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A  
VINDICATION  
OF OUR  
Blessed Saviour's Divinity, &c.

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A  
**VINDICATION**  
OF OUR  
**Blessed Saviour's Divinity;**  
CHIEFLY AGAINST  
**Dr. CLARKE.**

Wherein is shewn from **SCRIPTURE**,  
(after a Foundation is laid, by proving that this  
**DOCTRINE** is not inconsistent with **REASON**,)  
That He is of the same Essence and Perfections  
with the Father: And that this was the Opi-  
nion of the **ANTE-NICENE** Fathers; and of  
the **COMPILERS** of our **LITURGY**.

AND THE  
Chief **OBJECTIONS** are answer'd.

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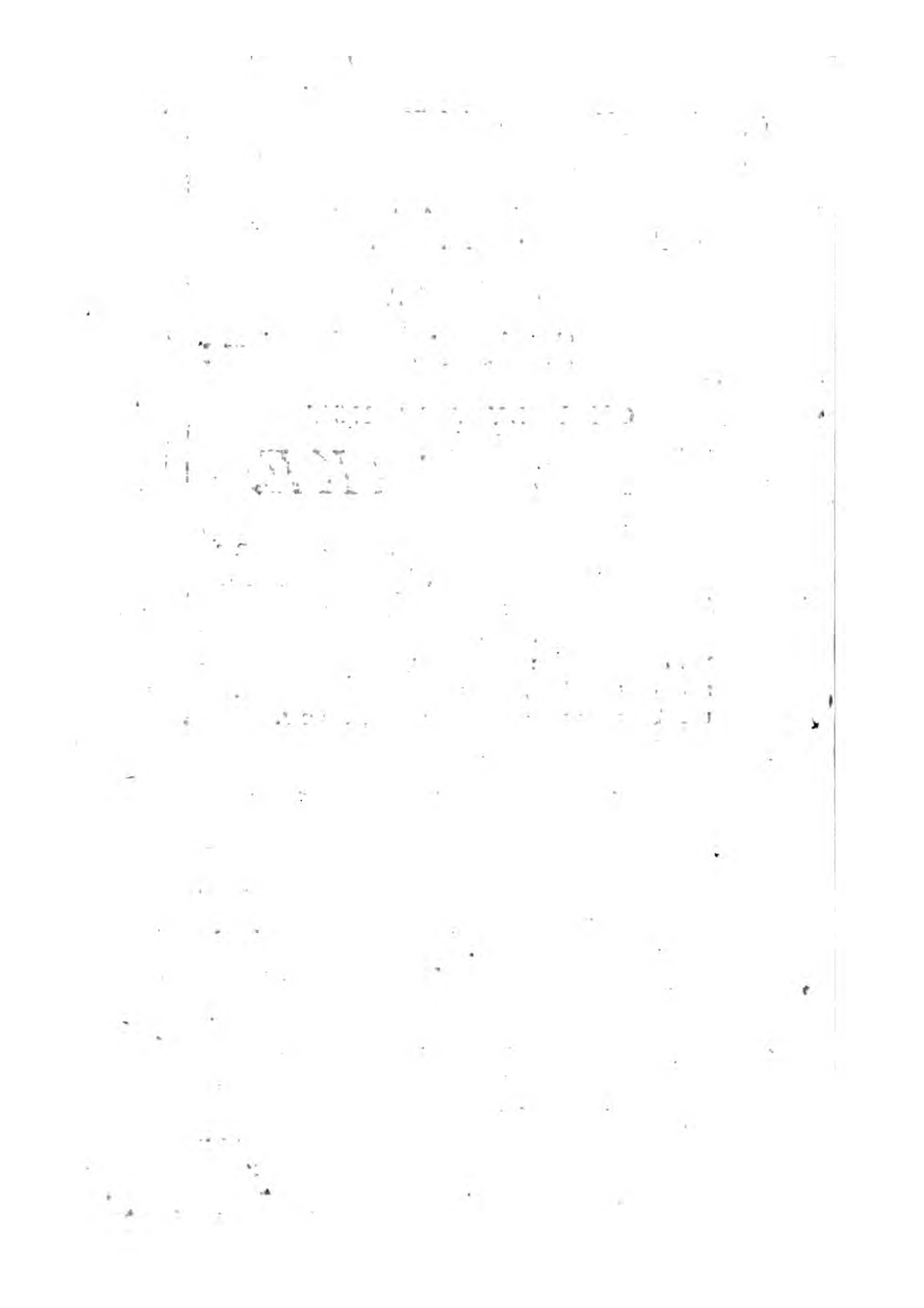
By **EDWARD POTTER**, M. A.  
Fellow of *Emanuel* College in  
**CAMBRIDGE**.

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THE  
PREFACE.

**T**HE greatest Part of this Vindication was drawn up, above a Year ago, in several Discourses, † for the Benefit of a Private Audience. I had no Thoughts Then, of appearing, in this Publick Manner, upon the Subject. But spending afterwards some Consideration upon the Matter; I almost persuaded my self, that the publishing of it might not be altogether unacceptable or unuseful to the World; and, at the last, by the Approbation of the Best Judges I cou'd apply my self to, I was determin'd to venture it Abroad.

I heartily wish it may have Influence and Success, wherever there may be any

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\* Preached in the Coll. Chappel.

## The PREFACE.

*Need of such an Application: But if it contribute to rescue only one Soul from the Pernicious Error it opposes, and save it alive; I shall think my Time and Pains well spent, and shall have my Reward.*

*Tho' this Vindication be design'd, Chiefly, against Dr. Clarke's Scripture-Doctrine of the Trinity; I have confin'd my self to the Defense of our Blessed Saviour's Divinity; being perswaded, that if this Point be gain'd, the whole Controversy will soon be at an End.*

*I am very sorry that Reverend Gentleman, who is so well qualified, by his great Parts and Learning, to promote the Honour and Interest of Religion, shou'd, on the contrary, Oppose the Divinity of its Blessed Author, and break the Unity of the Christian Faith.*

*But he does not This with Impunity. He has a Mark of Royal Displeasure fix'd upon him; and is now before our Venerable Ecclesiastical Synod, for his Heretical Opinions.*

*There*

## The PREFACE.

*There appears an Extraordinary Spirit of Integrity and Wisdom in that Great Council; and a General Disposition to advance the Glory and Strength of Religion: And They will shew, no doubt, a just Indignation against an Heresy that strikes at the Root of Christianity, and saps the Foundation of our most Holy Faith. But it does not become me to intermeddle in this important Affair——*

*Not designing this Vindication for the Publick, when I compos'd it; I was not careful and exact enough in making the References: And being very ill, all the time it was in the Press, I was not able to compleat them. Among the many Instances, therefore, of Candor, which I hope the Reader will shew me; I must desire Him to be Generous and Favourable, in his Opinion of this Matter. There are, indeed, but few wanting, or imperfect. But it must be own'd as a fault, that they are not all full and correct.*

## The PREFACE.

No Body, I believe, will be offended at my Freedom with Dr. Bull's Defense. The greater use a Man makes, upon this Subject, of that unvaluable Treasure of Primitive Antiquity and Sound Reasoning; the more secure he will be of appearing with some Reputation and Success. And that this Treatise is not more correct, and more worthy of the Publick, when I had such a Shining Light, and so Glorious a Guide before me, is to be charg'd upon my own Inadvertency and Injudicious Management.

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### E R R A T A.

PAGE 4. Line 24. after Scripture, a Note Interr. ? p. 18. l. 20. r. Ridicule. p. 28. l. 28. 29. r. Necessary Existence. p. 35. l. 22. r. those. p. 40. l. 30. r. those. p. 61. l. 18. for Instruments, r. Ministers. p. 79. Note l. 3. r. ἄσπετος. p. 103. l. 15. after Substance. ? p. 110. Note l. 2. after ἐξισοθῆς. this point. p. 129. l. 11. after Command it. r. to. p. 132. l. 11. r. and Comfort.

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A  
VINDICATION  
OF OUR  
Blessed Saviour's Divinity, &c.

**I** Undertake, in this Discourse, to prove, that the great and venerable Mystery of our Saviour's Divinity, I mean of his being of one Substance with God the Father (for so I would have the Word all along understood) is a Branch of that *Faith, which was once deliver'd to, and entertain'd by, the Saints,* and by the wisest, learnedest, and best Men of the primitive Church; and by the Compilers of our Excellent Liturgy.

I own with a becoming Deference, and a just Sense of Gratitude, that many Learned Men have appear'd, of late, with great Reputation and Success, in their several Methods, upon this Subject, before me. But I hope it will not be thought Pre-  
B sumption



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sumption in me, after they have *cast in of their Abundance, to cast in my Mite into the Treasury.* When there are such foul Rapes and Outrages committed upon our Articles of Faith, and Means of Salvation; 'tis time even for the meanest and most unworthy of the Ambassadors of Heaven, to employ his one Talent, in his great Master's Service, and earnestly to recommend and propagate *the Faith, which was once deliver'd to the Saints.*

The General Proposition I lay down is This; That Jesus Christ, in Opposition to the *Arians*, and all other Innovators, in this Article of his Divinity, is really and essentially God; or a Being of the same Substance, Properties and Perfections, with God the Father.

And This, I intend to do, chiefly, with regard to a late Book, intitl'd, *The Scripture-Doctrine of the Trinity*; written by a Person of a great Character, for Industry, Penetration and Learning; whom, nothing but the Defense of a most important Truth, cou'd justify engaging with. And if I make good my Point against him, all Heresies, relating to this Doctrine, must fall of Course.

This

This Learn'd Man takes great pains, in his Introduction, to prove by Reason and Authority, That the Bible only, is the Religion of Protestants, and contains all Articles necessary to Salvation; That, in compiling Systems of Fundamentals, we must be guided by Scripture alone. For Forms of human Composition in Religion, are no farther to be regarded, than as they are reconcileable with the Revelation of God, clearly express'd, in Holy Scripture.

Had this Author been writing against the Creed of Pope *Pius* the 4<sup>th</sup>, which contains 12 Articles more, than are, or can be, grounded upon the Word of God; this Introduction had been very suitable to his Design. But when these Remarks and Admonitions introduce a Discourse on the Scripture-Account of the ever Blessed Trinity, in which the commonly receiv'd Doctrine of that Article is oppos'd and exploded; and the Author insinuates, that either the Compilers of the Rule of Faith deliver'd in our Creeds, did not stick close enough to the sacred Writings, or that we have departed from the Original Intention of the Creeds we embrace; we have great reason to charge the Suggestion with Arrogance and Falsehood. For our Church acknowledges, with the utmost



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Veneration and Gratitude, that God has been pleas'd to make a full Discovery of his will to Mankind, in all things necessary to Salvation, in the Holy Scriptures; and that nothing shou'd be admitted as a Rule of Faith, which is not clearly express'd in those Divine Oracles; and with-all asserts, that the Articles of her Creeds are the Dictates of the Holy Spirit, and the Voice of Scripture; and that the Divinity of our Saviour, or the Eternal Godhead of the Son, as is maintain'd by those who are stil'd Orthodox, is one Article of her Creeds, as being part of that Faith, as will appear, I hope, afterwards, *which was once deliver'd to the Saints.*

And what a wild imagination is it in our Author's Introduction, that Men may assent and subscribe, for the sake of Peace and Order, to any Forms of Faith of human Composition; provided they can in any sense at all reconcile them with Scripture. And This, because no Forms must be admitted and comply'd with, which are not, in some sense, agreeable to Scripture.

That no Symbol of Faith is to be receiv'd, which is not clearly grounded upon the reveal'd Will and Declarations of God, is most certainly true; and, that the  
several

*Saviour's Divinity, &c.* ¶ 5

several Articles must be subscrib'd to, in a sense agreeable to the reveal'd will of God, is equally certain; but, to allow Men a liberty of assenting to Forms of Faith, for the sake of Peace and Order, in any sense that may possibly be thought agreeable to Scripture, is to introduce the wildest Licentiousness, in a private Interpretation of necessary Articles and Scripture, and to permit Subscriptions, in a sense agreeable to neither. If the natural and obvious Signification of Words, and the receiv'd Sense of Articles may be departed from, and the Interpretation of Scripture be private and arbitrary, which is plainly allow'd in the Doctor's Discourse, it undoubtedly follows, that the most foreign and unscriptural Construction of an Orthodox Article and the Revelation of God, tho' ever so contradictory to one another, may be perswaded to meet and kiss each other: And then it will be much the same, whether the Church enjoin Articles of Faith of a determinate Sense, or leave People to believe what they will. For instance: An Article of the Church of *England* demands Subscriptions to the three Creeds; the Apostle's, the Nicene, and that, which is commonly call'd, the Athanasian; One Article of which is the Divinity of our Saviour; whom they stile God's *only Son our Lord, God of God,*

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*of one Substance with the Father*; whose Godhead, Glory and Majesty are equal and co-eternal with the Godhead, Glory and Majesty of God the Father. Now 'tis plain, as shall be shewn hereafter, (whatever the Doctor has advanc'd to the contrary) that our Church by embracing these Creeds, especially the two latter, which I shall insist upon, and by enjoining Subscriptions to them, does fully recognize the Divine Nature and infinite Perfections of Christ, in such a sense, as is absolutely incompatible with the Doctor's Notion. And whoever assents and subscribes to this Article, *so* as to be clear of the foulest Prævarication, must do it in the same Extent and Latitude, as the Church maintains. For he that does not comply with this Branch of the Christian Faith, in the same unlimited Perfection, as 'tis *thus* propos'd to him, does not embrace an Article of the *Church's* Faith, but makes one of *his own*. But now according to our Author's Scheme; It is but charging the sound Construction of this Article with Absurdity, Non-sense and Contradiction, and searching Scripture for another Sense, wherein our Saviour may be stil'd the Son of God, without acknowledging his Eternal Existence and Consubstantiality with the Father; and then a Man may safely, for the sake of Peace and  
Order,

Order, assent to this Venerable Mystery of our most Holy Faith.

Such insincerity as this, methinks, exceeds the gross Equivocation and mental Reservation of the Jesuits, and is calculated rather for the Dissolution of the Unity of Faith, and the Bond of Peace, than for the Advancement of Order and Concord. If a Man cannot, after the best Means and Assistances of Enquiry, reconcile Forms of Faith, as the Church intends and maintains them, with Holy Scripture, he ought *ingenuously* to suspend his Assent; and not in the Spirit of Hypocrisy and Dissimulation (as most will interpret it) intitle himself to the Benefit of Subscription, and then *boldly* write against them.

But our Learned Author finding it impossible, in his Judgment, to reconcile the Article of our Saviour's Divinity, maintain'd in an absolute and unlimited Sense, with Scripture and Reason, vigorously endeavours to prove, that the Compilers of our Creeds and Liturgy, could not consistently with those two glorious Lights, intend it of his Eternal Existence and Consubstantiality with the Father.



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For to allow our Saviour to be an Eternal Person, essentially endow'd with the Perfections of necessary Existence, Independence, and the other distinguishing Properties of the Godhead, is to give Him the Honour of a Self-Originated and Self-Existent Being; which is to incur the Imputation either of Sabellianism, by making Him the same Person with Almighty God, under a different Representation; or of Polytheism, by admitting more distinct Essences and Gods, than one.

This Notion of Christ's eternal and necessary Existence, as implying, in the Doctor's Opinion, Self-Origination, and absolute Independence, is to his Scripture *a Stumbling Block*, and to his Reason *Foolishness*, and the cause of the reconciling Doctrine, we meet with, in his Elaborate Discourse.

In order therefore, to give as full and distinct an Answer, as I can, to the Book under Consideration; I shall, First, Explain, and distinguish between, Self-Origination and Self-Existence, as applied to God the Father; and eternal and necessary Existence, as apply'd to God the Son.

*Secondly,*

*Saviour's Divinity, &c.*

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*Secondly*, I shall prove that this Distinction is no Derogation or Prejudice to the Divinity of the Son; but that He is, notwithstanding, really and essentially God.

*Thirdly*, That this account of Christ's Divinity, neither makes Him the same Person with the self-originated Being, on the one hand, nor infers a Plurality of Gods, on the other.

*Fourthly*, That his Titles, Characters, and Perfections in Holy Scripture, do evince his being absolutely and essentially God; To which I shall subjoin the Doctrine of the first and purest Ages of the Church.

And *Lastly*, That the Compilers of our Liturgy did believe Him to be a Being really and eternally God.

These Heads being directly level'd against our Author's Doctrine, there is no occasion to give any farther Account of his Method and Design.

S E C T.

## S E C T. I.

**F**IRST then, I am to explain, and distinguish between, Self-Origination and Self-Existence, as apply'd to God the Father; and Eternal and Necessary Existence as apply'd to God the Son.

It won't, I hope, be here imagin'd, that I am going to *find out God to Perfection*, or to *be wise, above that which is written*, concerning the Mode of Christ's Personal Existence. The Essence of God and the Manner of his subsisting are certainly as unsearchable as his judgments; and Scripture is to be the guide of our Reason, in Religious Speculations, as well as the rule of our Faith and Manners. But when an Article is charg'd with absurdity and contradiction from the principles of Reason, 'tis time to consult the tendency and dictates of that glorious Faculty, and impartially to enquire, what light she will afford us, in clearing up the difficulties, which are urged against a Scripture-Truth.

For tho' the Article of our Saviour's Divinity be purely a matter of Divine Revelation;

relation; yet when his Existence is thus discover'd the Eternity and Necessity of that Existence, as distinct from Self-Origination and Self-Existence, may be the subject of Human-Speculation; but we shou'd never have offer'd at such niceties, tho' ever so well grounded, had not the Enemies of our Christian Faith, made it necessary, and provok'd us to it.

This being premis'd: Let me proceed to the Explaining of Self-Origination; by which we, by no means, understand the production of a thing out of nothing, by its own operation and efficiency; for that implies a possibility of being and not being at the same time, a supposition of action, where there is no manner of existence, which are manifest contradictions. But for want of a better Word to express our Conceptions of this matter; we intend by it, the Existence of something which owes its Being, in no sense, to any Fountain, or Original whatsoever; either in the order of Time, or of Nature and Causality: It implies the Existence of a Being, which was not only from all Eternity; but *so*, absolutely of, and from it self, without any Production, Emanation or Communication whatsoever.

And



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And a Being thus Self-Originated, or owing its Existence to no Production, Emanation, or Communication whatsoever, must essentially and necessarily be Self-existent. For as there was nothing, in the order of time, or of nature and causality, antecedent to its Origination; so there can be no Power without, nor any deriv'd Principle within, to preserve its Existence: But there must be an absolute necessity of Existence originally or eternally founded in its own Essence; by vertue of which absolute necessity, it can no more cease to be what it is, with its Powers and Perfections; than it cou'd prevent being what it is, with its Essential Properties. Its Existence is necessary because 'tis eternal; and 'tis necessary in it self, because it could have it no where else.

These are in short the Notions we have of Self-Origination and Self-Existence, as apply'd to God the Father. Let us now enquire what conceptions we are able to attain, of the eternal and necessary existence of God the Son.

By Eternity of Existence, we mean a Duration of it truly and absolutely Eternal, without any beginning. For let the Existence of a Being be carried back, ever  
so

so many Millions of Ages; yet if it once had a beginning; it has no more Title to a strict Eternity of Duration *à parte antè*, than if it had been but *of Yesterday*; because an Eternity of Duration, upon the supposition of its being once produc'd, must have preceded its Existence, which wou'd as much prejudice its own Eternity, as if it had been of a very late production. And by necessary Existence we here understand such an absolute *αίσις* or relation to Being, as implies an Impossibility of Non-Existence. Such a necessity of Existence, as tho' it be not irrelative and independent, in the sense of Self-Existence, mention'd above, implies notwithstanding an absolute contradiction to a possibility of being annihilated, or alter'd in the Essence or Powers of the Being, to which it belongs. For we do not upon this occasion understand a moral Impossibility of Non-Existence, arising from the nature of the Divine Attributes, and the moral Dignity of a Being; which may stand in so high a degree related and recommended to its Heavenly Father, by its extraordinary Excellences and Perfections; that it may be inconsistent with God's Goodness, Wisdom, or Justice, to destroy its Essence or diminish its Powers. But we mean a natural Impossibility of receiving any change in its Essence or Perfections, by its immediate, neces-

necessary and eternal Origination from that God, who is liable to no manner of *variableness, or shadow of turning*, but is necessarily *the same Yesterday, to Day, and for Ever.*

And, This is the eternal and necessary Existence, which we ascribe to our Saviour Christ, as distinct from the Self-Origination and Self-Existence of his Father.

*The Father is made of none, neither created, nor begotten*, but eternal, of and from Himself, and Self-Existent by a necessity, originally founded in the nature of his own personal Godhead. His Existence supposes no Communication or Emanation, nor any antecedent causality whatsoever; and therefore is absolutely independent and necessary in it self.

