

THE  
Sole Exclusive Divinity  
OF  
**JESUS CHRIST,**  
Proved

FROM HIS APPELLATION OF

SAVIOUR,  
IN A  
**SERMON,**

PREACHED  
IN THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST. JOHN'S,

*Manchester*

*On Christmas Day, 1808.*

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BY THE

*Rev. J. Clowes, M. A.*

Rector of the said Church.

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SECOND EDITION.

*Manchester :*

PRINTED BY NANFAN AND DAVIS.

1810.



1923

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## SERMON.

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St. Luke, chap. ii. ver. 11.

*Unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a SAVIOUR, which is CHRIST THE LORD.*

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THESE words are a part of that blessed annunciation of the GREAT REDEEMER, delivered by the angel to the shepherds, which we have just now heard read in one of the lessons appointed for this morning's service.

They contain a remarkable description of the *character* of that Holy Person whom they announce, which character is expressed by the emphatical appellation of SAVIOUR,—*Unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a SAVIOUR.*

It is to the instructive interpretation and most *interesting signification* of this name of SAVIOUR, as applied to that Holy Person whose nativity we this day commemorate, that I wish to engage your present attention, as a suitable means of leading you into such reflections as may be most proper and edifying for the solemnity of the present occasion.

It is a circumstance of striking notoriety in the present period of the Christian Dispensation, and

which deservedly excites serious alarm in well-disposed minds, that the character of the CHRISTIAN REDEEMER 'is become, amongst us, a subject of much *doubt*, which, in many instances, has led even to the *denial* of his Divinity.

The fact is too notorious to require any labour in the way of proof; for it is well known that both from the pulpit and the press, doctrines have been taught and circulated in the most public manner, and this by men distinguished both for their talents and their learning, utterly subversive of that article of Christian Faith which, in former times, hath been most generally believed, and supposed to be indisputable, in favour of the GODHEAD of that Holy Person who was on this day born amongst us.

I shall not waste your present time in enquiring into the *causes* of such *doubts* and *denials*. Sometimes men are fond of *novelty*, especially in the way of opinion, and are never so happy as in pulling down old, and building up new systems of Faith and Doctrine. Sometimes too, in their enquiries after truth, they do not, proceed, perhaps, with that coolness of dispassionate judgment and careful investigation which are necessary for the discovery of so precious a treasure: in the impetuosity of their quest, they make hasty conclusions; and overlook what they were seeking, through their *over hurry* to find it. Nor does it always happen that men of the most celebrated talents, whether natural or acquired, are the best qualified to discover holy truth; for we know, from the highest authority, that something more than *natural* talents is necessary for this purpose, and that the things of God, therefore, (to use the language of the



Redeemer) are hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes, Matt. xi. 25. Whence we may conclude, that men, the most distinguished for their learning and ingenuity, may possibly be the last to discover the truth, and that for this reason, because they may have too much of their own *self-derived wisdom and prudence*, and too little of that *spirit of babes*, to which alone the things of GOD can be safely revealed.

But be this as it may—one thing is certain, that a spirit of *doubt* has, of late, been very generally excited in Christian Countries respecting the Divinity of the CHRISTIAN REDEEMER, and that this *doubt*, in numberless cases, has proceeded even to *denial*. Possibly, beloved, this spirit may have begun to infect some of your minds. Possibly your faith may not be so firmly fixed as it ought to be respecting the divine nature, character and operation of that HOLY ONE whose nativity you are met this day to celebrate. If so, whilst I wish to suggest to you, that in all *doubt* there is more or less of *danger*, because *doubt* and *denial* are not far asunder, so I wish also to endeavour to dissipate your *doubt*, and thereby, as far as possible, deliver you from *danger*, by presenting to you what appears to me a conclusive and incontrovertible argument in favour of the eternal and exclusive Divinity of your REDEEMER, the LORD GOD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST.

