

DOCTRINE OF THE LORD
IN THE
Primitive Christian Church

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P R E F A C E .

THE substance of this little work was prepared and read as a Paper containing a reply to the question, "Did the Apostolic or Primitive Christian Church believe in the Divine Humanity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ?" At the request of those who heard the Paper read, it has been rewritten and enlarged, to some extent, and is now published, with the hope that it may prove useful in making known the faith of the early Church, on the great doctrine which lies at the foundation of the Christian religion.

Much more evidence might be adduced of the same character, from the works of the Anti-Nicene Fathers. : Some of them have left their views very fully and clearly expressed. It is designed, however, in this little work, to give only a brief digest of the writings of the Fathers on the Doctrine of the Lord. Their writings are now quite acces-

sible to those who desire to know more of their views.

Probably no theme occupied more of the thought of the early Christians than the one treated of in this work. It was a subject of almost constant discussion in the first centuries of the Christian Church. We find allusions to this doctrine scattered along the pages of all the eminent writers in the first centuries of the Christian era. The Council of Nice, the first Œcumenical Council of the Church, was assembled to consider this doctrine.

It is a matter of much interest, then, to know the views of the early Christians on this great doctrine of the Church. That they believed and taught the doctrine of the Divinity and the Humanity of our Lord, is beyond question. Did they believe that the Human, after the ascension, was also Divine? We have no doubt that the orthodox portion of the Church, the great body of the Anti-Nicene Church, both believed and taught this doctrine. This reconciles all difficulties respecting the Trinity. It shows a similar Trinity in God that there is in man,—a Trinity in Unity, and consistent with Divine Unity.



In the preparation of this little book, the following works have been consulted among others, viz.: Lamson's "Church of the First Three Centuries," Eusebius, Bunsen's "Hippolytus," Neander, Stanley's "Eastern Church," and Dr. Dorner's able work on the "Person of Christ." To these, especially the latter, the author acknowledges his indebtedness. Several of the quotations have been taken from Dr. Dorner's work. Where the exact language of the Anti-Nicene Fathers is used, quotation-marks have been placed around the extracts; where the exact language has not been quoted, but the substance of the original,—the same idea, though not always the same expressions,—the quotation-marks have been omitted.

The writer has endeavored to be faithful, and not make any statement of the doctrine of any one of the Fathers, beyond what can be fully substantiated by reference to his writings.

BATH, ME., May 30, 1870.



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THE doctrine concerning the Lord Jesus Christ is the central doctrine of Christianity. This is the fundamental doctrine of the Christian Church.

Ever since the Christian Church was established, this doctrine has often been brought into discussion. The Lord Himself once asked the disciples, "What think ye of Christ?" And this is a most important question; and a history of the views of the Christian Church, concerning the nature and character of Jesus Christ, is a history of the answer of the Church to this question of the Lord.

The Sacred Scriptures are full of evidence that there is only one God. He is indeed called by various names; but the absolute unity of the One only object of worship is so plainly stated in the Bible, that he who runs may read it. "Hear, O Israel," says the Prophet, "the Lord thy God is One Lord." These words were addressed to all Israel; and similar declarations are many times

repeated in the different Prophets of the Old Testament. Thus in Isaiah: "I am the Lord, and there is none else." Again: "There is no God else beside Me; a just God and a Saviour, there is none beside Me. Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else."

In Divine Prophecy it is foretold that there should be born into this world One, to be called by the same names, and consequently to be possessed of the same attributes, as the One God. And it is declared that "His government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." Again, in the same Prophet: "And it shall be said in that day, Lo this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us. This is Jehovah [in the original]; we have waited for Him; we will be glad, and rejoice in His salvation."

Now, no one doubts that these are prophecies concerning Jesus Christ and His coming into the world. He is the Prince of Peace, at whose birth into our world the angels sang the anthem, "Glory to God in the Highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men." And this same Prince of Peace is called *the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father*.

When Jesus Christ was in the world He said similar things of Himself. He declared that He came forth from the Father; manifested, or brought



forth, the Father to view ; the Father was in Him, and He and the Father are one. On another occasion, He said to Thomas, "If ye had known Me, ye should have known My Father also : and from henceforth ye know Him, and *have seen Him.*" And when Philip was yet uncertain whether he understood the Lord's language, and asked for a more explicit statement, "Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? *He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father.*" Thus He declares to Philip that He was the Father brought forth to view ; that in seeing Him, men see all that can be seen of the Everlasting Father ; that He was God manifest in the flesh, the Divine revealed in Humanity, the Father in the Son.

Thus putting together what is said in the Old and New Testaments, we are brought to the inevitable conclusion that there is only One God, and that the Lord Jesus Christ is that One God. If we accept the declarations in the Gospels and Apocalypse, we cannot fail to see that they point to the great truth of the Supreme Divinity of Jesus Christ.

Call to mind what the Lord says : "I am the light of the world ; He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. Come unto Me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, I will give you rest. If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink. He that believeth in Me, hath

everlasting life. I am the Living Bread, which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever."

Who can say such things of himself, if he be any other, or any less, than God? Who else but God is the light of the world? Who can give rest to the weary and heavy laden? Who else can give everlasting life to men? None but God can fulfil such promises as these.

The book of the Apocalypse is a wonderful book. So sublime is it in its imagery and descriptions, and yet so little understood, that some have doubted whether it is a book of the Holy Word. It opens with the words, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ"; and, in the first chapter, is one of the most wonderful descriptions of the Lord Jesus Christ to be found in the whole Word. This glorious Being, who reveals Himself to the beloved disciple, declares that He is the first and the last, and has the keys of hell and of death. Can any one be before the first, or beyond the last? But, in the Old Testament, Jehovah uses the same terms to describe His majesty and supreme divinity. In Isaiah: "Hearken unto Me, O Jacob and Israel, My called, I am the first, I also am the last." Now, who can this be who calls himself the first and the last, in the Apocalypse, but the same One who takes the same title in Isaiah? He says He holds the keys of hell and of death. Who can open hell, and to whom shall men go to escape eternal death, but

to God? The Psalmist expressly says, "He that is our God is the God of Salvation, and unto God the Lord belong the issues from death." But here, in the Apocalypse, Jesus Christ claims to Himself the same power; it follows, therefore, that He is the God of Salvation.

The apostle John says, he was in the spirit when he saw the wonderful things which are recorded in the Apocalypse. *To be in the spirit*, is to have his spiritual eyes opened, so that he could look into the spiritual world, and see what was transpiring there. And he did see what took place there. He saw whom the angels acknowledge; whom they adore and worship in Heaven; namely, the Lord Jesus Christ. Afterwards the apostle sees the Lord again seated on a throne, the hosts of heaven bowing in adoration before Him, and with glad voices ascribing dominion, and power, and glory to Him. Indeed throughout the book of the Apocalypse we find constant evidence that the Lord Jesus Christ is acknowledged, known, and worshipped as the only God in heaven.

When we become acquainted with the doctrines and views of those called the Fathers, that is, the eminent Christian writers who lived before the Council of Nice, we shall find evidence that they generally acknowledged and believed in the Scriptural doctrine of the Supreme Divinity of Jesus Christ. This is a doctrine known in the Church, from the very days of the apostles. One of the

apostles declares that "in Jesus Christ dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily"; and this great truth is embodied in nearly every one of the early writers of the Christian Church.

The earliest Christians were, most of them, not deeply indoctrinated in theology, but they were simple and sincere believers in the Lord. They were content with the simple creed of Peter, when he exclaimed, "Lord, I believe that Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." (1) This seems to be as much as the Lord could reveal of Himself to men, in the state in which He found them, when He came into the world to redeem and save them, and to establish among them His Christian Church. As He said in the Gospel, ye believe in God — that is, men had been taught in the Old Testament to believe in God. Now, for the Christian faith, He adds, "*Believe also in Me.*" Here is the first creed which he gives to His disciples: Ye believe in God, believe also in Me.

But the simple faith of the earliest Christians soon began to become more or less confused and disturbed by the Platonism, Gnosticism, and learning brought to bear upon it, from the Pagan world around. Heretical errors crept into the Church itself, regarded as an external body of believers. And perhaps it is not strange that the early Christian writers should have had their views of the Lord obscured, sometimes by heresies, and be led to feel uncertain who the Lord was, and what the relations of

the Son to the Father. It is not, perhaps, to be presumed that they always saw clearly that the Lord Jesus Christ was Jehovah clothed in the human form; that He was both the Father and the Son; or that they all saw clearly the necessity and great purposes of the incarnation. It is not strange, we repeat, that the early Christians did not clearly comprehend the doctrine of the Lord; for it is a profound subject. The state of the Lord, during His life in the world, is a profound mystery. The early Christians knew, indeed, that the Lord was born as another man, and was like another man; and yet that He was not like another man; for He was conceived of the Holy Spirit, and born of a woman, who was a virgin. Thus, in general, the Lord was like another man, when He was in the world; born of a woman, but conceived of Jehovah. The doctrine of the Incarnation, as laid down in the opening verses of the Gospel of John, seems to have been the subject of much discussion and thought in the first centuries of the Christian Church. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.