*The Son is neither made nor created; but begotten* of his Father by an Eternal Generation, as being a necessary Emanation from Him. He is not Self-Originated; for he receiv'd his Essence and all his Attributes and Perfections by Communication from his Father. Nor is He Self-Existent, in the common acceptation of that Word; for as he receiv'd his Being from his Father, so his own Existence must be founded in the Essence of his Father. But  
not-

notwithstanding this; since the Communication of the Divine Essence by the Father, which was the proper Generation of the Son, was Eternal and Necessary; the Person of the Son, which was that substantial, eternal and necessary Emanation, must have an eternal, immutable, and necessary Existence. Necessary Existence must certainly accompany eternal and necessary Origination; for the *one* is absolutely grounded upon the *other*. When I say that the Son is not Self-Existent, I mean that the Attribute of Self-Existence cannot be affirm'd of the Son, as it supposes Self-Origination to be its immediate principle and foundation; for in that sense 'tis applicable to the Father only. But the Son having the undivided substance, *the fulness of the Godhead* in its Essence and Perfections, necessarily communicated to Him, must receive by that necessary communication, an inherent Power of existing of Himself: For however the substance of the Divine Nature be communicated, or distinguish'd, it cannot cease to be Self-Existent; and therefore 'tis *given* to our Saviour, as 'tis express'd in Scripture, *to have life in Himself*; and with that property, since his Generation as will appear hereafter, was a full substantial Communication of the Godhead, He must have all the Divine Perfections and Attributes in Himself, Self-Origination only



ly excepted, in a compleat and infinite Degree. Yet I choose rather to ascribe Necessary than Self-Existence to Him: Because many, amongst whom is our Author, have promiscuously us'd Self-Origination and Self-Existence; and therefore to prevent our Saviour's being either the same Person with the Father, or a distinct Essence and God from Him, have really made Him no God *at all*. Whereas stiling Him necessarily existent by an Eternal Communication of the Divine Nature is more unexceptionable, and altogether as expressive of his Godhead.

What is here advanc'd, is not design'd for a proof of our Saviour's Divinity; for the proofs of *this Truth* must be fetch'd under my fourth Head from Scripture: But 'tis to shew with the Evidence, that will arise from the second and third Propositions, that what we really think Scripture and our Liturgy assert concerning his Nature and Perfections, implies no contradiction (as our Adversaries pretend it does) to the Principles of Reason.

SECT.

S E C T. II.

**I** Proceed now, Secondly, To prove That this Distinction is no Derogation or Prejudice to the Divinity of the Son.

'Tis matter, I doubt not, of Exultation and Triumph to our Adversaries to be allow'd, that our Blessed Saviour has not the Property of Self-origination, and the distinguishing Character of Self-existence, as 'tis the Immediate and Necessary Consequence of it: They will flatter themselves with the prospect of an easy Conquest, when We disclaim, what They may fondly think, the Merits of the Cause, and raze the only Foundation, upon which His Divinity can be built. But I hope it will appear in the sequel of my Discourse, that this concession is no Diminution of His Divine Character; nor any Prejudice to His being the same God with the Father in Nature and Essence; and in all those Perfections, which are the most distinguishing Marks and Evidences of the Deity.

Necessity of Existence, grounded upon an Eternal and Substantial Communication of the Father, is, as was formerly observ'd, what we apply to the Son; that is, that there could possibly be no point of Duration, in the Unfathomable Eternity of God's  
C Existence

Existence *à parte antè*, in which there was not a Necessary Emanation from Him of Essence and Perfections; which Emanation from Him, is stil'd the Generation of the Son; who, by this Necessary and Eternal Participation of His Father's Essence and Perfections, must be Really and Substantially God.

As on the one Hand; it would have been an act of most Unpardonable Presumption, to assert, by the Light of Unassisted Reason, that there was such a Communication of the Deity; for it is a *Mystery which must have been hid from all Ages, and from all Generations*, and cou'd never have been known by the sole strength of that faculty, *to the Saints on Earth*. So on the other Hand; it is an Argument of the highest Vanity and Insolence, to reject this Doctrine with ridicule and scorn, as contradictory and impossible (without being able to prove it so) when God the Father has been pleas'd to send a Person into the World, with such Exalted Attributes, Perfections and Characters, as are altogether inconsistent with our clearest notions of things, if They do not speak Him really and essentially God.

To explain the Manner of this Communication of the Father, and the distinct  
Sub-

Subsistence and Personality of the Son, would argue a pretence to *such knowledge*, as is much too *Wonderful and Excellent* for us; we cannot attain unto it. Scripture authorizes our stiling Him the only begotten of the Father; by way of allusion, no doubt, to Natural Generations amongst Mankind; but in an infinitely more sublime and perfect Manner; That is, as Man begets his Likeness, in Nature and Properties, a most resembling and exact Copy of his Essence and Perfections. So the Person begotten by Him, Who inhabits Eternity, is the *Brightness of His Father's glory*, and the *express Image of His Person*; which He could no way be, but by a participation of His Father's infinite Excellencies and Perfections.

This Allusion indeed, gives us but a faint Representation of the matter before us; being defective in these two points.

*First*, In an Human Generation, the Son is necessarily Younger than the Father; whereas in the Divine it is not so, but quite otherwise; for *there* the Father and Son are Coeval, necessarily Eternal. But this difference of Effects arises from a diversity of Causes: All Human Generations are Arbitrary and Contingent, and therefore must be consequent, in the order



of time, to their respective Causes; but the Divine Generation, being as necessary as the Being of God the Father, the Existence of the Son cannot possibly be consequent to it, in the order of Time, but must be Coeternal with it. A Cause which is Necessary in any respect, must have a correspondent Effect Coeval with it. Light and Heat, we know, are Necessary Emanations from the Body of the Sun, and always Coexisted with it; and had the Sun been Eternal, these Emanations must have been *so* too. The Cause must indeed be antecedent to its Effect, in the order of Nature: But Antecedency, in the order of Nature, does not alwaies infer Antecedency, in the order of Time; it may only suppose the Existence of a Subject, which is the Necessary Foundation or Emanative Cause of an Instantaneous Property or Effect; so that there shall be a Reciprocation of infering the one from the other; and the Existence of either being suppos'd, the other must necessarily have a Being. Thus the Essence of God is Antecedent, in the order of Nature, to His glorious Attributes, as being the Subject of them. And yet both His Essence and Attributes, are absolutely Eternal and Infinite, and infer one another.

The

The Generation then of the Son being consequent, in the order of Nature, to the Existence of God the Father, need be no Prejudice to His Eternity, nor the least Diminution, in any respect, of His Divine Character.

*Secondly*, In an Human Generation, there must necessarily be a Separation of Parts, and a Multiplication of Essence; but in the Divine, there is no Division of Parts, nor Multiplication of Essence. The Substance of the Deity, being at an infinite Distance, from Mixture and Composition, and absolutely filling all the Regions of Heaven and Earth, and all the Extent of unbounded Space, must be remov'd from all possibility of being Divided and Multiplied. Therefore when we speak of the Incomprehensible Generation of the Son of God, we must entertain no Imagination of any *Τομὴν Μερισμὸς*, or *Ἀρίστωσις*, any *Division, Section or Separation*; but must believe, that the whole Divine Nature is perfectly and entirely Communicated from the Father to the Son; and that the same *Numerical Individual Nature* is in Both, without any difference or distinction.

But, notwithstanding the Insufficiency of this Scripture-Allusion, from an Human-

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Generation, for a full Illustration of the Divine; it enables us to attain a somewhat clearer Conception of Christ's Nature and Attributes. Because according to our best apprehensions of things, the Person begotten, or He who receives His Being, by Generation from Another, must be of the same Essence and Perfections with Him, from whom He so derives His Original. And Even Novatian has this remarkable Passage: \* For as our Reason obliges us to think that Being Man, who is of Human Generation; so the same Reason enjoins, that we look upon that Being as God, who is begotten by God. Or which is the same; if any one be immediately concluded to have the Nature and Properties of Man, because He is born of, or proceeds from, Man; then that Being must undoubtedly have the Essence and Perfections of God, which is born of, or proceeds from, God. A Son, who is the Issue of an Human Generation, has an absolute Title to the Character of a Man, in Substance and Qualities, by a Participation of his Father's Nature. And since we can have no Notion of receiv-

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\* Ut enim præscripsit ipsa Natura, Hominem credendum, qui ex Homine fit; ita eadem Natura præscribit, & Deum credendum esse, qui ex Deo est. *Cap. xi.*

ing Being from Another, by Generation, without a Communication of Nature; no Reason can be assign'd, why the Person, who is of Divine Extraction, by way of Generation, shou'd not have an uncontrollable Claim to the glorious and distinguishing Perfections of the Deity, by vertue of His Divine Generation.

In a word; if the Deity be unmix'd and Spiritual in its Nature, and was from Eternity uncircumscrib'd in Being, which will not be deny'd, upon this occasion; it plainly follows, First, That if there be a Communication of the Divine Essence and Perfections to a Second Person, (and 'tis incumbent upon our Adversaries to prove it a Contradiction, that there shou'd be one) then it must be a compleat Communication of the whole Divine Essence and Attributes; for a simplicity of Nature can admit of no Separation; and infinity is irreconcilable with Multiplication. Secondly, That the Communication of the Divine Substance and Perfections must have been from Eternity; for infinite space being absolutely fill'd, thro' Every moment of past Eternity, with the Divine Essence; 'tis impossible there shou'd be such a Communication in time. The absolute and Necessary Infinity of



God's unchangeable Nature, renders Him incapable of a Temporal Communication of Substance.

If then, our Saviour's receiving His Being from God the Father by way of Generation, supposes a Communication of the Divine Substance (and if it does not suppose that, 'tis impossible in the least to conceive what it means) He must be Necessarily Infinite in Essence and Perfections, and Eternal in *past*, as well as *future*, Duration. Again; if we allow a Necessity of Existence, as apply'd to our Saviour before, and likewise Intelligence, which His works among us are an indisputable Testimony of, those glorious Attributes, which are the distinguishing Marks and Characters of the Deity, may easily be prov'd essentially to belong to Him; as Immensity, Omnipotence, and Omniscience; infinite Justice, Goodness, and Truth, and all other Moral Perfections of the Divine Nature.

That Necessity of Existence, which we ascribe to our Saviour, tho' it be not that Independent Self-Existence, which in the order of our Ideas, antecedently belongs to God the Father, is however an Unconditional and Absolute-Existence, Irrelative

tive to every thing without the Godhead; and consequently, can have no possible respect to any particular Place.

For since this Necessity of Existence is grounded upon a Necessary Communication of the Divine Essence, it must be Commensurate to the infinite Fulness of that Essence, and absolutely the same, as well in all places, as *Yesterday, to Day, and for Ever.*

The Necessity indeed of our Saviour's Existence is consequent, as was said before, in the order of Nature, to the Being of God the Father; but that is not the least Objection or Impediment, to its being Irrelative to Place. The Cause of the Divine Communication of Substance was unlimited, absolute, and necessary, with regard to Immensity.

We cannot give this a better Illustration, than by resuming our former Instance of the Divine Attributes, which are Eternal, and every where necessarily Existent; tho' they be Consequent in the order of our Ideas, to the Divine Essence. And indeed 'tis the greatest absurdity to say, that a Being, which is necessarily Existent, is not Immense; for if it may without a Contradiction be absent from one place, it may likewise

wife be without a Contradiction absent from another, and so from all places; which is expressly repugnant to the Notion of Necessary Existence; as our Reverend Author has prov'd in his Admirable and Immortal, *Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God*. For tho' He chiefly speaks there of the Self-existence of the Deity, yet his Reasoning is equally just of Necessary Existence, as 'tis explain'd here. And 'tis observable that this great Man had another Opinion of the Article before us, when He writ, and publish'd, that Excellent Treatise: For speaking of the Unity of God, he says, ' As  
 ' to the Diversity of Persons in that one  
 ' and the same Nature; That is, whether  
 ' in the Unity of the Divine Nature there  
 ' may not Co-exist with the first supreme  
 ' Cause, such Emanations from it, as may  
 ' themselves be equally Eternal, Infinite,  
 ' and Perfect, by an Absolute and Compleat  
 ' Communication of all the Divine  
 ' Attributes in an Infinite and Perfect Degree,  
 ' excepting only That of Self-Origination;  
 ' as there is nothing in bare Reason, by which it can be Demonstrated  
 ' that there is actually any such thing;  
 ' so neither is there any Argument, by which  
 ' it can be prov'd impossible or unreasonable to be suppos'd; and therefore  
 ' when declar'd and made known to

' us by clear Revelation, it ought to be believ'd.' These are the Reverend Doctor's own words, which sufficiently prove his Orthodoxy then; and 'tis strange that a Man of such early Learning and Penetration, shou'd have just occasion at his Age, to alter his Notions of so Important an Article. But to return.

As the Immenfity, or which is the same, the Omnipresence of Christ is deducible from the fore-mention'd Necessity of His Existence; so his Attributes of Omnipotence and Omniscience may evidently be establish'd upon this Foundation. If He be every where Necessarily Existent, as an Emanation from the Divine Nature, He must undoubtedly have a Title to the unlimited Perfections of Power and Knowledge. Nothing, tho' ever so retir'd or closely transacted, can be conceal'd from his Privity or Knowledge, who is essentially an Intelligent Being, and intimately present to all possible Space: And nothing, that does not imply a manifest Contradiction, (and then one part is absolutely destructive of the other) can be exempt from being an Object of His Power, who is every where necessarily Existent, by enjoying a full Communication of the Divine Nature. And a Being of this Character



rafter must of Necessity be adorn'd with infinite Goodness, Justice and Truth, and all other Moral Perfections. His Omniscience must secure Him from all possibility of deception or mistake; and his Omnipotence, whereby He cannot but be All-sufficient, must render Him incapable of any Temptation of Self-interest, Envy or Malice, or of any unworthy Motive whatsoever; and therefore nothing but the Eternal Nature and Reason of Things can be His Rule of acting; which is, in other words, to be determin'd in Every Exertion of Himself, by the Standard of infinite Goodness, Justice and Truth; for that is nothing else but the Eternal Nature and Reason of Things. But this being so plain and evident, I shall persue it no farther.

Tho' our Saviour then be not Self-originated, as that Property of Self-origination was before explain'd, nor upon that Account absolutely Self-existent; yet His not having that Attribute and its immediate Consequent, Self-existence, so consider'd, is no Diminution of His Divine Character, nor any Objection to His being really and essentially God. For Necessary-existence, which we ascribe to our Saviour, by a Communication of the Divine Nature, and not Self-origination only,

ly, intitles a Being to the most glorious and distinguishing Perfections of the Deity. The First, as well as the Last, is an indisputable ground of Immensity or Omnipresence; and the one, as well as the other, may be prov'd to be a Necessary Foundation of Omnipotence, Omniscience, Justice, Goodness and Truth.

So that the denying of Self-origination and Self-existence, is no Prejudice to our Saviour's being really and essentially God: He having without them all those Attributes and Perfections in Himself, which really constitute the Character of God, and make Him compleatly and infinitely Great and Happy. For Self-origination and Self-existence are only the grounds of Divine Excellencies and Glories, and would signify nothing without them; and the Necessary Existence, which our Saviour Enjoys, is a sufficient Foundation for the same infinite Excellencies and Perfections.

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S E C T. III.

**I** Proceed now, Thirdly, To prove That this Account of Christ's Divinity, neither makes Him the same Person with the Un-originated Being, on the one Hand;

Hand; nor infers a Plurality of Gods, on the other.

First, That this Account of Christ's Divinity does not make Him the same Person with the Un-originated Being.

The *Sabellians*, not being able to solve the Difficulties, which necessarily attend the Doctrine of a Trinity of Persons, in one and the same individual Essence, thought good to reject it; and thereupon maintain'd the Unity of the Deity, both in Essence and Personality. They assert-ed that He, whom we stile the Father, appear'd under different Representations and Characters, and acted the several Parts, which we ascribe to a Diversity of Persons, in the Godhead.

But a Plurality of Divine Persons is so plain in Scripture, *that he that runs may read.* \* *God sent forth His Son, that we might receive the Adoption of Sons; And because we are Sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our Hearts, crying, Abba Father.* Where the Son is distinguish'd from the Father, as sent by Him; and the Spirit of the Son is distinguish'd both from the Father and the Son,

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\* Gal. 4. 4, 5, 6.

as sent by the Father, after He had sent the Son. And this our Saviour has Taught us several times in a Word: as *the \* Comforter whom the Father will send in my Name; † the Comforter whom I will send unto you from the Father; and when the Comforter is come. ‡ Go teach all Nations, baptizing Them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* As certainly then as He that sends, has a distinct Subsistency from Him, that is sent; so true is it, that the Holy Scriptures are a Testimony of a Distinction of Persons in the Deity. And our Doctrine of Christ's Necessary Existence by a full Communication of his Father's Nature, is no just Objection to his distinct Personality. The same undivided Essence of God may be distinguish'd, for any thing that ever appear'd to the contrary, into different Subsistences; Each of which may enjoy the compleat Substance and Perfections of the Whole. Our Adversaries never were, and I'm confident, never will be, able to reduce this to a Contradiction, and shew its direct repugnancy to Reason; and if they cannot, we have no Authority to pervert the obvious sense of Scripture so much, as to disclaim a Diversity of Persons in the undivided Essence of the Deity.

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\* Joh. 14. 26. † Ch. 15. 26. ‡ Matt. 28. 19.



A Mystery indeed it is, and a very great one; but unless we be resolv'd to reject the belief of every thing, that is a Mystery, as to the Manner of it only, both in Religion and Nature; we cannot consistently disbelieve This; it being grounded upon that Authority, which is to *guide us into all Truth*. And as long as the Being of God is the Foundation of all Religion, and the Union of a Corporeal Substance with a Spiritual one, is acknowledg'd in the Nature of Man, we shall be oblig'd to digest Articles, which are great Mysteries, as to the Manner of their Existence. 'Tis impossible for our Finite Reason to Comprehend the Boundless Essence and Infinite Perfections of God; and therefore if no body wou'd own His Being, 'till every Mystery of His Nature and Attributes were explain'd, *Atheism* must necessarily be the Opinion of the whole World. Why then shou'd the belief of a difference of Persons in God's Infinite Essence, which is Incomprehensible to us, be boldly rejected, tho' the thing be sufficiently reveal'd, as we shall see hereafter; when the difficulty of conceiving the Manner of it, is the greatest Objection to it? In this sense, *who has declar'd his Generation?*

I can-



I cannot dismiss this Argument, without observing, that the *Sabellians* with the *Noetians* and *Praxeans* before them, who oppos'd this Doctrine of a distinction of Persons, were no doubt of the Opinion, that the Divinity of the Son and the Holy Ghost was very apparent in Scripture: Otherwise there had been no occasion of recuring to the absurdity of asserting Their *Sameness* with the Father in Person, as well as Essence.

Neither, Secondly, Does our Account of Christ's Divinity, infer a Plurality of Gods.

A Plurality of Gods is the greatest Absurdity in the World; as being a Contradiction to the clearest and most essential Notions, which we have of God; in whose Character, Necessary Existence and Absolute Perfection are most certainly requir'd. But upon the Supposition of two Gods, and if there may be two, there may be two Thousand; They must either be alike in all Things, or unequal in Perfections: Now if One be inferior to the other in necessary Perfections, He can have no Title to the Character of a God, to whose Notion all Infinite Perfections are Essential. If they be equal in all Things, so that neither of them can lay  
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Claim to any kind or degree of Perfection exclusive of the other, then They are Both Omnipotent. But 'tis impossible for Them Both to be Omnipotent; because Each of Them upon this Supposition, enjoying this Attribute in the same, *i. e.* in the most compleat and perfect Degree, They can effectually prevent the Exercise of Each Other's Power; and then 'tis the same as to have no Power at all. So that Omnipotence can be the Property of only one Essence; which in the same Uniform Undivided Manner, must fill Infinite Space, exclusive of Others, of the same kind; and without being of the same kind, two Beings, distinct in Essence, cannot be Gods; for, if They be different in kind, one must necessarily be more perfect than the other; and consequently one of Them cannot be God.

Two Human Persons indeed, being distinct in Essence, must be two different Men, tho' the same in kind; and the Reason is plain; for in all Generations of Human Persons, which are limited in their Extension; there is a Multiplication of Essence, as was observ'd above; and consequently the Son, having a distinct Substance, is not only a different Person, but also a different Man from the Father.

But

But in the Generation of Christ, by a full Communication of the Divine Nature; there being no Division of Substance, there can possibly be no Multiplication of Gods, different in Kind, Essence or Attributes; tho' there be a distinction of Persons; Each of Which enjoying those infinite Perfections, which make up the Character of the Deity, is really God; but being Both united in the same boundless Essence, are One and the same God.

We assert but one Un-originated Being, endow'd in the compleatest Manner, with all possible Excellencies; and 'tis the Unlimited Essence and Infinite Perfections of that Being, which give Him the Character of the One God, and make it impossible that there shou'd be any more. But there may be an Eternal and Necessary Emanation from Him, Equal to Him, in these distinguishing Attributes and Perfections, which prove Him to be really God; and that Being and its Emanation having the same individual Essence, and the same Attributes of Immensity, Omnipotence, and the rest, can be but One and the same God.

Had we asserted two or more Un-originated Beings, whether of the same kind

or not, with Separate and Independent Perfections, in the compleatest Degree; we cou'd not have been clear of the Absurdity of maintaining a Plurality of Gods. For then a distinction of Divine Persons, and a Diversity of Essences, must have been, as in Mankind, the same. But our Doctrine, as we have seen, is chargeable with no such Consequence. We profess, worship and adore only one Supreme, Undivided and Independent Being, distinguish'd into Persons of the same Infinite Essence and Perfections; each of which distinctly consider'd, must necessarily be God; or else, taken together, with regard to their united Substance and Attributes, They cou'd not possibly be one God.

'Tis well known that those of the Heathen World, who held a Plurality of Gods, did esteem 'em to be circumscrib'd in Essence, and limited in Character: As Their *Jupiter, Mars, Pluto, Hercules*, with the rest of their fictitious Deities. And waving the absurdity of Deifying, and Crowning with really Divine Honours, such imperfect Beings; one cannot much blame them for making a good many; for their being circumscrib'd and weak, made it necessary to multiply their Number, that there might be one at least, ready, to aid and assist, in all Places, and upon all Emergences.

