the evidence' (conviction) 'of things not seen.' We do not substantiate by faith,' but faith is, in itself, the substantiating or assurance of things hoped for,' &c. It is not what we do, but what we have. Thus, as I have said, we either believe or we do not believe To make out that I substantiate by faith, is to set the 'I' to work, and, I ask, what 'I' is it that is spoken of -- the old or the new? It certainly is not the old -- for the dead can substantiate nothing. Surely we are not to be told it is the new, for it is wellnigh blasphemous to speak of the new 'I' substantiating by faith what is of God. To it all that is of Him is simply, solidly, and abidingly true and real, for faith sees everything as God sees it. The truth is, the notion of substantiating by faith what is true of us, is merely the ground for turning us in upon ourselves with the query, How far is what is true of us, true to us? In other words, to put it baldly, do we really believe or not? And we are called upon to search our own hearts for a solution! One would have thought, with all the blessed truth as to the end of the first man, and the glory of the Second, that has been so long and so richly before us, and so generally professedly held, that the heart would have been the last place that we should be thus turned to; even Solomon could say the man is a fool who trusts it, how much more those who have the blessed Lord's words, in Matt. 15 before them?

It is ever the effort of the enemy to occupy the Christian with himself in some way other than that in which God does, for God, as I have said, never occupies him with himself save to judge himself for that which he allows that is contrary to Him. At one time, not very long since, it took the form of 'Death to Nature,' as it was then called -- now it takes the form of our own progress, our own advancement in truth, our 'drinkings in,' our 'growth.' This is but a different phase of the same school of teaching. Such expressions as 'having it' but not being 'in it,' 'not going on' are found in both, and, if comparison were our object, many other similarities might be traced.

The recent teaching regarding Eternal Life has manifested pretty clearly this school or system of progress. If it were merely isolated and individual utterances, we might pass them by, leaving the teachers to know themselves better, and for the truth to have more power over them individually, and thus to escape from the snare of false teaching they were entangled in. But, when a system of teaching is evolved from it nothing but full enquiry and exposure will suffice. I refer to the articles on Eternal Life, in the Voice to the Faithful for July and August last. [1888.]

In the first article we are told,

That the babe in Christ has an assured title to every blessing which is bestowed upon us in Him cannot be too strongly maintained.

We are then told that,

It becomes His servants to so minister to the saints what their blessings are, that young men, or even babes in Christ, may be led into the conscious possession, as
present heavenly light, of what that portion is which so soon will be enjoyed in its own proper sphere with the Lord.

A verse of a hymn follows, as giving a sanction to this. But we must be careful not to be caught by words, however fair and good they may be. The use made of this hymn is unjust, for the hymn speaks of Love supreme and bright giving us now, as heavenly light, what shall soon be our part -- not of ‘babes and young men’ being led into the conscious possession of it. The thought in the hymn is the sovereignty and sweetness of that love which gives to the feeblest -- a truly blessed and scriptural thought. The use made in quoting it is to support the notion that such giving is of no avail unless there is a conscious being led into possession. In short, the thought in the hymn is the giving -- the object of the citer is the effect produced. He says

The love supreme and bright is good to the feeblest heart, however small our progress hitherto: while nothing will prove a greater hindrance than assuming, because all things are ours, that I am in the possession of that which I have not apprehended, and of which I have not the conscious enjoyment.

The reader can judge for himself how far this is in accordance with Scripture. I have referred to it as it is a sample of the system of employment of the words of others, and even of texts of Scripture itself, to support a theory which has no foundation in what is thus quoted. I leave it, however, merely remarking that all enjoyment is ‘conscious,’ and that there is, in the very nature of things, no enjoyment that is not so.

But to return to the subject of the article. The writer evidently considers that all the Lord’s servants are ‘fathers’ according to 1 John 2, and that ‘fathers’ only are servants, for he says it is their work to lead on the ‘babes and young men.’ I am aware he does not boldly call them ‘fathers,’ but that is evidently what his teaching is, for ‘babes and young men’ not yet being ‘in it,’ they cannot help each other; besides, it is said they alone need the leading on, the fathers only being in conscious possession. It is important to bear this in mind, for it is the basis of what is developed later on.

The babe in Christ then is admitted to have a title to every blessing bestowed on us in Him. This is true -- but it is equally true of the ‘fathers,’ and no more true of them than it is of the ‘babe.’ Why then commence the discussion of Eternal Life with this assertion, save to commit us to the acceptance of the thing as true that it is all that babes have or, at any rate, that they must make good their title in order to get possession? We are then told,

But the journey from the place of shelter under the sprinkled blood in Egypt, through the Red Sea and Jordan, has to be taken [the italics are the author’s] by the soul in order to its entering upon its possessions in Canaan. Now this, again, is true in itself, but it is not true in the sense in which it is used here, for the object here is to show that babes are in Egypt, young men in the wilderness, and fathers in the land.

So what follows is of a piece with this, and it is said,

it may take us forty years, instead of eleven days, before we sit down, and taste the old corn of the land.

Apply this to the figure used before in this article and we have it taught that it may take forty years instead of eleven days for a child to become a father, though some may accomplish it in eleven days.’ I may be accused of misinterpreting the author, but this paragraph concludes with

Stumbling blocks also have to be exposed and taken out of the way which would hinder the soul advancing from the position of babe to that of father.

I have dwelt rather on this part of the article, because it discloses the system of this school of teaching, which interprets the first Epistle of John by Old Testament wilderness history, and which confounds Romans, Ephesians, and Colossians, making three sorts of Christians in a progressive way, i.e., Romans Christians (babes), Colossians Christians (young men) and Ephesians Christians (fathers). There is no more fatal error than bringing Old Testament history and figures into the New Testament, and seeking to interpret the New by the Old. Our privilege and blessing is, to study the Old by the light of the New -- knowing the Substance, to go back and look at the shadow, not to study the Substance from the shadow which it cast. I would ask, are ‘father’ not in the wilderness? Are they always and only in the land? Have they no wilderness experiences or joys? Because ‘the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land, are fathers to be denied feeding upon the humiliated Man here in this world our true Manna? Manna is for the wilderness and not for the land. This system of teaching, while professing to give more, would take away one of our most precious and blessed privileges. Again, is it the truth that babes are in Egypt? Is the Father only known in the land? All this teaching arises from systematizing truth to meet a preconceived view, based upon Old Testament history and figures, and thus, because John is abstract and not conditional, the truth there taught is, in reality, swept aside to make way for the introduction and maintenance of this Old Testament figurative teaching. In this way it is that the subject of Eternal Life is taken up in this article.

We are then told that there is no greater hindrance than assuming that we are in possession of that which we have not

114. { O love supreme and bright.
Good to the feeblest heart,
That gives us now, as heavenly light,
What soon shall be our part.}

115. {T. H. R. -- T. H. Reynolds?}
yet apprehended, and of which we have not the ‘conscious enjoyment.’ I admit fully the writer’s desire to elevate the practical condition of those he addresses, and to bring about a better state and a higher walk among Christians generally, but reducing all truth, all that is given us of God, to our apprehension of it, and to ‘conscious enjoyment’ of it on our part, otherwise the possession of it is a mere assumption and hindrance, is the very way to weaken everything, to sap the power of the truth, and to substitute for what is ours, because God has given it to us, a morbid state of self-contemplation which becomes more and more engrossing, and of occupation with our own progress and advancement, instead of with the blessed Lord and His present glory, and His interests here on earth. If anything but misery result from this, it is a feeding of pride, and is deadly -- if only misery, there can be no advance. It is not only wholly opposed to Scripture and sound teaching, but it is assuming as true the very reverse of God’s statement of the normal state of pride, and is deadly -- if only misery, there can be no advance. It is not only wholly opposed to Scripture and sound teaching, but it is assuming as true the very reverse of what is taught in 1 John. There it says, ‘I write unto you, children, because your sins are forgiven you for His name’s sake.’ This is the Holy Spirit’s statement of the normal state of a child in Christ. Every such child knows its sins are forgiven it, but the ‘conscious enjoyment’ or ‘apprehension’ of this forgiveness did not make it a child. It is the first knowledge of the child, and is true of all such children, or they are not children at all. So with ‘young men,’ ‘because ye have overcome the wicked one,’ ‘because ye are strong, and the word of God abides in you’ -- the state produced continues -- being strong, and the word of God abiding in them did not make them young men, any more than the ‘conscious enjoyment’ of their own victory over the wicked one did. These were evidences that they were young men. So with ‘fathers.’ The knowledge of Him that is from the beginning did not make them ‘fathers.’ It is, again, the Holy Spirit’s statement that there is nothing more to know. ‘Him that is from the beginning’ is all and everything there is to know.

But this system tells us,

The babe can say, Abba Father. He has the anointing which teaches all things. He has the eternal spring of life within -- the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.

Now this last is a quotation from Rom. 8:2, and is, so far as I am aware, used nowhere else in Scripture, and it is in connection with deliverance, not with being born again. I quote the entire passage which shows the loose and unwarrantable use made of it in the article before us.

For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath set me free from the law of sin and death.

We are now told ‘the babe’ has, in himself, this ‘Spirit of life in Christ Jesus’ (an utterly unscriptural thought) but yet he has not arrived at the state of Col. 3:11, when he would know Him not only as the Deliverer from Egypt but as the One who had brought him into the knowledge of Himself as sent of the Father, so that he could say, ‘In Him I know the Father.’ Such an one ‘is a father and not a babe.’ We may note that the only contrast here is between ‘babe’ and ‘father.’ The young men are left out here -- they are out of Egypt, but not yet in the land, wandering in the desert after having ‘overcome the wicked one, and being strong, and the word of God abiding in them.’ Why they are to be confined to the desert and in what part of it they are, may well indeed be left undefined. But I turn to the passage quoted that we may judge for ourselves as to the use made of it:

Do not tie to one another, having put off the old man with his deeds, and having put on the new, renewed into full knowledge according to the image of Him that has created him; wherein there is not Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bondman, free-man; but Christ is everything, and in all.

Here again is utter looseness of application. The true meaning of the passage has its application to all -- it does not make the babe a young man, nor the young man a father, nor is it applied to fathers as such, nor indeed has it anything to do with them distinctively, nor has it anything in the world to do with the knowledge of the Father in Him. Moreover the teaching of the passage is one of contrast, and has an abiding application as incumbent on us all.

But further, we are now told that the one who can say

_In Him I know the Father_

is a father. Let me ask, how else does anyone know the Father? It is only in Him, i.e., in Christ that any one knows the Father. We turn to scripture, and we find what is here attributed to the fathers as their distinctive mark, is attributed there to babes in Christ. ‘I write unto you, little children, because you have known the Father.’ (It is the perfect tense.) Yet this system would teach us

The youngest believer in Christ knows that God is his Father; the babe can say, ‘Abba Father’ . . . the one who can say ‘In Him, I know the Father’ is a father and not a babe.

Scripture tells us a babe is one who not only knows God is his Father, but who ‘has known the Father.’ Our author no doubt does not intend this, but this is what he has done -- by making the knowledge of the Father the distinctive portion of fathers he has reduced them to babes, for the one he calls a father is one Scripture distinctly speaks of as a babe.

Again it is mere assumption to say that ‘Him that is from the beginning’ in 1 John 2:13, 14, is the Father, or the Father known in Christ. It is Christ Himself personally, our Lord, our Savior, the Blessed, the Holy One of God, not merely the ‘Sent One of the Father,’ but Himself.

Christ in the world, His person manifested in flesh. That is where all experience ends; not in a knowledge of self merely as occupied with it, but in such a knowledge of it as empty us of self and gives us Christ. When a person is a young Christian he is occupied with his feelings; it is all fresh and new to him, and it is right enough. He feels
such wonderful joy at being forgiven. But, as you grow up, you get more and more emptied of self and occupied with Christ. We learn our own foolishness and weakness, and so are cast upon Christ, and learn more of the depths of His grace, the perfectness of His Person. All right experience ends in forgetting self and thinking of Christ.

I quote this from the writings of the beloved author of the hymn so mistakenly used. The writer then turns to John 16:28-30, to prove “how easily we may think we know.” The paragraph concludes with, ‘The revelation of the Father they did not yet understand.’ Here again there is the greatest looseness of application. The simple truth taught there is the condition of the disciples at that moment, in comparison with their state when the Holy Spirit should be come. But I will quote the whole passage:

I came out from the Father, and have come into the world; again I leave the world and go to the Father. His disciples say to Him, Lo, now Thou speakest openly, and utterest no allegory. Now we know that Thou knowest all things, and hast not need that any one should demand of Thee. By this we believe that Thou art come from God.

To this the writer adds:

The revelation of the Father they did not yet understand.

It has really nothing whatever to do with the subject before them, which was His coming from the Father, and His going to the Father. And yet the writer cites this passage as a proof how easily, like the disciples of that time who had not the Spirit, we who, have the Spirit may think we know! But before leaving this part of the subject, I would call attention to the assertion that the babe ‘has the eternal spring of life within’ -- within himself I presume, it could hardly mean in Christ -- the embryo that is to be cultivated and developed until the state of father is reached by his being able to say, ‘in Him I know the Father.’ But note this embryo thing is in the babe -- ‘in himself.’ What, I ask, is it the embryo of? ‘Eternal Life?’ Then Eternal Life is in the believer -- in embryo in the babe, in full development in the father! This is distinctly opposed to Scripture, for there it is never said that Eternal Life is in the believer, but ever in the Son. It is all confusion between the new nature in the believer and Eternal Life in the Son. I quote here but one passage:

And this is the witness, that God has given to us Eternal Life; and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son, hath life; he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life.

We have Eternal Life -- every believer has it -- but it is in the Son and therefore safe.

Again the same loose application, and assumption of the meaning of Scripture is found in the following.

Eternal Life is more than an eternal spring begun in my soul. The spring cannot be disconnected from its eternal source; and to that source it ever rises up, as the Lord said to the woman of Samaria, “springing up to everlasting life.”