Augustine says of the Proem to this Gospel, that a Platonic philosopher thought it ought to be written in letters of gold, and hung up in all the churches. This Gospel of John has always been a stumbling-block to unbelievers; but to all sincere believers it is the most beautiful of the Gos-

pels, if we may be allowed such an expression. It contains some of the most beautiful and touching narratives, and most affecting discourses of our Lord. There is nothing in the whole range of the Scriptures so inexpressibly tender as portions of those discourses which the Lord delivered on the eve of His visible departure from His disciples, recorded in John: Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in Me. I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you. Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you. I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.

The Gospel of John brings out, more fully than either of the synoptical Gospels, the doctrine of the Divinity, the Supreme Divinity of Jesus Christ. This Gospel seems to be addressed more peculiarly to simple, earnest, sincere, heavenly states of mind. Clement of Alexandria speaks of it as the spiritual Gospel. He says John wrote it at the request of his friends, to place by the side of the Gospels, his more spiritual Gospel.

In the first verses of the Gospel of John, we find that He who came into the world is described under the term *Logos*, in the original. In the beginning was the *Logos*, and the *Logos* was with God, and the *Logos* was God. And the *Logos* was made flesh, and dwelt among us. This term *Logos* is a Greek word, and had a well-defined

meaning, as used among the ancient Greeks. Plato spoke of God under the term Logos, meaning by it the divine reason, embracing the patterns or archetypes of things afterwards formed; sometimes also called the intellect of God, which, he says, is the "divinest of all things"; and he admits it into the number of his primary principles. Sometimes he speaks of the Logos in terms which, if literally understood, would lead to the supposition that he considered it a real being distinct from the Supreme God; or, united with, and proceeding from, the fountain of His divinity.

Philo, a learned Jew of Alexandria, sometimes called the Jewish Plato, discussed the doctrine of the Logos in a similar manner, attributing to the Logos the properties of a being, calling him the mediator between God and man, the first-born of God, and applying the term "God" to him. At other times he speaks of him as the image of God, the reason of God, calls God the fountain of the Logos, and the Logos His instrument or minister in creating, preserving, and governing the world. Philo was, perhaps, the first distinctly to attribute to the Logos a personal existence.

Undoubtedly Platonism and Oriental Philosophy exerted considerable influence on the early Christian writers, like Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria, Hippolytus and Origen.

The authors of the Septuagint version of the Old Testament used this term Logos in the translation,

answering to the English term word. As in this instance: "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth." The English term word was Logos in the Septuagint version. In John's Gospel, answering to the description of the birth of our Lord in Matthew and Luke, we find an account of the Logos, in which it is at last said that the Logos was made flesh, and dwelt among us.

Among the Apostolic Fathers, for a century, and perhaps somewhat more, after Christ, we find little discussion of the subject of the Lord's Supreme Divinity. They were content with the belief that in the Person of Jesus Christ the divine and the human were united. They recognized the two natures, without attempting to investigate the manner in which the union of both were effected in the Person of the Lord. They distinctly asserted the real Godhead, and the real manhood, but left the subject treated only in this general manner. Of their acknowledgment of His real manhood there is no doubt, for they were familiar with the facts of His earthly life, his real birth by Mary, His growth from childhood upwards, His ministry, and death and resurrection. These formed the common conviction of the Christian world. And of His real Godhead they are equally positive in their assertions. They recognized the truth that He was the Creator of the world, "by Him all things were made," and that He was to be its final Judge. It seems clear that

they fully believed in the scriptural and apostolic doctrine, that "God was in Christ," and that "in Him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."

CLEMENT OF ROME—90-100 OF THE CHRISTIAN ERA.

Clement of Rome addresses a doxology to Christ. In another place he says: "Through Him we fix our glance on the heights of the heavens, through Him we behold His (the divine) spotless and lofty countenance as in a mirror: through Him are the eyes of our heart opened; through Him it is the will of the Lord that we should taste immortal glory — Him who, being the radiance of the divine glory, is as much exalted above the angels as He hath obtained a more excellent name than they."

In what is usually denominated Clement's 2d Epistle to the Corinthians, though perhaps not genuine, but at least a writing of very high antiquity, the writer says: "My brethren, we must think of Jesus Christ as of God, as of the Judge of the living and of the dead, and not think little of our own salvation. For if our thoughts of Him be low, our expectations will also be little. If we esteem Him lightly, and act as we think, we sin, and are unmindful whence we have been called, and by whom, and to what, and how much Jesus Christ hath endured on our behalf. . . . We had no hope of salvation but from Him. . . . He will

appear as God. Christ our Lord, who hath saved us, was at first spirit, and became flesh."

IGNATIUS—69-107, OR 116.

In the early part of the 2d century, Ignatius was perhaps the most distinguished of any of the Apostolic Fathers, especially in the East. He was ardent, eloquent, and filled with a deep interest in the Church, to the more perfect organization of which he devoted his life. He seems to have dwelt much on the divine and the human in the Lord, in his own mind, and to have sought to bring out and apply this truth in the Church. He declares that God has manifested Himself in human form in Christ, and he calls Him God. In another epistle, Ignatius says: "He is our Teacher, but He alone is: and so little is He merely one of the Teachers, like Moses and the Prophets, that, on the contrary, He superintends them, as their Teacher. They were His disciples, and waited on Him in spirit as their Teacher." Again: "He is the Door to the Father, through which Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the Prophets and Apostles, and the Church enter."

The sincerity of Ignatius's Christian piety, and the fervor of his love, are manifest in his writings. "Suffer me," says he, "to imitate the passion of my God. My love is crucified; there is no fire in me desiring earthly fuel; that which lives and

speaks within me says, home to the Father." Polycarp also says of Christ the Lord: "To Him all things are subjected in heaven and on earth; Him every living thing worships; He is coming as Judge of the living and the dead."

That the Church was accustomed to worship the Lord Jesus Christ, and regard Him as God, is constantly stated by the enemies of Christianity at that time. Celsus, an eminent Pagan writer, declares it to be a well-known fact that the Christians held that Jesus Christ was God, and only endeavors to show that He was not what they believed Him to be. It is an interesting fact which he brings to light, that the Christian writers distinguished between a state of exaltation and a state of humiliation in Christ; that it is only since His death that they call Him God in the full sense, regarding Him generally, in the days of His flesh, as having His Deity hidden from the ordinary sight of men.

In the epistle to Diognetus, we have the true doctrine of the Lord set forth with great clearness: He who was from the beginning, is He who appeared anew, and is born anew in the hearts of believers. He who was forever, is now revered as the Son by whom the Church is enriched, and grace displays itself. What He reveals is God Himself, the truth. When the author says, "No one has seen or known God, He has revealed Himself," it is very manifest that he believed that God had Himself appeared among men. He goes on to represent

that the Logos fills the Church, adorns it with His gifts, dwells in the Church as Teacher, and rejoices in it.

JUSTIN MARTYR DIED ABOUT 165.

The same doctrine, too, we find more fully unfolded in Justin Martyr. His dialogue with Trypho is mainly a defence of the Deity of Christ. In it he represents that Christ truly became Man; He took flesh and blood; took on Him man. He calls Him the Logos become man. He says that the potency of becoming man, which the Logos always bore in Himself, and which He manifested when He before appeared in the form of a man, came thus to actuality. This reference to His before appearing in the form of a man, shows that he knew that the Lord had always been the Great Head of the Church in all ages of the world. It was He, Justin affirms, who guided Abraham and the Patriarchs, and inspired the Prophets. All the Old Testament Theophanies are manifestations of the Logos, or Christ. Again he says of Him: "That since He is the first-begotten Logos of God, He is God." In other words, being born of God, He derived the Divine nature from God. And still, again, we find Trypho bringing out the doctrine of Christians in these words: "Christ preëxisted God, before the ages, then condescended to be born and made man, and was not

man born of man. And Justin admits the doctrine in these words: "Being God, and born of a virgin, became man."