But



But our Doctrine laies us open to no Imputation of that gross Heathen Worship; for to us there is but one God, Unlimited in Essence and Attributes; whom we consider and adore under a distinction of Persons; which are severally recommended to us, by the same Undivided Excellencies and Glories.

We cannot therefore, without great unreasonableness, be charg'd with Contradiction, for maintaining a Plurality of Divine Persons in the same Undivided Godhead; because, First, we have good Evidence, as shall be shewn fully hereafter, of its being reveal'd: Secondly, because we are no Competent Judges of a Contradiction in this Case; for the Mode of subsisting in the Divine Nature, is far from being a proportionable Object of our Imperfect Powers. Thirdly, because our Church only asserts three to be one in different respects. Three with regard to the Personal Subsistence; One in respect of the Nature and Substance. A Trinity of Persons; but an Unity of Essence.

What has been said, I hope, is sufficient to evince the Truth of the Propositions, which I undertook to prove. Namely, First, that tho' our Saviour be not Unoriginated, and upon that account Self-



Existent, yet He is really and essentially God, by a full and necessary Communication of the Divine Substance and Perfections. Secondly, that this account of His Divinity neither makes Him the same Person with the Father, on the one Hand, nor infers a Plurality of Gods, on the other. For He is a different Person, by a distinct enjoyment of the Godhead, from the Unoriginated Being; and yet He is the same God with Him, by an Unity of Essence and Attributes

And hence may justly be defended that part of the *Athanasian Creed*, which respects the Divine Character of our Saviour; where He is declar'd to be Coeternal and Coequal with the Father in Godhead, Glory, Majesty and Greatness. For having the fulness of the Godhead by a compleat Communication of the Divine Nature and Perfections, He cannot be Inferior to the Father in any Attribute, which is a distinction of the Deity: By vertue of that Communication, He can be deficient in nothing, which is requir'd to make up the Character of a Being, infinite in Essence and Properties; which is the same as to be Coequal with the Father, in Godhead, Glory, Majesty, Power and Greatness. He is indeed Subordinate to, and upon that account less than, the Father, with regard

gard to His Origination; for He was begotten of Him; but that Subordination infers no Diminution of His Divinity; for Necessary Existence by an Eternal Generation entitles Him to the same Infinite Perfections, which attend the Self-Origination and Self-Existence of the Father. This may receive some Illustration from our Knowledge of Men: Amongst whom the Son is Subordinate to, and in that respect, less than, the Father, being begotten by Him; and yet the Son is as perfect as His Father in Substance and Properties, and inferior to Him in nothing, that enters the Character of a Man. Why then shou'd our Saviour's Subordination to His Father, upon the account of His Generation, which was Eternal and Necessary, cast a Blemish upon His Divinity; or weaken His Title to those Infinite Perfections, which are the Essential Glory and Distinction of the Deity?

The Reverend Doctor has insufferably perverted the sense and intention of this Excellent Creed; as shall be shewn in its proper place.

This Doctrine effectually secures the Father and Son from being of Co-ordinate Divinity; (which the Doctor is deservedly so apprehensive and jealous of;)

Co-ordinate Divinity, in the Sense, (which is the only dangerous one) of different Beings or Deities; distinct from one another in Essence and Perfections: We affirm them to be united in the same undivided Substance; and to be distinguish'd only in a peculiar Manner of Subsistence; and in Their Attributes, which are infinite in Both. We preserve Their Personal Character and Relation, distinct and intire, to Each of Them: The One is the Father; and the Other the Son: The One is Un-originated; the Other receiv'd His Divinity by a full and compleat Communication: And upon this Account, we allow a Subordination of the One to the Other; according to this Personal Distinction and Character. But, how does this prejudice the Divinity of the Son? May He not have been, notwithstanding, from Eternity, Co-essential with the Father; and in the Enjoyment of all the Fulness of the Godhead? As to the Self-origination and Self-existence of the Father, as explain'd before; They are only Modes of Being and Subsistence; and are of no Consideration any farther, than as they are the Foundation of those Natural and Moral Attributes, which are the real Distinction and Glory of the Deity. And all these Attributes, Natural and Moral, which are requir'd to make up the Character of a Being, which  
is

is really and compleatly God, the Son is vested in, by His Eternal Generation and Necessity of Existence. But the Doctor has here another Game to play: He endeavours to confound the Distinction of Being and Person; and will not allow of a Diversity of Intelligent Hypostases, in the same Individual Substance. He saies, 'tis no less than a Contradiction to assert, that there are three distinct Intelligent Persons in the same Individual Intelligent Being; and therefore a Man cannot be bound to believe it.

But the Doctor a little mistakes the Case. We do not affirm, that there are three distinct Intelligent Persons, in the same Individual Intelligent Being; but in the same Individual Being or Substance. That is; That the same Individual Being or Substance is distinguish'd, in an incomprehensible Manner, into Three Intelligent Subsistences or Persons. This Learned Man has not prov'd this Doctrine to be a Contradiction or an Impossibility: And till it be prov'd to be so, we shall think ourselves oblig'd, upon very good Grounds, to embrace it.

If the Doctor shou'd expect us to explain, in what Manner, the same Individual Substance is distinguish'd into several Intelligent  
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gent Persons, we must desire to be excus'd. The knowledge of This must be reserv'd to that Glorious and Happy Day; when we shall have the honour of beholding *God Face to Face*, and of *seeing Him, as He is*.

The Apostle, we find, in an Holy Rapture, declares, that *Great is the Mystery of Godliness; God was manifest in the Flesh*. And truly, if our Blessed Saviour be the Coessential Son of God; that is, a distinct Intelligent Person, deriv'd by Eternal Generation from the Father, according to the Doctrine of the Orthodox; stupendously *Great is the Mystery* of His Incarnation; That He, whom *the Heaven, and the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain*, shou'd assume, and dwell in, a frail mortal Body; shou'd become *Bone of our Bone, and Flesh of our Flesh*; and like to us in every thing; Sin only excepted.

But if He be not *thus* the Coessential Son of God; and if He be not His Coessential Son; He cannot partake, at all, of the Divine Substance; and consequently, must be a made or created Being; where then is the *Great Mystery of Godliness: God was manifest in the Flesh?* If it were a made or created Being only, which was the God, (pardon the Expression) that  
*was*



*was manifest in the Flesh*; it cou'd not deserve this Solemn Exclamation in the Apostle; *Great is the Mystery of Godliness &c.* For a Created or Finite Being to be confin'd to, and appear in, an Human Body, cou'd be no great Mystery.

Let the Doctor talk, as long as he pleases, of the Son's deriving His Being from the Father, in an Incomprehensible Manner; yet if he do not mean, (as there is no Reason to think he does,) that He derives His *Nature and Essence* immediately from *That* of His Father; he cannot perswade me, that he looks upon Him as any other, than a made or created Being. For I think it absurd to admit of a Medium. If he will acknowledge, that the Son is, strictly, of the same Nature and Essence with the Father, the Dispute is at an End; if he will not; I cannot see how he can clear himself of confessing Him to be only a made or created Being; which is the grossest Heresy.

And if the Father and the Son, in the Doctor's Opinion, be of a different Nature and Essence; I do not see how he can be justified, according to his Scheme of the Divinity of a Being, from making Them of Co-ordinate Divinity. He declares that the Divinity of a Being consists,

sists, not in Metaphysical, but Relative Qualities; as in Power, Wisdom and Goodness, &c.

Now the Son, He confesses, is possess'd of all the Relative Qualities, in the highest and most perfect Degree: Therefore, according to this Scheme, (let His Nature and Essence be ever so different from His Father's) He must, by vertue of His Relative Qualities, be of Co-ordinate Divinity with Him.

The Father's being Un-originated and Self-existent, and His Communicating to the Son, All that He enjoys, will not remove this Absurdity. For since God's Metaphysical Qualities, in his Judgement, do not at all concern us; and we are to take an Estimate of a Divine Being, by Relative Properties only; and since the Son is actually vested in all the Relative Properties, in the same Infinite Manner, as the Father is; He must (with regard to us however) according to his Doctrine, be of Co-ordinate Divinity with Him. Tho' by the By, The Doctor can Harangue copiously enough upon the Divine Metaphysical Qualities; when he thinks it will serve his Turn. As appears very plain in his *Reply* to the Excellent Mr. *Nelson* and his

his Friend; and to the Learn'd Author of the *Remarks, &c.* And, if I mistake not, he builds his whole Scheme upon a Principle, as he makes it, in *Metaphysicks*; that there cannot be distinct Intelligent Persons, as was said before, in the same Undivided Substance; which, 'tis incumbent upon him, to prove the Impossibility of.

Having laid this Foundation, by explaining what is properly to be meant by our Saviour's necessary Existence; and by shewing that his Divinity and distinct Personality have no repugnance to any Receiv'd Principles of Reason; I now pass on to shew, That His Titles, Characters, and Perfections in Holy-Scripture, to demonstrate the actual Truth of that, which this Reasoning only proves possible; by evincing Him to be Eternally and Essentially God.

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S E C T. IV.

**I**N the Prosecution of this part of my Discourse, I shall prove, First, From the Honour and Worship, which we are commanded to pay our Blessed Saviour; And,

And, Secondly, From Express Texts of Scripture, wherein He has the Titles and Characters of God, that He is really and essentially God.

It has been prov'd already, that granting our Saviour to be of the same Nature and Essence with the Father; (and it implies no Contradiction that it should be so;) He must necessarily be Infinite and Eternal: The Divine Essence being altogether incapable of either a partial or temporal Communication.

I shall shew here, in the first place, That the Homage and Adoration, which Christ is intitled to in Scripture, is due to His Divine or Metaphysical Essence, and not to any Extraordinary Majesty, Honour and Dignity, confer'd upon Him, by His Heavenly Father.

The Generality of our Adversaries, except the *English Unitarians* in the case of our Saviour's Divinity, do allow Him a just claim to religious Worship and Invocation; and maintain, that it is a Duty necessary to Eternal Salvation, to reverence and adore Him. But then They differ from us, about the Reason of His Title to our Homage and Adoration.

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We assert, that this Honour is due to Him, upon no other Account, than His being of the same undivided Substance and infinite Perfections with the Father. His being *God over all, Blessed for ever,* by a necessary and compleat Communication of the Divine Essence and Attributes must be own'd to give Him an incontestible Title to Invocation and Worship: Whereas our Adversaries contend, that His right to Adoration is no Essential Prerogative or Distinction of His Nature; but a glorious Badge of Honour, and a Mark of Elevation; given Him by God the Father, as a Reward of His great Merit, and a Token of His Boundless Complacency in Him: That His Dominion over the World, and His Command of ev'ry Knee, and of ev'ry Heart, is founded in Grace and Favour; and belongs to Him purely, because God has been pleas'd to *give Him a Name, which is above ev'ry Name,* and to exalt Him to the highest Station and Dignity; and thereupon to ordain, that we should *honour the Son, even as we honour the Father.*

This being the State of the Controversy between us; in order to vindicate our Doctrine and Practice, I shall do these four Things;

*First,*



*First*, I shall shew, What religious Worship is.

*Secondly*, Prove, That religious Worship belongs to God only, upon the Account of His Metaphysical Essence, and the Infinite Perfections which flow from it.

*Thirdly*, That it cannot be alienated by Him, or given to another.

And therefore, *Fourthly*, That it must be Idolatry in Creatures to exhibit it to any Being, which is not really and essentially God.

*First* then, I am to shew, What Religious Worship is. Religious Worship is that, which is properly Divine, or the Worship of God by Prayer; which consists in recognizing His Spiritual and Boundless Nature; His Infinite Power, Justice and Mercy; in humbly offering and dedicating our Selves to His Service, and in directing our Confessions, Petitions, Intercessions and Thanksgivings to Him. It implies a just Reverence and Admiration of God's Being and Attributes; and the acknowledging of our intire Dependence upon Him. It denotes the applying of our selves to Him, for the Removal

moval and Prevention of Evil; and for a Continuance of the Good we enjoy; grateful returns of Praise and Glory for the Mercies we have receiv'd, and the imploring of the Spiritual and Temporal Blessings we yet want, and may reasonably desire. And this is to be done, not only with the utmost Humility and Resignation; but with the greatest Intenseness, and most eager and flaming Devotion of our united Powers; we must Love, Honour and *Worship the Lord our God, with all our Heart, and with all our Soul, and with all our Mind, and with all our Strength.* Religious Worship will not admit of Partiality or Division; but, however it be diversify'd by Variety of Matter, must be directed to that Object only, which is infinite in Essence and Perfections; and must be maintain'd in the utmost Strength and Beauty. Which brings me, Secondly, To prove, That Religious Worship belongs to God only, upon the account of His Metaphysical Essence, and the Glorious and Infinite Perfections, which flow from thence.

It is the great Precept of the Law and the Gospel, that we shou'd *fear the Lord our God, and serve, or worship Him only;* and that for this Reason, *because the Lord our God is One Lord.* The Unity of God

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and His uncontrollable Power, Wisdom and Goodness, are with great Frequency and Emphasis, made in Scripture, the Foundation of all our Religious Addresses, and Divine Performances. *Know this day, says the Lord, and consider it in thine Heart, that the Lord He is God in Heaven above, and upon the Earth beneath: There is none else: thou shalt therefore keep His Statutes and His Commandments. \* I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God besides me; and the People (says the Prophet) shall fall down unto Thee, they shall Make Supplication unto Thee, saying, there is no God else, there is no God. And when Moses exhorted the Children of Israel to Obedience, he says, Hear O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord; and thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thine Heart, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy Might.*

*Lastly, Because it was a matter of Eternal Obligation, and of the greatest Importance to the Honour of God, and the Good of Mankind; this Precept stands in the Front of the Moral Law (which was most Solemnly proclaim'd by God Himself with Thunder and Lightning) thou shalt have none other Gods but me, or before me. I will not trespass on the Rea-*

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\* Isaiah 45. 5.

der's Patience, by mentioning any Passages in the Writings of our Saviour and His Apostles, relating to this Doctrine, who came not to abrogate and *destroy the Law or the Prophets; but to fulfil, explain and enforce Them.*

It appears then plainly from Holy Scripture, that God only is to be the Object of Religious Adoration and Worship; the immoveable Center, whither all our Divine Affections, Love and Devotion, must constantly tend. And the Reason there given, is very agreeable to the Fix'd and Unalterable Nature of Things; which is the Unity of the Godhead: That is, if *the Lord our God, be but one Lord;* or if there be but one Being of Infinite Essence, and all Glorious Perfections, there cannot possibly be any Other, qualify'd for an Object, of Divine Honour and Invocation. For our Addresses suppose the Presence and Knowledge, and Power and Goodness of the Being, to which they are made, or else they would be vain and ridiculous. No Evil could be fear'd from him; nor any Good expected. But the Unity of God, which arises (as was formerly observ'd) from the necessity and infinity of His Being, together with the Attributes of Power and Knowledge, and Justice and Goodness, which are the Es-

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essential Glories and Excellencies of His Nature, render Him every way qualify'd to receive Divine Honour and Worship. He is necessarily present in every place, *beholding the Evil and the Good*, privy to all our Wants, Supplications and Petitions; arm'd with Justice and Power to resent and punish Transgression; and adorn'd with Goodness and Holiness to observe and reward Obedience; and consequently a very fit Being to be dreaded and lov'd, to be address'd and ador'd.

But a Being, which is circumscrib'd in the Extent of His Nature, and limited in the Strength and Perfection of His Attributes, which is a necessary consequence of a Limitation of Essence, is very distant from the Character of an Object of Religious Invocation and Worship. We can never be sure, that a Being circumscrib'd and limited in any Real and Distinguishing Perfection of the Godhead, has an intimate Knowledge of our Spiritual and Temporal Affairs, of the Fervency of our Petitions, and the Sincerity of our Holiness; and that he is resolv'd and able to assist our Necessities, and distinguish our Service. To be qualify'd for all This, requires a most thorough and compleat Acquaintance with all the Concerns and Circumstances of the Creation, and with all the



the Principles and Springs and Motives of Action; which Character no Being has any pretensions to, which is not essentially present with every Spirit, and in every place: It necessarily requires a Nature, which *pierces even to the dividing asunder of Soul and Spirit, and of the Joints and Marrow*; that it may be a *Searcher and Discerner of the Thoughts and Intents of the Heart, and a Tryer of the Reins.*

The great God, whom we serve, and adore, and who is allow'd, on all Hands, to have an Original and Undoubted Title to Divine Honour and Worship, is of this most Glorious and Exalted Character. Not only *the Heaven is His Throne, and the Earth His Footstool*; He is not only present in every Temple, and *in the midst of two or three, wherever they are gathered together*, but He inhabits every Soul and every Heart by His Metaphysical Essence: No Action can be remov'd from His *Spirit*; no Thought can flee from His *Presence*. *The things of a Man knoweth no Man, except the Spirit of Man, which is in Him*; even so knoweth God, but in a more perfect Degree, the Things of a Man, that is, all the Imaginations and Designs of his Mind; because He is in Man, and therefore privy to the least and most transient of his Thoughts.

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The Metaphysical Essence then of God, and the glorious and infinite Perfections, which flow from thence, are the only ground of religious Invocation and Addresses; because He is thereby qualify'd (and cou'd be no other way) to answer all the Ends of Divine Honour and Application.

Again, God is to be lov'd and honour'd (as was observ'd in describing the Nature of Religious Worship) *with all our Heart, and with all our Soul, and with all our Mind, and with all our Strength.* But how can this be done, unless Divine Worship be appropriated to Him, as the only Object of it? 'Tis an Express Contradiction to assert, that we are Oblig'd to lay out all our Powers and Faculties (as far as relates to religious Exercises) in the Love and Honour and Obedience of God alone; and yet that we are commanded, at the same time, to pay equal Degrees of Honour and Service to another Being, really distinct from Him, in Nature and Essence. But I shall have occasion, to resume this Argument, under my next Division.

Perfuant to this Doctrine of worshipping God only, upon the account of His Metaphysical Essence, is it, that \**St. Paul*

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\* Gal. 4. 8.

charges the *Galatians*, when they knew not God, with doing service unto them, which by Nature are no Gods. 'Tis plain the Apostle intends by this reproof and the context, to establish the *Galatians* (who were lately converted from the Heathen Religion to the Christian) in the Worship of the true God, in opposition to the service of those, whom before They had honour'd with Divine Worship, tho' They were not Gods by Nature; and consequently, in the Apostle's Judgment, He, who is God by Nature, and none else, ought to be worship'd. The Nature or Metaphysical Essence of God, is here made the Necessary Foundation of Religious Honour and Service. The Nature, I say, or Metaphysical Essence of God; for tho' the word φύσις, which St. Paul, upon this occasion, makes use of, sometimes signifies the Complexion or Constitution of a Thing, and not immediately the Essence; yet then it imports that Complexion or Constitution, which flows from its present Frame and Texture, and supposes some peculiar Materials or Principles. And so 'tis the same, whether φύσις, in this place, be interpreted Essence, Nature or Constitution.

It appearing, I hope, from what has been said, that Religious Worship belongs to God only, upon the account of His

Metaphysical Essence and Infinite Perfections; (for thereby He is qualify'd to be a fit Object of it;) it will not be difficult to shew, Thirdly, That that Honour and Distinction cannot be Alienated by Him, or Communicated to Another.

Our Adversaries allow Religious Worship Originally to belong to God; and not rashly by Creatures to be transfer'd to Another. But, in their Opinion, 'tis no Incommunicable Honour; for God may if He please, for Extraordinary Reasons, adopt Another, distinct in Essence from Himself, and appoint and constitute Him, an Object of Divine Service and Adoration. And This, say They, He has actually done, in Relation to our Blessed Saviour, whom we are oblig'd to *Honour, even as we Honour the Father.*

But this Opinion is repugnant, First, to the express Declarations of Holy Scripture: Secondly, to the Foundation and Nature of Religious Worship: And, Thirdly, it confounds and destroys the Distinction between God and a Creature.

*First*, It is repugnant to the express Declarations of Holy Scripture; that God shou'd appoint and constitute a Being, distinct from Himself in Nature and Essence,  
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an Object of Religious Honour and Adoration.

'Tis so plain in the Sacred Writings, *that He that runs may read*, how Jealous God is of His Homage and Worship; and how Sollicitous and Provident, upon all Occasions, to prevent its being transfer'd to Another. *Thou shalt have none other Gods but me*, was set by the Almighty Himself, at the Head of the *Moral Law*; not only as a Precept, in the highest Degree, suitable to the fix'd and unchangeable Nature and Reason of Things, and therefore of a Necessary and Eternal Obligation; *the same Yesterday, to Day and for Ever*; but as a Duty, which is the Necessary Foundation of all other; without which, the Substance, Life and Being of Worship and Religion wou'd decay and perish. We are commanded, over and over again, to Honour and Adore God only; because *He is but one Lord, and besides Him, there is none else*. And God declares saying, *\*I am the Lord, that is my Name, and my Glory will I not give to another*: and † *I am He, I am the First, I also am the Last, and I will not give my Glory to another*; meaning in both places, as the context shews, That

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\* Isaiah 42. 8. † 48. 11, 12.



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Glory, which consists in Religious Service and Honour.

Now can it be imagin'd, that a God of infinite Holiness, Truth and Justice, shou'd make such repeated and solemn Declarations, founded in the very Nature and Reason of Things; that He alone will be the Object of Divine Addresses and Adoration, and that He will not give His Glory and Honour to Another; and yet that He has confer'd that Distinguishing Mark of the Deity, a right to Religious Invocation, upon a Being, distinct from Himself, in Nature and Essence? This wou'd be an Imagination, that must derogate very much from those Noble and Sublime Apprehensions of Holiness and Veracity, which necessarily attend just Notions of the Being and Attributes of God.