We turn to the passage, and we find,

Jesus answered, and said to her, every one who drinks of this water shall thirst again; but whosoever drinks of the water which I shall give him shall never thirst for ever, but the water which I shall give him shall become in him a fountain of water, springing up into eternal life.

The teaching before us would have us believe that what the Lord speaks of as giving, was Eternal Life, as an eternal spring in the soul which would spring up to everlasting life! The looseness and confusion of all this is only equaled by the following,

It has its own sphere in the glory of God. It belongs to that place where Jesus is now glorified by the Father, so that from thence (the italics are the author’s) He might give eternal life to as many as were given Him of the Father.

There can be no mistake about the writer’s meaning here. Eternal Life is something in us, received from Jesus glorified -- ‘in the glory of God.’ Had no one Eternal Life then until Jesus was glorified? Again we turn to the Word.

Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee; as Thou hast given Him authority over all flesh, that as to all that Thou hast given to Him, He should give them eternal life.

The Lord is here speaking on earth, and He does not say, Thou hast given Him glory that from thence He should give Eternal Life to as many as Thou hast given to Him, (but) Thou hast given Him authority (i.e. power -- right).

I quote the next verse also,

And this is the life eternal, that they should know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.

This is His own simple and blessed statement, that the Eternal Life is the knowledge of the Father, the only true God, and Himself the Sent One. But we are now told.

To have it in conscious possession is more than being able to say that God is my Father, as a delivered soul; it is understood when we are brought to sit at the feet of Him that is from the beginning, and hindrances are removed which prevented our allowing Him to make the Father known to us as He knows Him, and the things of the Father as He can show them to us.

No one, surely, who has ever tasted the blessedness of being at His feet, and hearing His Word, can or would desire to deny the holy calmness and joy, the ineffable sweetness and privilege of it, but the use here made of all this is that we may have Eternal Life in conscious possession, and understand what it is -- this eternal spring in us that flows back to the source it comes from, not out in blessing to others. All-absorbing self-occupation! We must not be led astray, dear reader, by words and expressions that seem so good and fair, and that sound so well. The purport of all this teaching is that we are to be occupied with the life in us, its development and growth, in ‘conscious enjoyment’ of it for
there is no greater hindrance than assuming we are in possession of it' otherwise. Thank God we have His Word, and His Spirit, and they never fail; and what different teaching we have from them!

I am the good Shepherd, and I know those that are mine, and am known of those that are mine, as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep . . . My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me, and I give them eternal life; and they shall never perish, and no one shall seize them out of My hand . . . These things have I written unto you that ye may know (have the consciousness of) that ye have eternal life, who believe on the name of the Son of God.

In the August number of the same periodical {Voice to the Faithful}, we have a few more words from the same writer, on the ground that his previous article on ‘Eternal Life’ had been misunderstood by many. If what he adds had been a withdrawal, or in any way an explanation of his previous article, we might have accepted it, or, at any rate, have waited for something further, if it had been felt to be not sufficient. But it neither explains nor withdraws -- on the contrary, it maintains all that had before been said, and shifts the point at issue to another which is not in question. No one has ever questioned the fathers’ having eternal life, the point at issue is the writer’s assertion that babes have only the spring of it, and that in themselves. We are now told that the writer holds, unequivocally, that the life which every believer now has is the life of Christ -- eternal life. But he returns to the old loose and erroneous quotation from Rom. 8:2, and says,

How could I speak of the “eternal spring of life within, the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus,” if it were not so?

Now this is not the question at issue at all, i.e., the character of the life. The point is, as given in his first article, and repeated in a side way here, that the babes have life only in embryo and ignorantly, and that fathers alone have it in ‘conscious enjoyment.’ Now it is nowhere said in Scripture that ‘the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus’ is in any Christian, be he babe, young man, or father. I have spoken of this before, in noticing the first article, but I refer to it again here, because the statement is repeated as explanatory of the previous assertion that babes and young men need to be led into ‘conscious enjoyment’ of life, otherwise their possession of it is mere assumption.

What follows is a sort of attempt to define Eternal Life, which to all but the initiated will be hopeless confusion. He says,

Eternal life ‘is “the river of Thy pleasures” from eternity to eternity, for “with thee is the fountain of life.” Thus it is written “The Father hath life in Himself.” And when the eternal life that was with the Father was manifested here, and the voice of the Father proclaimed the eternal pleasure in Him who had become flesh, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I have found my delight.”

Why ‘eternal’ should be added to ‘pleasure,’ the writer does not tell us -- there is no warrant for it in Scripture. Was the Father’s pleasure in the Son ever other than eternal?

To Him as Son and yet a man upon earth, the Father gave to have life in Himself. To everyone that believeth in Him the Son communicates this life.

We turn to Scripture and find

For even as the Father hath life in Himself, so He has given to the Son also to have life in Himself, and has given Him authority to execute the judgment also, because He is the Son of Man.

Not a word here about communication of the life to the believer. It treats, instead, of authority and judgment, and is specially characteristic of John’s Gospel, where the blessed Lord is spoken of as one with the Father and yet as Son of Man receiving everything. Again

My sheep hear My voice, and I know them and they follow Me, and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, and no man shall seize them out of My hand. My Father who gave them to Me is greater than all, and no one can seize them out of the hand of My Father . . . As Thou has given Him authority over all flesh, that as to all that Thou hast given Him, He should give them eternal life.

But we are now told that “believing in Him” must precede the communication of this life. What is it that believes? Is there life there before this life is communicated? Scripture tells us of and insists upon the purpose of God the Father, and the authority and power imparted by Him to the Son. This teaching turns us from that to ourselves, and asks us ‘where this life can be satisfied, but at the fountain?’ Is the life in the babe an unsatisfied life, albeit that he has known the Father? Has a father alone a satisfied life?

But the interpretation of John 4:14, is now changed, and we are told it is ‘the Spirit in the believer, which ‘springs up to eternal life.’ He adds to support this

As another has said, “We drink the blessedness which is in His Nature, in a nature which, being spiritually the same, must and can enjoy it, according to that Nature, itself, in its own perfection.”

Here again all is confusion, and an assumption that the new nature we possess as children of God, and which is distinctly in us, is the same thing as Eternal Life which we also possess, but which is in the Son, and which is never, in Scripture, spoken of as being in us. The passage quoted speaks of the nature every child of God possesses -- the capacity in us to know and enjoy God Himself, and all that is of Him. This article however entirely confounds this nature with Eternal Life. The fallacy of its use of it will be seen at once if we refer it to God, for it would make out that His Nature is Eternal Life, which all would rightly refuse at once. But it is upon the assumption he makes of it, that the writer bases the question to all his brethren, indeed to himself included, ‘Do we drink there?’ This we are told is ‘the responsibility
Not one letter of Scripture is given, nor indeed can be found for such a query, nor for such a thought. Indeed Scripture never so speaks either to or of the Christian. We turn to the Word, and find,

See that ye walk circumspectly, redeeming the time &c. -- Walking worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing . . . I endure all things for the elect’s sake -- as therefore ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him, and assured in the faith, even as ye have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving,

and the like, but never the breath of such an enquiry as ‘Are you drinking there?’

The article then defines what is meant by ‘conscious possession,’ and we are told it means

entering into that sphere (the ‘sphere of eternal delights where Christ is who is our life’) as I said, “the soul entering upon its possessions in Canaan.”

But it is conscious possession of Eternal Life he is speaking of; and that too in us, for he says it is communicated to every believer by the Son. Thus the believer is to be turned in upon himself, in occupation with the development of Eternal Life in himself in conscious possession, to know whether he is ‘drinking there’ or not! Can self-occupation go farther? Is there any occupation with self more unscriptural than this?

But to proceed,

In the history of our souls, we have to substantiate, by faith, what is certainly true of us. This is in reference to ‘every saint being seated in the heavens in Christ.’ I have already spoken of the term ‘substantiate by faith,’ but I add a word, as all is error and confusion in the use here made of it. ‘Faith is the substantiating’ -- the firm conviction, or assurance. We do not substantiate anything by faith; substantiate means ‘to make to exist,’ so the dictionaries tell us. Either we believe or we do not believe. But the use here made of ‘substantiating by faith’ is to put our faith in the place of the Spirit of God, and to make our faith do the work the Holy Ghost alone can do, and blessed be God, always does where He is ungrieved and unhindered, and when we are subject to Him. He alone brings to the soul the realization of all that His presence brings with it. It is by faith that He does so, but it is He that does it and not we. The exhortation to ‘substantiate by faith’ is really unbelief, but it is more, for it leaves out the whole point and force, indeed the whole truth of the teaching regarding the Holy Spirit’s present office in the believer. Nothing can be more serious than this. The ‘responsibility of grace,’ too, a term used by this school, but not to be found in the Word, is certainly not to substantiate by faith what, for faith, needs no substantiating at all (for faith itself is the substantiating, or assurance of all that is of God) in order to ‘answer to what is bestowed’ and to ‘drink there.’ Christian responsibility, on the contrary, is to be subject to the new power in us, the Holy Spirit, and so to walk and live that He may, ungrieved and unhindered, realize to our souls all that He, and He alone, can do, and that thus Christ may be manifested and honored in our lives. He will never occupy us with our own enjoyment, our own ‘drinking’ though He alone can enable us to enjoy, and here our condition and walk come in practically. The moment we are occupied with our own enjoyment or ‘drinking’ we cease from both, and become occupied with ourselves, and pride and self-satisfaction have their way.

It is said by some that the difference is only one of expression, and that, after all, the right thing is meant, though expressed in other terms. Scripture bids us, however, ‘hold fast the form of sound words.’ And from what has been said the difference, if fairly looked at, will be seen to be radical, and what is aimed at is a system built up upon occupation with self. It may however be said it is not fair to take two short articles by one person as constituting a system or school of teaching. I refer therefore to the September number of the same periodical, where in an article entitled ‘Growth’ we have precisely the same principles laid down. Here we are told that

As we have faith, we realize our new being with its joys and privileges.

Now while it is quite true that it is only by faith that we realize anything that the eye cannot actually see, Scripture never speaks of our own new being as the object of our realization or occupation at all. Moreover, as we have seen, it is the Holy Spirit’s power and work alone that realizes to our souls what is ours in Christ, and His work depends upon His being ungrieved and unhindered in us. Not all the faith in the world would avail in the smallest degree for realization, if the Holy Spirit were grieved.

We are then told,

The moment we have faith in the blood of Christ, from that moment God’s purpose is true to us, namely, that we, who were chosen in Christ, have now entered on the reality of God’s purpose. The purpose has begun; it is now in operation in each of us individually

Now this is not true either scripturally or practically, for Scripture tells us ‘after that ye believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.’ It does not say how long after, but it is clearly subsequently to believing, many things coming in between believing and sealing, owing to what we are as children of Adam. And practically too it is not true, for the soul comes to God in its sins, and is occupied with and delighted with forgiveness, and may take years to arrive at any thought of God’s purpose. Nothing can be said to be true to us until we are at least aware of it, though it may be true of us. But I refuse absolutely such a thought as God’s purpose beginning. Scripture never so speaks, but tells us of His purpose being fulfilled, not of its being in operation in us now. But we are here told

The finish will be when we have fully put off the old man,
and have put on the new.

We turn to Scripture, and we find

But ye have not so learned the Christ, if ye have heard Him, and been instructed in Him according as the truth is in Jesus; namely, your having put off according to the former conversation the old man corrupt according to the deceitful lusts.

Admitting this is purpose, it is not, at any rate, ‘purpose in operation,’ but fulfilled. Again

in whom (Christ) also ye have been, circumcised with circumcision not done by hand, in the putting off of the body of the flesh, in the circumcision of the Christ . . . If ye have died with Christ from the elements of the world, why as if alive in the world, do ye subject yourselves to ordinances?

This article tells us

The finish will be when we have fully put off the old man, and have put on the new

so that what Scripture speaks of as a thing done, is here denied, and spoken of as a thing doing, and doing, mark, by us, not done by God, and this we are told is God’s purpose accomplishing -- our ‘growth which is in proportion to our faith!’ Thus the fulfilment of God’s purpose depends upon us! Well, indeed, may this article say this ‘Growth refers to something new,’ for new it is in every sense, when we turn to Scripture.

Ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory . . . Always bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our body; for we which live are always delivered unto death on account of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh.

The application of this truth to us is either welcome, blessedly welcome to the soul, or it is eminently distasteful and sought to be avoided. Where in Scripture are we ever called upon to be occupied with life in ourselves, its growth, development and power? Is self-cultivation ever taught in Scripture? But we read the next sentence

We must bear in mind, that if we were apart from the old man, and apart from the place where the old man is, we should find that old things had passed away; behold, all things are become new, and all things are of God.

We turn to Scripture, and read,

So if anyone be in Christ, there is a new creation: the old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new: and all things are of the God, who has reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ.

We are not in Scripture called upon to bear in mind that we shall find this to be so after death, but that it is true now to faith, as true, indeed, as it will be when we are with our Lord in glory, and no more true then than it is now. The writer makes our finding this to be so, conditional upon our being ‘apart from the old man and from the place where the old man is,’ i.e. actually dead and passed away from the scene here below. God, on the contrary, has given us this positive truth, real and blessed to faith, now, that we may know it as a present living reality to the soul. And this teaching we are told is for ‘faith that produces growth.’

We are then told that

The babe has the same life and nature as the full grown man; but his joy and his power, as well as his testimony, depend on the measure of his growth.

The similarity between this and the previous article on Eternal Life will at once be noticed. If what is here said is true, we may reverse the proposition, and it will then stand, ‘The full grown man has the same life and nature as the babe; but his joy and his power, as well as his testimony, has depended on the measure of his growth.’ Thus joy, power and testimony depend upon our growth, our growth depends upon our faith, our faith depends upon our laying hold, and so all depends upon us! We turn to Scripture, and find growth is always connected with what is outside us, not with our faith.

Grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

But holding the truth in love, may grow up to Him in all things, who is the Head, the Christ.