From the fact that Justin knew that the Lord our Saviour and Redeemer had been divinely present in the Israelitish Church, and had appeared to the Patriarchs and Prophets, and guided and inspired them, there is no reasonable doubt that he acknowledged the Lord's Supreme Divinity. One of the Theophanies, to which, doubtless, Justin alluded, is found in Genesis, where the Lord appeared to Abraham, under the name of Jehovah, in the plains of Mamre. He was sitting at the door of his tent, and when he lifted up his eyes and saw, behold three men stood near him, whom, as soon as he saw, he ran to meet, and bowed himself to the earth; and he said, Adonai, if I have found grace in thine eyes, pass not away, I pray, from thy servant, etc. That it was the Lord our Saviour who then appeared to Abraham, is plain, from His own words in the Gospel: Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it and was glad; Verily, verily, I say unto you, before Abraham was, I am. Here we find the Lord Himself declaring His own Divine Presence in the Israelitish Church, and that Abraham knew of Him, and saw Him, and rejoiced in Him: for He was before Abraham.

Because the Lord our Saviour existed as God before the incarnation, it was afterwards believed

by some in the Church that God the Greater begat a Son from eternity, and that this Son descended and assumed humanity, to redeem and save men. This is an error; for it involves the idea that there is more than one God, and the universal testimony of the Scriptures is that there is only one God. And the same one God is our Creator, Redeemer, and Saviour. After the incarnation, and in the humanity, and in respect to that humanity, He is called the Son, the Son of God, and the Son of Man, Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Redeemer; but, at the same time, He was the Immanuel, — *God with us.*

Against this doctrine of the eternal Sonship, Justin is explicit in his statement. "The Divine Essence," says he, "is not partitioned off by the begetting of the Logos, nor transmuted into portions." So he ascribes all power to the Logos. "Power rests in essence, and the essence of the Logos is Deity, — true Deity." To the preëxistence of Christ we shall find allusion in other writings of the fathers, and we regard all allusions of this kind as direct evidence of their belief in His Supreme Divinity.

ATHENAGORAS. — 161-180.

The clear and cautious Athenagoras sets forth this statement: "We call God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, at the same time pro-

claiming their essence in unity, and a distinction in their order. It is the love and joy of the Christians to know God, and the Logos who comes from Him; to see what is the unity of the Son in relation to the Father, what the communion of the Father with the Son, what the Spirit; what is the union of all these, and the distinction of the united,—the Spirit, the Son, the Father. Again, he says, “God’s Son, the knowledge of whom the Christians have, is the Logos of the Father. From Him and through Him is everything made, since the Father and the Son are one. And since the Father is in the Son and the Son in the Father, through the unity and power of the Spirit, so is the Son God’s Intelligence, and the Logos of the Father.”

CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA — 210–220.

In Clement of Alexandria we find some clear and well-defined views of the Son, Logos, or Word. While God, he affirms, cannot be known or shown as He is in Himself, it is otherwise with the Son, who is indeed the object of faith, and afterwards also of knowledge. “The Son is the revealed Truth in Person. He is supreme, and always, whole Light of the Father, all-seeing and all-knowing.” The phrase that God cannot be known in Himself, implies, of course, that He cannot be known unless He reveal Himself; thence, he adds, “that Christ is like God the Father. He

is the Father's countenance; He is the revealer of the Father's essence. The purifying, gentle, divine Logos; in truth, the most manifest God, the most easily showed to us God." Again, he says, "The Father is not without the Son";—the very doctrine of the Scriptures, which declare that the Father is in the Son, and we come to the Father in Him. So we read elsewhere, in Clement, that "the Word, the Christ, was from the beginning the cause both of our being and of our well-being. Now He hath appeared to men, being alone both God and Man, the Author to us of all good, by whom being instructed how to live well we are speeded onwards to eternal life. The preëxistent Saviour has appeared nigh to us; He who exists in the self-existent has appeared. The Word who was with God, has appeared as our Teacher, has taught us to live well, in order that hereafter He may, as God, give us eternal life. He has appeared to assist us against the Serpent, who enslaves us." ". . . He offered salvation to the Israelites of old by signs and wonders, in Egypt and the Desert, at the burning bush and in the cloud. . . . He spoke to them by Moses and Isaiah, and the whole prophetic choir, but He speaks to us directly by Himself."

The doctrine of Christ's perpetual Divine Presence in the Church, in all ages, and His Supreme Divinity, are here clearly and unmistakably affirmed. No writer previous to Clement has stated the doctrine in a better manner. Of a broad and

liberal mind, and well educated in the learning of Greece, and thoroughly acquainted with the philosophies and all the ancient writings of the learned world, Clement may be regarded as one of the wisest and best representatives of the Christian Church of the second century.

IRENÆUS. — 177—

Irenæus is another great Church Teacher of the same century. He is one of the most pathetic and eloquent writers of the Ancient Church, and probably no one was more highly esteemed. Irenæus's views of the Logos are similar to those we have quoted from other writers. He says: "God is wholly Logos, and the Son is this Logos. He is no creature, and Christ is not to be called God in the sense in which other men are called gods; for, strictly speaking, nothing is to be called God. But the Son, manifested in Christ, is actually God, because God is only to be known through God, and because He has power to forgive sins." So he speaks of the Son being the visibility of the Father, who would otherwise be invisible. "Wherefore the Unapprehended, the Incomprehensible, the Unseen, hath made Himself visible, comprehensible, apprehensible, for those who believe in the incarnation, in order to make those who apprehend and see Him blessed through faith. His greatness is unsearchable; but His goodness is also not to be

told, by which He gives Himself to be seen." Again: "The Word made Himself visible and tangible by being born of Mary; for it is the Son who is the organ of the Father from beginning to end, and without Him can no man know the Father; hence there is the one God,— Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,— and one faith, and one salvation."

"If," he exclaims, "Christ has not become man, ye remain under the ancient curse and under death; for we could not enter into the Sonship unless the Son had entered into fellowship with us and become flesh. His humanity is not an appearance; and so His works, the slaying of sin and of death, and the vivifying of men, are realities." . . . "Through every stage of human life Christ had to pass, in order that He might restore to all communion with God. He sanctified each stage of life, for He came to save all by Himself, — all, I say, who through Him shall be born again to God, — infants and children, lads, youths, and old men."

In the work of redemption, Irenæus seems clearly to see that the Lord's ability to perform that great work depended on His actual assumption of a humanity like ours. Without His becoming man He could not have wrought redemption. "So He," says Irenæus, "entered into Mary, in order to take for Himself her substance, otherwise He could not be similar to us. From the like substance He had a body as we have. He who was incapable of suffering became liable to suffering, —

the Word became Man." Again: "In every moment of His earthly life Christ is the invisible become visible; and as the light of the Father entered into the humanity of the Lord, so it comes beaming forth from Him on us. *And now He is, in His humanity, the fountain of the Holy Spirit for all who believe in Him.*

TERTULLIAN — 200— to between 220 and 240.

Tertullian, a Roman lawyer, was a man of greater intellectual powers of mind than any previous Christian writer. He possessed great energy, a combative spirit, and he plunged into a discussion of the profoundest themes of the Church. He was somewhat speculative, but of deep penetration, clear perceptions, and a sincere believer in the truths of the Gospel. He met the heresies of his generation with strong arguments, and, generally, able and full expositions of the truth. He was a full believer in the actual coming of the Lord into the world, and of His divinity, and strongly opposed to the heresy of the Patripassians, and yet a staunch defender of the Divine Unity. He says: "Through the appearance of Christ, the name of God has been more perfectly revealed. The difference between the worshippers of one God and many divinities is fixed by Christianity;

for if we really meant that there are three Gods and three Lords, when we teach that there are Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, we, the sons of light, should have extinguished the torches which light us to the martyr's death." Again, he affirms "that God is (becomes) the Son of God, *so soon as He attains positive reality in the actual world. . . .* All religion was therefore shadowy and symbolical, prior to the coming of Christ; for in the flesh the Son became visible. His body, it is true, veiled His glory, and in His glory could not be seen, save by those who were exalted above their usual consciousness. This, however, happened to the three Apostles on the mountain. Nevertheless, the Incarnate Word entered into visible existence through the incarnation, and we have an actual Person, whom we have seen, and heard, and handled."