But, *Secondly*, The Opinion of our Adversaries in this Matter, is repugnant to the very Foundation and Nature of Religious Worship.

*First*, To the Foundation of it. The Foundation of Religious Worship, (as we have seen before) is the Metaphysical Essence of God, together with those Glorious Attributes and Perfections, which flow from it. That is, the Being, which is fit to be the Object of Divine Honour  
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and Invocation, must be really present in every Place, privy to the Thoughts and Intentions of every Heart, and able to assist, reward and punish. Of this Character is the great *Jehovah*, infinite in Essence, Knowledge, Justice and Power. But if these Qualifications be necessarily requir'd to compleat a Title to Divine Honour and Service, 'tis impossible for God to make it over, or communicate it to Another, distinct from Himself; because those Conditions themselves are absolutely incapable of a Communication. God is most certainly oblig'd to act according to the Eternal Relations and Reason of Things, that is, He can do all things, that imply no Contradiction, and nothing that does: But all Essences, except his own, are limited and finite; and therefore at the farthest remove, from a Possibility of receiving those Attributes, which make up the Character of an Object of Worship. And it implies a manifest Contradiction, that God shou'd communicate Perfections to *a Being*, whose Nature is incapable of receiving them. What sounds more absurd, than to say a Being is finite in Essence, and yet has an inherent Power (for such is that of our Blessed Saviour) confer'd upon it, of knowing what is done, and of acting without controul, at all times, and in all places?

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If it be objected, that God may very much enlarge the Extent and Capacity of a Created Being; and then it may be a fit Subject for the reception of those Perfections, which are necessary to constitute and finish an Object of Divine Worship. It may be answer'd; be the Extent and Capacity of such a Being enlarg'd ever so far, it will never be actually improv'd and advanc'd to Infinity; (that Property being consequent to Necessary Existence only;) and therefore it cannot possibly admit those Attributes, which are Boundless and Perfect; And if so, it can never become qualify'd, for Divine Honour and Adoration. But this will appear plainer, by an Answer to another Objection, that may be brought, and is This. We read of many in the Sacred Pages, both Old and New, besides our Blessed Saviour, who had the *Power of discerning Men's Thoughts, of raising the Dead, and healing the Sick*; and if God cou'd communicate, and Man receive, such an Extraordinary Power; where is the Absurdity of supposing the same inexhaustible Fountain of all Perfection, to confer it in that Extent and Manner, which may make it equal to all Objects and Occasions? If He can qualify Men, *to be knowers and searchers of some Hearts, and to recall departed Spirits to their former Bodies*;

dies; it is not impossible for Him, by the utmost Communications of His Glorious Attributes, to enable a Created Being, to be *a knower and trier of all Hearts and Reins*, and to govern and dispose of every part of the World; nay, to *call things that are not, as if they were*, and create them out of nothing; which implies the highest Pitch and Perfection of Power: And then our Reasoning upon the Foundation of Religious Worship, will not prove Christ to be really and essentially God.

To this, I answer, That these Men did not perform these extraordinary and supernatural Actions by a *Permanent and Inherent Power*, communicated to them, at first, by God; but were only Instruments, in His hands, to bring these great and mighty Works to pass. When *the Dead were rais'd*, their Ministry indeed concur'd; they spoke a Word, or made some outward Sign or Application; but the Almighty interposal of the Supreme Being, was constantly, in every case, the Efficient Cause, in producing the Astonishing and Divine Effect. The Power confer'd upon them, did not amount to what we generally call a Commission; for a Man by vertue of a Commission from his Prince, may transact a great variety of  
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Publick Affairs, without His immediate Concurrence, without His Presence and Assistance. But these Men acted by no such Commission; they stood in need, in every instance, of the Divine Concurrence and Interposal. *The departed Spirits were gone to God that gave them,* and therefore cou'd be restor'd by no Power but His Own. And the knowledge they had of a few Men's Thoughts and Intentions, was no *Residing and Constant Power,* given them by their Heavenly Father; but depended upon the immediate Assistance and Communication of the Divine Spirit. To know the Thoughts and Intentions of a Mans heart, without his expressing them, some way or other, requires such an intimate Union with it, as no Being can pretend to, but He who made, preserves and inhabits it. Whereas, the Powers (as shall be shewn fully hereafter) whereby Christ was enabled to be a *Discerner* of all Men's Imaginations and Designs, *to raise the Dead, &c.* were *Permanent and Inherent Attributes;* which they cou'd not be; were not He of the same Essence and Perfections with the Father. Such Powers must undoubtedly arise from a Communication of God's Properties and Excellencies. But such a Communication cannot be made to a Being, distinct from Himself, in Nature and Essence,



sence, so as to make them *Permanent and Inherent*. If it could, it must either be *in whole* or *in part*: But there cou'd not be a Communication made *in whole*; for that wou'd suppose the Divine Perfections to be separable from their proper Subject, and capable of being intirely transfer'd to Another; which is the most flagrant Contradiction. Neither cou'd there be a Communication of 'em *in part*; for that implies their Divisibility: But God's Attributes are as far from being capable of Division, as His Essence is from the same Imputation.

The Powers and Properties, which we, in an imperfect Degree, are endow'd with, are not by a Participation of the Divine Perfections, but entirely by Creation; they are either created together with the Soul, and grow and strengthen with it, or are consequences of its Nature and Constitution; which in this Case amounts to the same. So that, when we say, some of the Divine Attributes are Communicable, as Goodness and Justice, we must not mean, that those individual Attributes can be imparted to us; but that they have some Resemblance, in kind, to those Properties in us; Whereas Unity and Necessity of Existence, which are stil'd Incommunicable, bear no Proportion to any Created Per-

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Perfection. Our Saviour then having those Perfections, which could; neither be Created, nor Communicated by God to a Being, distinct in Nature and Essence, from Himself, must necessarily be of the same Substance with Him, and consequently every way qualify'd for an Object of Religious Worship.

*Secondly,* The Tenet of our Adversaries is repugnant to the Nature of Divine Honour and Adoration. The Great God of Heaven and Earth, demands Worship from all our Powers and Faculties, with their utmost Strength and Intension; no part of our Constitution must be employ'd in Divine Service and Devotion to another Being; nor any Degree of Religious Honour and Invocation given from Him. But if Christ be of a Nature, different from the Father, as He must, if He be not of the same Substance with Him, we are under an Obligation to Worship two Beings distinct in Essence, *with all our Heart, and with all our Soul, and with all our Mind, and with all our Strength.* That is, we are oblig'd to pay all our Religious Worship to One Being, and all of it to Another; to give all the Divine Honour, we are capable of expressing, to One Essence, and let it terminate there; and all of it to Another, and let it terminate there; which

which is a manifest Contradiction; and yet upon this Supposition it must be so; or else we shall not *Honour the One*, as we *Honour the Other*; which Scripture commands us to do.

Whereas, if our Saviour be allow'd to be of the same Substance with the Father, we are clear of this Contradiction: Divine Worship may then be paid to Each Person distinctly, in the most Comprehensive and Perfect Manner, we are able; for it will all terminate on the same Essence, or the same God. It will lose nothing, upon this Scheme, by Division; but, as a River parted and uniting again, is of the same Strength and Power; it will meet in one Undivided and Infinite Being, and retain its Vigour and Efficacy.

*Thirdly*, The Opinion of our Adversaries confounds and destroys the Distinction between God and a Creature. Our Notion of God, is, that He is a Being Uncircumscrib'd and Infinite in Essence, and all Glorious Perfections; and 'tis the Character of a Creature, to be imperfect, finite and dependent. This is the receiv'd and fundamental Distinction between these Beings. But if Men can once persuade themselves, (as our Adversaries pretend they do, in the case of our Saviour,) that

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a mere Creature can be exalted to the Character of a real and true God, advanc'd to the Honour of sitting at *the right Hand of Majesty on High*, and by a Communication of infinite Perfections, render'd a proper Object of Religious Worship; it must be impertinent and ridiculous to make, or defend this Distinction. Right Reason seems to teach, that the Distance, between God, and the most Exalted of Created Beings, is Infinite; as let us go ever so many Millions of Ages back, we shall yet be infinitely short of Eternity. But upon the Scheme of our Adversaries, the Approaches of a Creature to the greatest Glories and Excellencies of God, are indeterminate and uncertain: He may be imperfect and finite one day, and absolutely Perfect and Infinite the next. This Doctrine wou'd tempt one to conceive either too dishonourable Notions of God, or too sublime ones of a Creature; either that God can work Contradictions, or that He is not much Superiour to *the Work of His Hands*.

Religious Worship then, belonging to God only, upon the Account of His Metaphysical Essence, and the Glorious Perfections, which are founded in it, cannot be communicated by Him to another Being, distinct from Himself in Nature and  
Essence;



Essence; as appears from the express Declarations of Holy Scripture; the Nature and Foundation of Divine Honour; and the Essential Distinction between God and a Creature; therefore our Saviour, being intitled to an Equal Share of Religious Worship with the Father, must be of the same Nature, Essence and Perfections with Him; and for that Reason, as was formerly shewn, Necessary and Eternal in Existence.

It follows hence, That it must be gross Idolatry in Creatures, to exhibit Religious Worship to a Being, which is not really and essentially God: Which is the Fourth and Last Particular I propos'd; and I need not spend many Words upon it.

Idolatry consists in giving Divine Worship, either, to a Being, which is not God; or, to One, which is not thought to be God; tho' He be really so.

'Tis this latter Sort of Idolatry, which we charge upon our present Adversaries; and therefore to this I shall chiefly speak.

They assert our Blessed Saviour to be God, only by positive Institution; with-

out any Natural and Uncontroulable Pretensions to that Character: But must it not be unpardonable Sacrilege to rob God Almighty of half His *Honour and Glory*, and give it to a Being, which they maintain to be a Creature; or to a real and true God, as they affect to call Him, who however is *factitious, and but of Yesterday*? If *We* must not give God's Glory, because *He* will not, to Another; if we must not *Worship a Creature, besides the Creator, who is God Blessed for ever*; if we must not honour those with Divine Service, *which by Nature are no Gods*; it must undoubtedly be gross Idolatry to pay Religious Worship to One, whom they assert to be God, not by Nature and Essence, but only by Divine Appointment and Constitution. That Christ is really and essentially God, will by no means mitigate the Charge of their Idolatry, but be a great Aggravation of it. They divest Him of the Honour of being *One with God*, of His Divine Essence, and Infinite Perfections, and degrade Him to the Character of a Created Being, and then fall down and worship Him. Which is worse Idolatry, than giving Divine Worship to a mere Creature, under a false Perswasion either of its Being a God, or of Doing God Honour by it: For, in this Case, Men only mistake the Object of

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Worship, or misplace their Zeal; but in the other, they impudently pull down and destroy *the God*, and then absurdly worship *the Creature*. And therefore our Adversaries are more inexcusable, than the Generality of the *Heathen* and *Romanists*; who either think the various Beings they worship to be true Gods, or by this means to do honour to Him, who is really so; or to promote the Constancy, Strength and Fervency of Divine Worship; and do not, with our Adversaries; industriously deny *a true God*, and pay Religious Honour to *a false One*; which our Saviour must be, if He be not (as They hold, He is not,) really and essentially God.

The Worship of Christ being commanded by God Himself, will not render their *Idolatry* more excusable, than *that* of the *Heathen* and *Romanists*; for which there is no Justifiable Colour from Scripture or Reason; till they can prove, (what they will never be able to do) that that Worship is not therefore commanded, because His Divine Nature gives Him a Title to it.

I pass on now, *Secondly*, To prove from Express Texts of Scripture, wherein Christ has the Titles and Characters of God, that He is really and essentially God.

It was frequently insisted upon by the Primitive Fathers, and has been since, by many Learned Men, that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, apply those Names and Characters to Christ, which are Incommunicable to any, but to God, and are the brightest Evidence and Distinction of the Deity.

And surely nothing can more clearly demonstrate the Divinity of a Being, than to be describ'd by such Appellations and Characters in *Holy Writ*, as denote a Necessity of Existence, a strict and proper Eternity; or any other Attribute, which Scripture appropriates, and Reason informs us, can belong to God only. That our Saviour is describ'd in *Holy Writ* under such Appellations and Characters, as clearly evince His Divinity, or His being of the same Glorious Essence and Perfections with the Father, is now to be prov'd.

I shall begin my Argument for clearing the Truth of the Proposition, before us, with Christ's being stil'd *Jehovah*, in the Sacred *Writings*. 'Tis well known to those, who have any Acquaintance with the Hebrew Language, that the Name, *Jehovah* is taken from Being and is the same as  $\text{יהוה}$   $\text{אני יהוה}$  *ero qui ero, I am that I am*. That is, the Person here mention'd, styles Him-



Himself a Being, of whose Essence it is to Exist; and therefore calls Himself, *I am that I am.* His speaking in the future tense, is a Mode of Expression in the Hebrew Language, which implies a Necessity of Being, or an Eternal Duration; for it signifies His containing in Himself the Reasons of *Future*, as well as *Past*, Existence; which must be Necessary in Each Respect; or else His assuming this distinguishing Appellation can be justifiable by no Authority whatsoever. And 'tis well known that the *Jews* had such an awful Regard and Veneration for this Tremendous *Name* of God, as expressing at once His Essence and Eternal Existence, that they very seldom mention'd it; and when they did use it, 'twas with a most profound Respect and Religious Dread. They esteem'd it to be Incommunicable to any Being, but the Supreme God; whose Property it was to be Necessarily Existent; and therefore stood in the utmost abhorrence of a freedom with it.

That this Title is apply'd in the Writings of the Old Testament to God the Father, the first Person in the ever Blessed Trinity, is unquestionably true, and agreed on all hands: And that 'tis assum'd by a Person, in the same *Divine Oracles* Numerically distinct from the Father, is a

Truth, which may be prov'd beyond all Reasonable Contradiction; which Person was believ'd, by the Primitive Fathers, to be *the Son of God*. 'Tis plain the Angel, \* *which appear'd to Moses in a burning Bush*, was the same Person that stil'd Himself, † *the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob*: And that gave Authority to *Moses* to tell the Children of ‡ *Israel* that His Name is אֲנִי אֲהִיָּהּ אֲנִי אֲהִיָּהּ *I am that I am*; that, *I am*, sent him unto them; and that This, meaning, § *Jehova Elobe, is His Name for ever, and This is His Memorial unto all Generations*. 'Tis plain, I say, that the Person, which begins, continues all along, the Conference with *Moses*; and therefore He, who has the Appellation of *Angel*, at the beginning, afterwards assumes the Character of *the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob*, and stiles Himself, *Jehovah I am*. Titles surely too great for any Being, that is not of the same Glorious Nature and Perfections with Him, who is Infinite in Essence and Attributes, and *the same Yesterday, to Day, and for Ever*. And that He, who discourses with *Moses* and distinguishes Himself by these Titles and Characteristics of the Deity, is not the Un-originated Being, or

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\* Exodus. 3. 2. † Vers. 6. ‡ Vers. 4. § Verse 15.

God the Father, but a Person distinct from Him, is evident from His Being call'd מַלְאָכִים which signifies a Legate, a *Messenger*, or as we render it, an *Angel*. For 'tis highly absurd to say, that a Person, who is sent and commission'd by another, is not Numerically distinct from Him, by whom He is employ'd, and authoriz'd to discharge an Embassy.

'Tis said, \* *the Lord rain'd upon Sodom and Gomorrah Brimstone and Fire from the Lord out of Heaven*. The Lord who rain'd Fire upon *Sodom*, and the Lord from whom He rain'd the Fire, are, as *Justin Martyr* saies, † *two Persons*: The One was on Earth, the Other in Heaven; and therefore They must be Lords, Numerically distinct from Each Other. And yet, They are but one Deity, Both of one Undivided Substance: The Lord in Heaven was Lord, and the Lord on Earth was Lord; and yet in Nature and Essence they were but one Lord: *The Lord our God is One Lord*: Lord in each part of the verse is call'd by the incommunicable Name, *Jehovah*; which according to the Notions of the *Jews*, and of the Primitive Writers, in the Christian Church, denotes the Supreme Deity; which They cou'd Both be no otherwise,

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\* Genesis 9. 24. † Δύο πρόσωπα.

than as they are of the same Undivided Substance.

The Prophet *Isaiah* tells us, that the *Name* of our Saviour *shall be call'd wonderful, Counsellour, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace:* Titles surely too great for a Being inferior to the Supreme God in the Essential Characters of His Deity. I shall not trouble the Reader with any more Passages out of the Old Testament;

But proceed to enquire into the Evidence we find in the New Testament of our Saviour's Divinity. We may reasonably think He wou'd by no Means *leave Himself without witness*, in a point of such an Extraordinary Nature and Importance; as whether He be necessarily Infinite in Essence and Perfections or not? As, on the one Hand, if He be from Eternity, in a strict and proper sense, of the same Substance and Attributes with the Father; we may without presumption expect clear Testimony and Assurance of it, from Himself and His Holy Apostles; to raise in our Minds just apprehensions of the Excellency and Dignity of His Person, and to possess us with the highest Notions of the Price and Value of our Redemption by Him; and thereby to ascertain our  
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Faith, and influence our Conduct. So, on the other hand, if He be a Fictitious and Temporary Deity, as He must, if He be not Co-eternal and Consubstantial with the Father, we cannot suppose His *Modesty and Humility* wou'd suffer Him to leave such Expressions and Characters upon Record, as wou'd easily and naturally lead His Disciples into a Belief of His being equal to God, in Nature and Perfections.

When ever His Followers form'd a design of paying Him more Honour on Earth, than was absolutely consistent with the intention of His Commission, and the State of His humiliation; He rejected their Proposals, and discountenanc'd their Attempts. When they had thoughts of making Him a King, He plainly tells them, His *Kingdom is not of this World*: How often do we see Him endeavouring to avoid the Admiration and Applause of Men, and ascribing the Glory of His Actions to the Presence and Assistance of His Heavenly Father? Nay, lest *the Paps He suck'd, and the Womb that bare Him* shou'd rise too high in Mens Esteem and Veneration, He diverts them from fond Speculations of that Nature, to matters of a Spiritual and Eternal Importance. Whereas, He and His Apostles, have given such Testimony to His  
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being One in Nature and Perfections with *the great King of Heaven*, as sufficiently proves that Fundamental Article of our most Holy Faith: And when He found His Discourse was leading His *Audience* into such a Conception of His Dignity and Extraction, He is so far from discouraging and suppressing their Opinion (which must be a Pernicious and Damnable one if false, and therefore by no means to be countenanc'd by *the Blessed Jesus*;) that He still more clearly expresses and asserts His Divinity; as we shall see hereafter.

Having premis'd this in General; I hasten to the producing of those Texts of Scripture in the New Testament, which in the Judgment of Primitive Antiquity, do evince our Saviour to be One with the Father in Substance and Attributes. I do not intend to examine all the Texts our Reverend Author has laid together; but only such of them as make most for, or against, the Doctrine, I am now defending; and shall subjoin some Testimonies of the *Antinicens* Fathers to each part of my Discourse.

I shall endeavour to prove these three things. *First*, an Unity of Nature between God the Father and God the Son.

*Secondly*,

*Secondly*, The Eternity of the Son's Existence.

And *Thirdly*, His Omniscience and Omnipotence.

I do not design to enter into an Examination of all the Divine Perfections; and shew, that Scripture and Primitive Antiquity ascribe them to our Saviour: If these I have mention'd be clearly prov'd to belong to Him, the rest, I doubt not, will be granted of Course.

And, First, I am to prove an Unity of Nature between God the Father, and God the Son. The first Testimony I shall bring of this Unity, is the beginning of St. John's Gospel: *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* That *in the beginning* is design'd here to denote Eternity, shall be prov'd under the next Head. That the Term, *Λόγος*, refers to Christ, is acknowledg'd by all, that Subscribe to the New Testament: But whether it be intended to signify Him, as a Substance Pre-existent to the Creation of the World, or a Divine Quality only informing a Man; or if such a Substance, whether of the same Nature and Essence with His Heavenly Father, and a distinct Person from Him

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Him; not to mention now, whether He be Eternal, are Questions, which have much disturb'd the Peace and Happiness of the Christian Church. But that He is a Substance Pre-existent to the Creation of the World, and not a Divine Quality only informing a Man, might be clearly prov'd from the Words I have Quoted, and the Verses following, and from a great many passages of Holy Scripture. But this I shall pass over, as being superseded by what I promis'd to shew.

To apprehend the Acceptation of the Term, *Ἀβρῶς*, so frequent in this Chapter of St. *John*, 'tis expedient to enquire into the Reason of his using it; which was with Regard to *Jews, Gentiles* and *Hereticks*; but more especially to the latter. We are assur'd by the united Testimony of Learn'd Men, that the *Chaldee Paraphrase* and the *Jewish Targums* make the word of *Jehovah* an Appellation of the same Importance and Extent as *Jehovah Himself*, and yet a Person distinct from Him. As the *Word of Jehovah rain'd down Fire from Jehovah upon Sodom*. \**The Word of Jehovah shall be my God*: And in the *Psalmist*, instead of, *The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my Right Hand*;

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\* Genesis 19. 24.



They render it, *The Lord said unto His Word, sit thou on my Right Hand.* There are many instances in the Old Testament, to the same purpose; but these are sufficient Evidence, that the *Jews* gave the Title of *Word*, to a Person distinct from the Father, and yet equal to Him in Greatness and Power.