No where, that I am aware of, does Scripture ever occupy the child of God with his faith, or with his growth. On the contrary it always points to the Object of our faith, and of our growth, and growth depends upon the apprehension of the truth by the power of an ungrieved Spirit -- the truth as to the Person and glory of the blessed Lord, His graces and perfections, His mind and His will, not the poor and feeble reflection of it in us.

But, in the next paragraph, in support of his views of growth, the writer refers to Saul of Tarsus, as saying,

about thirty years after his conversion, that he was not perfected, but that he desired to take possession of that for which he was taken possession of by Christ Jesus.

We turn to the passage in Philippians and read

But surely I count also all things to be loss on account of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, on account of whom I have suffered the loss of all and count them to be filth, that I may gain Christ, and that I may be found in Him, not having my righteousness, which would be the principle of law, but that which is by faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God through faith, to know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if any way I arrive at the resurrection from among the dead. Not that I have already obtained the prize, or am already perfected; but I pursue, if also I may get possession of it, seeing that also I have been taken possession of by Christ Jesus. I will add the next verse,
Brethren, I do not count to have got possession myself; but one thing -- forgetting the things behind, and stretching out to the things before, I pursue, looking towards the goal for the prize of the calling on high of God in Christ Jesus.

Here indeed is what produces progress, viz.: the Object before the soul, but there is not a breath of such a thing as growth in himself, nor was there the least looking, in upon himself to see how far he had attained. It is the Object, the all-absorbing Object before his soul, the excellency of the knowledge of His Lord that he speaks of; and well, indeed, may he thus say 'I have not already obtained the prize, or am already perfected!' The Object before him precluded all thought of his own growth, all occupation with it, and he can but say he is not already perfected, his desire as to himself being that he might be conformed to Christ's death. This article uses this statement of the apostle in support of the notion of growth in us, as much as to say that Paul was then seeking by faith his own growth. Thus it adds

Growth is an increase in me of the new being which I am, by divine grace; and the measure of my faith is the measure of my growth.

It is all 'me' and 'my.' And I ask, Who and What is to feed our faith in order that we may grow? Are we to be always occupied with feeding our faith? What is our faith that is to be so fed as to produce growth? Faith is simple belief and confidence in God. All this is unscriptural and folly. --- a system of syllogistic reasoning that is wholly unscriptural and empty. Scripture never says that the increase or growth of our faith is our growth. I turn to 2 Thess. 1:3 and read

We ought to thank God always for you, brethren, even as it is meet, because your faith increases exceedingly, and the love of you all towards one another abounds.

The increase of their faith showed itself in love, and endurance, not in their own growth.

The article then adds

"Faith in Christ Jesus" is laying hold of Him.

Again we turn to Scripture and find

Having heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and the love which ye have towards all the saints,

Rejoicing and seeing your order and the firmness of your faith in Christ Jesus.

No thought here of growth, but simply the reality of faith manifesting itself in love to those that are Christ's, and in subjection to and firmness for Him. No 'laying hold of Him.'

Again we turn to the Word, and find injunctions to 'lay hold on eternal life,' end to 'lay hold on the hope set before us,' but no such thing as 'laying hold of Him.' Again we must repeat, faith is not what we do, but what we have. It is futile to add 'I am not looking in,' for it is all looking in from beginning to end in this article, for if 'growth' is not something in us, what is it? Besides it is added,

In every advance in growth, there is, as I have said, an advance, consciously of joy and power and testimony.

These cannot be increased but by increase of growth.

Here again we may note the expression 'conscious joy,' as if there were any joy which is not conscious. But I deny the statement here made as to joy, power, and testimony resulting from growth -- growth results from them. Joy, power and testimony result from an ungrieved Spirit that can occupy us with the blessed Lord and His glories, and perfections, and His interests here below. The Holy Spirit never occupies us with our growth, though it be only through Him that we grow. It is all false and unscriptural to ascribe this to faith. When the disciples said 'Lord, increase our faith,' His reply was that they had none, not even 'as a grain of mustard seed.' Faith is believing, and we cannot speak of more or less believing, for we either believe or we do not believe. Faith is always absolutely certain, and is simple confidence in God. In the Word it is only in two places spoken of as increasing, one we have already referred to, and the other is where the Apostle speaks of his being enlarged among them to announce the gospel beyond. In neither instance has it anything whatever to do with their growth.

But we are next told that

In the New Testament, except in the Gospels and Acts (which are the state of transition) you do not find any one regarded as a Christian who has not received the Spirit.

It is difficult to discover the writer's meaning here, for in the Gospels no one is considered a Christian at all, in the proper sense of the word, while in the Acts those who believed through the preaching of the Apostles, and were converted were Christians in all truth and reality, and had the Holy Spirit, see Acts 2:4, 38, 4:31, 'all filled with the Holy Spirit;' 6; 7; 8:17; 10:44; &c., &c., all through the Book indeed. But why speak of the Gospels and Acts as the state of transition? If any wish to study the Person of the Lord, and His marvelous ways of grace and power and love, where should he turn to but to the Gospels? Are we then to pass them over as transitional? The disciples of that day were not in a transitional state but were Jews who, through grace, received the Messiah, and who, by the way, were therefore authorized to take the place of children of God in this world being born of God. At the end they are in precisely the same state as those will be to whom the Lord comes, when He comes the second time; see Acts 1. There is no transition about it, for the Christian, distinctively Christian position on earth began in Acts 2, when the Holy Spirit descended and took His place here on earth in answer to the glory of the glorified Christ. I ask what, from Acts 2 onward, is the state of transition? And from what to what? Alas! dear reader, do we not look, well nigh in vain, for the simple faith, the dependence and power of those early days, so real and so blessed that it is ever a joy and comfort to go back and dwell upon them? There was no such talk, in those days, as 'faith produces growth,' 'growth increases through faith,' or of
his own heart, to determine to carry about the dying of the believer in upon himself, to seek to find Christ in his own heart, to determine to carry about the dying of the Lord Jesus, to find Christ reigning in his heart, to be occupied with his own growth, measuring it indeed by his marked detachment from the first man, and the things that suit the first man.

It is then said

assured, by faith, that there is nothing between God and me, I am brought to God. I am justified by faith, and I have peace with God; and the love of God is shed abroad in my heart by the Holy Ghost, which is given to me. I have grown to this by accepting, in faith, the work of Christ for me.

Again we may ask, What ‘I’ is it that is here spoken of as growing to peace with God? Is the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost ever the result of growth? Is it ever said, however remotely, that justification by faith results from or is attained by growth? Is peace with God a thing we grow to? We may grow to familiarity with it as mere doctrine, but the thing is truth, Divinely given truth, and it is written.

Being justified on the principle of (not ‘by’) faith, we have peace toward God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have (have obtained and possess) access by faith unto this grace wherein we stand, and we boast in hope of the glory of God.

Not a word of ‘growth’ here. If ‘growth’ be introduced into the passage the whole purport, and force, and indeed certainty of the truth is lost, and what is Divinely and sovereignly given, and therefore sure, is what we grow to by accepting a Divine work for us, and thus depends upon us. How opposed is all this to the simple unfailing, and blessed Word!

Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.

God rich in mercy for His great love wherewith He loved us (we too being dead in offences) has quickened us with Christ (ye are saved by grace) and has made us sit down together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus.

Note here that even the being seated in the heavenlies in Christ, is not a truth we grow to, but is sovereignly given in His grace.

Grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Desire the sincere milk of the Word that ye may grow thereby.

But holding the truth in love, we may grow up to Him in all things, who is the Head, the Christ.

The article concludes with,

That we may rejoice at the fracture of the pitcher, that the light which is in us may shine out.

This school of teaching, dear reader, is, as I have said, unscriptural and false. It takes the eye off Christ and fixes it upon the poor reflection in us, in order to produce growth. If any soul found itself ‘markedly detached from the first man,’ and connected this in any way with its own growth, it would minister to nothing but pride; on the other hand, failure to perceive this detachment and growth would tend to despair. In either way the fruit is evil. Such teaching comes not from the Spirit and the Word, but from a desire to obtain deliverance in some other than God’s way. It is not the ministry of Christ to the soul.

Our only hope and strength is, not in so-called ‘conscious enjoyment and growth,’ but in conscious weakness and...
dependence, to be subject to Him, and to hear His Word, and
to walk in obedience to it. May He give us to discern what is
not of Himself, and to refuse all teaching that is not the
ministry of Christ to the soul.

I cannot do better than give here two quotations from the
ministry of our beloved brother now with Christ, whose
writings have been before referred to.

That which characterizes fathers in Christ is that they have
known Him who is from the beginning, that is, Christ.
This is all he has to say about them. All had resulted in
that. He only repeats the same thing again, when
changing his form of expression, he begins anew with
these three classes. The fathers have known Christ. This
is the result of all Christian experience. The flesh is
judged, discerned, wherever it has mixed itself with Christ
in our feelings: it is recognized experimentally, as having
no value; and, as the result of experience, Christ stands
alone, free from all alloy. They have learnt to distinguish
that which has only the appearance of good. They are not
occupied with experience -- that would be being occupied
with self, with one’s own heart. All that has passed away;
and Christ alone remains as our portion, unmingled with
aught beside, even as He gave Himself to us. Moreover
He is much better known; they have experienced what He
is in so many details, whether of joy in communion with
Him, or, in the consciousness of weakness, or in the
realization of His faithfulness, of the riches of His grace,
of His adaptation to our need, of His love, and in the
revelation of His own fulness; so that they are able now
to say, “I know whom I have believed.” Attachment to
Himself characterizes them. Such is the character of
“fathers” in Christ.

The possession of the nature is necessary to the
understanding of what that nature is, and for the
knowledge of Him who is its perfection. But, if I seek to
know it and have or give the proof of it, it is not to the
existence of the nature in us that the Spirit of God directs
the thoughts of the believers as their object. God, he has
said, is Love; and this love has been
manifested towards us in that He has given His
only Son, that we might live through Him. The
proof is not the life in us, but that God has given
His Son in order that we might live, and,
further, to make propitiation for our sins. God
be praised! We know this love, not by the poor
results of its action in ourselves, but in its
perfection in God, and that even in a
manifestation of it to us, which is wholly
outside ourselves. It is a fact outside ourselves
which is the manifestation of this perfect love.
We enjoy it by participating in the divine nature,
we know it by the infinite gift of God’s Son.
The exercise and proof of it are there. The full
scope of this principle and all the force of its
truth are stated and demonstrated in that which
follows. It is striking to see how the Holy
Spirit, in an epistle which is essentially occupied
with the life of Christ and its fruits, gives the
proof and full character of love in that which is
wholly without ourselves.

May we, indeed, through grace, hold fast the simple truth as
it is in Jesus, and resolutely refuse all bypaths, let them be
never so speciously put before us!

P. A. H.
Chapter 7

F. E. Raven’s Lie Regarding What He Had Written About the Babe in the Manger

It is indeed a sorry fact that there is nothing about the Son of God that has not been attacked by professed Christians. Especially is this true in connection with the incarnation of the Son, come here in holy manhood to take a dependent place before the Father. When we contemplate that Babe in the manger, there was the dependent One; at the same time very God, creator and sustainer of the universe. At the moment He lay in the manger, the universe was upheld by the sustaining will of Him Who was God and man in one Person. The so-called “laws” of nature were then and there, as now, the expression of His will. As He lay there, in the manger, “the Mighty God” (Isa. 9:6), “by Him all things subsist together” (Col. 1:17). He was sustaining the breath of Herod who was going to try to kill Him. Lying against the cross, He sustained the centripetal and centrifugal forces as the hammer described its arc to drive in the nails; as He had likewise sustained the spit in its course as they had dared to spit in the face of the Lord of glory.

Such was the place of dependency that our Beloved took, and this led to His lying in the manger. He was a dependent babe, then a dependent boy and then a dependent man. He grew from holy, dependent infancy to holy, dependent manhood, ever the delight of the Father in every station. In every station He glorified the Father. As a dependent babe in the manger, He glorified the Father.

It is sorrowful that on June 29, 1889, F. E. Raven wrote, in a negative way, in a letter:

... Think of a helpless infant being the exhibition of eternal life. . . .

H. H. McCarthy heard about it and in a published paper quoted FER in this way:

“Fancy a helpless babe an expression of eternal life.”

An attempt was made by F. E. Raven and his supporters to conceal what FER had written and to condemn H. H. McCarthy. Mr. Barker forwarded some questions to Mr. Raven, one of which was:

Is it true that Mr. Raven has owned (as I am informed) that he was the author of the sentence, “Fancy a helpless babe an expression of eternal life”?

Mr. Raven replied:

Greenwich, March 6, 1890.

My Dear Brother, . . . In regard to the first point, I am not aware that I ever penned the sentence supposed to be mine. It is for Major McCarthy, who I believe is the author of the paper, in which the sentence appears in inverted commas, to prove whence he derived it.

Mr. Barker responded:

Torquay, March 19, 1890.

My Dear Brother, -- I shall be very glad if you will place me in the position to say that the sentence with which Major McCarthy’s tract begins never emanated from you.

The sentence I mean is, ‘Fancy a helpless babe an expression of eternal life!’ Possibly in passing from one to another the sentence may have undergone some unintentional change while the substance of the thing remained. So I shall be more than thankful if you can tell me that not only the sentence as it stands, but no such sentence ever came from you.

To this, Mr. Raven wrote:

Greenwich, March 20, 1890.

My Dear Brother, -- I thank you for your letter, and hasten to reply, I trust plainly.

I have understood that Major McCarthy printed the words, “Fancy a helpless babe an expression of eternal life,” supposing them to be an extract from a letter of mine. I am satisfied I never used these words.