In pursuing this argument, I might call to your recollection what you have just now heard read from the Prophet concerning the INCARNATE GOD, where it is written, that *His name shall be called WONDERFUL, COUNSELLOR, the MIGHTY GOD,*

*the EVERLASTING FATHER, the PRINCE OF PEACE*, Isaiah ix. 6. And also what he testifieth concerning himself, that *HE and the FATHER are one*, John x. 30. And that *Whosoever seeth Him seeth the Father*, John xii. 45. chap. xiv. 9. with innumerable other declarations of a like convincing import : but at present I shall confine myself to the testimony contained in the ever memorable words of the angel in my text, "*Unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a SAVIOUR.*"

But methinks I hear you ask, What proof can these words contain of CHRIST'S Divinity? We have read them, and heard them read, over and over, and yet should never have conceived that any demonstration of such a sort was involved in them.

I would observe in reply, that what you say may possibly be true ; and you may also have read and heard many other words in your Bibles, and yet have overlooked much of their divine instruction ; but this only proves, that it is possible to read and hear the Sacred Scriptures, and yet not at all times discover the hidden wisdom which they contain.

For consider ; that Holy Person who was as on this day born of the Virgin Mary, is here called by the angel, a SAVIOUR. But let me ask, can any one be a SAVIOUR who is not God? Reflect, I entreat you, with yourselves, on this interesting question, which, perhaps, you have never heretofore attended to as you ought. Is not, I repeat it, the name of SAVIOUR, as here manifestly applied to JESUS CHRIST, a full and convincing proof as

can possibly be given, that he is the GREAT AND ONLY TRUE GOD?

Do you still doubt? and cannot you still see into the clearness and certainty of this proof? Let me then refer you to the book of the Prophet Isaiah, chap. xliii. 3. where you will find these words, "I *am* JEHOVAH THY GOD, *the* HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL, thy SAVIOUR;" and in the 11th. verse, "I, *even* I, *am* JEHOVAH, and *beside* ME *there is* no SAVIOUR;" and again, chap. xlv. 21. "There *is* no GOD *else* *beside* ME; a just GOD and a SAVIOUR; *there is* none *beside* ME." And again, chap. lx. 16. "Thou shalt know that I, JEHOVAH, *am* thy SAVIOUR and thy REDEEMER, *the* HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL." And in the Prophet Hosea it is expressed with equal decision, "I *am* JEHOVAH\* THY GOD *from* the land of Egypt, and thou shalt know no GOD but ME, for *there is* no SAVIOUR *beside* ME," chap. xliii. 4.

What think you now, and what must every reasonable man think, of these testimonies from the WORD OF GOD? It is here asserted expressly by JEHOVAH HIMSELF, the ETERNAL GOD who made the world, that he is the SAVIOUR; and (observe) further, that *there is* no SAVIOUR *besides* him: and yet in the same infallible Word of GOD it is asserted as expressly, over and over again, that JESUS CHRIST *is* the SAVIOUR, and that he it is who shall save his people from their sins, Matt. i.

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\* It may here be proper to remark, for the information of the unlearned reader, that in our English translation of the Bible, the original term JEHOVAH is constantly rendered LORD, whereas it ought to have been rendered JEHOVAH, as in the passages here quoted.

21. Acts iv. 12. How now are these testimonies to be reconciled, unless JESUS CHRIST be also JEHOVAH? JEHOVAH says of himself, "*There is no SAVIOUR beside ME,*"—of JESUS CHRIST it is said, "*He is the SAVIOUR of the World,*" John iv. 42. Either then JESUS CHRIST must be JEHOVAH GOD, or it is plain there must be a SAVIOUR besides JEHOVAH, which is contrary to his repeated and most positive declaration.

But leaving this difficulty to be solved by those who still *doubt*, I shall beg leave to suggest another consideration of no less importance than the above, towards deciding on the interesting question before us.

The term SAVIOUR, as applied to JESUS CHRIST in the Sacred Scriptures, manifestly implies that the work of SALVATION was wrought by him; for to call him a SAVIOUR, and yet not to ascribe to him the *operation* of a SAVIOUR, which is SALVATION, is to give him a mere name without that office which the name involves.