As for the *Heathen*; the greatest Masters of Wit and Reason among them, call a Divine Person by the Title of *Λόγος*. *Clement of Alexandria* records a Passage of *Orpheus*, the most antient of the Greek Sages, to this Purpose: \* *Looking up to the Divine Word.* And *Hermes Trismegistus*, as He is cited by *St. Cyril*, in his first Book against *Julian*, says thus of God; † *His Word proceeding from Him is His Fruitful and Natural Son.* *Plotinus* calls the Son of God by the Name and Title of *Λόγος*. And also ‡ *the Psyche or Soul is the Word, and a sort of Energy of the Mind; as He, that is, the second Hypostasis of the Trinity, is the Word and Energy of the First Good.*

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\* Εἰς δὲ λόγον ἦσαν βλέψας. p. 48. † Ὁ λόγος αὐτῶν  
 σωτηρίας παντὶ ἀνθρώπῳ, ἐπὶ γόνιμος γνήσιος υἱός.— ‡ Οἷον ἐστὶν ἡ  
 ψυχὴ λόγος αὐτῶν, ἡ ἐνέργειά τις, ὡς περὶ αὐτὸς ἐκεῖνος, 5. Ennead.

And *Amelius* Contemporary with *Plotinus*, and the great Admirer and Expositor of the *Platonick* Philosophy, says, as he is cited by *Eusebius*, *St. Cyril* and *Theodoret*, \* *This was the Logos or Word, by whom existing from Eternity, all things were made, &c.*

Hence it appears, that the Wisest among the *Heathen*, not only had a Notion of a Plurality of Persons in the Deity, (which was owing, no Doubt, either to Tradition, or to an imperfect Knowledge of the *Jewish* Dispensation;) but that They call'd that Divine Hypostasis, which was an immediate Emanation from the First, by the Title of *Logos*.

*Lastly*, *Hereticks* had contriv'd an astonishing and absurd Genealogy of Divine Beings. They fancied the Foundation and Original of all Things, to have begun a Series of Deities, of various Orders and Distinctions. To these Deities They gave the General Appellation of *Æons* or *Ages*, but assign'd to Each of them a particular Name and Title, according to their Different Characters and Provinces of Action. One of these Emanations

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\* Οὗτος ἄρα ἦν ὁ λόγος, καθ' ὃν αἰεὶ ὄντα, καὶ γενόμενα ἐγένετο, &c.

tions they call'd by the Name of *Logos*; which together with *Zoe*, was the cause of all things, that were afterwards produc'd into Being. Now 'tis very probable that St. *John* had a view to all these, *Jews*, *Gentiles* and *Hereticks*, in fixing upon the Term of *Logos*, to Express the Dignity and Nature of our *Blessed Saviour*.

They all gave, (as we have seen,) this Name to a Divine Being: And therefore it very much became the Wisdom of the *Evangelist* to make choice of that Term, which they were all acquainted with; in order to prove that all those Perfections, which They truly ascrib'd to the *Λόγος*, did really meet in the Character of the *Messias*; and to rectify several Mistakes in their Apprehensions of this Matter. 'Tis very probable, I say, that St. *John* had an Eye to all these, when He singled out the Term of *Λόγος* to denote the Person of the Son of God: Because They all gave it to a Divine Person, and consequently were unanimously prejudic'd in favour of it: But in an especial Manner to those *Hereticks*, who entertain'd that wild and stupid Notion of *Æons*; against whom we have the Express Testimony of *Irenæus*, that St. *John* level'd this part of His Gospel.

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Let us enquire then what Evidence the *Evangelist's* applying the Title of *Λόγος* to our Saviour, in the foremention'd views, is of His being of the same Nature and Essence with God the Father.

The Learned among the *Jews* look'd upon the *Word of Jehovah*, as an Appellation of the same Importance and Extent as *Jehovah Himself*: And the wisest *Heathens* esteem'd the *Νῦς* or *Λόγος* (for They generally us'd these Terms promiscuously) to be a Being of the same Majesty and Power as the Supreme God.

Now St. *John's* using a Title, They so well understood, to express the *Messias*, was a very likely way to remove Their Prejudices, and to make Them *Converts* to the *Christian Faith*; by shewing them, that the Person, who had lately appear'd and convers'd upon Earth, in the Name and Character of God Incarnate, was the *Λόγος* or Word, which They had so great an Esteem and Veneration for. If Christ be really and absolutely God, this was a wise and admirable Method, to bring them over to His Institution, and to render Them sound and Orthodox in their Faith; to induce them to the acknowledgment of His Works and Doctrine, and to give them just Apprehensions of His *Person*.

But



But if He be not of the same Nature and Essence with the Father; the *Evangelist* had scarce chose a Title, which wou'd very probably lead them either into believing the contrary, or into the Gross and Fatal Error of Polytheism, *viz.* of having more un-originated and independent Gods than One. This 'tis reasonable to think it wou'd do; because they look'd upon that Term as signifying a Divine Being of the same Perfections and Character with the Supreme God, and a Distinct Person from Him: And therefore St. *John's* applying it to Christ, (considering withal the other Divine Characters he frequently gives Him,) wou'd naturally induce them to believe Him, to be either of the same Substance with the Supreme God, or another Un-originated and Independent Being. So that, unless we can imagine Him to use a Term, which in all likelihood wou'd lead them into *Polytheism*, we must conceive his Application of it to Christ to be an Argument of His Being of the same Nature and Essence with His Father.

And if we shou'd take the *Jews Word of Jehovah*, and the *Heathen λόγος*, according to the Opinion of some Learn'd Men, for a Quality only, or a Property of Almighty God; 'twill be of no Validity

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or Weight against us. For then St. *John's* using it, in this Manner, must tend either to persuade them, that He is nothing but a different *Mode and Denomination* of the Father; and so to confirm them in that Heresy, which was afterwards call'd *Sabbellianism*; or else to prove to them, that He was not a Quality only or a Property of God, but a Substantial and Distinct Person in the Deity. To apply it upon this occasion in another Sense, than as a Quality only or Property of God, or as a Divine Being really and essentially God, wou'd have been to give it an Acceptation, which they knew nothing of, and without any Mark or Character, by which they might apprehend, what that *new Acceptation* shou'd be. But, 'tis plain, St. *John* does not apply this Title to Christ, as a Divine Quality only, or a Property; because he ascribes Personal Qualities to Him, and proves Him to be a Distinct Hypostasis from the Father: Therefore it must be given Him as a Divine Being, really and essentially God; not of a different Nature from the Father, (as has been prov'd before,) but of the same Substance with the Father.

As for those *Hereticks*, who maintain'd that Senseless Genealogy of Deities call'd *Aeons*, of which the *Λόγος* was one; it  
was

was agreeable to St. *John's* design, with Regard to them, to apply the Title of *Λόγος* to Christ, if He be really and essentially God, and not otherwise. He intended to bring them off, from their conceit of several Divine Emanations, to the Acknowledgment of the true *Messias*, who enjoy'd all those real Perfections, which they, thro' a vain Imagination, ascrib'd to *Fictitious Deities*: He alone was really *the Life, and the Light, and the Fulness, and the only begotten of the Father*; which glorious Names and Titles with many *more*, they had given to their Imaginary *Æons*. Now if the *Λόγος* be truly and absolutely God; This was a good Argument, to reduce those *Hereticks* from their wild and groundless Opinion, by proving all those Sublime Characters, which they gave to different Powers and Emanations, to belong to One Being, who is the Son of God, and the Substantial *Λόγος*.

They look'd upon their *Æons*, in all probability, as imperfect Beings and for that Reason shar'd out Powers and Perfections among Them, according to Their respective Capacities, and assign'd Them peculiar Stations to act in. Now for St. *John* to apply the Title of *Λόγος*, together with all those Attributes and Characters, ascrib'd to Him in this Gospel, to a

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Being, which is not absolutely God; had been the way to confound and shock, and not to satisfy and convince Them: Because it had been to give those Powers and Perfections to a Nature, which, in Their Judgment, was not capable of receiving Them: As our Saviour's cou'd not be, were He not truly and absolutely God. If, in their Apprehensions, on the other Hand, those *Æons*, were Real and Perfect Deities, St. *John's* styling Christ by the Title of *Λόγος*, was, on purpose, to confirm and improve Their Opinion of the Divinity of *that particular Emanation*; by shewing all those Powers and Attributes, which they had thinly scatter'd among many Divine Beings, to belong really in the compleatest Degree, to Him alone: And consequently that they ought to reject all the rest, as Superfluous and Insignificant; and adhere only to the *Λόγος*, who was *the Life, and the Light, and the Fulness, and the only Begotten of the Father.*

So that upon the whole; it had not been Prudent for the *Evangelist* to give the Title of *Λόγος* to Christ, if He be not Essentially God; which He can be only by being of the same Substance with the Father. And, that He is really and absolutely God, plainly appears from the Passage of St. *John*, now under Consideration; *The Word was*  
with



*with God, and the Word was God.* The Clause, *the Word was with God*, leaves no grounds for confounding the Distinction of Father and Son, and making Them (as some notwithstanding, absurdly have done) only different Denominations of the same Person. *To be with God* is not here spoken of a Divine Property, as Wisdom or Justice may be said to have been with God *from the beginning*; but, as appears from the Description, refers to a Person: But for One Person to be with Another, as *the Word with God*, necessarily supposes a distinction of Persons. And the next Expression, *The Word was God*, is an Evident Testimony that Christ is essentially God. When the Evangelist had assur'd us that *the Word or Christ was with God*, He immediately subjoins, *and the Word was God*.

He must be guilty of an unpardonable Impropriety in Language, if the Term, God, in the last Clause, be not of the same Signification and Latitude, as in the former. The *Word* is stil'd God, with as great an Emphasis and Authority, as the Father is; and why the Title shou'd denote a Being in one Proposition, who is absolutely and necessarily God; and in the other, a God of inferiour Dignity and Distinction, no Reason can be assign'd.

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The want of an Article before Θεός, in the Proposition, Θεός ἦν ὁ λόγος, *The Word was God*, does not lessen its Character; for Articles in the Greek are often uncertain and arbitrary: And Θεός, more than once in this Chapter, has none prefix'd to it, when 'tis most certainly apply'd to God the Father.

When other Beings in Scripture are call'd *Gods*, there is always some *Mark*, whereby we may clearly perceive, that They are not really and absolutely *so*; but that They are honour'd with that high Title, upon the Account of their Station or Office. But in this Description of our Saviour, there is not the least Intimation, that the Term, God, is not to be taken in the highest and most unlimited sense: And therefore nothing but its implying a manifest absurdity, or Contradiction, (which it will never be prov'd to do,) can be a Reason for putting any other Construction upon it.

And the *Evangelist* Himself, my thinks, takes Effectual Care, in the 3d. Verse, to prevent any misapprehension of this Matter; by recording such an Action of Christ, as cou'd be perform'd by God alone: *All things were made by Him, and without Him was not any thing made, that was*

*was made.* If to create or produce things out of nothing, be not the Essential and Incommunicable Prerogative of the Supreme Being, 'tis impossible to discover what is so. But the Creation of all things in this, and in many more places of Scripture, is ascrib'd to God the Son, in the same Express and Absolute Manner, as it is in other Passages to God the Father; That is, They were jointly concern'd in this great Work, as being Both Essentially Infinite in Power and United in Will.

It appears then, I think, very plain, that the *Word* or Christ is Perfect God, consubstantial with His Father: Because St. *John* styles Him God, in the same Emphatical and Absolute Manner, as he does the Father, and ascribes to Him an Essential and Incommunicable Power of the Deity. And according to this Interpretation, The Primitive Fathers, *Ignatius*, *Clement* of *Alexandria*, *Justin*, *Irenæus*, *Tertullian* and *Origen*, understood the *Evangelist*, as might be easily shewn.

The next passage I shall mention, is in the 10th Chapter of St. *John*, 30th ver. *I and my Father are One.* In the 24th ver. the *Jews* came and said unto Him, if  
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*Thou be the Christ, tell us plainly*: He reminds them that He had formerly appeal'd to the works He did in His Father's Name, which bore *witness of Him*; and here resumes the Discourse He had been just before upon, concerning His Sheep, or true Believers, to whom He promises Eternal Life; and declares that none shall pluck them out of His Hands: For, saies He, *my Father, which gave them me is greater than all; and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's Hand*: But, *I and my Father are One*. Here He assures the *Jews* that He is the Christ, the Saviour of the World, under the Title of the *Shepherd*: And also as an Argument of His Ability to discharge His undertaking, that He is one with the Father in Nature and Essence. 'Tis plain the *Jews* understood Him in this Sense, for *They took up Stones to stone Him, — for Blasphemy*; and because that *He being a Man, made Himself God*. If He had only asserted, in their Opinion, as our Adversaries pretend He did, that He was one with the Father in Power, and was able to do all things relating to Their Salvation, and to the Government of Them, They cou'd never have been so offended at Him, as we find They were. This was no more than all of Them expected from the *Messiah*: And the enquiry was then, whether He  
were



were the Person or not. And therefore the Offence must be taken for there being more in the Answer, than They expected, and cou'd digest, tho' He shou'd be the *Messiah*; which was, that His being One with the Father, which He affirm'd of Himself, meant an Unity of Nature and Substance, and not an Unity in Power only. The former cou'd have been no *Stumbling Block* to Them, but the last was a great *Rock of Offence*. And if They had understood Him, as only affirming Himself to be One with the Father in Power, or in some other Attributes; They wou'd not have form'd Their Accusation in these Words; *Thou being a Man, makest thy Self God*; for that implies being equal to God in Essence and Perfections; but thus, *Thou being a Man, makest thy Self like to, or, as God*, as in the Old Testament; *i. e.* Vested in some Divine Properties. And if our Blessed Saviour had not really been, what They understood Him from His own assertion to be; wou'd not He, who was unspeakably *meeke and lowly in Heart*, have treated Their Opinion with Indignation and Abhorrence? have declar'd the Extent of His Divinity, and shewn in what respect, He was *One with the Father*? But instead of discouraging Their Apprehension of His Deity, grounded upon His  
 own

own Assertion concerning it, He proceeds to fix and establish Them in it. *If They are call'd Gods*, saies He, *unto whom the Word of God came; why shou'd I whom the Father hath sanctify'd and sent into the World, be thought to blaspheme, for saying I am the Son of God?* This is that kind of Reasoning, which is call'd an Argument *from the less to the greater*: As if He had said; 'If the great Judges among you are call'd Gods, because They bear a faint Resemblance of Divine Empire and Authority; how much rather may I, who am the Natural and Co-essential Son of God, be allow'd to stile my Self *'His Son or absolutely God?'* He does not say whom God, but *whom the Father hath sanctify'd*, as being His proper Father before He sanctify'd Him, by a Necessary Communication of His Substance.

And He adds, *believe, for the Works sake, that the Father is in me and I in Him*; which is the *ἁπόφασις* so much talk'd of by the Fathers, implying Their being substantially in one another. And the *Jews sought again to take Him*, for continuing to affirm Himself to be One with the Father by an Unity of Nature: For this was the Charge before. \* *Tertullian* under-

\* Quomodo dictum est, Ego & Pater Unum sumus, ad Substantiæ Unitatem, non ad Numeri Singularitatem; *Cap. 25. Adversus Prax.*

stands the Text in this Sense: *As it is said, I and My Father are One; to Express not the Singularity of Person, but the Unity of Substance.* And *Novatian* to the same purpose \*.

The next Testimony, which I shall mention, of Christ's Consubstantiality with the Father, is in the 4th Chap. of St. Paul's Epistle to the *Galatians*, ver. 8. *Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service to them, which by Nature are no Gods.* The Apostle in this place expressly charges the *Galatians*, before their Conversion to Christianity, with paying Divine Worship, thro' ignorance, to those, which *by Nature* or *Essence are no Gods.* Now there is but one kind of *Nature*, which can possibly constitute the Divinity of a true God; and all other *Natures* must be essentially different from it; This is evident by the *Light of Reason.* If we be commanded then in Scripture, (as was prov'd before) to honour and worship our Saviour, and yet forbidden, as we implicitly are in this Text, to worship any, that *by Nature are no Gods*, He must *by Nature* be God, and of the same *Essence* with the Father: Because there is none other *Nature* or *Essence*, by which a Be-

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\* Cap. 13.

ing can be truly and properly God; Namely, such a God, as the Apostle supposes Divine Worship to be only due to. The Doctor has two Comments upon these Words: The first is altogether groundless; ‘*Unto Gods, which have no Being in Nature, says he, or to Gods, which in Nature (or in reality) have no Being*; and is sufficiently confuted by a late ingenious Author; as contrary to the two most ancient Versions, the *Syriac* and the *Arabic*; to the Scripture-use of the word *Φύσις*; and the Nature of the Expression.

I shall not cite his Arguments upon these Particulars, but pass on to his second Comment, which is this; ‘*\* Gods, which by their Nature, have none of that Divine Authority or Dominion over you, which you vainly ascribe to them.*’ The word (*Φύσις*) in Scripture (he saies) does not signify the *Nature* of Things in the *Metaphysical* or *Essential*, but only in the *Vulgar* and *Natural*, the *Moral* or *Political* Sense of the Word; that is, the true *State* and *Condition* of Things, their *Capacities* and *Powers*, their *Circumstances* and *Qualifications*, the *Rea-*

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\* Addenda to Scripture-Doctrine of the Trinity, and Reply to Mr. Nelson's Friend, pag. 78.



' *son* of Things, and sometimes even *Cu-*  
 ' *stoms* only: As appears from the use of  
 ' the same Word, 1 Cor. 11. 14. *Doth not*  
 ' *even Nature it self teach you, that if a*  
 ' *Man hath long Hair, it is a shame unto*  
 ' *him?* And Rom. 2. 14. *Do by Nature the*  
 ' *things contained in the Law;* And Rom.  
 ' 1. 26. *That which is against Nature;* And  
 ' Rom. 2. 27. *Uncircumcision which is by*  
 ' *Nature;* And Rom. 11. 24. *Which is wild*  
 ' *by Nature* — And Ephes. 2. 3. *We were*  
 ' *by Nature the Children of Wrath:* Not  
 ' by our original Nature or Essence. And  
 ' thus likewise in the present Passage;  
 ' *Them which by their Nature,* (that is,  
 ' which in the Nature and Reason and  
 ' Truth of Things) are no Gods; have no  
 ' Divine, no Invisible Authority or Do-  
 ' minion over you, &c.

I allow that the word ( $\Phi\upsilon\sigma\iota\varsigma$ ) in the Scrip-  
 ture Instances above, imports the Condi-  
 tion and Capacities, the Circumstances and  
 Qualifications of Things; that is, that *such*  
 Properties and Operations and Effects are  
 agreeable to the present Frame and Con-  
 stitution, Reason and Capacities of Things:  
 In all these Cases, the Subject acts, or is  
 treated, according to its present natural  
 Powers and Inclinations; or, at least, as  
*Use and Custom* directs; which is a *second*  
*Nature*. And these Properties, Opera-  
 tions

tions and Effects, These Powers and Inclinations are always in Proportion to the Nature, Extent and Capacity of the Subject. As the Frame, Texture and Constitution of it may happen to alter; its Faculties and Operations must change of Course. But what Tendency has this, to prove, that our Blessed Saviour's being *God by Nature*, may only imply His being *God by Invisible Authority and Dominion over us?*

In the Passages above, the Word, *Nature*, either denotes the present Frame, Faculties or Appetites of Things; or refers to outward Circumstances and Customs; which, as Motives and Principles, may make *such and such* Actions, agreeable or natural.

But our Saviour's *invisible Authority and Dominion over us*, cannot constitute Him, *God by Nature*, in either of these Respects. Not, First, As *Nature* signifies the Frame, Constitution or Powers of a Thing: Because His *Invisible Authority and Dominion*, is, by the Doctor's own Acknowledgment, unlimited and infinite: But it is not agreeable or natural to the Frame, Constitution or Powers of a Thing; that an unlimited and infinite Attribute shou'd belong to a circumscrib'd  
and

and finite Subject or Essence; as our Saviour's must be, if He be not of the same Substance with the Father. For no other Substance or Essence, is, or can be, infinite. Therefore His *Invisible Authority and Dominion* cannot intitle Him to the Character of *God by Nature*; as *Nature* signifies the Frame, Constitution or Powers of a Thing: Nor, *Secondly,*

For the same Reason, as *it* refers to outward Circumstances and Customs. Outward Circumstances and Customs always suppose a Fitness, Agreeableness or Proportion between the Subject and the Properties of the Thing, which they have some Relation to; or else they can never make its Actions, in any Case, agreeable or natural. But a limited Essence and infinite Attributes can never bear such a Fitness and Proportion between themselves, as outward Circumstances and Customs require, to make Actions agreeable or natural. Therefore our Saviour's *Invisible Authority and Dominion over us*, cannot give Him a Title to the Character of *God by Nature*; as that *Word* refers to outward Circumstances and Customs.

In a word; there is no Parity of Reason between those Scripture-Instances the Doctor has produc'd, and the Subject, he  
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wou'd illustrate and prove by them. In the former, there is always something agreeable or natural, with regard to the Frame and Constitution and Properties of Things; but in the latter, there is an infinite Disagreeableness and Disproportion, in relation to the Essence and Attributes of the same Thing: But besides all this; I have prov'd elsewhere, that a limited Essence and infinite Attributes are absolutely incompatible.

I pass on now to the 2d Chap. of St. Paul's Epistle to the *Philippians*, and the 6 and 7 Verses: *Who* (Christ Jesus) *being in the Form of God, thought it not Robbery to be Equal with God: But made Himself of no Reputation, and took upon Him the Form of a Servant, and was made in the likeness of Men.* The Apostle, in this place, recommends the Glorious Vertue of Condescension and Humility in the Bright and Perfect Pattern of it, *Jesus Christ: Who being in the Form of God, or really and absolutely God, did not think it an Injury to the Divine Nature and Perfections, to lay in a claim to an Equality with His Father; or according to another Interpretation, did not assume to be Equal or Like to God, but emptied Himself, and condescended to have His Divinity vail'd in frail and mortal Flesh.*

That,



That, *being in the Form of God* implies being really and absolutely God, is plain, *First*, From the Signification of the Term, *Form*. *Secondly*, From the Nature of St. *Paul's* Argumentation.