According to Tertullian, "The Father, Son, and Spirit are one, because all are of one through the unity of their substance: all have one essence." He says, "Difference and number are not in God, so far as He is conceived of in His eternal, immovable being, but merely so far as He is regarded in motion. When a ray proceeds forth from the sun it is a part of the whole; but the sun will be in the ray, for the ray is a ray of the sun, and does not break loose from the substance thereof, but merely dilates itself. So is spirit of spirit, God of God, like a light kindled at a light. . . . Thus did spirit constitute another of spirit, God another of God,

not in point of number, but of form. That ray of God, having entered into a virgin, and made itself flesh in her womb, was born as a man united with God."

"I do not desire two suns," he says, "but Christ I can call God, as Paul does in Romans, where he says, 'Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God, blessed forever.' Even a ray of the sun, considered by itself, I call sun; for example, when I say 'there is sun'; but I do not, therefore, at once designate the sun, from which the ray proceeds,—Ray. Two forms of existence, of one and the same substance, I acknowledge, as of the sun, so of God." Thus Tertullian plainly declares that the Son is entitled to be called God, for, "whatever is born of God, is God." He speaks of the Father and Son as indeed distinct, but the distinction is not that of Personality in the Godhead, but the Father rather representing the Divine, and the Son the human. He uses the word "prosopon," as designating this distinction, but all early writers use this word in a very different sense from the one in which it has been used in the later ages of the Christian Church. It is now supposed to imply distinct personality, and a real distinction in the Personality of the Godhead, like that between two men. Whereas it originally meant the Face, or Countenance of God. The Son is the countenance of the Father. Sabellius used this term, and recognized a distinct prosopon in Christ. And he

would not, if it had implied, at that time, the same distinction as among modern theologians. It then meant that the human was the prosopon of the Divine, the manifestation of the Divine. And in accordance with this view Tertullian says, "The Son is derived from God, as the branch from the root, the stream from the fountain, the ray from the sun;" and consequently alone could properly manifest the Divine, to angels and men. There is much said by Tertullian, Clement, and other early writers, showing the distinction which they saw between the Father and the Son. They knew there was a distinction, and endeavored to make their view of it plain, without, however, intending to divide the Godhead into different persons, or denying the Supreme Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ. On the contrary, they were careful to indicate their recognition of the Supreme Divinity. Tertullian's language is especially guarded. After admitting the unity of substance of the Father and Son, he says, "God is Spirit, and from spirit is produced spirit, from God is produced God, from light is produced light." And again, lest it should be understood that there is no distinction between the Father and Son, he says, "The Father is different from the Son, as he who begets is different from him who is begotten." He speaks of God as the "Head of Christ," and of Christ as Most High, because by the right hand of God exalted "Lord of Hosts."

No one can read Tertullian's able and elaborate

Treatise against Praxeas, though he is especially arguing against Patripassian tendencies, without coming to the conclusion that Tertullian is a full believer in the Divine unity of God in essence and substance, and the supreme Divinity of Christ.

CALLISTUS — 219 — 222.

Callistus, Bishop of Rome, of whom Hippolytus said some things unfavorable to his character, if they are true, has left some remarkable statements of the faith of the Christian Church concerning the person of Christ. His testimony is positive in favor of the Supreme Divinity of our Lord. He says, "The Father is not one Being, the Son another, but one and the same, and all is full of the Divine Spirit. And the Spirit that became flesh in the virgin, is not different from the Father, but one and the same. This is the meaning of the words, 'Dost thou not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in me?' For what is seen, which is man, is the Son, but the Spirit which dwells in the Son is the Father. For I will not say that there are two Gods, the Father and the Son, but one. The Father, who was in the Son, took flesh and made it God, uniting it to Himself, and made it one. The Father and Son was therefore the name of one God, and this one Person (prosopon) cannot be two." Is there any doubt about such statements as these, showing that the Christian faith was manifestly a

faith in the Divinity of our Lord? Language can scarcely be more explicit. The faith of the Church can scarcely be stated in a manner less likely to be misunderstood. Callistus has been accused of sympathy with the heretic Noetus. Those who are acquainted with the views of the so-called heretics of the Church, will find some of them, at least, quite as sound on certain doctrines, as many of those who are usually termed orthodox.

NOETUS — *About 200.*

The doctrine of Noetus was indeed quite similar to that of Callistus on the subject we have under consideration. Noetus says, "When the Father was not yet generated, He was justly called the Father; but when he was pleased to suffer birth, he became himself the Son." Again he says: "He was called the Father and Son according to the difference of times; but he is one. He who appeared and endured to be born of a virgin, and conversed among men as a man, confessing himself to those who saw Him to be the Son, by reason of His birth, yet not concealing, from those who were able to understand it, that He was the Father."

HIPPOLYTUS — 200—236.

Hippolytus, Bishop at the Port of Rome, was intelligent in the doctrines of the Church, an ex-

tensive writer, and undoubtedly of much influence. He was opposed to the Patripassian tendency of Noetus, an enemy of Callistus, and wrote, not without passion, replies to their views. He cannot, therefore, be accused of any Patripassian tendencies, but was accused of views tending in the opposite direction. His confirmation of the Lord's Divine nature affords only so much the stronger evidence that the universal testimony of the Church of this century is in favor of the doctrine that the Lord Jesus Christ is God.

In his answer to Beron, he says: "God is unchangeable. The Word, in the aspect in which He is identical with the Father, was not identical with the flesh, but what he was prior to assuming the flesh, that he continued. Through the wholesome act of incarnation, he introduced into the flesh (the human) the activity of His own Deity. What the Divine was prior to the incarnation, that it was afterwards — incomprehensible, impossible, incomparable, unchanged, mighty in itself, abiding in its own natural existence, and working according to its own nature. So, also, what the flesh was as to essence and operation, that it continued to be after it had been most intimately united with the Deity. Thus the Incarnate One worked both after a Divine and human manner. So far as He worked after a Divine manner, the Divine activity shone through the flesh. For the nature of the Deity was by no means transmuted, as though it had become essen-

tially flesh, that is, flesh of Deity ; but the flesh remained what it was, weak flesh, in accordance with the Word of the Lord : “ The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak.” In the flesh he performed and suffered that which pertained to the flesh. Moreover, the distinction between Deity and humanity is not a merely quantitative comparative one, otherwise we should have to describe one and the same being as both greater and less than Himself. But beings of like essence can be compared with each other ; not those of unlike essence. Between God, the Creator of the Universe, and the creature, no comparison can be instituted. God never falls out of Himself ; never did He enter on an existence outside of Himself ; and yet the incarnation was a reality, and God truly revealed Himself in it.”

He then goes on to give an illustration as follows, stated substantially by Dorner, employing the relation of a thought to its representation in word, through the medium of speech, or in signs written by the hand. Thought is the self-moved energy of the soul, which flows forth according to its nature, in a continual stream (as did the energy of Christ out of the Deity). When I mould thoughts into words, or delineate them in signs, employing the tongue as an instrument, or written signs, which in themselves are foreign to the thing represented, the thoughts themselves remain unchanged. Though they attain to actuality by means of something unlike themselves, they are not changed, but simply

revealed and perceived. It is true I employ my tongue and letters for the manifestation of my thoughts; and yet the thoughts do not belong to the words or signs, but to me, the speaker; and I give expression to them, in both ways, just as they flow out of my rational soul. The tongue is merely the organ. Now as the power, whose essence is rational, while continuing unaltered in itself, expresses itself by means of the bodily tongue, so, if two things utterly incomparable may be compared, by means of the body (the assumption of the body), the almighty, all-creating activity of the entire Deity manifested itself without change through the body of Christ, in all that He worked after a Divine manner; but the Deity Itself remained essentially exempt from limitation, though it shone through a nature essentially limited.

As Hippolytus did not deem the Prophets—Moses, etc.—to have been themselves active at the moment of revelation, he maintained that Christ sojourned in them, appeared to them, and they were forms under which He, for the time, manifested Himself previous to His coming in the flesh; and at the incarnation He perfectly and permanently assumed humanity, and lived a human life.

The incarnation he describes as follows: The only begotten Word of God, God of God, humbled Himself, voluntarily abasing Himself to that which He was not, and invested Himself with this flesh of ours. At the same time, as the Word of God,

the glory of God belonged essentially and inalienably to Him, even after the act of incarnation; "Let us believe, dear brothers," says he, "that God the Word descended from heaven into the Virgin Mary; that He became flesh, assuming from her also a human, that is, a rational soul; that, in short, having become all that man is, with the exception of sin, He saves the fallen, and is able to confer immortality on those who believe in His name. Born of the Virgin and the Holy Ghost, He exhibited a new man, in that His heavenly nature was constituted of that which was of the Father, as Logos; and as far as concerns the earthly, He took a body from the old Adam, through the medium of the Virgin. He now, coming forth into the world, revealed Himself as God in a body; came forth as a perfect Man."