116. If any reader has papers by H. H. McCarthy, such as The Babe in the Manger, or other papers, please contact the writer.
These letters are quoted by A. C. Ord in *The Manifestation of the Divine Nature in the Person of Christ*, pp. 3-5, and he commented thus (pp. 5, 6):

What are we to think of such a reply, or of the refusal of Mr. Raven’s friends at Ealing to produce the letter in question, which contains some sentence which they at first communicated, and which undeniably embodies a lowering reflection upon the Person of the only begotten Son of God? Where is the care for the glory of God, when the Lord Himself is in question, and when Mr. Raven and his friends at Ealing persist in concealing that which has given so much occasion for distress among those gathered to the name of Christ. “He that doeth truth cometh to the Light that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God.” Is the Person of the Lord held in so little estimation that such conduct can be passed over, or is the credit of Mr. Raven’s character to be held of more importance? His own statement in reply to Mr. Barker, painful as it is, is a confirmation of the deeper gravity of the sentence they agree to conceal.

But the dishonesty, and the vindictiveness, against faithful H. H. McCarthy, came to light; and A. C. Ord placed the following in an appendix (pp. 42, 43).

Mr. Raven wrote to a brother in the West of England a letter dated July 2nd, 1890:

“I send you an extract from the letter in which the statement, ‘Think of a helpless infant, &c.’ occurs. I think it speaks for itself. The exhibition of eternal life is in the Risen Man, who has annulled death.

(Signed) “F. E. Raven.”

**EXTRACT.**

“June 29, 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 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.”

Here then is the letter (June 29, 1889) so long held back: and the reason for this unholy compact in concealment is now evident. The leaders of the Raven party at Ealing, though Major McCarthy had got the sentence originally from them, which he printed afterwards, insisted that he should be put under discipline for his unrighteousness in printing a sentence reported from a letter, which was not contained in that letter; and Mr. Raven was a party to this conduct by declining to say to Mr. Barker more than “I am satisfied I never used these words.” Thus, with this prevaricating reply, he leaves Major M., with the imputation of unrighteousness cast upon him, and its consequent effects conveying the impression that Major M. has done him an injustice. It now turns out that the difference in the sentence consists in --

“Fancy a helpless babe an expression of eternal life.” (Major M., as reported to him.)

“Think of a helpless infant being the exhibition of eternal life.” (Mr. Raven to Mr. Rudling.)

The reader, having both sentences in juxtaposition, will now be able to judge what is the difference between them. The dishonorable character of the concealment becomes evident; as it is clear that the charge against Major M. of unrighteousness, could not have been sustained for a moment, had the sentence as originally written been divulged. Thus the holy discipline of the House of God is made a handle for party spirit -- a false charge made, and long sustained, against a servant of Christ; and this is maintained by these clandestine means, and by the professed leaders of an assembly, -- where the glory of the adorable Person of the Son of God was in question. One of these took the trouble to count the words in each, to insist upon the horror of the Major’s conduct, saying that there were eleven words in the original instead of nine, and that there were six differences. This he repeated, over and over again, on many different occasions, before many witnesses; whilst a leading London brother denounced, at Cheapside, the iniquity of the Major.

The words “expressed,” and “exhibited” (or “manifested,” which is the Scripture term, and, perhaps, the strongest), are expressive of what is displayed in the Person Himself, and not at all of perceptions existing in the beholder. Hence, if we say that anything that was essentially in Christ was not exhibited in Him, we deny His own Word, “I am altogether that which I say unto you” (John 8:25).

Having shown that F. E. Raven and his supporters lied

117. See also W. T. Whybrow, *Heavenly Truth*, p. 16.
118. W. Kelly wrote:

To a Christian nothing is so near the heart as Christ, nothing so offensive and evil as His dishonor. Where then are those whose speculations led them to say in substance, whatever the variation of phrase, “Fancy a helpless babe an expression of eternal life”? The unbelief and the irreverence of such a speech seem to have been by no means confined to one; but it was laid, not without ground at the door of perhaps the boldest in the new school [F. E. Raven]. The coolness with which he denied the imputation made one tremble for the zealous brother [H. H. McCarthy], who characterized the affront to our Lord as it deserved. But it comes out long after, without confusion or apparently intention but by the evident hand of God, that the actual words were “Think of a helpless infant being the exhibition of eternal life.”

Now the former report (avowedly hearsay) imputes less than what in fact was written. Yet the writer, when appealed to, said he was satisfied he never used these words! Was this Christian candor? or even common honesty? But so it is ever: the truth of Christ lost for one who bears His name is the loss of truthfulness. Nor this only: the brother who resented the reported dishonor of Christ was challenged to produce the letter (continued...)
regarding his statement about the babe in the manger, we return to FER’s letter of March 20, 1890 for an additional extract.

When an earlier paper of Major McCarthy’s appeared, in writing to a brother at Ealing I pointed out the monstrosity of an assertion of the Major’s, that the Lord never ceased to be the EXHIBITION of eternal life from a babe in the manger to the throne of the Father. It was no question of what was there in the babe -- God manifest in the flesh, eternal life, and all else, but of what He was the exhibition, for Major McCarthy meant in detail. He was as a babe the EXHIBITION of infancy in its helplessness, for all else, though there, was for the moment veiled, and it was His glory, for in being made of a woman, becoming man, He came truly and really into humanity in its conditions here, grew and increased in wisdom and stature.

F. E. Raven withdrew only the word “helpless” as H. H. Frost noted:

"The word “helpless” was, under pressure, withdrawn, and thus, as was publicly shown in a large meeting at Brighton, the sentence was made worse, for it thus treats the Lord like any other “babe.” The word was withdrawn again on October 7, 1890, sixteen months after it was written. At the meeting referred to on page 10, F.E.R. was asked to withdraw the statement itself. This he refused, saying, “rather than do so he would go out of fellowship.” -- "Some Account," &c. 119

We continue now with helpful comments by A. C. Ord.

Though He is rejected by man because of His humiliation (in Matthew 11) -- for the pride of man is “offended” by the lowly guise and form of manhood which He has assumed -- He bows to His Father, who hides these things from the wise and prudent, and reveals them unto babes; and we there learn that so glorious and profound is this mystery of His Person, that it is inexplicable to man. But what is most remarkable, and shows how, on account of His humiliation, His sacred character is guarded, it is not so affirmed of the Father; for while it is said that no man or creature “knoweth the Son but the Father,” it is permitted to us by the indwelling of the Spirit to know the Father. “Neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son wills (βοιληται) to reveal Him.” There is not in the Father that complex glory which exists in the Person of the Son become man, but pure and simple divine character and nature, which could be revealed and made known by the Son. “No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him.” (Compare John 1:18, 14:8, 9, 16:25, 17:6, 25, 26.) Hence the glory of the Son who became man, and in consequence exposed Himself to be scrutinized and treated with indignity by the wretched ingratitude of the heart of man, for whose sake He humbled Himself, is safeguarded by the inscrutability which surrounds it. And so jealous is the Holy Ghost, by whom the Gospels are indited, on this subject, that the same truth is repeated still more emphatically in Luke 10:22: “All things are delivered to Me of My Father; and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.” The difference of the language here observable is remarkable; it is not only “no man knoweth the Son, but the Father,” but “no man knoweth (τις εστιν ο υιος) who the Son is but the Father,” that is, not only His Person cannot be fathomed, but the manner of His existence is wholly incomprehensible to the human understanding. 120

Who, for instance, can form an idea of the effect of the presence, action, and power of the Holy Ghost in that human nature, the seed of the woman conceived of the Virgin by His power? For though it was “the Seed of the woman,” and conceived of her according to the promise, and thus of her nature and substance, the action of the Spirit was such, in the miraculous conception of that holy humanity, that the angel says that that Holy Thing born of her could, on this account (as well as in His own higher nature), bear the title of the Son of God. Thus all His human life was in the power of the Holy Ghost, infinitely beyond His marvelous action on saints in earlier days. This explains how, in the sacrificial aspect of His giving up Himself to death, it is said by the apostle Paul in Hebrews 9, that He, “through the Eternal Spirit, offered Himself without spot to God”; for the Holy Ghost acts in being Himself, in an infinite way, the power of those motives and feelings, which led Him to devote Himself thus for the glory of God, in His death. So again we read, “He was led of the Spirit into the wilderness” to be “tempted of the devil,” and “Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee” (Luke 4).

This was signified of old in the type when the fine flour was mingled as well as anointed with oil. We have

120. Thus is rebuked the slighting allusion to this passage contained in the words, “Retiring behind the oft-quoted phrase, ‘No man knoweth the Son, but the Father.’” (Voice to the Faithful, January, 1891, page 15.) And the dangerous claim to distinguish, in this incomprehensible mystery, the human from the divine (page 17), now put forth by so many of these teachers.

pointed out the activity of the Spirit of God from the earliest moment in John the Baptist; how then can we limit His energy, and the effect of His all-pervading presence thus specially marked, in the case of our Lord Himself? Before the scene in the temple, even from His infancy, we read what could not be said of another, He was “filled with wisdom.” Now wisdom is not only knowledge, but the power or capacity of adjusting the relations of things, or using knowledge rightly. Where can we find another who could tell us what was addressed to Him at the moment of His birth? “I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art My Son; this day have I begotten Thee. Ask of Me, and I shall give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession” (Psalm 2:7,8). We have seen (The Manifestation of the Divine Nature) in Psalm 22 how the sense of conscious relationship, confidence, and hope was expressed by the Lord when He was upon His mother’s breasts; but this goes even farther, for He declares how He was addressed as Son and heir by the Father, on the day of His birth, and what was then pledged to Him, and on what ground.

Of Him alone, in contrast with all others, it is said, “He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto Him” (John 3:34). A prophet might communicate messages which were given to him, but at other times he spake as other ordinary men; whilst Jesus spake only and always the words of God, and nothing else, just because He was God, and spake always by the Spirit of God. If He cast out devils, it was by the finger of God, and by the Spirit of God (Matt. 12:28); but He could also whilst on earth confer on others the power of doing the same and working miracles, to impart which is the prerogative of God alone (Luke 9:1; Mark 6:7). What above all marks the import of the passage, that none knows who the Son is but the Father, is the statement in Colossians, twice repeated, that in Him all the fulness (of the Godhead) is pleased to dwell. Not only this, but “in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.” This statement, true of Him when on earth, is generally supposed to express that He is God incarnate; but far more than this is contained in it. He is corporeally the center of the presence and action of all the divine Persons. He is the Son in His own Person. He manifests perfectly the Father in all His blessed nature; for He can say, “I and My Father are one,” and, “He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father.” And all the energies and working of the Holy Ghost, in the scene of evil that surrounded Him, proceeded from Himself as their center. This is expressed in the Revelation, when He is said to be, both now and in the future, possessor of the seven Spirits of God (originally seen before the throne, and subsequently sent forth into all the earth), first in the address to the church at Sardis, and afterwards when seen as the Lamb that had been slain, in the midst of the throne, with seven horns and seven eyes, emblematic of the fulness of divine intelligence, and of active power which He wields in all the universe (Rev. 1:4; 4:5). 122

It is important to observe, that in both the passages which specially speak of the Lord before the assumption of humanity, and subsequently to His becoming man, His divine personality is always maintained. Nor did He take another personality by becoming man. 123 It is one and the same Person that Scripture presents to us throughout. In Hebrews 10, “Then said I, Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God”; “A body hast Thou prepared Me.” The statement, “In the volume of the book it is written of Me,” comprises all that He fulfilled, after that He had taken as well as in taking the body prepared for Him. In what follows we read, “But this man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God.” In Philippians 2 He who is subsistent in the form and glory of God, empties Himself, and being found in fashion as a man, He humbles Himself. The divine personality is not lost by His becoming man, but is marked or distinguished even then, by these acts ascribed to Him. Hence He carried with Him the infinite sense of what He was, and what He came to do. “Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God.” And the result of His intervention never falls below the height of this infinite purpose and presence, as is distinctly

---

121. “The Father” has been wrongly introduced here (A.V.); for the παντερόμενος of “fulness” refers to the Godhead, i.e. all the persons subsisting in the divine glory. It expresses the compass of which the Person of Christ is both the object and the subject; so that instead of being some inferior or subordinate person because he became Man, it is exactly the reverse. The Godhead has been pleased to magnify His Person, by making His human form its dwelling-place, the channel of its expression and display, and His death the means of the reconciliation to itself of the whole scene which has been defiled by sin, as well as of ourselves, i.e. persons, who are now brought nigh. The word εὐδοκίσε (was pleased) being in the past tense shows that the former extends to His Person and life when on earth.

122. Mr. Raven may see only the exhibition of infancy in its helplessness; but Scripture calls Him, the babe, “God with us,” and the child “the mighty God,” i.e., far more than saying “God was in the babe,” for God has dwelt in man in the prophets of old by His Spirit, or now, as the apostle John tells us, in us (1 John 4, but never before or in any other were God and man united in one for our eternal blessing and to accomplish redemption. Is it possible that Mr. Anstey (Letter to Brethren on the Continent, p. 4) can be ignorant of this difference? He denies that “Mr. R. separates the true Godhead from the manhood,” because He says “God was IN the babe,” and adds, “The weakness of such a charge is manifest. Have we never read ‘God was in Christ.’” Unitarian and other heteretical teachers will admit that God was in the babe, as He was in John the Baptist, who was full of the Holy Ghost from his mother’s womb; but they will not admit that the babe was God. Mr. Raven, as the consequence of dividing the Person of Christ, to which his views on eternal life have led him, always thus speaks, “All was there”; but to his eye nothing but “helplessness” was “exhibited,” all else, though there, was veiled.” He has repeated this in various ways, so that the withdrawal of the word “helpless” in one instance leaves his teaching untouched. He says, “It was humanity in its conditions,” to which he then limits the Lord’s Person; and, in consequence, the manifestation also.

123. [The writer means that the Person did not change. This should have been more clearly expressed.]
shown in His still humbling Himself, and fulfilling what was written in these eternal counsels concerning Him. At no moment of His life, from His birth, when He takes the body prepared for Him, to His giving it up on the cross, could this be wanting.