*First*, From the Signification of the Term, *Form*: *Form* is a Logical Term, and denotes the Internal Cause, by which a Thing is that particular Being, which it truly is: As the Human Soul is the *Form* of a Man; and that particular kind of Immaterial Substance, which constitutes the Nature of the most Exalted Created Beings, is the *Form* or Essence, which distinguishes them from others. So in Relation to God; that peculiar kind of Spiritual Substance, which constitutes His Nature, is His *Form* or Essence, and distinguishes Him from all others. A Being therefore can no more be in the *Form of God* (taking that Term in its proper Signification) without partaking of the Divine Essence, than it can be justly said to be, what it really is not.

And that St. *Paul* us'd this Term, in its Natural Sense, with regard to our Saviour, appears, *Secondly*, From the Opposition His being in the *Form of God*, bears to His being in the *Form of a Servant*: The latter confessedly signifies His appearing

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in Human Nature; and why the former shou'd not mean His Being in the Nature and Effence of God, no Reason can be assign'd. We are never to depart from the proper Signification of Words in their Construction, except the Nature of the Subject, or the Context require it: But the Nature of the Subject cannot require it here; unless it can be prov'd, (which never has been done) that it is naturally Impossible for our Saviour to be so in the *Form of God*, as to be essentially God. And, 'tis plain the context does not require it: *St. Paul* is here exhorting the *Philippians* to Condescension and Humility; and sets before them the Example of Christ; who *being in the Form of God*, for our Sakes, took upon Him the *Form of a Servant*. Now if He be absolutely God, this is an Extraordinary Motive to the Practice of those Graces and Vertues; which He assum'd our Nature to perform and recommend; because He being Infinitely Happy, cou'd have no prospect of receiving any Accessions of Bliss and Happiness in His Divine Nature, by a Reward of His Labours and Miseries; and therefore the Riches of His own Goodness and Compassion must prevail with Him, without any other Consideration, to undertake them.

But

But if He be inferiour to the Father in Nature and Substance, the weight of the Perswasive is prodigiously lessen'd, and its Efficacy abated: For then the Prospect of *sitting at God's right Hand, of being Governour and Judge of the World, &c.* might powerfully move Him to take our Nature upon Him: And consequently not His Humility and Condescension; but the Love, and Goodness, and Compassion of the Father, is to be admir'd and magnified by us.

Farther; if the Expression; οὐχ ἀρπαζ-  
μὸν ἡγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα Θεῷ, be well interpreted, *He thought it no Robbery to be equal with God*; 'tis a clear Testimony of the Truth we are upon: For if He be not of the same Essence and Perfections with the Father, it must have been the greatest Indignity and Injury to His Character, and the highest Presumption and Arrogance in Him, to pretend to an Equality with God. This Interpretation is supported with the Authority of \*Clement of Alexandria, and of † Origen.

And if the other Construction be admitted, *did not assume to be Equal (or like) to God*, what will our Adversaries gain by

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\* Admonit. ad Gent. P. 7. † Tom. I. P. 357. & 374.

it? For then it will mean, that tho' our Saviour was *in the Form of God*, or truly and properly God, He did not however, affect appearing upon Earth, in *the Pomp and Splendour of the Deity*; but was willing, for our Good, to have His Divinity conceal'd under the vail of our Flesh.

But if He be not truly and properly God, how absurd was it in the Apostle, to tell the *Philippians*, as an Argument of Meekness and Humility, that *Jesus Christ*, whom they ought to imitate, did not assume to be *equal to God*, and to appear among us, in *the Pomp and Splendour of the Divine Nature*, when He had no Pretensions to an Equality with God.

The last passage of Scripture I shall examine, upon this Occasion, is in the *5th* Chapter of the *1st* Epistle of St. *John*. ver. *7th*. *For there are Three that bear Witness in Heaven, The Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these Three are One*. The most Natural Interpretation of this place, is, that *these Three are One* by an Unity of Essence: And then 'tis a direct proof of Christ's Consubstantiality with the Father: And the Context seems to require this Construction. They are mention'd here as *Three in Heaven*, giving Testimony to the Divine Mission of Christ, in opposition to the *Three in Earth, the Spirit,*  
*the*



*the Water, and the Blood*, bearing Witness to the same Truth. The Testimony of the *Three in Earth* is call'd, in the next verse, *the Witness of Men*; and the Testimony of the *Three in Heaven*, is call'd *the Witness of God*. Now the Testimony of the *Three in Earth* is jointly call'd *the Witness of Men*; because three Men (for so \**the Spirit, the Water and the Blood*, may be easily prov'd to mean) of the same Nature and Essence concur in it. And, with what propriety, can the Testimony of the *Three in Heaven*, be said to be jointly *the Witness of God*, except They be the same God by an Unity of Substance. The Testimony of the *Three in Heaven*, is declar'd, jointly taken, to be *the Witness of God*; but if the Word and the Holy Ghost be not as truly and properly God, as the Father is, that Threefold Testimony cannot be *the Witness of God* only, but of some other Beings with Him: And then St. *John's* Argument is false, and this Comparison with the *Three in Earth* Groundless and Ridiculous. So that supposing, by *these Three are One*, be meant *One* in Testimony, as our Adversaries contend; 'tis still a clear demonstration of the Article we are upon: Because they cannot be *One* in Testimony,

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\* *The Spirit*, He that has extraordinary Gifts of *the Spirit*; *the Water*, He that is baptiz'd; *the Blood*, He that is a *Martyr*.

in any tolerable Sense, according to the Context, without being *One* likewise by an Unity of Nature and Essence.

I am sensible the Authority of this Text is very much disputed; 'tis entirely rejected by some Learned Men; and declar'd dubious by *some others*; amongst *whom* our *Author* may be reckon'd. But if They wou'd Impartially consider the Reasons we bring for its being *Genuine*, They wou'd scarce entertain such hard Opinions of it.

*First*, 'Tis agreeable to St. *John's* Doctrine elsewhere, both, as to the Father and Son, at least, *being One*; *I and my Father are One*, as was noted above; and, as to the Testimony, which the *Three in Heaven*, give to Christ: *I am One*, saies our Saviour, \* *who bear Witness of My-Self; and the Father, that sent Me, beareth Witness of Me*; and † *He*, speaking of the Holy Ghost, *shall testify of Me*.

Thus it appears, that both Branches of the Controverted Text, in this Epistle, are agreeable to the Apostle's Doctrine in His Gospel. Why then shou'd we refuse to subscribe to its Authority?

*Secondly*, If this verse be not *Genuine*,

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\* St. John's Gospel Chap. 8. Vers. 18. † Chap. 15. Vers. 26.  
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the Context is maim'd and incomplete. This is Evident, from the comparison just now spoken of, between the Witnesses *in Heaven and in Earth*; and if this Text belong not to the Epistle, there is no Mention of God the Father's bearing Witness to Christ; which however is refer'd to in the 9th verse.

For these and other Reasons, that may be given, the greater part of the Orthodox in the Article of the *Trinity*, think Themselves oblig'd to acknowledge the Authority of this Text. But say our Adversaries, if it be *Genuine*; why was it not Extant in all, or most of, the Primitive Copies, and generally quoted against the *Arians*, when there was so much need of it? To this it may be answer'd, that it was in some of the Primitive Records of *Holy Scripture*: St. *Cyprian* plainly refers to it, concerning the *Unity of the Church*: It is written, saies He, of the Father, Son and Holy-Ghost; *and these Three are One*: which Words together are not in any other part of the inspir'd Writings; and therefore He must undoubtedly mean this Verse. And 'Tis by a great Many Learned Men thought to be refer'd to by *Tertullian*. And 'tis very obvious to conceive, that it might be omitted by a Negligent Transcriber: For the Words, Τρεῖς εἰσὶν οἱ μαρτυ-  

pētes

*πῶτες*, are at the beginning of both Verses, 7. and 8th and, *ἐν εἰσω*, at the Conclusion: So that one of the first Transcribers casting a careless and hasty Eye upon the place, confounded the Verses, and took but one of them; and many other Manuscripts being taken either immediately, or mediately, from that Corrupt Copy, the Error was easily and diffusely propogated.

From these Places of Scripture, my thinks, 'tis plain that our Blessed Saviour is Consubstantial with His Father: There being either such an Unity asserted between Them, as can denote nothing less than an Unity of Nature and Essence; or such a Divinity ascrib'd to Him, as bespeaks Him either a Distinct and Independent Being from the Father, or His Natural and Coessential Son: But That having been formerly prov'd Impossible, this must be true.

There might be many more Texts produc'd to the same purpose; but let these suffice. I shall only enquire a little farther, what the Primitive Fathers say upon this Head, and then dismiss it. It has been confidently asserted that the Term, *ὁμοούσιος*, *Consubstantial*, was not us'd by the Fathers of the three first Centuries, but introduc'd by the Council of *Nice*, 25 Years after that Period.

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But *Eusebius* in his Epistle to the *Cæsarians*, concerning the Nicene Faith, extant in \**Socrates*, saies, we know many of the Ancients, Learned and Famous Bishops and Writers, who discoursing of the Divinity of the Father and Son, us'd the Word, Ὁμοῖος. Many Monuments of Antiquity are long since lost, which *Eusebius* was well acquainted with. He durst not have refer'd to any Authorities in defence of this Matter, if They were not to be found; because his Enemies cou'd easily have discover'd the Imposture. *Dionysius* of *Alexandria*, *Origen's* Disciple, who flourish'd in the middle of the Third Century, in his Epistle to *Dionysius* of *Rome*, as 'tis recorded by † *Athanasius*, saies, that Christ is Ὁμοῖος ἔ θεῷ, *Consubstantial with God*. And *Athanasius* expressly 'declares, that That Term, as us'd in the Nicene Creed, was approv'd by the Testimony of the Ancient Bishops: And his Adversaries never prov'd the contrary.

*Tertullian* against *Praxeas* saies, that the Father, Son and Holy Ghost are *Unius Substantiae*: Now for these Three to be *Unius Substantiae*, must import the same, as their being Ὁμοῖοι. In the same Book, ‡ *I and the Father are one*, is to be un-

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\* *Eccles. Hist. Lib. 1. Cap. 8.* † *Tom. 1. P. 918.* ‡ *P. 328.*  
 derstood

derstood, saies he, *of an Unity of Substance, not of a Singularity of Number; and the Father and the Son are Individual, and Inseparable*, meaning in Their Essence; with much more to the same purpose. And all this too, when he was writing against *Praxeas*, who affirm'd the Father and the Son to be the same Person; which by the By, (as was observ'd formerly) shews the great Opinion, *that Heretick*, and the *Sabellians* afterwards, had of our Saviour's Divinity: Because they look'd upon Him to be the very same Person with the Supreme and Un-originated God. But what I wou'd observe here is this; tho' *Tertulian's* main business was to prove a Distinction of Persons in the Deity; yet he takes care, all along, to assert and prove an Unity of Essence or Substance. And if we go higher we shall find the same maintain'd in other Words.

\* *Justin* in his Dispute with *Trypho*, speaking of the Mode of the Son's Generation, saies, that *He was begotten by the Father, not by abscission, as if the Father's Essence were divided, but as Fire is produc'd by Fire, without any Diminution of the Substance*. Without examining the propriety of the Similitude, or the Soundness of the Philosophy; This

is certain, that the Blessed Martyr asserts Christ's Consubstantiality with the Father: He declares by the Comparison, that They are of the same Substance; the Son being begotten of the Father's Essence, as *Fire by Fire*: And likewise that They are intirely One, and *Individual in Essence*; because that Generation was not by *Ab-scission or Division*. This and more Similitudes of the same import, other Fathers, as *Tatian, Athenagoras, Dionysius of Alexandria, &c.* use upon this occasion; as a *Ray from the Sun, a River from the Fountain, &c.* which clearly shews, that they maintain'd Christ to be of the same Substance with the Father; and they took care too, to assert an absolute Unity of Essence between Them.

I shall cite but one Passage out of *Ireneus*, tho' there are many upon this Subject: \* *God made all things in Measure and Order, and nothing is Unmeasur'd with Him, because 'tis not Uncompounded. And he said well, who affirm'd, that the Unmeasurable Father Himself is measur'd in the Son; for the Son is the Measure of the Father, because He contains Him.* Now

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\* Omnia Mensura & Ordine Deus facit, & nihil non mensum apud Eum, quoniam nec incompositum, & benè qui dixit, ipsum immensum Patrem in Filio mensuratum. Mensura enim Patris Filius, quoniam & capit Eum. *Lib. 4. Cap. 8.*

'tis impossible for the Son to be Equal and Commensurate to the Infinite Extent of the Father, and to contain and comprehend Him, unless He be of the same Nature and Substance, and Co-extended, with Him. Were He any thing less than Infinite in His Essence, He cou'd no more *Measure*, as *Irenæus* expresses it, and *comprehend the Father*, than the Smallest Vessel is able to contain all the Water of the *Ocean*: But He cannot be Infinite in His Essence, without being of the *same* with the Father. *St. Clement of Alexandria*, with whose Testimony I shall conclude this Head, says, \* *The Divine Logos, who is most evidently the true God; is Equal to the Lord of all things: Because He is His Son, and the Word was in God.* And not long after, † *God hates nothing, neither does His Word; for They are Both One, that is, God.* It appears from these two Passages, not to mention any more, that *St. Clement* did esteem our Saviour to be *Consubstantial* with His Father. He declares Him to be *the true God, and Equal to the Lord of the Universe*; for this Reason, *because He is His Son, and the Word*

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\* Ὁ Θεὸς λόγος, ὁ φαιερώτατος ὄντως Θεός, ὁ τῶν διαπονητῶν ἄλων ἐξισωτής. ὅπ' ἦν ἕως αὐτῶν, καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν ἐν τῷ Θεῷ, p. 68.

† Οὐδὲν ἄρα μισεῖται ὑπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἀλλ' ἕθ' ὑπὸ τοῦ λόγου. καὶ γὰρ ἄμφω, ὁ Θεός.



*was in God*: For this cou'd be no Reason at all, unless he means that He is His Son by a Compleat Communication of the Divine Nature: None other sort of Sonship being proper to be alledg'd as a Foundation of *true Deity*, and of an Equality with *the Lord of all things*. And he affirms, that *the Word can hate nothing, because He is one with God*; which must be understood of an Unity of Nature; for it cannot be certainly affirm'd of any Nature, but that, which is really Divine, that it is absolutely and essentially exempted from bad Passions. And the Holy Father tells us, that he means an Unity of Nature: For when he had said, *They are Both One*, he thus explains himself, that is, *God*; lest he shou'd be understood of an Unity in Will only, or in some other Divine Properties.

I have now done with this Branch of my fourth Section: When I have gone thro' the others, I design to lay the most Material Objections together, and give them as good an Answer, as I can. I now proceed to prove Christ's Co-eternity with the Father.

If it appear, from what has been said upon the former Head, that Christ is Consubstantial with the Father; I need not  
be

be at much Pains to prove His Co-eternity with Him; The One being a Necessary Consequence of the Other. It cannot be deny'd, that the Divine Nature is absolutely incapable of any Change or Alteration; but a Temporal Communication of God the Father's Substance to the Son, must imply, that the Divine Nature is capable of Change and Alteration. For tho' the Essence of the One, be the Essence of the Other; and upon that account, perhaps, it may be thought by some to undergo no Alteration, if it were Communicated in Time; yet since the Father and the Son have Distinct Personal Properties, founded upon that Common Essence, and necessarily flowing from it; a Temporal Communication of Essence, must certainly infer a Change in the Divine Properties; because it implies such a Communication of Them, as makes Them become in Time *Numerically distinct*. But the Divine Properties being Necessary and Essential to the Divine Substance, they can no more undergo any Change or Alteration, than *That* can: They necessarily imply and infer one another. Therefore being our Saviour, is of the same Nature and Essence with the Father, He must have Co-existed with Him from Eternity; and must enjoy all the *Fulness of the Godhead*, by a compleat  
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## Communication of the Divine Perfections.

As to His Eternity, which I promis'd to speak something to; I shall insist but upon two or three Passages of *Holy Scripture*, in proof of it. He is stil'd, in *the Old Testament*, *the Everlasting Father*; and *His Throne is declar'd to be for ever and ever*, &c. Expressions, one wou'd think, denoting a true and absolute Eternity. St. *John*, in his Entrance upon his Gospel, says, *In the beginning was the Word— And all things were made by Him, and without Him was not any thing made, that was made. In the beginning is a Common Hebraism to Express Eternity: Thus Solomon describes the Eternity of Wisdom: \*The Lord possessed me in the Beginning of His way, before His works of old: I was set up from Everlasting, from the Beginning, or ever the Earth was, &c. Where 'tis plain, that in the Beginning is Equivalent with, from Everlasting, and denotes the Eternal Existence of that Divine Attribute. To be said, in Scripture, to be before the Creation of the World, implies an Eternity of Existence: As in the 90th Psalm. Moses speaking of God, says, Before the Mountains were brought forth;*

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\* Prov. 8. 22, 23.

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*or ever thou hadst form'd the Earth and the World: even from Everlasting to Everlasting, Thou art God.*

Which *Mode* of speaking the Primitive Fathers often use, in Relation to our Saviour: St. *John* then may very well be understood to mean the Existence of the *Word, from Everlasting*, when he says, *He was in the Beginning*: And that he does mean so, appears from the 3d Verse, *All things were made by Him, and without Him was not any thing made, that was made*. Now our Saviour must either sometime have had a Beginning, or have existed from Eternity: No *Medium* can possibly be conceiv'd. If He has existed from Eternity, the Dispute is ended in favour of the *Orthodox*. If He sometime had a Beginning, it must be either out of Pre-existent Substance, or by Creation out of nothing. If out of Pre-existent Substance; it must be either out of the Divine, or out of some other, that had existed from Eternity. I have prov'd already, that it cou'd not be in Time, out of the Divine Substance; and our Adversaries will grant, that no Substance has existed from Eternity, but the Divine. Therefore, if He were any time made, or had a Beginning, it must be by Creation out of nothing; which is directly contrary to this Text  
of



of St. *John*; where 'tis expressly asserted, *that all things were made by Him, and that without Him was not any thing made, that was made.* If Christ Created all things, that were ever produc'd into *Being*; it wou'd imply a Contradiction, that He shou'd be in the Rank and Number of Created Beings. When we say all things are Created by Him, *it is manifest, that He is excepted,* who did create them. But if Christ be not in the Order and Number of Created Beings, He must have existed in the Divine Essence from Eternity; and have *so* existed too, by a *Personal Subsistence*, as appears from these Words: For if He had once been in the Divine Nature and Essence, without such a *distinct Personal Subsistence*, as we are assur'd He has now: Whenever He had the Divine Nature and Essence deriv'd and communicated to Him, *so* as to constitute a *Distinct Person*, He might properly be said to be made, with regard to that *Distinct Personality*.

The Bodies of *Adam* and *Eve* may justly be said to be made or created, tho' it was out of Pre-existent *Materials*, of the same Nature, *differently modified.* And if Christ had His *Distinct Personality* deriv'd and communicated to Him in time, from the Divine Nature and Essence;

He may, upon that Account, be declar'd, without Blasphemy, to be a made or created Being: Because in deriving or communicating the Divine Substance *so in Time*, as to produce *distinct Persons* in it; there must be such a *different Modification* of it, as will intitle the Persons produc'd, in that Manner, to the Character of being made or created. If then, upon the whole; Christ owe His *Distinct Personal Subsistence* to a Temporal Act of His Father's Power and Will, whether it were produc'd out of the Divine Substance, or out of nothing, it matters not, St. *John* is in the wrong for affirming, that *all things were made by Him*, and that *without Him was not any thing made, that was made*: Because according to either of those Doctrines, He must Himself have been first made, and consequently something was made without Him; unless He can be suppos'd to make Himself; which our Adversaries will not say. Therefore since He cou'd not be made in Time, out of nothing, nor out of the Divine Essence; He must have had a *distinct Personal Subsistence* in it from Eternity. As to His being call'd in Scripture *the First Born of every Creature*, I shall consider it hereafter.

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He is stil'd in the first Chapter of the Epistle to the *Hebrews*. Verse 3. *The Brightness of the Almighty's Glory*. As Wisdom is describ'd by Solomon, \**The Brightness of the Everlasting Light, the Unspotted Mirror of the Power of God*. But how can He be *the Brightness or Resplendency* of that Everlasting Fountain of *Light and Glory*, except He be Eternal? To come forth as *Light or Brightness* from Him, of whose Essence it is to be the Source and Original of *it*, must imply, that the Being so coming forth, is of the same Duration, *past, present, and to come*, with Him, whose *Light or Brightness* He is.

If Christ then, in His Personal Character, be *an Eradiation* from God the Father, *the Eternal Fountain of Light and Glory*, He must be Co-eternal with Him, *the same Yesterday, to Day and for Ever*. We cou'd never indeed, by the Powers of Reason, have discover'd the Necessity of there being *an Eradiation, under a Personal Distinction*, from the Divine Glory; But since Christ's Personal Subsistence, is reveal'd in *Scripture* to be an *Eradiation* of the Almighty's Glory; *Reason* declares for the Eternity of His Existence: Because the Original, whence He derives His Be-

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\* Wisd. Solomon, Chap. 7. Vers. 26.

ing immediately and necessarily, is Eternal.