Again: "He became what He was not before, without losing the Divine essence and glory which He had from the beginning. Through his flesh bringing incarnation, the Word introduced into the flesh the activity of His own deity; not that His deity was bounded by the flesh. The Creator of the universe descended like rain, and divided Himself like a stream which is without limits, and rejoiced the City of God. He who was called the Son of Joseph, was the Only Begotten One as to His Divine essence: He hungered, who fed thousands; He was weary, who by His labors relieved the weary; He had not where to lay His head, and

yet all things were in His hand; He suffered, and healed all by His sufferings; He suffered Himself to be beaten, and made the world free."

Hippolytus wrote what is called the Confession of Faith,— his own faith. We have no reason to doubt that it was generally regarded as a confession of the faith of the Christian Church of his own day in the East and the West. We do not find in this confession his views of the Lord so clearly and well expressed as in some of the passages quoted above, taken from other writings; but, so far as stated, they teach the same doctrine of the Supreme Divinity of Christ. He says: "The Logos of God is alone of God, wherefore He is God, being the substance of God." Again he says: "For to them (the disciples) the Word revealed Himself when He appeared, speaking openly, not recognized by the unbelieving, but expounding all to the disciples." Again: "For this reason, the Father sent the Word, that He might appear to the world; and He, though rejected by the Jewish people, was preached by the apostles and believed in by the nations. This is He who was from the beginning, and who is begotten in the hearts of believers. This is He who has ever been, and to-day is accounted a Son, by whom the Church is enriched, and simple grace is made abounding in believers," etc.

Hippolytus was accused of believing in two Gods. Callistus and Noetus accused him of this

belief. But Hippolytus says this was not true. He entirely disclaims having such a faith. He says, if the Word is with God, being God, so we may say, "Dost thou speak of two Gods?" As to myself, he adds, "*I do not speak of two Gods*, but merely of One. Only I establish two prosopa, and as the third, the Holy Spirit." This is the Greek word, in the later ages of the Christian Church, made to signify Persons; though it was never understood in such a sense previous to the Council of Nice, or the time of the great Arian controversy. The "prosopa," as explained by Hippolytus, is, by illustration, light of light, water from the fountain, ray from the sun. "Do we," then, he asks, "teach a plurality of Gods, which have come into existence in the course of time? By no means. All runs back again into one, for God is one."

CYPRIAN — 246-258.

We find the same views of the Lord laid down in Cyprian, that eminent Christian writer, and Bishop of North Africa, a little later than Hippolytus. He says: "The entire Scriptures refer to Christ, and He is the key to their understanding; not till we believe in Christ, can we understand them. . . . This Christ is the First-born and the Wisdom of God, through whom all things were made; the Word of God; the arm and hand of God; he is the Maleach Jehovah, the Messenger of God, and God Himself.

ORIGEN — 211-254.

Origen was, perhaps, taking him in all respects, the most wonderful man among the anti-Nicene Fathers. He was a disciple of Clement of Alexandria, and himself also, probably, a native of the same noted city of the Christian Church: certainly he was an Egyptian. He was a man of brilliant talents, and great intellectual endowments; and he exerted a vast influence in the Church, not only in his own day, but down even to the later period of the Church's history. He performed an immense amount of labor. He was ardent and enthusiastic, and, from his childhood, filled with the zeal of a martyr. Jerome calls him "a great man from his infancy." He combined a hearty love of the Church, with the highest culture which the age in which he lived, and Alexandria, the seat of ancient learning, afforded. He was, therefore, well qualified for the high position which he took in the Church, and the great influence he exerted in it. The amount of his labors was so great, and he wrote with such rapidity, that we should expect to find discrepancies in his views, as well as dogmas to which we could not assent. And such is the case. From some of his statements, Subordinationists claim his sympathies with them, and from other statements, their opponents claim equal sympathy. After a candid, impartial examination of his views, no one can justly infer that his faith differed in any

essential respect from the prevalent faith of the Church on the fundamental doctrine of the Lord. He was a man of such a broad and noble mind, that he was willing to recognize truth in all the sections of the Church where he found it, and give due credit to its possessor, though he might have been in other respects of heretical tendencies.

He recognized the Divine and the human in Christ. He so connected the actual Deity of Christ with His humanity, as to confess, with Thomas the disciple, "My Lord and my God." He was thus able to recognize with the apostle the truth that the very fulness of the Godhead dwelt in Christ, and to bring out more plainly what Tertullian hinted at, when he asserted that the sun is in the ray, or the fountain in its streams. As in Tertullian, so in Origen, we find statements of the two natures in Christ. Origen says: "Our Lord had truly human development, and participated thoroughly in human weakness, so far as it was not marked by sin." (2.) Again: "In order to enable man to approach Him, he assumed the form of man in the state to which sin had reduced it — took upon Himself a mortal body, and lived a truly human life, though without sin." Thus he recognized the old canon of the Church of the second century, "That it was necessary that Christ should assume the first fruits of the whole of human nature, because He could only save that which He assumed." He maintained that that which the Son (His hu-

man) did not possess, was the inmost, the highest part of God. This was incommunicable. And the Son could only participate in the inmost and highest part of the Divine nature so far as He lost Himself entirely in the One Indivisible God. Finally, he says: "The entire Person of Christ, even His body, ascended up into heaven and was glorified. All human weakness was removed, Divine power and glory took its place. Then the Father possessed in the Son (the human) an absolute image of Himself. Hence the Lord said: 'I and the Father are one, and he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father also.'" "For no one, I believe," he adds, "embraces the entire glory of the Father in himself, in copy, save the Son. He not only participates in wisdom and truth, but is wisdom and truth itself, and all the wise are wise through their participation in Him." Again, Origen says: "The Father cannot be seen otherwise than in the Son." And Dorner says, that Ritter "justly recognizes that the essential tendency of Origen's teachings was to show that the entire fullness of the Deity dwelt in the Son."

When Celsus asked the Christian of the second century, Why do you honor a second God in addition to the true one? Origen answered: "He is one with God. And God, in generating Him, gave over all things into His hands. Not *alongside* of, but *in* God, do we worship the Son. The Son is not merely the executor of the Divine will, as

though He worked outside of God, but the *same will* that is in the Father is an almighty and holy will in the Son." Again: "The Incarnate Word was like the sun, whose rays continue pure, whatever may be the nature of the place on which they shine. In Him is the entire sum of essential good, which, as such, can undergo no change or alteration. Even during His self-abasement, He lost no part of His blessedness; He continued blessed, even while He was laboring and suffering for our salvation. Unchangeable in essence, God descended to men in providence and activity on their behalf."

Origen saw and pointed out clearly the difference between the human and the Divine, the Son and the Father: "For the latter," he says, "is the light which is unapproachable by and exalted above all conflict with darkness. The Son, on the contrary, is the light which shines in the darkness, which battles with, suffers persecution from, but is not overcome by darkness." (3.)

It had been a prevalent doctrine among the philosophers, that man possesses a rational and a sensitive soul. More or less of the Christian writers and Churchmen, before the time of Origen, taught that Christ was possessed of the sensitive, but not the human rational soul. The place of the rational soul, they believed, was supplied by the Logos. Origen differed from all those who wrote on the subject before him. Fearful lest he should not

recognize fully enough the reality of the Lord's assumption of humanity, or, with the Patripassians, transfer sufferings to the Divine Himself, he taught that the Logos, the Word, or Divine nature of Christ, became united to the human rational soul, as well as the sensitive soul. But in maintaining this view, we have no reason to think that he had any sympathy with the Subordination doctrine that afterwards obtained in the Church, or that he intended to deny the universal doctrine of the Church at that time—the doctrine of the entire Divinity of Christ. He knew well that our Lord was the only Redeemer and Saviour.

We have thus shown by extracts from the writings of some of the most eminent Christian writers before the time of the Council of Nice, that the Doctrine of the Supreme Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ was well known and accepted, and believed in, as the doctrine of the Sacred Scriptures in the Primitive Christian Church. (4.) This, we believe, was the general faith of the great body of the Church and of its best and most eminent Bishops, teachers and writers. It was the universal faith of the East and the West, for three centuries after Christ.

It is true there were heretical views in the Church. There were those, as in all ages, who did not understand the Doctrine of the Lord—who had misconceptions of it—who did not accept it or believe it. We find, too, the beginnings of the great

heresies which finally destroyed the faith of the Church in its later ages — we find Arianism, Pelagianism, Socinianism.— but in their early beginnings they possessed little strength, and deceived, comparatively, but small numbers of the early Christians.