On this passage in Hebrews 10, Mr. Darby thus comments:

Before He became man, in the place where only divinity is known, and its eternal counsels and thoughts are communicated between the divine Persons, the Word -- as He has declared it to us, in time, by the prophetic Spirit -- such being the will of God contained in the book of the eternal counsels, He who was able to do it, offered Himself freely to accomplish that will.

That of which we have been speaking is continually manifested in the life of Jesus on earth. God shines through His position in the human body: for He was necessarily God in the act itself of His humiliation, and none but God could have undertaken and been found in it. Yet He was always, and entirely and perfectly, obedient and dependent on God. That which revealed itself in His existence on earth was the expression of that which was accomplished in the eternal abode in His own nature. That is to say (and of this Psalm 40 speaks), that which He declares and that which He was here below are the same thing: the one reality in heaven, the other bodily on earth. That which He was here below was but the expression -- the living, real, bodily manifestation of what is contained in those divine communications which have been revealed to us, and which were the reality of the position that He assumed." (Synopsis on Hebrews, p. 335, 336.)

... He tells us that He took this place willingly, according to the eternal counsels respecting His own Person. For the Person is not changed. But He speaks in the Psalm according to the position of obedience which He had taken, saying always I and Me in speaking of what took place before His incarnation." (p. 334, note.)

How different all this is from Mr. R. and those writers whose reasons would reduce us to the conclusion that His infancy was practically unaffected by His divinity or by the unlimited presence of the Holy Ghost; thus lowering Him below what was true of John the Baptist, who was “filled with the Holy Ghost from His mother’s womb”!

... as we have said, they [the gospels] ever keep Him before us in the unity of His Person. No doubt they present, as has been stated, sometimes more of the divine and sometimes more of the human; and doubtless some acts are more characteristically divine in their nature, and others more characteristically human. But even in specifically human acts, to attempt to draw the line, even as to these, or to exclude what is divine from them, and vice versa, is not permissible; and if reverence and faith and love for that blessed One are allowed to have their place, such an attempt will be at once checked. Take, for instance, the Lord touching the leper. No doubt it was with a human hand that He does so; but that blessed hand conveys divine virtue and power, and dispels the leprosy in a moment. And the words, “I will, be thou clean,” expressive of divine title and authority, coming forth from human lips, and a heart filled with infinite love, accompany His touch, which in any other than His would have involved defilement. So when “the whole multitude sought to touch Him,” the Spirit of God adds, “for there went virtue out of Him and healed them all.”

Even in death (which is an act of a specific human character), we have seen that the divine purpose and nature (Heb. 10), not only gave all force and meaning to the assuming the body prepared for Him, but characterized the wondrous offering of that body on the cross; so that God could find His infinite pleasure and satisfaction in it. No man could take His life from Him. He had power to lay it down, and power to take it again. In a similar way we are not only told, that, whilst voluntarily submitting to it for our sakes, He could not be helden of death, for He was the Prince of Life; but He gives His flesh for the life of the world, and He that eateth of this bread shall live for ever. This life in Him overcomes all the power of death, and this is here extended distinctly to His humanity.

In this His divine title and exemption from death, save by His own act, as well as His resurrection power, appear. He adds, “Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again”; i.e., it was the voluntary nature of this act, and loving obedience to His Father in it, that constituted its value.

Thus, though we do not call divine acts human nor human acts divine, the Scripture shows us that, in His acts, the human and divine combine or mingle. If this is denied, His blessed Person is divided, and all the value of what He does, and is, is lost. This does not imply any confusion or transformation of the human into the divine, or the divine into the human; but it implies a union intimate and perfect, in His blessed Person, which will be our joy, as it is the ground of our confidence, throughout eternity. An union which is impenetrable and unfathomable, but because of which it could be said, when He was on earth, “The Son of man which is in heaven.”

The attentive reader will have noticed previously that FER had denied things that he was proven to have said. With evil doctrine comes loss of integrity.
## Scripture Index

**GENESIS**
- Gen. 1:1 ........................................ 34, 35
- Gen. 2 ......................................... 148
- Gen. 3 ......................................... 40
- Gen. 2:7 ....................................... 148
- Gen. 22 ........................................ 49
- Gen. 22:1 ...................................... 20

**EXODUS**
- Ex. 17:7 ...................................... 20
- Ex. 40:34, 35 ................................. 75

**LEVITICUS**
- Lev. 2 ......................................... 41
- Lev. 14:35 ..................................... 234
- Lev. 16 ........................................ 33, 68

**DEUTERONOMY**
- Deut. 1:8 ...................................... 238
- Deut. 6:16 ..................................... 20
- Deut. 19:15 ................................... 216
- Deut. 32:40 ................................... 148

**SAMUEL - JOB**
- 1 Sam. 6:19 ................................... 6, 77
- Neb. 8:8 ....................................... 123
- Job 38:7 ...................................... 34, 36

**PSALMS**
- Psa. 2 ......................................... 40, 94
- Psa. 2:7 ....................................... 50, 118
- Psa. 2:7, 8 .................................... 5, 252
- Psa. 8 ......................................... 40
- Psa. 8, 40 ...................................... 211
- Psa. 16:10 .................................... 95
- Psa. 22 ........................................ 5
- Psa. 22:9 ...................................... 232, 252
- Psa. 22:9, 10 ................................... 41
- Psa. 24 and 102. ............................. 40
- Psa. 32 ........................................ 193
- Psa. 36:8 ...................................... 155
- Psa. 40 ........................................ 14, 253
- Psa. 40:6 ...................................... 58
- Psa. 40:7, Heb. 10:7, 9 ...................... 14
- Psa. 43 ........................................ 94
- Psa. 45:6, 7 .................................... 15
- Psa. 78:18, 41, 56 ............................. 20
- Psa. 90 ........................................ 58
- Psa. 91:11 ..................................... 20
- Psa. 102 ........................................ 94
- Psa. 110 ........................................ 40
- Psa. 115:16 ................................... 148
- Psa. 133 ...................................... 189, 208
- Psa. 133:3 .................................... 210
- Psa. 139 ...................................... 193
- Psalms 15:1................................. 148

**PROVERBS - ECCLESIASTES**
- Prov. 8 ....................................... 211
- Prov. 8:30. ................................... 34
- Eccl. 3:18-21 ................................. 148

**ISAIAH**
- Isa. 7:14 ........................................ 41
- Isa. 9:6 ........................................ 249
- Isa. 18:10 .................................... 189
- Isa. 50 ........................................ 15, 39
- Isa. 57:1 ....................................... 215

**JEREMIAH - ZECHARIAH**
- Jer. 26:2 ...................................... 167
- Ezek. 18:4 .................................... 99
- Ezek. 28:12-15 ............................... 18
- Ezek. 31:16, etc., 32:27 .................. 193
- Dan. 7; Rev. 19 ............................. 93
- Dan. 7:13 ..................................... 96
- Dan. 7:13, 22 .................................. 87
- Dan. 12 ....................................... 193
- Zech. 13:7 .................................... 34, 94

**MATTHEW**
- Matt. 1:18 .................................... 40
- Matt. 1:23 .................................... 41
- Matt. 3:16 .................................... 58
- Matt. 3:16, 17 ............................... 18
- Matt. 4 ....................................... 72
- Matt. 4:1 ...................................... 18
- Matt. 7:18 .................................... 222
- Matt. 11 ....................................... 4, 251
- Matt. 11:27 ................................. 3, 4, 237
- Matt. 11:28; see also vv. 31, 32 ........... 27
- Matt. 12:28 .................................... 5, 252
- Matt. 15 ........................................ 239
- Matt. 16:13-28 ............................... 89
- Matt. 17:5 .................................... 75
- Matt. 18:15-17 ............................... 126, 128
- Matt. 18:18 .................................... 225
- Matt. 18:20 .................................... 111
- Matt. 18:27 .................................... 93
- Matt. 19:16 .................................... 149
- Matt. 19:29 .................................... 189, 193
- Matt. 22:43, 44 ............................... 2
- Matt. 26:48 .................................... 54
- Matt. 26:63-64 ............................... 89
- Matt. 28:19 .................................... 28

**MARK**
- Mark 6:7 ...................................... 5
- Mark 9:7 ...................................... 75
- Mark 13:32 ................................. 16, 21, 22, 46
- Mark 14:36 .................................... 119

**LUKE**
- Luke 1:2 ...................................... 39, 40, 88
- Luke 3:21, 22 ............................... 41
- Luke 3:22 ..................................... 56, 58
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>John 1, Col. 1 and Heb. 1</th>
<th>37</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John 1</td>
<td>34, 37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 1:1</td>
<td>6, 177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 1:1, 2</td>
<td>34, 35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 1:1-13</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 1:3</td>
<td>221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 1:4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 1:14</td>
<td>6, 38, 52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 1:14, 18</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 1:14-18</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 1:17</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 1:18</td>
<td>6, 43, 50, 48, 52, 65, 67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 1:18, 14:8, 9, 16:25, 17:6, 25, 26</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 1:18, 39-34</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 1:32</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 1:47-50</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 3</td>
<td>148, 190, 191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 3:12</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 3:13</td>
<td>52, 73, 87, 88, 162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 3:13 and 6:62</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 3:14</td>
<td>209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 3:15-16</td>
<td>145, 153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 3:18</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 3:34</td>
<td>5, 57, 252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 3:35</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 3:35; 13:1</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 3:35; cp. 17:2, 6</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 3:36; 5:24; 6:47</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 4:14, 6:35</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 4:14</td>
<td>210, 243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 4:24</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 5</td>
<td>14, 15, 87, 147, 152, 161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 5:17, 19, 20; 7:28; 8:20-29</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 5:17-20</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 5:18-20</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 5:19, 20</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 5:20</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 5:21</td>
<td>54, 209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 5:23</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 5:24</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 5:26</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 5:26</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 5:26 and chap. 17:2</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 5:36, 37; cf. 12:49, 50</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 6:27</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 6:27, 33, 48-51</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 6:37</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 6:46</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 6:51</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 6:53</td>
<td>62, 154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 6:56</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 6:57</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 6:62</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 6:62; 14:2; 17:24</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 6:63</td>
<td>209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 6:64</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**JOHN**

| John 7:28                | 57 |
| John 7:38, 39             | 18, 63 |
| John 7:39                | 28, 58, 148 |
| John 8:19                | 44 |
| John 8:26                | 15 |
| John 8:28                | 18 |
| John 8:28, 29            | 54 |
| John 8:28, 12:31-36      | 87 |
| John 8:42                | 52, 57 |
| John 10:10               | 63, 148 |
| John 10:18               | 19 |
| John 10:27, 28           | 192 |
| John 10:28               | 62 |
| John 10:29-33            | 61 |
| John 10:36               | 57 |
| John 10:38               | 62 |
| John 11:3, 36            | 54 |
| John 11:52               | 63 |
| John 12:24               | 41, 62, 63, 148, 154 |
| John 12:24; 20:22        | 63, 119 |
| John 12:24-26            | 63 |
| John 12:59               | 210 |
| John 13                  | 58 |
| John 13:1                | 21 |
| John 13:12-17            | 29 |
| John 13:3                | 13 |
| John 13:31, 32; 17:4, 5  | 63 |
| John 13:32; 17:5, 24     | 150 |
| John 14:11               | 62 |
| John 14:14, 15           | 60 |
| John 14:16, 26           | 63 |
| John 14:20               | 63 |
| John 14:26               | 25 |
| John 14:28               | 62, 150 |
| John 14:29; see Isa. 41:21-23, 26 | 21 |
| John 14:31               | 54 |
| John 14:4-6; 1 John 1:2  | 149 |
| John 14:9                | 44 |
| John 14:9-11             | 18 |
| John 15                  | 63 |
| John 15:22-24            | 125 |
| John 15:23, 24           | 54 |
| John 15:26               | 49, 52 |
| John 15:3                | 148 |
| John 16:13               | 55 |
| John 16:17               | 54 |
| John 16:27, 28           | 13, 41, 52 |
| John 16:28               | 50, 51, 57 |
| John 16:28-30            | 241 |
| John 16:7                | 25 |
| John 17                  | 71, 149 |
| John 17:11               | 63 |
| John 17:19               | 73 |
| John 17:2                | 73, 204 |
| John 17:2, 5, 24         | 72, 73 |
| John 17:21-23            | 64 |
| John 17:23               | 54 |
| John 17:24               | 73 |
| John 17:3                | 192 |
| John 17:3, 1 John 1:1-3  | 179 |
| John 17:4, 19:30         | 63 |
| John 17:5                | 29, 35, 39, 62, 71 |
| John 18:4                | 21 |
| John 2:13, 18-27         | 149 |
| John 20:17               | 88 |
| John 20:17-22            | 63, 209 |
| John 20:2                | 54 |
| John 20:22               | 62, 148 |
### Acts
- Acts 1:6 ........................................ 148
- Acts 2 ........................................ 246
- Acts 2:4, 38, 4:31 ............................... 246
- Acts 2:15 ....................................... 148
- Acts 2:31-33 .................................. 154
- Acts 2:32, 33 .................................... 58, 79
- Acts 2:33 ........................................ 28, 196
- Acts 2:36 ....................................... 38
- Acts 3:13 ........................................ 196
- Acts 4:27 ....................................... 50
- Acts 5:31 ....................................... 196
- Acts 7:55 .......................................... 75, 149
- Acts 7:55, 56 .................................. 149
- Acts 13:2 ......................................... 56
- Acts 13:33 ........................................ 40, 118, 119
- Acts 15:9 ......................................... 148