But who now, let me ask, can possibly work the work of SALVATION except GOD himself?

I put the question to such amongst you, beloved, as have yet any doubt concerning the Divinity of your redeeming and saving LORD, because, perhaps, you have never yet considered as you ought, what the term SAVIOUR implies, or what the work of SALVATION is.

For your own sake then, and for your SALVATION's sake, let me counsel you *now* to reflect



seriously and deliberately on these momentous terms, SAVIOUR and SALVATION, and I am persuaded you will want no further argument to convince you of your REDEEMER'S Divinity, provided you are not unwilling to be convinced.

You yourselves allow that that HOLY ONE, who was born in the world as on this day, was and is the SAVIOUR, and that he worked and does work SALVATION. But do you know, or have you considered what SALVATION is? Do you know that SALVATION must needs be a *divine* work, because it implies the *saving of souls*? For from what, let me ask, are souls to be saved, but from *sin*, and from *hell*, and from *death*? And who can save from these direful enemies until he hath first conquered and subdued them? And who can conquer and subdue sin, and hell, and death, but the OMNIPOTENT GOD ALONE?

But further—SALVATION, of necessity, implies *Reformation* and *Regeneration*, for it is not possible (as the Sacred Scriptures continually testify), that man can be saved, unless he be first *reformed* and *regenerated*. Of consequence, he who is the SAVIOUR of men, must needs be also their previous REFORMER and REGENERATOR, in order, finally, to become their SAVIOUR.

But do you know, or have you ever seriously considered, what *Reformation* and *Regeneration* are? Do you know that these terms imply the *making man anew*, or, in other words, the forming him into a *new creature*? And who, let me ask, can do this but GOD alone? Who, but GOD alone, could *first* create man? And if the *first* creation

manifestly supposes the DIVINITY of the CREATOR, why not the *second*? If none but GOD could *make* the world, how can any but GOD *re-make* it?

And yet, how plain is it from the testimony of the Sacred Scriptures, that JESUS CHRIST, as being the SAVIOUR of man, is also his RE-FORMER and REGENERATOR! For is it not written of HIM, that *As many as believed on Him, to them gave HE power to become the SONS OF GOD, which were born (observe) not of bloods, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, BUT OF GOD?* John i. 12. 13.

How can words speak plainer than these do, that man's new birth is immediately from JESUS CHRIST? That it is JESUS CHRIST alone who gives power to men to become the SONS OF GOD? How then, can words speak plainer than these do, that JESUS CHRIST is GOD, for who, but GOD, can give *power to become the sons of God?*

I might here proceed to show further, how SALVATION implies both *Omnipotence, Omniscience, and Omnipresence*, on the part of the SAVIOUR, inasmuch as it is altogether impossible that the SAVIOUR can work SALVATION, unless he be at the same time *omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent*. For without *all power*, how, as was just now observed, could he subdue sin, and hell, and death? And without *all knowledge* and *omnipresence*, how could he possibly provide for and effect the reformation and regeneration of each individual human mind? And who cannot see, that *omni-*

*potence, omniscience, and omnipresence* are **DIVINE ATTRIBUTES**, and can belong only to the **ONE ETERNAL GOD?**

But I trust that what has been already said will be sufficient to remove every doubt, and to convince you of a certainty, that **JESUS CHRIST**, as being **THE SAVIOUR**, must, of necessity, be the **ONLY ETERNAL** and **ALMIGHTY GOD**.