It seems probable that those who maintained the Patripassian views, at least the best portion of them, fell into such an erroneous faith from an honest desire to avoid the opposite error of denying the entire Divinity of Christ. They preferred to accept the error of the Divine passibility, rather than deny that Christ, in His Divine essence and nature, was one with the Father, or essential Divinity. That this Divine essence was absolutely indivisible, they knew, and would not, therefore, deny it.

The heresy of Sabellius was akin to that of Patripassianism; though Sabellius denies that God underwent sufferings. The most erroneous point in the faith of Sabellius seems to be that wherein he is accused of denying the real incarnation. With him the appearance of Christ in the flesh was but a Theophany, like the theophanies of the Old Testament, when He appeared to men, assuming, for the moment, the form of some angel. The incarnation was thus not real — it was temporary, not permanent. There was no actual assumption of humanity, no glorification of the Human, and consequent resurrection and ascension

Sabellius appears, also, to have no clear and distinct ideas of the Divine Trinity. According to his view, the Trinity is not in God but in His revelation or manifestation of Himself, viz.: in the law, in the incarnation, and the Holy Ghost. According to Epiphanius, to the Father was attributed legislation, to the Son incarnation, to the Holy Ghost the inspiration of the apostles and the quickening of believers.

Other images, also, were employed to illustrate the view of the Trinity. The Father, Son, and Spirit were regarded as analogous to the body, soul and spirit; also to the trinity in the sun, viz.: its form in itself, its appearance to men, its penetration into objects on earth, and giving warmth and light. His views seem to be crude and imperfect. Attempts are made to grasp these great subjects, but there is a failure to realize any clear and truthful views. It seems plain that Sabellius, and those who agreed with him, fell into these errors, from a desire to avoid the worse error of denying the Supreme Divinity of the Lord.

The doctrine of the real incarnation is the fundamental doctrine of the Christian Church. The relationship of the essential Divinity with the suffering Humanity, presented to our view in the person of Jesus Christ, has not been readily seen or understood in the Church. In the faith of the Church, the Saviour is perfect Man; and He is God. In the Arian heresy, He is neither God nor man. For

Arius attributed to Him Divinity more than belongs to a mere man, and yet, because he was human, Arius made Him less than God. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself." This was the doctrine of the apostles. And the Scriptures declare that, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God; and the Word was made flesh." If God was in Christ, and the Word from the beginning was God, then God Himself, the Word, Wisdom, or Logos, was made flesh. In other words, the Father of eternity assumed humanity, and was in the Son. Or, to repeat the same idea in other words, if the Divine Word or Logos was God, then Jehovah God revealed Himself in the person of our Divine Saviour, thus agreeing exactly with what is said in the Old Testament, that, beside Jehovah, there is no Saviour or Redeemer.

But it seems strange to many, that Jehovah God should veil Himself in a covering of flesh and blood, and live and walk in the cities of Palestine. And how could this be, it is asked, that God Himself should come down into a nature defiled with evil? In reply, of course it is to be said that so far as the humanity had any tendencies to evil in it, it could not be a perfect manifestation of Divinity. But what was the purpose of the incarnation? The redemption of man from sin. And how could there be any redemption without a victory? Or a victory without a conflict? Or a conflict without a

direct meeting of the foes, as it were face to face? If the power of evil had not been prevalent, the assumption of humanity would not have taken place. In the very fact, therefore, of an assumption of humanity like that of men, we have the surest evidence of redemption. He, then, who from eternity was First, *in time* became the Last. When the power of evil was so strong as to prevent the flow of His mercy and truth into our world in any degree of purity, He clothed Himself with a body which also limited, for a short season, the full manifestation of the Divine soul within. In order to come into this sphere of ours, and live and walk and work with men, and overcome man's enemies, and redeem and save him, it was necessary that He should be born into this world as a man. And to be born as a man, He must put on that very human clothing with which He invests all human souls. And as soon as He put on humanity, the conflict for redemption began, and continued till at last He could say: "It is finished."

In this assumption of humanity, the Lord had a human as well as a Divine side. The Divine clothed itself with the human — the human, as it existed on the maternal side. It is ever to be remembered, however, that Christ had no human father. Joseph was only his reputed father. The Scriptures expressly assert that He was conceived of the Holy Ghost.

In ordinary human beings, the inner spiritual or-

ganization is from the father; the body, and that part of the mind's organization most closely connected with the body, are from the mother.

Now the Lord was born of a woman, but conceived of the Holy Spirit. That is, what an ordinary man has from his father, in our Lord was the Everlasting Father Himself. And what man inherits from his mother, that the Lord had from the Virgin Mary. He took on this hereditary from the Virgin Mary, or invested Himself with it, that He might be, as the apostle declares, touched with a feeling of our infirmities, and tempted in all points as we are, and yet without sin.

Thus, in the assumption of humanity, the Lord took our nature so far as the mother's part was concerned; but He did not take that inner part, that inner spiritual organization, which, in ordinary human births, descends from father to son. If He had done this, He must have had a human father; and then He would have had an entire human soul. Then He would have been, in all respects, like ordinary men. Then there would have been the same difference between Him and the everlasting Father, as between other men and God. He might have been more richly endowed. But in His very nature He would then have been unlike the Father. For this Arius contended. Then there would have been a time when He was not, as Arius said. In fact, the doctrine of the Arians and Socinians was based on the supposition that the

Lord had an entire human soul. They did not consider the fact, that He had only that part of the human soul which is derived from the mother ; and that His inner part, His soul, was the indwelling essential Divinity itself. If they had seen this great truth and acknowledged it, all those painful discussions which befell the Church at the time of the Council of Nice, and afterwards on the hypostasis, the consubstantial, etc., etc., would have been avoided ; and the plain and simple doctrine of the Scriptures would have continued to be the faith of the Church. (5.) The teaching of the Scriptures concerning the birth of the Lord, and the double nature, would have explained all difficulties. The fact that our Lord had no human Father, at once indicates the distinction between him and every other human being, and leads to the apostolic doctrine that "God was in Christ."

Perhaps there was another reason for the growth of the Arians, in the fear which the Church entertained towards the Patripassians and the Sabellians. The more orthodox portion, therefore, endeavored to steer a middle course between the Sabellians and Arians, and so adopted the doctrine of the different hypostases and the consubstantial nature of Christ with the Divine. This result culminated in the discussions of the Council of Nice and the establishment of the tri-personal doctrine, giving to the different *prosopa* distinctions amounting to nearly those between three different men, and yet not fully

denying in the creeds the old, apostolic, and Christian doctrine of the Divine Unity. For the Nicene Creed declares that the true faith is, to believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ is God and man; God of the substance of the Father, and man of the substance of the mother, — perfect God and perfect man, — since, *as the rational soul and body are one man, so God and man are one Christ.*

The doctrine of the Divine Unity had always been the doctrine of the Church. This was the true faith. (6.) It was forbidden by the Catholic Church to say that there is more than one God. The coming of our Lord into the world did not divide or transmute the Divine Essence. It was the assumption of humanity, by the Divine Essence. It was the assumption of our nature, as to the maternal part, — that the Lord, in that nature, might be tempted, as He was in the Wilderness, in the Garden of Gethsemane, and on Calvary, — that He might, in the Humanity, conquer in his temptations, consecrate and glorify that Humanity, and reveal Himself more and more in it, till the very fulness of the Godhead could dwell in it, and thus become our Heavenly Father, Redeemer, and Saviour.

Thus, in the incarnation, our Lord became both Divine and human, God and man. In His inmost essence and nature, He was God, — He was the Father, — in prophetic language, “the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father.” In the outward humanity, which He derived from Mary, He was man. He

ate and drank and slept, He conversed and acted like a man. He grew in stature and wisdom, — He was tempted, He prayed, had his joys and sorrows, and finally suffered and died. These experiences all pertained to the Humanity. In the Divine nature, He was, of course, incapable of suffering such experiences.

In this way, the Infinite and Eternal God, the Everlasting Father, whose ways were of old, became Immanuel—God with us—our Saviour. And in this assumption of humanity, — even frail and imperfect humanity, — He underwent no change in Himself, or in the infinite perfections of His Divine nature.

Perhaps some persons find a difficulty in accepting the doctrine that Jehovah dwelt in Jesus Christ when on earth, as the soul of man is in the body, thinking that this would require Him to leave His throne in heaven, and also limit and restrict the Divine Being to a mere human bodily presence and space. But any such supposition as this can only arise in the minds of those who have very imperfect conceptions of the omnipresence of God. God is eternally present everywhere: He is not controlled or limited by space.