### Romans
- Rom. 1:3-5 ....................................... 119
- Rom. 1:4 ......................................... 41, 93, 119
- Rom. 1:17 ........................................ 148
- Rom. 1:19-20 .................................... 36
- Rom. 3 ............................................ 141, 165
- Rom. 3 and 4 .................................... 132, 133, 138
- Rom. 4 ........................................... 133, 164, 214
- Rom. 5:19 ........................................ 155
- Rom. 5:4; cp. Rom. 15:30 ......................... 50
- Rom. 6 ........................................... 93, 175
- Rom. 6:4 .......................................... 119
- Rom. 6:11 ........................................ 159
- Rom. 6:20 ........................................ 176
- Rom. 6:23 ........................................ 19, 161, 221
- Rom. 7 ............................................ 41, 203
- Rom. 7:18 ........................................ 173
- Rom. 7:23 ........................................ 117
- Rom. 7:8 ........................................... 99
- Rom. 8 ............................................ 149
- Rom. 8:2 .......................................... 241, 243
- Rom. 8:3 .......................................... 168
- Rom. 8:10 ......................................... 193, 210
- Rom. 8:11 ........................................ 119
- Rom. 8:16 ......................................... 208
- Rom. 8:28, and 9:11-17 ............................ 161
- Rom. 8:29 ........................................ 118
- Rom. 8:30 ......................................... 146
- Rom. 9:5 ........................................... 14
- Rom. 12:8 ......................................... 123
- Rom. 12:10 ........................................ 54
- Rom. 16:17 ....................................... 155, 180, 235
- Rom. 16:17, 18 ................................... 213
- Rom. 16:18 ....................................... 238

### 1 Corinthians
- 1 Cor. 1:5 ........................................ 37
- 1 Cor. 1:9 ......................................... 150
- 1 Cor. 1:30 ....................................... 173
- 1 Cor. 2:11, 12 ................................... 148
- 1 Cor. 2:11 ....................................... 208
- 1 Cor. 5:21 ....................................... 126
- 1 Cor. 8:6 ......................................... 30, 59

### 2 Corinthians
- 2 Cor. 3:18 ........................................ 74, 149
- 2 Cor. 4 ........................................... 233
- 2 Cor. 4:10, 11 .................................... 143, 144
- 2 Cor. 4:4 ......................................... 74
- 2 Cor. 4:19 ......................................... 74
- 2 Cor. 4:7-13 ....................................... 231
- 2 Cor. 5:1 .......................................... 174
- 2 Cor. 5:17, 18 .................................... 170
- 2 Cor. 5:17 ........................................ 146, 173
- 2 Cor. 5:21 ........................................ 16, 117, 125, 126, 131-133, 136, 138, 139, 141,
  164, 163, 166, 168, 174, 201, 207, 214
- 2 Cor. 6:17, 18 ................................... 231
- 2 Cor. 12:9, 10 .................................... 117
- 2 Cor. 13:1 ......................................... 216

### Galatians
- Gal. 1:16 .......................................... 153
- Gal. 1:6, 7 ......................................... 18
- Gal. 1:8-9 ......................................... 145
- Gal. 2:19, 20 ...................................... 173
- Gal. 2:20 .......................................... 99, 193
- Gal. 2:20; 3:13, 14; 4:4, 5 ........................... 153(Rom. 16:17169
- Gal. 3:8 ........................................... 173
- Gal. 3:20 ........................................... 29
- Gal. 3:26; 4:4-6 .................................... 153
- Gal. 4:4 ............................................ 41, 57, 58, 119
- Gal. 4:6 ............................................ 63, 119, 149
- Gal. 5:17 .......................................... 159

### Ephesians
- Ephesians ........................................ 138, 139
- Eph. 1:4 ......................................... 138
- Eph. 1:4, 5 ........................................ 198, 208
- Eph. 1:9-11 ........................................ 161
- Eph. 2:10; 4:24 .................................... 146
- Eph. 2:5 ............................................ 209
- Eph. 3:9-11 ........................................ 161
- Eph. 3:10 .......................................... 31
- Eph. 4:14 .......................................... 133
- Eph. 4:3 ............................................ 225
- Eph. 4:3, 4 ......................................... 225

### Philippians
- Phil. 2 ............................................ 5, 15, 95, 252
- Phil. 2:5 ............................................ 38
- Phil. 2:5, 6 ......................................... 62
- Phil. 2:5-8 .......................................... 13, 20
- Phil. 2:6 ............................................ 14
- Phil. 2:6, 7 .......................................... 81
- Phil. 2:7 ............................................ 27
- Phil. 2:7, 8 .......................................... 209
### COLOSSIANS
- Col. 1:10 ........................................... 95
- Col. 1:15 .......................................... 118
- Col. 1:16 .......................................... 36
- Col. 1:17 .......................................... 14, 61
- Col. 1:18 .......................................... 118
- Col. 1:19 .......................................... 5, 11, 30, 252
- Col. 2:6-7 ........................................ 225
- Col. 2:13 .......................................... 209
- Col. 3:1-5 ........................................ 159
- Col. 3:3 ........................................... 154
- Col. 3:4, 5 ........................................ 210
- Col. 3:4 ........................................... 64, 119, 193
- Col. 3:11 .......................................... 241

### THESSALONIANS
- 1 Thess. 5:19 ...................................... 219
- 1 Thess. 5:23 ...................................... 208
- 2 Thess. 1:3 ....................................... 246
- 2 Thess. 2:7 ....................................... 52

### 1 TIMOTHY
- 1 Tim. 2:5 ......................................... 29
- 1 Tim. 4:1-3; 2 Tim. 3:1-9 ....................... 87
- 1 Tim. 6:13 ........................................ 93
- 1 Tim. 6:15-16; Rev. 19:11-16 ................. 87

### 2 TIMOTHY
- 2 Tim. 1:1 ......................................... 202
- 2 Tim. 1:7 ......................................... 226
- 2 Tim. 1:9 ......................................... 140
- 2 Tim. 1:10 ....................................... 209
- 2 Tim. 1:9 ......................................... 161, 174
- 2 Tim. 2:19 ....................................... 180
- 2 Tim. 2:19, 22 .................................... 180
- 2 Tim. 2:21 ....................................... 169, 196
- 2 Tim. 2:22 ....................................... 226
- 2 Tim. 3:13, 14, 15; 4:3, 4; 1 Tim. 6:20, 21 ........... 227

### TITUS
- Titus 1:2 ........................................... 221
- Titus 1:3 ........................................... 140
- Titus 3:10 ......................................... 234

### HEBREWS
- Hebrews ........................................... 117
- Heb. 1:1, 2 ...................................... 94, 117
- Heb. 1:2, 3 ...................................... 118
- Heb. 1:2; Psa. 102:25 and Heb. 1:10 ............. 36
- Heb. 1:3 .......................................... 61
- Heb. 1:4, 5 ...................................... 118
- Heb. 1:5 .......................................... 40, 50, 117
- Heb. 1:5, 5:5 ..................................... 118
- Heb. 1:5-14 ...................................... 118
- Heb. 1:8, 9 ...................................... 15
- Heb. 2:11 ......................................... 204
- Heb. 2:11 ......................................... 111
- Heb. 2:14, 15 .................................... 18
- Heb. 2, 6, 9 ...................................... 93
- Heb. 2:9, 3:3-4, with Psa. 8:1 ...................... 87
- Heb. 2:9 .......................................... 41
- Heb. 4:14 ........................................ 94
- Heb. 4:15 ........................................ 117
- Heb. 5:5 .......................................... 40
- Heb. 5:5-8 ........................................ 94
- Heb. 5:9; 6:2; 9:12; 9:15; 13:20 ................. 31
- Heb. 7 ............................................. 94
- Heb. 8:1 .......................................... 94
- Heb. 8:1, 2 ...................................... 111
- Heb. 9 ............................................. 4
- Heb. 9:14 .......................................... 25, 106
- Heb. 9:27 .......................................... 19
- Heb. 10:5 ......................................... 2, 3, 5, 94, 97, 111, 252
- Heb. 10:5, 6 ....................................... 58
- Heb. 10:6 .......................................... 38
- Heb. 10:7 .......................................... 38, 39
- Heb. 10:19 ........................................ 111
- Heb. 11:17 ........................................ 20, 48
- Heb. 11:3 .......................................... 36

### JAMES
- James 1:13-15 ..................................... 20, 41, 117
- James 1:18 ........................................ 154

### PETER
- 1 Pet. 1:9 .......................................... 99
- 1 Pet. 1:12 ........................................ 25, 26, 28, 58
- 1 Pet. 1:17 ........................................ 138
- 1 Pet. 2:22 ........................................ 18, 117
- 1 Pet. 2:24 ........................................ 16
- 1 Pet. 3:19, 20 .................................... 95
- 1 Pet. 4:6 .......................................... 208
- 1 Pet. 5:14 ........................................ 54
- 2 Peter ........................................... 208
- 2 Pet. 1:7 .......................................... 54
- 2 Pet. 1:17 ........................................ 75
- 2 Pet. 2:1-10 ...................................... 87
- 2 Pet. 2:5 .......................................... 37

### 1 JOHN
- 1 John ............................................. 241
- 1 John 1 .......................................... 152, 197
- 1 John 1:1 ........................................ 34, 194
- 1 John 1:1, 2 ..................................... 125, 156, 227
- 1 John 1:1, 2 and 5:11, 12, 20 .................... 152
- 1 John 1:1, and 5:20 ............................. 194
- 1 John 1:1-3 ....................................... 156, 179
- 1 John 1:1-3, and 5:20 ......................... 156
- 1 John 1:1-3; 5:20; John 6:48, 53, 54; 17:2-3 ........ 227
- 1 John 1:1-4 ....................................... 63
- 1 John 1:2 .......................................... 37, 54, 75, 82, 150, 152, 153, 161, 162, 192, 222
- 1 John 1:2, and 5:20 ............................ 221
- 1 John 1:5 .......................................... 32
- 1 John 2 .......................................... 130
- 1 John 2:5 .......................................... 65
- 1 John 2:6 .......................................... 147
- 1 John 2:8 .......................................... 204, 210
- 1 John 2:13, 14 .................................. 241
- 1 John 2:18-29 ................................... 213
- 1 John 2:22, 23 ................................... 6
- 1 John 2:29; 3:1-3 ................................. 154
- 1 John 3:1 .......................................... 133, 139, 208
- 1 John 3:8 .......................................... 58, 161
- 1 John 3:9 .......................................... 153
- 1 John 3:24; 4:13 .................................. 149
- 1 John 3:5 .......................................... 18
- 1 John 3:5; cp. John 14:30 and 8:46 .............. 117
- 1 John 4 .......................................... 1, 4-32
- 1 John 4:1-3 ....................................... 87
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Page Numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 John 4:2, 3</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 4:7</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 4:8</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 4:9, 10</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 4:11</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 4:12</td>
<td>43, 65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 4:13</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 4:14</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 4:15</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 4:17</td>
<td>213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 5:1</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 5:10</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 5:11</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 5:20</td>
<td>82, 122, 124, 129, 130, 131, 153, 156, 161, 162, 167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 5:20</td>
<td>168, 176, 198-200, 202, 204, 207, 220, 221, 222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 John</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 John 9, 10</td>
<td>1, 86, 120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 John 10-11</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revelation</td>
<td>5, 252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revelation 1:4, 4:5</td>
<td>5, 252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revelation 3:14</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revelation 3:8</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revelation 5</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revelation 19:13</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revelation 22:18, 19</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Subject Index