I cannot, however, conclude this discourse, without adverting to an objection to the doctrine contained in it, urged by those who are unwilling to admit the Supreme Divinity of **JESUS CHRIST**, and who, therefore, contend, that though he was called a **SAVIOUR**, and was a **SAVIOUR**, yet he was only a *delegated* or *instrumental* **SAVIOUR**, whilst the **ETERNAL FATHER**, or **JEHOVAH**, was the *delegating* and *principal* **SAVIOUR**: and this idea, they further urge, is strongly supported by what **JESUS CHRIST** testifies, in the days of his flesh, concerning himself, where he says, that *He was sent of his Father*, that *He came to do the will of his Father*, and that *His Father is greater than him*; and also when *He prays to his Father*. But surely all such objectors forget, that when **JESUS CHRIST** thus speaks of his inferiority to his Father, he speaks respecting his *human nature*, whilst it was in its progress towards a complete union with his **DIVINE NATURE**, that is to say, with his **INDWELLING FATHER**; but when this union was completed, so that the *human nature* became receptive, as St. Paul expresseth it, of *All the fullness of the Godhead bodily*, (see Coloss. ii. 9.) then no idea of inferiority or separation is any longer suggested, but on the contrary, it is urged by that **INCARNATE**

GOD himself, with all the force of divine language and authority, "I and my FATHER are One, John x. 30. He that hath seen ME, hath seen the FATHER, John xiv. 9. He that believeth on ME, believeth not on ME, but on him that sent ME, John xii. 44, 45. All power is given unto ME in heaven and in earth, Matt. xviii. 18. Believe ME that I am in the FATHER, and the FATHER in ME, John xiv. 11. As the FATHER hath life in himself, so hath he given to the SON to have life in himself, John v. 26. I am ALPHA and OMEGA, the BEGINNING and the ENDING, saith the LORD, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the ALMIGHTY, Rev. i. 8." Accordingly on this glorious occasion, one of his Apostles exclaims, at seeing him after his resurrection, My LORD and my GOD, John xx. 28. And another testifies concerning him, This is the TRUE GOD, and eternal life, 1st. John v. 20. And another, To the ONLY WISE GOD OUR SAVIOUR, be glory. and majesty, and dominion, and power, both now and ever, AMEN, Jude xxv. 5. And all the hosts of heaven, in like manner, prostrate themselves in adoration of this redeeming Saviour, Saying with a loud voice, worthy is the LAMB that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing, Rev. v. 12.

To conclude. To the certainties and the comforts then of the above faith, I sincerely recommend you, hoping and earnestly praying that you may henceforth hold it fast without wavering.

Nevertheless, in this hope and prayer it is my duty to suggest to you the means, which can alone prevent the return of doubt, and preserve you stable

in that divine truth and confidence to which you are called.

These means are, to look and labour earnestly for that Salvation which JESUS CHRIST came to accomplish in you, and for this purpose to watch over and cherish in your own minds and lives the progress of this work, in its gradual removal of all the powers of sin and error, working in the spirit of pride, covetousness, impatience, malice, hatred, contempt of others, and similar evils, until you attain to the full introduction and establishment of all the heavenly graces and virtues of humility, contentment, patience, charity, forbearance, well-doing, and every other evangelical excellence, which has a tendency to conjoin you with GOD, and GOD with you.

But since you cannot effect all this of yourselves without a divine power, and since there is no divine power but from JESUS CHRIST, it is further necessary that you apply immediately to this ONLY TRUE GOD, to receive from him that *new life* which he came to give you, which is the blessed life of faith and love, of truth and confidence, void of doubt, because uncontaminated by the defilements of sin.

To this *manifested Incarnate GOD* then let me direct you to approach in the spirit of a true repentance and conversion, and I will venture to promise you, because he hath promised it, that in the degree of purification and regeneration, to which, in such case, you will have the unspeakable happiness to attain, you will be gifted with that principle of a divine faith, which, casting out all uncertainty of

unstable opinion, will enable you to behold in **JESUS CHRIST** *all the fullness of the Godhead bodily*, and to join in that affecting confession of the Prophet, *Lo! this is our GOD; we have waited for him, and he will save us; this is the LORD, we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his Salvation*, Isaiah xxv. 9. **AMEN.**



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NANFAN AND DAVIS, PRINTERS.  
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