It is also to be remarked that the body of our Lord, when on earth, being born of the mother, partook of her nature. Of course that human body could not contain, in its own limits, the essential Divinity in all its fulness, while it retained any

of the finite and imperfect nature of the mother. The Humanity assumed, must be renewed by a Divine Process, glorified, sanctified, until it became perfectly assimilated to the Divine Nature. This process was continually going on during the whole of our Lord's life on the earth. The work was not so far advanced that He could enter on his public ministry till he was thirty years of age. Before that time, He was not capable of receiving the Divine, in such full measure as was requisite, to enable Him to perform those miraculous and Divine works which did show forth themselves in Him. But gradually the human received the Divine in larger and larger measures, till at last "all the fulness of the Godhead could dwell bodily" in it. This was after the resurrection. Then His body was Divine. Then He could say, that in His humanity, "all power is given to me in heaven and on earth."

Thus "the assumption of the human essence into the Divine," into God, did not require Him to leave heaven and shut Himself up in a human body. But Jehovah put forth His influences as an emanation from the Divine substance—not a material emanation, but a Divine emanation—concentrating them in a form taken from a human mother. In accordance with the declaration of the Gospel, "the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee"—and "that holy thing that shall be born of thee," in

the Hebrew idiom of the time, "*shall be the Son of God.*" The Holy Ghost and power of the Highest are the Divine life, and energies, and influences going forth from Jehovah God. And while He was moulding a form in a human mother, and purifying and glorifying that form till it became a fit receptacle for the indwelling of the essential Divinity in all its fulness, He still inhabited His throne of Eternity in the centre of his dominion. He did not leave that centre, He did not change His character by coming down into our world. He was the same loving, good, and wise Being. But He did place Himself in new relations to men. He brought Himself nearer to men. He who before was invisible became visible. He who was God, through the human came down into our conditions, entered into our experiences and into sympathies with our doubts, and fears, and griefs, and sorrows, and sufferings. And He made known His own nature and character to us, more fully than it was possible for Him to do in any other way, through these experiences and His new relations to us.

Some can see nothing of Divinity in all this. But, in fact, it is the very way in which His Divinity manifested itself; the way in which He is always manifesting His love and wisdom. By thus coming down and dwelling among men, He became approachable to all sorts of men, and even to evil spirits in hell. In his temptations He ex-

perienced their assaults, till, by the Divine power within Him, He overcame them all.

He declared Himself to be the truth. By this is meant that His life, all His actions were living illustrations of the truth — were, in a word, truth in action. The truths of the sacred Scriptures He lived here on earth, on this low human plane where men live, and taught men, by precept and example, how they ought to live; and by this Divine life He lived, He glorified the Humanity, or filled it with the glory of the essential Divinity. To this He refers when He prays, “Father glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.” In this passage, “thine own self” can be no other than the essential Divinity. This was the glory which he had with the Father before the world was. And the glorification of Christ, or the Humanity with “thine own self,” or the essential Divinity, could be no other than filling this Humanity with the Divinity and its glory till it became itself Divine Humanity, and one in essence and substance with the Divinity.

Through the Glorified Humanity now descend those Divine influences, called in Scripture the Holy Spirit, which, the Lord said, when on earth, was not yet (then) given, because Jesus was not yet (or then) glorified. This occurred before His glorification. But since the glorification of the humanity, there have gone forth from Him quickening, renewing, and sanctifying influences and

grace for the regeneration of men, which did not, and could not, go forth till after His ascension and full glorification.

The Divine Humanity is that "new and living way of access" to the Father, who is the invisible and otherwise incomprehensible Divinity. By means of it, we approach the Father. *No one cometh to the Father but by me.*

In the Lord Jesus Christ do we find God Himself, and not out of Him, or independent of, or separate from Him. In Christ we behold God in just those relations, and in that sympathizing attitude which we, in our fallen condition, need; and doing what we need to have done for us, before we can be redeemed and saved. We see Him suffering with us, and for us; sweating, as it were, drops of blood, pierced by nails and the spear, and the malignant darts of evil spirits, that He might finish His work, and redeem man from the bondage of sin, and the dreadful consequences which it had brought on the human race.

If we are ready to give to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ the supreme homage of our hearts, we shall experience His redeeming and saving love; we shall have His Divine presence, His sanctifying influences, and His quickening and renewing grace; we shall be enabled to fight the good fight of faith, and become conquerors, and more than conquerors, through Him that loved us, and finally be received into His kingdom.

We shall close this little work with a brief allusion to the hymns of the Primitive Christian Church. And we shall find that the doctrine of the Supreme Divinity of the Lord enters into, and is interwoven with, the entire hymnology of the early Church.

We frequently find references, in the writings of the Fathers, to the fact that singing formed part of the worship of the Church. At Antioch, we hear of the first choir of singers some fifty years after the Council of Nice, and of the antiphonal mode of singing the Psalms. It is believed that, among the early Christians, the whole congregation joined with one voice in singing, during public worship.

Not many of the hymns that were in use in the ancient Church are preserved. The Psalms and songs of Zacharias, Mary, and Simeon were used. In addition to these were the "Hymns of the Brethren," so called probably because they were composed by them. The hymns were generally addressed to Christ as God, or in praise of Him. The author quoted by Eusebius appeals to "Psalms and Hymns of the Brethren, written at the beginning by the faithful, setting forth the praises of Christ, the Word of life." By the famous letter of Pliny to Trajan, about A. D. 110, we are carried far back almost to the apostolic age. He testifies that Christians at that time were accustomed to assemble before sunrise, and sing hymns to Christ as God. How beautifully Pliny here embodies, as it

were unconsciously, the simple faith of the early Church. He seems to imply that the chief fault of the Christians brought before him was, that they sung hymns to Christ as God. This is the faith of the Church, sent down to us from its primitive days, by a learned Pagan—Christ is God. The letters of Hadrian also contain evidence that, though the Christians were Monotheists, yet they worshipped Christ.

Bunsen says, "We possess still four compositions, real gems, genuine relics of ancient congregational hymnology." The first is the "Morning Hymn of the Primitive Church," to which he thinks Pliny alludes. There is no trace of metre in it, and it must be as old as the writings of John the Apostle. It begins, —

"Glory to God in the highest
And on earth peace
To man good will.
We praise Thee
We bless Thee
We adore Thee
We give thanks to Thee
O Lord God," etc.

The Greek Church has preserved this relic as the "Angelic Hymn," the first verse being from the song of the angels at the birth of Christ. It ascribes praise to Jesus Christ as being alone Holy, alone Lord, and alone the Highest.

The second and third Psalmodic Hymns are made up chiefly from the Psalms. In one part we find this beautiful prayer: "Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this day without sin," which seems to indicate that it was used as a Morning Psalm.

Bunsen says we have one composition of Hellenic source. It is called the "Candle Hymn of the Greek Christians," or the "Hymn of the Kindling of the Lamp." Basil the Great refers to the "Thanksgiving of the Lighting of Candles" as an "ancient pious voice of the people,"—doubtless alluding to the custom of the ancient Greeks, who, when the light was brought in at the evening, said, "the good light," or "the light is good." The Greek Christians transferred these words with some variation, suiting the prayer to the Hymn with which they greeted the domestic lamp, using the lighting of the lamp as a means of elevating their thoughts to Him who is the light of the soul. This Hymn is as follows:—

"Serene Light of holy Glory,
Of the Father everlasting, Jesus Christ!
Having come to the setting sun,
And seeing the evening Light,
We praise the Father and the Son
And the Holy Spirit of God.
It behoveth to praise Thee
At all times with holy songs,
Son of God who hast given Life;
Therefore the World glorifieth Thee."

Clement of Alexandria has preserved a hymn, which, of course, is very old; and it is remarkable that it has come down to us in so complete a form. We give the commencement of this hymn as we find it in Dorner. It seems to carry us back to an early and simple age of the Church. Doubtless there are some mutilations of the ancient text, and some imperfections and faults in the translation:—

“Bridle of untamed colts,
Wing of unwandering birds,
Never-wavering Rudder of Youth,
Shepherd of the loyal flock,
Thy blameless
Children gather
Holily to praise,
Sincerely to laud
With consecrated lips.