**A Bible Commentary for Today** ........................................... 21
**A Brief Statement of F. E. R.’s Doctrines, and Their Effect** ..................................................................................................................... 199, 218
Acton ............................................................................................................................... 227
Adam ................................................................................................................................. 96
Allan, J. S. ......................................................................................................................... 78
Anderson, Robert ............................................................................................................ 13
*Anointed* ......................................................................................................................... 96
*Anstey, H. C.* ................................................................................................................ 126, 128, 134, 137, 139, 186, 211
*Anstey, H. C., Letter to Brethren on the Continent, p.* . 4 .................................. 5
*Anstey, H. C., letter to German brethren by* ............................................................ 126
Apollinarism .................................................................................................................... 100, 124, 211
Apollinarist Christ, death of, means no atonement .................................................. 106
Apollinarist Christ, death of, dissolves the incarnation .............................................. 106
Apollinarist Christ, means Deity learns ........................................................................ 105
Apollinarist Christ, means God suffered as Christ’s mind ......................................... 105
Apollinarist Christ, means God took a place lower than God .................................... 105
Apollinarist doctrine, formally announced by FER in 1895 .................................... 62
Apollinarian heterodoxy, prevails largely at present ............... 99
**Apollinarism** .................................................................................................................. 2, 5, 6, 18, 78, 81, 101
Apollinarism, deity enclosed in a body ........................................................................ 100
Apollinarism, exclusion of manhood from Christ’s Person ......................................... 2
Apollinarism, resurrection of Christ is an incarnation .................................................. 107
Apollinarism, some implications of ............................................................................. 105
Apollinarist of Antioch (the son) ................................................................................ 98
Apollinarus ....................................................................................................................... 25
apologists for F. E. R.’s evil doctrines ............................................................................ 220
Aris, A. P. ....................................................................................................................... 82
Ark of the Covenant ...................................................................................................... 6, 61
assimilated ...................................................................................................................... 130
assimilated to the believer ............................................................................................ 196
Athanasian creed.......................................................................................................... 45
covenant, atonement ...................................................................................................... 177
**Aware** ......................................................................................................................... 21
B., Dr. ................................................................................................................................ 219
B., H. G. ........................................................................................................................ 186
**B., H. G., Letter from a Brother in Canada, p.** . 4 ...................................................... 206
Babe in the manger, helpless? ......................................................................................... 5
Babe in the manger .......................................................................................................... 129, 136, 142, 143, 177
Babe in the manger ......................................................................................................... 5, 79, 194, 197, 199, 202, 205, 206
Babe in the manger ......................................................................................................... 217, 222, 225, 231, 232, 238, 249
Babe in the manger, F. E. Raven’s evil thought .......................................................... 220
Babe in the manger, F. E. Raven’s lie about ................................................................. 217, 249ff
Babe, infancy in its helplessness ..................................................................................... 252
Babe, lovingly.................................................................................................................. 88
Babe, F. E. Raven said “God was in the Babe” .............................................................. 223, 224, 231, 236
Babe, infancy of our blessed Lord .................................................................................. 234
Babe, wrapped in swaddling clothes lying in the manger ........................................... 199
baby ..................................................................................................................................... 200, 241, 242
babe, in Christ .................................................................................................................. 239, 240
babes ................................................................................................................................... 190, 240
babes and young men had not Eternal Life .................................................................... 195
baptism ................................................................................................................................ 10
Barker, W. ......................................................................................................................... 142, 205, 249, 250
Barnet conference, June, 1929 ...................................................................................... 45, 79
begotten is used in Psa. 2 ............................................................................................... 48
Bellett, J. G. ....................................................................................................................... 16, 180
Bethesda ......................................................................................................................... 217
Bexhill ............................................................................................................................... 206, 212, 224, 226, 227, 233, 234, 235
Bexhill ............................................................................................................................... 123, 126, 131, 181, 183, 184, 186
Bexhill action of June 1890 ............................................................................................ 89, 107
Bexhill, competency denigrated .................................................................................... 186, 206, 233
Bexhill, gathering numbered about 24 (7 brothers) ...................................................... 186
Bexhill, June 29, 1890 ..................................................................................................... 89
Bexhill refused the Greenwich assembly (FER’s assembly) on June 29, 1890 ........ 124
Boddy, G. ......................................................................................................................... 181, 183-185, 186, 187
bosom, a generated? ....................................................................................................... 47
bosom, in or into the Father’s bosom? .............................................................................. 47
bosom, of the Father ........................................................................................................ 47, 67
Brand, H. G. .................................................................................................................... 131, 141
Braunford, Oporto .......................................................................................................... 225
Brasili .................................................................................................................................. 225
Brixton .................................................................................................................................. 127
Brookhaus, C. .................................................................................................................. 128, 139
Brookly .................................................................................................................................. 225
Broomhead, Geo. .......................................................................................................... 181, 183, 185
Broomhead, Mr., of Greenwich .................................................................................... 45
Brown, C. H., *Jesus is Jehovah* .................................................................................. 36
Bruce, F. F., denies inerrancy of Scripture and denies .................................................. 21
Burton, A. H. ................................................................................................................... 141
Burton, A. H., *Reflections on the Park Street Notice* .............................................. 216
Burton, A. H., *Remarks, Sept. 1890* ............................................................................ 213
C., E. [Cross?] .................................................................................................................. 238
Calithorp, Dr. ................................................................................................................... 127
Chalcedonian creed ....................................................................................................... 100
Champney, H. D’Arcy .................................................................................................... 129, 130
Champney, H. D’Arcy, ludicrous claim ........................................................................ 187
Champney, H. D’Arcy, palliations of FER ..................................................................... 137
Chater [E. H.?] ................................................................................................................... 211, 227
Cheapside [London] ........................................................................................................ 125, 181
Chesterfield, Geo. ........................................................................................................... 183, 181, 182
Christ, a divine and human Person .............................................................................. 96
Christ, a real human body ............................................................................................... 83
Christ, access through .................................................................................................... 11
Christ, and self-conscious “I” or individuality ................................................................ 99
Christ, and Son of Man ................................................................................................. 96
Christ, Apollinarian, He dismissed Himself .................................................................. 106
Christ, Apollinarian, deity is His own spirit ................................................................... 103
Christ, as a Man, life came out in a moral way in ....................................................... 209, 211
Christ, as “the Apostle” ................................................................................................. 93
Christ, assimilated ........................................................................................................ 195, 196, 197
Christ being the eternal life ............................................................................................ 153
Christ, cross, death and resurrection .......................................................................... 10
Christ, death of, does not define or divide the Person .................................................. 19
Christ, death of, human soul and human spirit ............................................................ 97, 106
Christ, did not have the carnal nature .......................................................................... 41
Christ, divine and the human united in one sole Person .............................................. 98
Christ, essential personality and Being ........................................................................ 221
Christ, glorification ....................................................................................................... 10
Christ, God and man in one Person ............................................................................. 85, 97
Christ, He is corporeally the center of the presence and action of .............................. 25
Christ, He was not mortal ............................................................................................. 19
Christ, His divine personality is always maintained .................................................... 5
Christ, His humanity was not maintained .................................................................... 41
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clement of Alexandria</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarke, Adam</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cousins, Peter, the Harvester</td>
<td>Sept. or Oct., 1986, p. 18.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coates, C. A.</td>
<td>81, 107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coates, C. A., also denied that Christ had a human soul and spirit</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coates, C. A., did he reaffirm the eternal Sonship of Christ before death?</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton, D., Grave Facts</td>
<td>125, 126, 127, 181, 182, 185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton, D.</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council of Trent, Chapter 7</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cowell, A. J.</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creation</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creation, why the Word was the One who created</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross, Mr.</td>
<td>232, 238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross, abandonment on the</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross, addressing God during the darkness</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross, atoning sufferings, death, and blood-shedding comprise atonement</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croydon</td>
<td>219, 231, 232, 233, 235, 256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croydon Notice</td>
<td>219, 231, 236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cutting</td>
<td>203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deck, J. G.</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deity, alleged introduction into</td>
<td>221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deity, in the mysterious unity of, they are one</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delitzsch, Franz</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deuteronomy, the book that so strongly presses obedience</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divine Persons, characteristics of</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divine principle</td>
<td>230, 233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divine principles</td>
<td>229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divine Righteousness and Eternal Life</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIVINE PERSON</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>divine righteousness</td>
<td>132, 133, 139, 141, 157, 159, 160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>divine righteousness, did J. N. D. teach us?</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>divine righteousness, in us by sin being displaced by righteousness?</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>division is worse, his doctrine is shocking, but</td>
<td>231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>divisions have begun</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>doctic tendency</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donges, Emil</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dorchester</td>
<td>227</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dublin, 40, Westland Row</td>
<td>207, 210, 231, 234, 235, 237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dssolop, J.</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dwelling in God</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dwelling in God and in us</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d&quot;Odkolski, E.</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ealing</td>
<td>181-184, 205, 206, 225, 226, 227, 251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ealing, table spread at Shaftesbury Hall, Ealing, by</td>
<td>181-184, 205, 206, 225, 226, 227, 251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earle, Ralph, The Wesleyan Bible Commentary 4:27.</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earle, Ralph</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early things</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Finchley</td>
<td>226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ebury Street, Pimlico, London</td>
<td>181, 185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edmondson, J.</td>
<td>203, 207, 208, 209, 210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ekonose heauton (He emptied Himself)</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elberfeld</td>
<td>128, 186, 225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emptying</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ephesians, contrast between the two states</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>essence</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>essence, in</td>
<td>199, 209, 210, 226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>essence, something eternal, but not deity?</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>essential</td>
<td>221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eternal Life</td>
<td>192, 221, 224, 231, 239, 240, 242-244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eternal Life and Christ are really two distinct thoughts?</td>
<td>193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eternal Life, attack the Person of the Son as the</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eternal Life, Christ is the</td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eternal Life, describes generally the blessing in which</td>
<td>195, 198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eternal Life, integral part of the Person, says FER</td>
<td>145, 191, 193, 194, 195, 200, 201, 203, 222, 231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eternal Life, has been spoken of as this condition</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eternal Life, he is it</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eternal Life, in essence in the eternal Son</td>
<td>210, 211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eternal Life, in John's Gospel</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eternal Life, integral part of His Person</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eternal Life, integral part of my body, so eternal life is a part of Christ</td>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eternal Life, is Christ himself</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eternal Life, is Christ</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lie, see Babe in the manger in index</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lie, man or manhood</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lie, Raven, F. E., about truthfulness and honesty</td>
<td>214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lie, Raven, F. E., I absolutely accept the teachings of our deceased brother (JND)</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lie, Raven, F. E., I do not claim to have found new light</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lie, Raven, F. E., regarding what he had written about the Babe</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lie, shuffling, so painfully manifest amongst the promoters of these</td>
<td>214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lie, Taylor J., used words deceitfully</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lie, web of evil and deceit</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life and its manifestation in the Son of God</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life and responsibility</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life and righteousness</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life, separating life from relationship</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln</td>
<td>233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logos</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logos, becomes the?</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logos, His soul was united to</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logos, intelligible communication by the</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logos, preincarnate</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logos, “Becoming a man, He becomes Logos.”</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London (see Park Street)</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lord’s Supper, and our state</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lord’s supper</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lord’s supper, “The Service of God” is a Ravenite symbol</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lord’s Table, obligation of guarding the</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love, of the Father for you</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowe, W. J.</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowe, W. J.</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luke, gospel of</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lust</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MacArthur, J., denies eternal Sonship</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MacArthur, John</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MacArthur, John, attack on the Trinity</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MacArthur, John, Christ was not Son until His incarnation</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MacArthur, John, playing down the doctrinal importance</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mackintosh, C. H.</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malvern</td>
<td>214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man, eternal?</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manhood, new and heavenly</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manhood, new and heavenly Man</td>
<td>190, 191, 195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manhood, or humanity, any existence in</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manhood, Second Man, man, manhood, or humanity had no existence in fact before</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manhood, was ever in essence in the Eternal Son</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manhood, what gives character morally to the</td>
<td>209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manhood, what gives its character to His</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marks, J.</td>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marotta, Frank</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matthew’s gospel</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maynard, C. D., Dr.</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maynard, C. D.,  On Some Subversions of the Truth</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McCarthy, H. H.</td>
<td>197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McCarthy, H. H., charge against, of unrighteousness</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McCarthy, H. H., vindictiveness against faithful</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McCarthy, Major (H. H.)</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McCarthy, Major, Is the Snare Broken?</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McCarthy, Pinkerton, Humphrey, Lowe, the late Chas. Stanley, Maynard#2 meal-offering</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mediatorial service</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mediatory</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melchizedek</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Messiah</td>
<td>94, 96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metaphysical speculation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metaphysics in divine things</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miiri, Carl</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mine, J.</td>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed condition</td>
<td>159, 160, 171, 172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed condition down here</td>
<td>158, 159, 160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monogenesis, the use of in capture</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moral force</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moral state</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morphe (form); see Kenosis</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mortal, Christ’s humanity was not mortal</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Father is greater than I</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mystic folly</td>
<td>246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mysticism</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mysticism, worldliness and</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature and life</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature and relationship</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature and relationship</td>
<td>197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature, relationship and eternal life</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nestorius</td>
<td>94, 98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York Circular, Dec., 1890</td>
<td>184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New, and evil system</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New and wonderful truths</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New birth</td>
<td>189, 190, 199, 200, 203, 208, 209, 227, 228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New birth</td>
<td>133, 140, 147, 154, 180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New birth and quickening</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New birth, is not the sealing of the Spirit</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New character of teaching</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New creation</td>
<td>170, 191, 201, 204, 207, 208, 227, 245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New doctrine(s)</td>
<td>130, 131, 151, 154, 180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New light</td>
<td>194, 198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New light, heavenly light, lured on by</td>
<td>194, 198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New light, through grace received light on these subjects</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New light, ‘fresh light’ of Ravenism is, then, old darkness and</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New man</td>
<td>176, 200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New, nothing new or contrary to the truth</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New order</td>
<td>157, 166, 169, 170, 174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New order of blessing, he that hath a sphere, or a</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New order of blessing, eternal life is a sphere, or</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New order of things.</td>
<td>138, 140, 141, 150, 157, 170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New sphere</td>
<td>136, 141, 153, 161, 166, 173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New sphere and order of blessing</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New system</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New teaching</td>
<td>150, 155, 156, 157, 163, 168, 179, 180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New thoughts</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New truth, beautiful new truth they were getting in England</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newman, F. W., Phases of Faith</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newton, B. W.</td>
<td>98, 165, 168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No mission from God at all</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noel, N.</td>
<td>35, 45, 83, 105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes I saw had been corrected</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nottingham</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O., Mr.</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oliphant, J. S.</td>
<td>125-128, 131, 130, 133, 135, 136, 139, 140, 145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oliphant, J. S.,  Letter, Dated September, 1891</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oliphant, John S.</td>
<td>216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omnipotence, omniscience</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omniscient</td>
<td>21, 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On Righteousness</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Person, two natures</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only-begotten God, is a false reading</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only-begotten Son</td>
<td>43, 48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open Children</td>
<td>19, 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orchard Street, Bristol</td>
<td>218, 220</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Subject Index 265