He is, several times, in the Revelation of St. *John*, describ'd by the Title of *Alpha* and *Omega*, without the least Restriction or Limitation, without assigning any particular, in which He is the *First* and the *Last*: But 'tis well known, that God the Father describes His own Being, by the same Title and Character, and gives it a most Emphatical Distinction from all others: Christ therefore having reveal'd Himself Solemnly and Frequently under the same distinguishing Name and Character, has thereby declar'd Himself to be the same Eternal Being in Nature and Essence, with the Father.

Nothing, (as was observ'd before) shou'd induce us to depart from the Obvious and usual sense of words in their Construction, but the Nature of the Context, or an impossibility that the thing shou'd be true, according to the Natural Interpretation of them. But it will easily appear to any one, that without Prejudice considers the Places, where Christ stiles Himself, *Alpha* and *Omega*, the *Beginning* and *End*, the *First* and the *Last*, that the Nature of the Context, by no means, requires a Departure from the known and usual Signification of the



the Terms; for He assumes to Himself this Title and Character, in the same Emphatical Manner, as God the Father elsewhere does; and there is not the least Intimation given, that it shou'd be restrain'd in its Acceptation. And it has never been prov'd impossible for Him to be of the same Duration with the Father, by a Necessary and Eternal Communication of the Divine Substance.

I shall say no more upon this part of my Subject from *Scripture*; but make a short enquiry, what was the Doctrine of the First and Purest Ages of the Church in this Matter.

St. *Ignatius* styles Him, in his Epistle to *Polycarp*, ὑπέρχαιρος, ἀχρονος, *above Time, without Time.* But if Christ, in His past Duration, be not limited to *Time*, but is *above*, and before all, *Time*, He must be Eternal. For had He been produc'd into *Being*, ever so many Millions of Ages before the Creation of the World, He cou'd not properly have been said to be *above*, or *without Time*. Whenever He cou'd be suppos'd to Commence Existence, *Time* must have a Beginning at least; because from thence a Successive Duration might be computed; and consequently *the Being produc'd* cou'd not be *above*, or *without Time*;

*Time*, for *Time* must begin with it at least. But farther; there is no *Medium* between a Temporal and an Eternal Duration; and whatever Being has not, in a strict and proper sense, existed from Eternity, must have had a Beginning within *Time*; and there must be an *Eternal Duration past and gone* before its Existence: And therefore fix upon what Period you will, ever so far back, for its Production, and you may reckon as many Ages as you please to precede it; which gives us a clear Notion of *Time* before the suppos'd Production of that Being. So that *Ignatius* had talk'd very absurdly, if He had not meant, that our Saviour was strictly and properly Eternal, when He stil'd Him, ὑπέρχαιρος, ἄχρονος.

In His Epistle to the *Magnesians*, he expressly declares that Christ is Eternal. *Who is His (God's) Eternal Word, not proceeding from silence.* The Blessed Martyr very probably levels This, against the *Cerinthian Gnosticks*, who maintain'd that our Saviour was not Eternal; but that after *silence*, He was brought into Being: *i. e.* That after a Duration, in which God the Father was alone, the Word was produc'd. But in his Opinion, as he expressly declares, the Word, which he calls ἐσιώδης,

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\* Ὃς ἐστὶν αὐτῷ λόγος αἰδίος, οὐκ ἀπὸ σιγῆς ἐγενήθη.

the *Substantial Word*, did not proceed from *Silence*, or was not produc'd after a *Duration*, in which God the Father was alone: And therefore the *Eternity* he ascribes to Him, must be a *Strict* and proper *Eternity*; else there must have been *Silence* or *Duration*, in which God the Father was alone; and after which, the *Logos* commenc'd *Existence*.

*Justin* asserts in his Dialogue with *Trypho*, that the Person who appear'd to *Moses* in the Bush, was the Son of God, and mentions His Stiling Himself; 'Εγώ εἰμι, ὁ ὢν. *I am, He that exists*: But if Christ has such an *Eminence*, or compleat Degree, of *Existence*, that He can justly assume the Title of, *I am He, that exists*, or, *of the existent Being*, He must be *Necessary*, and *Consequently Eternal*, in *Existence*. And toward the End of his Epistle to *Diognetus*, he expressly saies, *He is alwaies Existent*, ἕως ὁ αἰ.

*Irenæus* speaking of the *Infinite Distance* between the *Creator* and the *Creatures*, saies, that *the One is unmade, without Beginning and End, All-Sufficient, &c. And that the others were made, had a Beginning, are Dependent and liable to Dissolution*. But at the same *Time* he declares, that *Christ is the Maker or Creator of all things;*  
and

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*and that the Father and He had a Just Title to be call'd God, and only Lord. \* Therefore if Christ be, in the Opinion of this Father, Unmade without Beginning and End, &c. He must undoubtedly, be understood by him to be from Eternity. And The Holy Martyr, has this remarkable Passage. † For thou art not unmade, O Man; neither didst thou always coexist with the Father, as His own Word (or Son) did. But the Father and Son cou'd not alway be Co-existent without being Coeternal.*

That *Clement of Alexandria* maintain'd the Eternity of Christ's Existence is plain from these two Passages. ¶ *Therefore the Word is call'd Alpha and Omega, the End of Whom alone becomes the Beginning, and who again terminates in that which is from above, the Beginning; No where admitting of Distance.* The meaning of which place is This: The Word has really no Beginning of Days, or End of Life; but has existed from, and will be to, Eternity, without any Successive Duration. He styles Him, ὁ ἄχρονος, καὶ ἀναρχος, *without Time*

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\* *Lib. 3. Cap. 8.*

† Non enim infectus es, O Homo, neque semper coexistebas Deo, sicut proprium ejus Verbum. *Lib. 2.*

¶ Διὰ τῶν Α καὶ Ω ὁ λόγος εἰρηται· ἔμουν τὸ τέλος ἀρχὴ γίνεται, ἔπιλυται πάλιν ἐπὶ τῷ ἀνωθεν ἀρχὴν, ἕδαμοῦ ἀφ' ἑσῶν λαοῶν. *Lib. 4. Strom.*

*and*



and without Beginning, \* which He can be conceiv'd to be no otherwise than by being Eternal.

*Origen*, as he is quoted by *Athanasius*, disputes with indignation against those, who said there was a Time, when Christ was not, and ascrib'd a Beginning to Him; and declares, 'tis dangerous to deprive God, as much as in us lies, of His only Begotten Word, which always existed with Him; even as dangerous, as to despoil Him of Wisdom or Reason, or Life: So that, according to *Origen*, we may as well deny the Essential Properties of God, as the Co-existence of the Son, to be from Eternity. Some Learn'd Men indeed have question'd the sincerity of *Athanasius*, in quoting *Origen* after this Manner; because, say they, 'tis done with an Eye to the Doctrine of the *Arians*, † *there was a Time, when He was not*. But these *Hereticks* did not vent their Pernicious Opinions, till an Hundred Years after *Origen*; and therefore what is brought out of him against them, shou'd rather be look'd upon, as a forgery, than as a true Citation. But it may be answer'd, that this was no New Doctrine;

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\* *Lib. 7. Strom* † Ἦν τὸ ἔν, ἔπ ἔκ ἦ.

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for the *Gnosticks* in the Apostles Days, and their poison'd Followers maintain'd the same; and many no doubt in the heat of Controversy, with the *Noetians* and *Sabellians*, fell into the same Extravagance and Blasphemy. He calls Christ, in his 5th Book against Celsus, *the Splendor of Eternal Light*; and in his 1st Book *Peri-Archon, Chap. 2.* he stiles Him *the Wisdom of God*; but He cannot be the *Splendor of Eternal Light*,) as has been prov'd before,) nor *the Wisdom of God*, except He be Eternal.

*Socrates*, who was well acquainted with the Writings of *Origen*; and has a good Reputation for Fidelity and care, asserts, that *Origen* held the Coeternity of the Son with the Father.\*

I pass on now to shew that our Blessed Saviour is Omniscient and Omnipotent: And First that He is Omniscient. 'Tis said of Man in General, *we are but of Yesterday, and know not what shall be on the Morrow.* But the understanding of God is Infinite; extending at once to all Times and Places and Objects. 'Tis the Prerogative of Him alone, who *inhabits*

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\* *Θεογένης συναίδιον πανταχῶς ὁμολογεῖ τὸ εἶναι τῷ πατρὶ.* Eccl. Hist, Lib. 7. Cap. 6.

*Eternity, to search the Heart, to know us, to understand our Thoughts a far off, to shew us what shall happen, and declare things to come.* But this Perfection belongs to our Saviour Christ, as the Son of God. *All things are naked and open to Him.* St. Peter makes this acknowledgment; *Lord, Thou knowest all things:* And the other Apostles likewise, *Lord, we are sure that Thou knowest all things: He knew what was in Man; He knew their Thoughts; He knew from the Beginning, who shou'd betray Him; and that Peter wou'd deny Him.* Now He must be enabled to do all this, either by an *Occasional and Arbitrary Revelation* from His Heavenly Father, or by a *Necessary and Permanent Principle* of Infinite knowledge in Himself. There is no Testimony in Scripture of an *Occasional and Arbitrary Communication* of knowledge to Him. He clearly discerns Men's Hearts, and Thoughts, and Resolutions in all Instances, and foretels Contingent Events; and *needeth not*, as we can perceive, *that any Being shou'd tell Him.* He knows and declares things *past, present, and to come*, with the same Ease and Certainty and Universality, as the Father does; and therefore *the Principle* by which He is enabled to perform This, may be justly look'd upon to be alike *Inherent and Necessary* in Both. And accordingly the  
Evan-

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*Evangelist* assures us, that *Jesus knew in Himself, that His Disciples murmur'd at Him.* He had not this knowledge by any Information, Human or Divine; but *ἐξ ἑαυτοῦ, in and by Himself*; which shews His Power of searching the Heart to be *an Inherent Property*, given Him, as His Essence, and Life, and all His Attributes were, that He might *have them in Himself*, by a Necessary Communication of *all the Fulness of the Godhead.* To search the Heart was prov'd formerly to be the Prerogative of God alone: Our Saviour Christ has the Power in Himself of searching the Heart; therefore He is really and absolutely God.

'Tis the Property of God only, who made all Things, and knows the Springs and Principles of Action, and is present to all Times and Places, to foresee the Future Operations of Free-Agents, and to foretell contingent Events: But Christ has the Property of foreseeing the Future Operations of Free-Agents, and of foretelling Contingent Events; therefore He must be that God in Essence and Powers, who made all Things, and knows the Springs and Principles of Action, and is present to all Times and Places.

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The Text relating to His Ignorance of the Day of Judgment, shall be consider'd in its proper place.

*Secondly*, That He is Omnipotent. That Being is Omnipotent, who has the Power in Himself of Creating, or producing things out of nothing; of raising the Dead, and working Miracles at pleasure; and is able to Communicate the Power of working Miracles to others. This cannot be deny'd to be the Character and Distinction of Omnipotence; for no greater Marks of that Attribute in its highest Elevation (if we may allow any difference in the Acts of Omnipotence) can be conceiv'd. But *Scripture* testifies, that our Saviour has this Power in Himself. That He created the World, *St. John* tells us; *All things were made by Him, and without Him was not any thing made, that was made*: And *St. Paul*, *By Him were all things Created, that are in Heaven, and that are in Earth; Visible and Invisible, &c.* These are exprefs Testimonies of Christ's creating Power. By Him *the Blind receiv'd their sight, the Lame walked, the Lepers were cleans'd, and the Deaf heard*, without any natural means, *and the Dead were raised up. Even the Wind and the Sea obey'd Him*: Infomuch that we may address our selves to Him, as the *Psalmist*

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*Psalmist* did to the Almighty; O Lord God of Hosts, who is a strong Lord, like unto Thee? Thou rulest the raging of the Sea; and when the Waves thereof rise, Thou stillest them. And, according to His promise, He rais'd Himself the Third day from the Dead; which is a most convincing Instance of Divine Power.

*Lastly*, He gave others Power over unclean Spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all Manner of Sickness, &c. And accordingly we find that even the Devils were Subject to the Apostles, and that Wonders and Signs were done by them.

*By the Name of Jesus*, Peter cur'd Æneas, who had kept his Bed eight Years; and rais'd Tabitha from the Dead. Hence it appears, that Christ is able to raise the Dead, and work Miracles at pleasure, and to Communicate the Power of working Miracles to others.

Now the Power of doing all this, must either be deriv'd to Him from the Father, by an arbitrary Communication; or it must be a Necessary and Abiding Principle in Himself. Were the Power of Creation and raising the Dead, deriv'd to Him by an Arbitrary Communication, no Act of it cou'd in any wise be His own. The Almighty

mighty must interpose in ev'ry Instance of its Exercise; and not only concur with Christ's natural Powers, and sustain them in Operation (for according to this Doctrine He is not Independent) but must perform the Act of Omnipotence Himself. For what cou'd it signify for Christ to say, *Let there be Light*, or, *let a departed Soul return to its Body*; unless His Heavenly Father shou'd, at the same time, *will* and *command* it be so. Upon the Supposition, I say, that this Power is by *an Arbitrary Communication*, His pronouncing those Words cou'd obtain no Effect, without the immediate Assistance and Command of a Superior Being. And indeed the very Supposition of such a deriv'd Power is an Absurdity; for it carries no Vertue or Energy along with it.

Christ cou'd not so much as be an Instrument in the Hands of God in the Works of Creation, and raising the Dead, by that *suppos'd Power*. For to be an Instrument implies having some Share in the Work or Action, by the Direction and Conduct of the *Principal Cause*: But according to the absurd Doctrine of *an Arbitrary Communication*, He cou'd bear no part in doing such great and wonderful Things. His speaking the word by no means intitles Him to the Appellation of

an Instrument; for the whole Action is perform'd by a Superior Power.

Tho' we stand in need, every moment, of Divine Help, to continue our Natural Faculties in Strength and Operation; yet the Works we do, by these Faculties, so sustain'd and assisted, may properly be call'd our own; for they are the Effects of such Powers, as God is pleas'd to endow us with; and the Matter or Subject of them is within our Reach, or Sphere of Action. But the producing of things out of nothing, &c. can never be the Object of any Power, which is not essentially Unlimited and Infinite. For there is an Infinite Distance between *Not being and being*; and such a repugnancy to a transition from *the one State to the other*, as can only be conquer'd by that Being, who has the Attribute of Omnipotence, as a *Necessary and Inherent Principle in Himself*.

And Scripture testifies, that Christ has *the Power in Himself* of doing those Works, which carry with them the Marks and Characters of Omnipotence. He is several times declar'd to be the Creator of all Things, without mentioning any Power, by which He was so, but His own. He had *Power*, He tells us, to *lay down His Life*, and He had *Power to take it again*. He  
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promis'd to, and did, *raise Himself from the dead*. He stiles Himself *the Resurrection and the Life*; and has engag'd His word, *to raise those up, that believe on Him, at the last day*. And He gave the Apostles Power, in His own Name, *to heal the Sick, cleanse the Lepers, raise the Dead, and to cast out Devils*. My Father, says He, *worketh hitherto, and I work; The Father is in Me, and I in Him; whatsoever things the Father doth, these doth the Son likewise: All things, that the Father hath are Mine. The Holy Ghost shall receive of Mine, and shew it unto you*. And in Him, says the Apostle, *dwells all the Fulness of the Godhead*. These, my thinks, are convincing Testimonies of His having *the Power* of doing all things *in Himself*. He is as expressly and emphatically declar'd to be the Author of those Works, which are Arguments of Omnipotence, as the Father is; and therefore we cannot justly deny an Equality and Unity of Power to belong essentially to *Them Both*. Christ indeed sometimes applies to His Heavenly Father for Assistance, and addresses Him upon Extraordinary Difficulties and Emergencies: But since we find Him, at other times, going thro' as great, or greater, things, without any such Application or Address; we may fairly conclude, that when He uses this Method, 'tis not be-

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cause, consider'd in His Divine Nature, He wants assistance; but that 'tis with a design, either to appear purely, upon some occasions, as Man; or to convince the World of an entire Union and Harmony between His Heavenly Father and Himself; or to be a Pattern to us in making Prayers and Supplications to the God of *all help all comfort*. To the Doctrine of Scripture, concerning the Infinite Knowledge and Power of Christ, I will subjoin the Opinion of the first Ages of the Church.

*St. Ignatius* in his Epistle to the *Ephesians* has these Words. \**Nothing is hidden from the Lord; (speaking of Christ) but our secret things are open to Him.*

*St. Clement of Alexandria.* † *Christ is ignorant of none of our thoughts, nor of the reasonings, which pass in our Minds.* And afterwards, He says, ‡ *The Son of God is always every where, but contain'd no where: All Mind, all the Light of the Father, all Eye; sees all things, hears all things, knows*

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\* Οὐδὲν κρυπτόν ἐστι τῷ Κυρίῳ, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰ κρυπτά ἡμῶν ἔγνω αὐτὸς ἔστι.

† Οὐδὲν κρυπτόν ἐστι τῷ Κυρίῳ, καὶ τὰ κρυπτά ἡμῶν ἔγνω αὐτὸς ἔστι. Strom. Lib. 4.

‡ Πάντα δὲ ἅν παντα, καὶ μηδαμῶς περιεχόμενον, ὅλος νῦν, ὅλος φῶς πατρῶον, ὅλος ὀφθαλμὸς πάντα ὁρᾷ, πάντα ἀκούων, εἰδὼς πάντα, Strom. Lib. 7.

*all things.* Here the Divine Attributes, which are Incommunicable to Creatures, are given to the Son, as Immensity, Omnipresence and Omniscience.

*Justin* in His Book, concerning the true Faith, saies, \**There is truly One God of all, who is manifested in the Father Son and Holy Ghost.*

And *Irenæus* stiles *Christ* the true God: But He cannot be the true God, nor the same Being, or God, with the Father, as *Justin* insinuates, that He is, except He be vested in the same Attributes with Him.

*Tertullian*, has this Passage; †*The Name of the Father God Almighty, the most High, the Lord of Hosts, &c. These, we say, belong to the Son also, and that the Son came in these, and always acted in them; and the Son is in His own Right God Almighty, as He is the Word of Almighty God.*

*St. Clement of Alexandria*, gives this

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\* Unus verè est Deus omnium, qui in Patre, Filio, Spirituque Sancto cognoscitur.

† Nomen Patris Deus Omnipotens, altissimus, Dominus virtutum &c. Hæc dicimus & in Filium competisse, & in his semper egisse; & Filius suo jure Deus Omnipotens, qua Sermo Dei Omnipotentis. Cap. 17. adversus Prax.

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Testimony. \* *For He wants nothing, who has the Word, the Almighty God: Many more Passages might be brought from the Primitive Writers to prove, that They acknowledge Christ to be an All-knowing, and All-powerful Being, but let these suffice: And they frequently give this Reason for Their Opinion; because He is of the same Essence, or the same God with the Father.*

From what has been said in this fourth *Section*, I hope the Truth of the Proposition sufficiently appears; Namely, That Christ's Titles, Characters and Perfections in *Holy Scripture*, do evince His being absolutely and essentially God; and that this was the Doctrine of the best and purest Ages of the Church.

To what has been observ'd from the Fathers, I will add this one Consideration: That when They dispute about the Worship of Christ, either with *Jews*, who were jealous of *the Unity of God*, and fearful of Idolatry; or with *Gentiles*, who generally maintain'd and worship'd a *Plurality of Deities*; They do not affirm that Divine Honour and Adoration is due to Christ

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\* Ἀπειδίης γάρ ὁ ἕναι πρῶτος Θεὸν λόγον ἔχει, *Padag. Lib.*  
3. Cap. 7.



by the Appointment purely of the Father; that we are to pay Him Homage and Worship, merely because God has commanded it. They assert the Unity of God, the Maker and Governour of the Universe; and profess their Obligation to Worship this one God, and none other; and, at the same time, They own Christ to be God, and declare Divine Worship to be due to Him, as *such*: Which shews that the Fathers, and indeed the true *Christians* in General, had no Apprehensions of a *Plurality of Gods*, when They gave Divine Honours to God the Father, and to Christ: And the Reason must be, that They esteem'd Them to be One and the same God, in Nature and Perfections. Otherwise *the Jewish Converts* must have had great jealousies of being guilty of *Idolatry*, and *the Gentile* must have been confirm'd in it; unless it had been prov'd, (which was not attempted,) that it is in the Power of God to appoint *what Objects* He pleases of Religious Worship; and that He had actually appointed Christ to be *so*, tho' He be not of the same Nature and Perfections with Himself.

I now pass on to propose and answer the Chief Objections, that are brought against this Doctrine of Christ's Divinity, from *Scripture and the Fathers*. First, from

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*Scripture.* And, First, *That Christ is not Eternal*; and therefore, very likely, not Co-essential with the Father. For He is said to be *the first-born of every Creature*; and consequently He must be in the Condition and Number of Created Beings; tho' the most Glorious and exalted of All.

Secondly, *That He is not Omniscient.* For He knew not the Day of Judgment. He that is really and essentially God knows all things: But Christ does not know all things; therefore He is not really and essentially God.

Thirdly, *That He is not absolutely Good.* For *there is none Good, but One, that is, God.* There is but One Being, that is absolutely Good, that is, God. He denies Himself to be that Being, which is absolutely Good; Therefore He is not God.

Fourthly, *That He is not Infinite in Majesty and Greatness; and therefore not God:* For *My Father, saies He, is greater than I.* He only is absolutely God, than Whom None is greater; or Who is Infinite in Majesty and Greatness. Christ is not He, than Whom None is greater, or Who is Infinite in Majesty and Greatness:

ness: Therefore He is not absolutely God.