“Leader of youth, Christ,
King of Saints;
Of the Highest Father,
All-administering Word:
Dispenser of Wisdom;
Support of the suffering;
Lord of immortality;
Saviour of mortals; O Jesus!
Shepherd and Father,
Rudder and Bridle,
Heavenly Pinion
Of the consecrated flock;
Fisher of men,
Of the heirs of salvation,
Whom Thou from hostile flood,

In sea of evil,
 With sweet life,
 The pure fishes catchest :
 Lead us on, O Thou
 Shepherd of rational sheep !
 Lead us on, O Holy One !
 Prince of youths undefiled.

“ We sucklings,
 Fostered by soft lips,
 From the spiritual breast,
 Filled with sweet song
 Sing sincere praise,
 Genuine hymns,
 To Christ the King :

“ Sing sincerely
 The mighty Son.
 O peaceful choir,
 Ye, the Christ-begotten,
 Thou holy people,
 Praise together the God of Peace ! ”

Thus does the Primitive Christian Church, through its writers, testify to us in doctrines and Hymns of Praise and acts of worship, who was her Lord and her God. The Lord Jesus Christ was the Head of the Church, whom they acknowledged and worshipped. The old Christian hymnology, from the traces of it which we possess, had for its object the worship of the Lord, as God. It was truly a Martyr Church in the sense of a witnessing, testifying Church ; for it testified to and was a witness of Christ, the Head of the Church. It testified to its

full and sincere faith for the true Godhead and the true manhood of Christ. Here, the Church in the East and the West, in its primitive days, was one. One faith, one baptism, and one Lord.

APPENDIX.

(1.) A CREED was undoubtedly formed very early in the Church, based on the baptismal formula — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This gradually grew into the Apostles' Creed. We find in Eusebius, that the synod against Paul of Samosata appealed to an ancient symbol of faith. Tertullian and Irenæus also refer to one. The Creeds of the East and West are in substance the same, recognizing the true Divinity and true Humanity of the Lord. "And this faith," Irenæus says, "the Church preserves, though diffused over the whole world, carefully as dwelling in one house; she believes it as with one heart, proclaims it as with one mouth."

The acknowledgment of the Lord Jesus Christ was the central element of the Creed, the germ around which grew the other parts, and it is found almost wholly in Ignatius. It is attested by the old Doxologies to Christ, which tell us of the ancient faith of the believing Church.

(2.) Eusebius, in his Ecclesiastical History, says: "The mode of existence of Christ is twofold, the one resembling the head of the body, indicating His Divinity, the other compared to the feet, by which He, for the sake of our salvation, assumed that nature, which is subject to the same infirmities with ourselves." Again, He is "the true and only Son of the Father, and the Lord and God and King of all created things, who has received power and dominion with Divinity itself."

(3.) Like all the Anti-Nicene Fathers and Christian writers of that period of the Church, Origen had no belief in the atonement, in the form in which this doctrine was developed by Anselm and the later theological writers of the Romish Church. The Romish doctrine of the atonement is nowhere found in the early centuries of the Christian Church. It grew up under the Pagan influences of ancient Rome. It is the old Pagan doctrine handed down and partially christianized in the Romish Church. As Dr. Stanley intimates, in his *History of the Eastern Church*, we find no traces of substitution, used in its later theological sense, in the churches of the East, during the early centuries of the Church.

(4.) There is a beautiful and simple testimonial in the Epistle of the Church of Smyrna, in these words: "The Jews carefully observed us when we fetched the remains of Polycarp out of the fire (they supposed the Christians would make it an object of worship). They knew not that we could neither desert Christ, who died for the salvation of the entire world of the redeemed, nor worship another. For we worship Christ, who was the Son of God: but the martyrs we love and honor as disciples and imitators of Christ."

(5.) Dorner says: "Irenæus was acquainted with several letters addressed by Polycarp to churches and individuals, which have not been preserved. In a fragment of a letter which has come to us from antiquity, Irenæus, addressing Florinus, says, "I saw thee in Asia Minor with Polycarp, when thou livedst in splendor at the Imperial Court, and tried to gain importance in the eyes of Polycarp. For of that which then happened I retain a better remembrance than of that which has recently taken place: for that which is learned in youth, grows together with the soul, and becomes one substance with it." Then, after detailing

what he remembered of Polycarp — of his walk, of his appearance, of his manner of life, of his discourses to the people, of the accounts he gave of his intimate intercourse with John and others who had seen the Lord, of their discourses, and of that which he had heard from them regarding the Lord, His miracles and His teachings, he adds that what Polycarp had received from those who had themselves seen the Word of Life, as he narrated it, was entirely in agreement with the Scriptures. "Such things I eagerly listened to, even at that time, by the grace of God which was given to me, and wrote them down for remembrance, not on paper, but in my heart: and, by God's grace, I read them there ever afresh and unadulterated."

(6.) Swedenborg, in the course of his theological writings, has given a very full and clear statement of the Doctrine concerning the Lord Jesus Christ. He shows that the doctrine of the Lord's Supreme Divinity is the doctrine of the Sacred Scriptures; and declares that this was the doctrine of the Anti-Nicene or Primitive Christian Church. In that Church, it was known that the Humanity of the Lord is Divine — in the language of the Athanasian Creed, "*by assumption of the Human Essence into the Divine* — into God." The Lord, in His Divine Humanity, now rules in heaven and over the whole universe. Swedenborg affirms that the Christian Church was divided into two epochs or periods — the first period extending to the time of the Council of Nice — and the second from that time to the last judgment, which took place in the year 1757, in the spiritual world. The former period he commonly calls the Primitive Christian Church; the latter, he simply designates the Christian Church. In the former period, the Lord in His Divine Humanity was acknowledged; in the latter period, the Divine was taken away from the Human. It was distinguished between the Human and the Divine. In other words, the Church, in

the second period, thought of the Human in heaven as it was on earth, before the full glorification—before the “Human Essence was assumed into the Divine,” or into God. In this second period, therefore, there has never been any full acknowledgment of the supreme Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ. In Christian doctrine, it has been unlike the Primitive Church. The Christian Church has never been united,—one church,—like the Primitive Church. It has been divided into three great branches,—the Greek, the Roman, and Protestant; having little sympathy or love for each other: each claiming to be the Catholic Church of Christ. It has also been divided in doctrine and faith. In a word, charity has not abounded, as in the ancient Church, and the love of many has waxed cold. Hence Swedenborg makes this remarkable statement in “The True Christian Religion,” No. 597, that, since the time of the Council of Nice, *spiritual temptations have been unknown* in the Church. And the reason is that men have not acknowledged the Lord Jesus Christ, and looked to Him and prayed to Him as God of heaven and earth, and shunned evils as sins against Him. There can be no spiritual temptations when these great primary truths of the Scriptures, and the possession of the true Church of Christ, are not in the minds and hearts of believers.

The doctrine of the Lord in his Divine Humanity, Swedenborg treats as the most important, yea, the fundamental doctrine of the Church. He says the acknowledgment of the Lord as the Saviour of the world is of all things the first and most essential to spiritual life. It is the very life of religion. And the Lord was so acknowledged in the Most Ancient Church, in the Ancient Church, and in the Primitive Christian Church. For a more full statement, and also for the reason for the recognition of a distinction between the Divine and Human, see A. C. 4738.

Thus, according to Swedenborg, the great error of the Christian Church, since the Council of Nice, has been

that they have not acknowledged the Lord in His Divine Humanity, — that He now has all power in heaven and upon the earth. It is true that they have attributed to Him the Divine and human; but the human which they have attributed to Him is that human which was derived from the mother Mary. Hence the blasphemous expressions, which we sometimes see, that she still is the mother of God. While the fact is, that during the process of glorification, He put off the maternal human, and put on a Divine Humanity in its place: or, in the language of the Athanasian Creed, “assumed the Human Essence into the Divine” — made it Divine. So that He now has nothing about Him belonging to the mother, Mary, and she stands in the same relation to Him as all other finite, human, and created beings. This is the reason, too, that He did not acknowledge her as His mother, before He left the world, but simply spoke of her as “woman.”

Swedenborg moreover affirms that since the Last Judgment in 1757, and as a consequence of that Judgment, the Christian Church has changed, and important changes are going on in it. New states are coming upon it. There is much more freedom of thought and discussion of spiritual things. The Church takes a broader view of her own duties and relations to the world, and a profounder sympathy in all things relating to the interests of the human race. And when she is ready and willing loyally to acknowledge her liege Lord as her only God and Saviour, she will become a new Christian Church; become that Church, which is to be the fulfilment of the last of the Divine prophecies of the Holy Word, symbolized under the City New Jerusalem, which John, the beloved disciple, saw coming down from God out of heaven, to take up its abode forever on the earth.