Ord, A. C. .............................................. 4, 40, 79, 105
Ord, A. C. 127, 136, 142, 143, 197, 204, 214, 217, 220, 223, 236, 251
Ord, A. C., Collected Writings, pp. 130, 131 .................................. 211
Ord, A. C., Collected Writings of ................................................. 199
Ord, A. C., Collected Writings, p. 127 ............................................ 202, 207
Ord, A. C., Collected Writings, p. 128 ............................................ 203
Ord, A. C., Collected Writings, p. 114, note 22 ................................ 204
Ord, A. C., Collected Writings, “The Manifestation of the Divine ...” 220
Ord, A. C., Collected Writings, p. 113 ............................................ 203
Ord, A. C., Collected Writings, p. 98, note 3 ................................... 210
Ord, A. C., Collected Writings, pp. 87, 127 .................................... 197
Ord, A. C., Collected Writings, p. 98 ............................................ 201
Oughtibridge .............................................. 228
out-of-the-world heavenly condition 144, 162, 190, 191, 194, 203
Palmer, J. Spencer .............................................. 223
Park Street ............................................... 125
Park Street, London, declaration 216, 217, 231, 232, 233, 235, 236, 251
Person is displaced, indeed lost ...................................................... 170
Person of Christ .............................................. 156
Person, what was eternally true in the ........................................ 207
person, the word, in this system .................................................. 55
person, use of the word ......................................................... 55
personalities, distinct i.e., two Persons ................................ ....... 52
Personality, as Man is very evidently CHM’s belief ................................ 84
Personality, human, in the Person of Christ ................................... 101
Personalities, human personality of Christ not lost by death ............. 95
personality, Christ, no two distinct personalities ................................ 100
personality, Christ, not a dual-personality .................................... 96
personality, denying that He is personally man ................................ 96, 97
personality, Eternal Personality as Eternal Life ................................ 194
personality, His divine personality is always maintained .................. 252
personality, is connected with the “soul” in this world .................... 95
personality, no human? ................................................................ 95
personality, of Eternal Life ................................................... 198, 222
personality, of our Lord .......................................................... 229
personality, of the Eternal life .................................................... 227
personality, without that union there must have been two distinct personalities .............................................................................. 101
personally, man ........................................................................ 102
Persons, divine 2, 42, 55, 56 ......................................................... 102
Persons, divine, circle of affection .................................................. 50
Philadelphia ...................................................... 225
Pinkerton, B. F. 128, 129, 139, 165, 215 .............................................. 215
Pitcairn ......................................................... 232
pneuma ................................................................................. 208
Pollock, A. J. .................................................... 59, 82
Praising with Christ, corporately .................................................. 112
Psuche ........................................................... 208
purpose as connected with eternal life ............................................ 200
Quarrels ......................................................... 26
Quemperford ...................................................... 91
Quemperford ...................................................... 220
quickened, live before God after a new order ...................................... 209
quickening ........................................................................... 209, 210
R., Mr. .............................................................................. 207
Rachelines ......................................................... 208, 209
Raven, F. E. ........................................................................... 214
Raven, F. E., Letter of December 6th, 1889, printed by J. S. Oliphant. 167
Raven, F. E., 1895 when he formally issued The Person of the Christ .... 77
Raven, F. E., a mission from an evil spirit ........................................ 79
Raven, F. E., Apollinarian doctrine .................................................. 83
Raven, F. E., apologists for F. E. R.’s evil doctrines ......................... 220
Raven, F. E., assembly, own circle its decision is binding ................ 206
Raven, F. E., bewildering folly ..................................................... 174
Raven, F. E., Christ not the Eternal Life personally .......................... 179
Raven, F. E., charges a retrograde movement .................................... 203
Raven, F. E., core of system ....................................................... 124
Raven, F. E., death destroys the Christ of Ravenism ....................... 96
Raven, F. E., denied the eternal Sonship ......................................... 78
Raven, F. E., denied that the Son was Eternally the Word ................. 78
Raven, F. E., denied the Son was eternally the Word ....................... 35
Raven, F. E., denied that Christ had a human soul and spirit .......... 78
Raven, F. E., denied the eternal relationships ................................. 78
Raven, F. E., denied that the Eternal Sonship .................................. 45
Raven, F. E., denied that the Son was essentially the Eternal Life 77, 210
Raven, F. E., denied that Christ had a human soul and spirit 100, 103
Raven, F. E., denied divine attributes to the Second Man .............. 124
Raven, F. E., denigrated the Bexhill assembly .................................. 186
Raven, F. E., doctrine, deep spiritual subtlety in it ............................ 221
Raven, F. E., doctrine, denial of “the Eternal life” ......................... 222
Raven, F. E., doctrine, deification of Eternal Life on the one hand .... 206
Raven, F. E., doctrine, degrades and dishonors our Lord .......... 215
Raven, F. E., Eternal Life is not Christ personally ....................... 161
Raven, F. E., Eternal Life, an integral part of the eternal Son 145, 191, 193, 194, 195, 200, 201, 203, 222, 231
Raven, F. E., eternal life, Son is much greater than97, 199, 207, 210, 222
Raven, F. E., eternal life only connected with manhood .............. 203, 204
Raven, F. E., eternal life of the Son before incarnation is profanity 208
Raven, F. E., evasion and prevarication ......................................... 204, 217
Raven, F. E., evil of his whole system ......................................... 173
Raven, F. E., fancy a helpless Babe ............................................. 250
Raven, F. E., folly and unreality .................................................. 176
Raven, F. E., for him the Son of Man is an “it,” .......................... 99
Raven, F. E., has fallen into Satan’s trap ......................................... 99
Raven, F. E., he does not “bring the doctrine” of Christ ............... 98
Raven, F. E., he divided the Person ............................................. 124
Raven, F. E., held that Christ’s humanity was a “condition” ............ 100
Raven, F. E., Heterodox on the Person of the Christ by William Kelly .. 98
Raven, F. E., his paper, Eternal Life ............................................ 106
Raven, F. E., his doctrine is shocking, but division is worse .......... 231
Raven, F. E., humanity-in-essence, preexistence of, is the keystone 211
Raven, F. E., I have never wished any letters of mine to be kept secret, 199
Raven, F. E., I had long been dissatisfied with .............................. 204
Raven, F. E., I was not a distinguished teacher ............................. 204
Raven, F. E., I absolutely accept the teachings of our deceased brother (JND) ......................................................... 198
Raven, F. E., I admit eternal life to be a state .................................. 142
Raven, F. E., I must be judged according to what I have written .... 124
Raven, F. E., induce him to retract ............................................. 232
Raven, F. E., introduced mystical worship of his False God .......... 109
Raven, F. E., invents “The Service of God” .................................. 109
Raven, F. E., kenosis, a Ravenistic ............................................. 62
Raven, F. E., lie, I absolutely accept the teachings of our deceased brother (JND) ......................................................... 198
Raven, F. E., lie, I do not claim to have found new light ................. 198
Raven, F. E., on the road to light .................................................. 205
Raven, F. E., lie regarding what he had written about the Babe .... 249
Raven, F. E., lie, man or manhood .............................................. 211
Raven, F. E., lying ...................................................... 136
Raven, F. E., meaning by “Person” the deity only ......................... 101
Raven, F. E., mystical mind ....................................................... 123
Raven, F. E., new and heavenly Man .......................................... 190, 191, 196
Raven, F. E., new sphere of blessedness his object ....................... 161
Raven, F. E., paragraph is omitted ............................................. 170
Raven, F. E., plain heterodoxy ................................................... 98, 105
Raven, F. E., preexistence of humanity in essence is the keystone 211
Raven, F. E., resurrection then amounted to another incarnation .... 106
Raven, F. E., revised notes ....................................................... 129
Raven, F. E., risen glorious Man He is the Eternal Life ................. 197
Raven, F. E., root evil of all his error and fancy ............................ 174
Raven, F. E., “second Man, though ever such in His own Person” .... 204
Raven, F. E., sheltering himself .................................................. 171
Raven, F. E., shiftiness of ....................................................... 131
Raven, F. E., Son of Man, for F. E. Raven, is an “it,” ................. 88
Raven, F. E., system of ecclesiastical tyranny ................................................................. 234
Raven, F. E., teaching systematized .................................................. 92
Raven, F. E., teaches two lives for Christ ................................................................. 215
Raven, F. E., The Person of the Christ by .................................................. 83
Raven, F. E., the spirit abroad is fanaticism .................................................. 208
Raven, F. E., the Son of God is more than eternal life ............................................. 156
Raven, F. E., they have no true Christ at all .................................................. 86
Raven, F. E., thou, FER, thoughtest that I was altogether such a one as thou ...... 56
Raven, F. E., too much is at stake to allow of drawing back ......................... 232
Raven, F. E., tract, Eternal Life ........................................................................... 224
Raven, F. E., virulence and persistency of the attacks made on me .......... 205
Raven, F. E., want of truthfulness and honesty ..................................................... 214
Raven, F. E., what death of Christ means .................................................. 95
Raven, F. E., where did that opposing and evil spirit go when FER died? ... 59
Raven, F. E., Witney meeting, I was a learner rather than a teacher ............... 203
Raven, F. E., yes, FER did deny human personality in the Person of Christ ........ 101
Raven, F. E., separates the true Godhead from the manhood ......................... 5
Raven system, fresh light of Ravenism is, then, old darkness and ................. 32
Ravenism, Christianity is gone ................................................................. 6
Ravenenonis the Person ................................................................................. 3
Ravenite hymn-book .................................................................................. 36
Ravenite kenosis .................................................................................. 62, 106
Ravenite system .................................................................................. 25, 31
Ravenite system of the Godhead is a Ravenite kenosis ................................. 62
Redland .................................................................................. 154, 165, 167
relationship and being .............................................................................. 144, 162, 190, 191, 194, 198, 199, 200, 202, 203
relationship and being in which it was and is ........................................... 162
relationship and nature .................................................................................. 51
responsibility .................................................................................. 143, 173
responsibility, Christian ................................................................... 143
responsibility, person, is in the I .................................................................. 99
resurrection .................................................................................. 149
Reynolds, T. H. .................................................................................. 127, 129, 240
rhema .......................................................................................... 36, 37
righteousness .................................................................................. 155, 157
righteousness, God’s .............................................................................. 138, 160, 165, 173, 174, 180, 191, 201, 204, 227
righteousness is intimately connected with life .............................................. 191
righteousness of God .............................................................................. 125, 126, 214, 215, 222, 226, 227
righteousness, relationship and life ................................................................ 137
Rhogert, G., in her New Age Bible Versions ...................................................... 38
Roach, A. .......................................................................................... 80
Rochester, NY ...................................................................................... 78, 79
Rudling, Mr. of Ealing .................................................................................. 136
Rudling. .......................................................................................... 250
S., D. J., Columbus Ohio .............................................................................. 83
salvation ........................................................................................ 11
sanctified, used in John 10:36 ........................................................................ 57
Scammell, A. E. ................................................................................ 223
Scammell, G. R. ................................................................................ 223
school or system of progress ........................................................................... 239
scrutability .......................................................................................... 93
eceder .......................................................................................... 128, 233
Second Man .............................................................................. 87, 88, 124, 200, 202, 203, 204, 206, 207, 209, 211
Second Man, brought into manhood .................................................................. 206
Second Man, Christ as man, apart and distinct from what He is as divine?21
Second Man, does not possess omnipotence .................................................. 88
Second Man, F. E. Raven denied divine attributes to the ......................... 124
Second Man, humanity, making in some shape ...... form exist before the incarnation ................................................................. 211
Second Man, is a divine Person ........................................................................ 89
Second Man, man, manhood, or humanity had no existence in fact before ......................... 211
Second Man, manhood was ever in essence in the Eternal Son ........... 210
Second Man, see manhood in index .............................................................. 110
Second Man, divine attributes ........................................................................ 87, 88
self-occupation, school or system of progress ........................................... 239
self-occupation, and self-satisfaction too .................................................. 244
sent, Father sent the Son .............................................................................. 55, 57
sent, from the Father .................................................................................. 57
sent, if it implies inferiority of the sent One, then the use of “I” ...................... 55
sent, is not greater than he who has sent him ........................................... 29
sent, Spirit, being the Spirit before being sent destroys the evil system ...... 27
sent, Spirit, remained in the form of God, yet was sent ............................................. 26
sent, though sent, He is always in heaven ........................................... 52
sent, when was the Son sent? ........................................................................... 57
Sheffield .................................................................................. 228
Shekinah .......................................................................................... 68
Shekinah, and the cloud of incense .................................................. 33
shuffling, so painfully manifest amongst the promoters of these (211), 214
Sibthorpe, Henry, of Redruth, Cornwall ...................................................... 80
Simeon .......................................................................................... 88
Snell, H. H. ...................................................................................... 45
Son and Son of God, alleged distinction between ........................................... 45
Son, as man, has taken humanity up into the glory of God ....................... 39
Son, beholding His glory .................................................................................. 43
Son, came out from the Father ........................................................................ 51
Son, can do nothing of Himself ...................................................................... 53, 56
Son, does whatever He sees the Father does ........................................... 53
Son, does whatever the Father does .................................................. 53
Son, eternal, took manhood into His Person ................................................... 2
Son, given to have life in Himself ................................................................ 88
Son, glorification, basis for .............................................................................. 71
Son, glorification, character of, involves the eternal Sonship .......... 74
Son, in personal union with flesh as Jesus .................................................. 84
Son, is God as Son ...................................................................................... 53
Son of God and eternal life are made strictly equivalent ...................... 165
Son of God, “called,” not “became” .......................................................... 41
Son of Man ...................................................................................... 96
Son of Man, for F. E. Raven, is an “it,” .......................................................... 88
Son of Man, on earth is positively identified as an omnipresent .......... 88
Son, the .............................................................................................. 8
Son, took humanity into His Person .............................................................. 3, 19
Son, took the place of receiving all from the Father ...................................... 61
Son was essentially in His Person the Eternal Life ........................................... 124
Sonship, eternal, I lose all that the Son is, if He is only so as incarnate ......... 44
Sonship, in the Godhead ................................................................. 40
Sonship, notion of only temporal is destructive and abhorrent ............... 52
Sonship, notion of Sonship only when incarnate so destructive .......... 51
Southampton .................................................................................. 227
sphere ...................................................................................... 143, 147, 150, 151, 163, 165, 166, 167, 170, 203, 244
sphere, and order of blessing ........................................................................ 221
sphere, Christ is not “a sphere” ......................................................................... 150
sphere, eternal life was stated to be a .......................................................... 131
sphere, He that hath a sphere, or a new order of blessing ....................... 166
sphere of eternal life .............................................................................. 145
spheres, see eternal life in index .................................................................. 215
Spirit, activities before He was Sent .......................................................... 29
Spirit, allegedly taking an “attitude” .......................................................... 26
Spirit, allegedly took a place “patterned” after the place Christ took .......... 55
Spirit, allegedly “condescended” to be sent ................................................. 26, 28
Spirit, being the Spirit before being sent destroys the evil system .......... 27
Spirit, Christians have indwelling .............................................................. 12
Spirit, eternal ...................................................................................... 25, 31
Spirit, has the, taken a mediatorial place? ................................................... 29
Spirit, He reveals in communion, according to the power of truth .......... 11
Spirit, is He eternally in a subject place? ...................................................... 30
Spirit, James Taylor, Sr.’s invention of a new form for ......................... 28
Spirit, likewise was sent from heaven ...................................................... 58
Spirit, named as the Holy Spirit by the angel before the incarnation .......... 42
Spirit, operations in worship ................................................................. 114
Spirit, place taken .................................................................................. 27
Spirit, procession of the .............................................................................. 49
Spirit, remained in the form of God, yet was sent .......................................... 26