Lastly, *That His Exaltation to the Throne of God, His having a Name which is above every Name; that every Tongue must confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, &c. is a Reward of His Humiliation, and of His Glorious Redemption of Mankind:* But were He essentially God, He wou'd have a Natural and uncontrollable Right to the highest *Dignities* without any such consideration. Therefore since these great *Dignities* are confer'd upon Him, by a Voluntary Act of His Heavenly Father, in consideration of the fore-mention'd Merit, He is not essentially God.

These are the Chief Objections that are brought from *Scripture*, against the Divinity of our Blessed Saviour. I will endeavour to give a Satisfactory Answer to Them in their Order. But give me leave to premise this one thing; That supposing we were not able to solve all the Objections and Difficulties, that may be rais'd from *Scripture*, against this Article of our Holy Faith, must we therefore give it up; when, at the same time, we find it clearly and fully reveal'd, in other parts of *Holy Writ*? I cou'd Instance in some other Branches of Christianity, that are Generally look'd upon  
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by us to be firmly establish'd in *Scripture*; And yet such Objections and Difficulties have been Started from *thence*, concerning Them, as never perhaps receiv'd a Clear and Satisfactory Solution. If a Doctrin be worthy of God, and be clearly and fully set forth in the Records of Reveal'd Truth, we ought to assent and subscribe to it; some seeming Arguments to the contrary, notwithstanding.

But to return. The first Objection is, that Christ is not *Eternal*; and therefore very likely not Co-essential with the Father. For He is said to be *the First-born of every Creature*; and consequently He must be in the Condition and Number of Created Beings, tho' the most Glorious and Exalted of All.

Let us consider the Context, \* and compare it with a Parallel place. † The context is thus; *who (Christ) is the Image of the Invisible God, the First-born of every Creature: For by Him were all things created that are in Heaven, and that are in Earth, visible and invisible, — All things were created by Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist.*

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\* Colof. Ch. 1. Ver. 15, 16, 17. † Heb. Ch. 1. Ver. 2. 3.



If by Christ's being *the First-born of every Creature*, we are to understand, according to the Objection, the First made or Created Being; the Apostle contradicts himself in the two following Verses; where He expressly saies, that *all things were created by Him, that are in Heaven and that are in Earth, Visible and Invisible, &c.* Were He a made or created Being, tho' He were the First of all, and ever so Glorious and Exalted in Nature and Perfections, He cou'd not be exempted from the Condition and Character of a Creature; nor excluded from the Number of those things which *were created in Heaven and in Earth*: Nor cou'd He possibly be *before all things* and sustain them; if He had once a Beginning, as all Creatures have: But it is St. Paul's assertion, that He *did create all things that are in Heaven and in Earth, and that He was before all things*, and does sustain them: Therefore He must be exempted from the Condition and Character of a Creature, and excluded from the Number of those things which were created, and must never have had a Beginning. So that these Words, consider'd with the Context, will by no means bear the sense, which our Adversaries put upon them. We must look out then for some other, which may appear Worthy of the Apostle. And let him explain his  
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his own meaning, in a parallel place, mention'd above; where he saies, *Whom* (the Son) *He hath appointed Heir of all things, by Whom also He made the Worlds; Who being the Brightness of His Glory, and the Express Image of His Person, and upholding all things by the Word of His Power.*

In the First Passage, the Son is stil'd *the First-born of every Creature*; in This, *Heir of all things*; which are equivalent Expressions. For Primogeniture did anciently signify *that Dominion and Principality, which the First-born had a Title to.* *Jehosaphat* gave the Kingdom to *Jehoram*, because he was the First-born. \* *And God gave David to be the First-born, high above the Kings of the Earth.* *Justinian* saies, to act as *Heir*, is to act as *Lord*; † for the Ancients us'd the Word *Heir for a Lord.* Because therefore the Son of God is *Heir of all things* by Vertue of His creating them, He may be call'd *the First-born of every Creature*, or of all things; having as good a Title at least (for so much is sufficient here) to be *Heir and Proprietor of the whole World, visible, and invisible, as the Creator of it; as the*

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\* 2 Chron. 21. 3. † Instit. L. 2. Tit. 19. §. 6.

*First-born of Men*, has to the Inheritance of His Father's Kingdoms and Estates.

Christ is call'd *the Beginning, the First-born from the Dead* \*; where 'tis plain, that by His being *the First-born*, is not to be understood His being *the First, that rose from the Dead*. For we read of rising from the Dead, in *the Old Testament*, and in *the New*, before our Saviour's Resurrection. But He is stil'd *the Beginning, the First-born from the Dead*, because He is *the Principle and Efficient Cause* of rising from the Dead.

Upon the Whole therefore; when Christ has the Title of *the First-born of every Creature*, we are not to imagine Him to be the First Made or Created Being; but that He is *the Principle and Efficient Cause*, and consequently *Heir, of every Creature*, or of all things, *visible and invisible*.

*Secondly*, 'Tis Objected, *that He is not Omniscient*. He, that is essentially God, knows all things: But Christ does not know all things; for *He knows not the Day of Judgment: Therefore He is not essentially God* †.

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\* Col. 1. 18.

† Mar. 13. 32.

Were it necessary to understand the *Son* in this Text abstractly, for the *Second Person*, in the ever *Blessed Trinity*, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to make it consistent with the Doctrine of His Omniscience. For He seems expressly to refer the knowledge of the *Day of Judgment* to His Father alone. But where is the Necessity of understanding Him here for the Son, in the highest Sense, which *Scripture*, in other places, will justify our conceiving Him in? We maintain Him to be the *Son of God*, not only by a Compleat Communication of Essence and Perfections (tho' chiefly upon this Account) but also as being *begotten and form'd by a Divine Power and Vertue in the Womb of a Virgin*, without the Assistance of an Earthly Father; and as being *sanctified and sent into the World as the Messias*. Scripture speaks of Him, as the *Son of God*, in these several Senses, before His Resurrection; upon which, He is call'd again *the Son of God*, as being *begotten or raised from the Dead*. His being *the Son of God* in this last Acceptation does not relate to our Subject. In the First, we believe *Him to be Omniscient*: In the others, that *He grew in Wisdom and Knowledge*; and that He did, and said, nothing of Himself, but the Father shew'd and order'd Him all, that He *did and spake*, in Relation to  
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*His Prophetick Office.* He acted in that Station, as the *Messenger* and *Minister* of the most High God; and therefore it was reasonable, that He shou'd intirely submit to His Will and Pleasure, and receive Directions and Assistance from Him. What was necessary and convenient to be made known to the World, in order to Happiness and Glory, He had Instructions to Communicate; but what was too curious in its Nature, or pernicious in the Consequence, with Regard to the Honour of God, and the Good of Mankind, He had no Commission to impart; nor was it necessary, that He shou'd have any Knowledge of it.

As Christ then was the Co-essential Son of God, *He knew the Day of Judgment*; being undoubtedly, in that Capacity, well acquainted with *the deep things of God*: But as He was *begotten and form'd by a Divine Power and Vertue in the Womb of a Virgin, and sanctified and sent into the World as the Messias*, He was ignorant of it; having receiv'd, as the *Messenger and Minister* of Heaven to Mankind, no Commission to authorize Him, nor Revelation to enable Him, to foretell it to us.

*Of that Day and that Hour knoweth no Man; no, not the Angels which are in Hea-*

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*Heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.* Tho' He be not to be understood here as the Co-essential *Son of God*; yet He is deservedly plac'd above *the Angels*, next to *the Father*, having obtain'd a more excellent Name than *They*, as being begotten by a *Divine Power*, and anointed and commission'd to make a full Discovery of His Father's Will; and as enjoying *the Hypostatical Union* of the two *Natures*, Divine and Human. And as He consisted of these *Natures*, as He was *perfect God* and *perfect Man*, and in relation to Both the *Son of God*, for the Reasons above; He might speak in either Capacity, as *Circumstances* determin'd Him. By *Vertue of the Hypostatical Union*, He was the *perfect Messias* and *Redeemer*. With regard to His *Divine Nature*, He knew and cou'd tell all Things; to His *Human*, He knew and spoke only by *Revelation* and *Commission*.

It was not proper that we shou'd be inform'd of *the Day and Hour of Judgment*; and therefore He answers the Enquirers about it, in that Capacity, in which He was ignorant of it. We consist of two parts, *Body* and *Spirit*; and consider'd in these different respects, are *Mortal* and *Immortal*; and we speak of our Condition, as there is occasion, in either view; We  
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sometimes talk as *Carnal Persons*, at others, as *Spiritual*. So our Saviour consisting of two *Natures*, was *omniscient*, in the One, and not *so* in the Other; and He spoke in either Capacity, as the Nature and Circumstances of the Discourse requir'd. It was not fit that *the Day of Judgment* shou'd be reveal'd; and therefore He answers the enquiry concerning it, in that Capacity of the *Messias*, in which He had receiv'd no Instructions about it. So that the Ignorance which He professes of *the Day of Judgment*, is not the least Prejudice to the Doctrine of His Omniscience, as He is the Co-essential *Son of God*.

*Thirdly*, That *He is not absolutely Good*. For there is *None Good but One, that is, God\**; There is but one Being that is absolutely *Good*, that is, *God*: He denies Himself to be that Being, which is absolutely *Good*: Therefore He is not *God*.

In answer to This, it will be sufficient just to observe these two Things.

*First*, That He does not deny Himself to be that Being, which is absolutely *Good*, and therefore *God*. He only demands the Reason, by way of Reproof, why the

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\* Mark 10. 18.

Person, that address'd Him in that Manner, shou'd call Him *Good*? If He did not believe Him to be God, as 'tis very likely He did not, he ought not to give Him the Appellation of *Good*, which belongs to God only. He does not disclaim the Title; but reproves the Man for applying it to One, whom He did not look upon as God, tho' He be really so.

*Secondly*, That supposing it to be meant here, that God the Father alone is *Good*; it will do the cause of our Adversaries no Service. For He only Originally, and of Himself, has the Attribute of Goodness; the Son has it by Communication from Him. The Perfections of the Son are Necessary and Infinite, equal to the Father's; but they are not Underiv'd and Un-originated, as the Father's are; Who in that respect has the sole Title to Them. This account of the Matter may be an answer to the Objection: But I am more inclin'd to stand to the other Observation; which seems to me to be a clear Solution of the Difficulty.

'Tis objected, Fourthly, *That Christ is not Infinite in Majesty and Greatness; and therefore not God.* \* *For My Father, says*

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\* Joh. 14. 28.

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He, is greater than I. He only is absolutely God, than whom None is greater; or Who is Infinite in Majesty and Greatness: Christ is not He, than whom None is greater; or who is Infinite in Majesty and Greatness: Therefore He is not absolutely God.

Christ is here discoursing to His Disciples, about His Departure from them, into Heaven; and tells them that He *will prepare a place for them*, in the Kingdom of His Father; who will send the *Comforter* to aid and assist them in the mean time. But, notwithstanding, they were under great concern and uneasiness upon this occasion; not apprehending how He cou'd procure such Blessings and Happiness for them. Upon which, He says, *Let not your Heart be troubled — Ye shou'd rejoice, because I go unto the Father: For My Father is greater than I.* As if He had said, 'Tho' you do not look upon me as able to do these great Things for you, being in your Apprehensions only a Man, yet you shou'd *not be troubled*, but shou'd rather *rejoice* at my Departure, *because I go to my Father, who is greater than I*; and able to do all Things.' He speaks of Himself, according to their Conceptions of Him, as a *Man*, or however, as the *Messias*: In both which respects,

spects, He was less than the Father, and acted by His Appointment and Commission, in Obedience to Him.

'Tis plain that the Comparison between the Father and Christ, is, in Relation to *Power*, and not to *Metaphysical Essence*. For His Disciples suspected His Ability to do as He promis'd; and He tells them, that tho' they distrusted His *Power*, yet they had no Reason to despond, because He goes to intercede for them with His Heavenly Father, who *is greater* or more Powerful *than He*. And the Learned Doctor will not deny this; for he says often that there is no account of His *Metaphysical Essence* in *Scripture*. But if the Comparison be in Relation to *Power*, then, according to the Doctor's own Principles, it cannot be meant of His *Power*, as He is a Divine Being or God, whatever His Nature or Essence be. For He acknowledges over and over again, that Christ's relative Attributes, as *Power*, &c. are given Him by the Father without measure. And therefore according to this Scheme, there was no need of His comforting His Disciples, upon this Occasion, with His going to the Father, in their behalf, who *is greater than He*; for *having all Power*, &c. deriv'd to Him, in an ineffable Manner, He was *sufficient* for all things. Except it be meant that

that *the Father is greater than He*; because His Attributes are not Un-originated, as the Father's are, but deriv'd and communicated. But if so; the Doctrine of the *Orthodox* may as well be true, that the Father is *greater* than the Son: Tho' They be Both of the same Essence and Perfections; because the One is Un-originated, and the Other Begotten; the Attributes of the One Underiv'd, those of the Other communicated. So that unless our Saviour's concession, *The Father is greater than I*, be spoken in Relation to Their *Personal Characters*, as Father and Son, it may very well be understood of Him, as He was Man, or as the *Messias*; in which Capacity He did nothing of Himself, but acted by His Father's Instruction and Command. And let it not be thought absurd, that God shou'd be compar'd with Man; for 'tis so in other parts of Scripture: \* *God is greater than Man*. † *He, that is higher than the highest, regardeth, and there be higher than they*. But as Christ was the *Messias*, He was much *greater* than a bare Man; but less than His Heavenly Father; as being deputed and commission'd by Him.

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\* Job. 33. 12. † Eccles. 5. 8.

*Lastly, 'tis objected, That Christ's Exaltation to the Throne of God; His having a Name which is above every Name; that every Tongue must confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, &c. is a Reward of His Humiliation, and of His Redemption of Mankind: But were He essentially God, He wou'd have a Natural and Uncontroulable Right to the highest Dignities without any such consideration: Therefore since these Dignities are confer'd upon Him, by a Voluntary Act of His Heavenly Father, in consideration of the foremention'd Merit, He is not essentially God.*

The greatest Honour that is appointed our Saviour in *Holy Writ*, is Divine Worship: But if Divine Worship cannot be alienated by God the Father, nor given to another Person, only upon the account of His Metaphysical Essence, *i. e.* except He be essentially God (and I hope it was formerly prov'd, that it cannot) then this Objection is of no Weight or Consequence. We are to Honour and Worship the Son by the Command of God, as He is the *Messias*, has redeem'd Mankind and is exalted to the highest Throne. But does It hence follow, that He had not a *Previous Title* to Religious Homage and Adoration, whenever it shou'd be known, that He is the Son of God? Or that this worship  
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wou'd or cou'd have been appointed, were He not essentially God? We deny not but that He is to be Worship'd upon the fore-mention'd accounts: But then we assert, that the Worship that is commanded upon these accounts, has its Foundation in His Metaphysical Essence; otherwise it had not been commanded. We are to worship the Father as our *Creator* and *Preserver*: But is it not evident that His Capacity to be an Object of Worship is founded upon His Metaphysical Essence; as He is a Being Omnipresent, and consequently Omnipotent and Omniscient? And we are to worship the Son, as the *Messias* and *Redeemer*: But His capacity to receive worship is grounded upon His Divine Metaphysical Essence; as He is a Being Omnipresent, &c.

As to His Divine Nature; *He* only *ascended where He was before*, and is vested in that *Glory, which He had with the Father before the World was*; in whose *Bosom* He is, as His *only begotten Son*. But His Human Nature, after His Ascension, had great Accessions of Glory and Honour; It is far exalted above all Creatures, and is seated upon the *Throne of God*: In some sense, it may be said to have Divine Worship paid to it; as it has an *Hypostatical* or *Personal Union* with the Son, Whom

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*we are oblig'd to honour, even as we honour the Father.*

Man consists of Body and Soul; and we pronounce such an one to be a Wise, Sincere and Candid Man. But the Ornaments of Wisdom, Sincerity and Candor, are Qualities of the Soul, and not of the Body; and yet we ascribe them to the Man, who is made up of *Both*, and value and esteem him accordingly.

So in Relation to our Saviour Christ, who consists of two Natures, *Human* and *Divine*; we ascribe Incommunicable Attributes, and pay Divine Worship to Him: But these Incommunicable Attributes and Divine Worship, only belong to Him properly, as God; and can affect His Human Nature no farther, than as it has the Honour of being *Personally* united with the Divine; because this Nature alone is capable of being the Subject of *such* Attributes, and of being qualified for receiving Religious Worship. So that the Father's conferring the foremention'd Honours and Dignities upon the Son, did not imply an Institution of Worship, which was not due to Him, *in the General*, before; but had an immediate regard; either to His Human Nature, which was capable of receiving new Accessions of Glory and Happiness; or, to  
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His being the *Messias* and *Redeemer*; in which Capacity He is essentially *God*, as well as *Man*. And then the suppos'd Institution of Worship to be paid to Him, was nothing but a Declaration of its being due to Him, as *God*, in the *General*; and a Designation of it in *some particular Instances*, as He is the *Messias* and *Redeemer*.

From what has been said, in answer to these Objections, I hope it appears, that they are of no Weight against the Doctrine of our Saviours *Divinity*. When any thing is expressly mention'd or imply'd of Him, which is injurious to the Character of the *Godhead*, it is not to be charg'd upon His *Divinity*, but plac'd to His Account, either, as He was a Man, and therefore necessarily Limited and Imperfect; or, as the *Messias*; in which respect, He spoke and acted by Inspiration and Command.

I proceed now to consider the Chief Objections, from the Fathers. Those Glorious Champions of the Christian Faith, are so full and express for the Son's Co-essentiality with the Father, that I shall forbear examining those few Passages, which *hastily* and *negligently* dropt from their Pens (seemingly) against it. Uninspir'd Writers are seldom so much upon their guard, as to lay themselves open to no Impu-

Imputation of Inconsistency or Contradiction; especially amongst prejudic'd and ill-natur'd Readers. Nay, we have found those, who have not blush'd to play *the Inspir'd Writers* against one another; and sometimes to set an *Holy Penman* at Variance with himself. If we find an Article to be the profess'd Opinion of an Author, we ought to disregard some incautious Expressions, in other Parts of His Writings, about it.

This is the Case of the Primitive Fathers, in Relation to this Article of Co-essentiality. They frequently and professedly treat upon, and assert it, in clear and full Expressions: Tho' now and then they carelessly drop something, that can scarce be reconcil'd with this Opinion. This is to be observ'd likewise, with regard to the other Attributes of our Blessed Saviour; His Eternity, Omniscience, and Omnipotence. The Primitive Writers frequently assert and prove them: Yet *here and there* we meet with Passages, which may be easily construd, as looking another way. But these ought to be of no Force against their plain and repeated Expressions and Declarations. I have produc'd Evident Testimonies out of them, to shew their Orthodoxy in the Article of His Divinity, that they believ'd Him  
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to be Co-essential and Co-eternal with the Father; of Infinite Knowledge and Power. I cou'd easily multiply Testimonies to the same Purpose, were it Necessary. I shall not therefore make it my business to examine the particular unguarded Passages, that are brought from Primitive Antiquity against the Doctrine I am upon; as being of no Consideration against its direct and plain Evidence in this Point; but shall only give a short Answer to what is Objected from some very Ancient Writers as *Athenagoras, Tatian* and *Tertullian*, against the Eternity of the Son's Existence; leaving other Objections to stand or fall by the Strength of what has been already offer'd in this *Vindication*.

These Fathers of the Church assert His *Temporary Production*, a little before the Creation of the World. But if He had a *Temporary Production*, in their Opinion, He cou'd not be thought by them to be really and absolutely God: For no Being can be so, that is not strictly Eternal.

We acknowledge, that in their Opinion, the Son had a *sort of Temporary Production*, but by no means according to the Intention and Design of the Objection; which implies that He had no (Personal however) Existence before

fore that time. These very Fathers are clear and express enough (as Bishop *Bull* has shewn) for the Son's Eternity; and therefore *the Temporary Production* must be so explain'd, as to make it consistent with the Doctrine of His Eternity. And indeed 'tis very easily done: For when they speak of *such a Production*, they do not mean a true and proper *Nativity* or *Generation*; whereby His real Existence commenc'd; but a *Figurative* and *Metaphorical* Beginning. They took the Liberty (perhaps in Imitation of \* *St. Paul*) of calling His proceeding forth from the Father to the Creating of the Worlds, by the Title of His *Birth* or *Generation*. Because He then enter'd upon exerting a *Divine Power* and *Energy*, and begun to be declar'd the Son of God. They do not insinuate, that He had no Existence before His thus coming forth to create the Worlds; but they mean that He had, as to any real effect, no *Energetical* Existence, before He appear'd to be the *Original*, *Principle*, and *Efficient Cause* of all things. And upon this account He was *begotten*, as some of the Primitive Writers speak, by the Will of the Father, when He was sent forth by Him to make the Worlds.

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\* Coloss. Chap. 1. Verse. 15.

I shall insist no longer upon so plain a Case. Whoever wou'd have farther Satisfaction herein, may consult the Third Section of Bishop *Bull's* Defense.

As to the Primitive Doctrine of the Son's being less than the Father, and of His Subordination to Him; 'tis the same, as has been laid down in this Discourse.

I proceed to prove, *Lastly*, That the Compilers of our *Liturgy* did believe Him to be a Being really and eternally God.

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S E C T. V.

**W**HOEVER reads and seriously considers the *Nicene*, and that which is call'd the *Athanasian, Creeds*, cannot, one wou'd think, reasonably doubt, whether those that admitted them into our *Liturgy*, did look upon our *Saviour* to be the Co-essential Son of God, or not: In one of them, He is stil'd *God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God*; and is declar'd to be *of one Substance with the Father*. By which Expressions, they cou'd understand no less than His being of the same Nature and undivided Essence with the Father. Those excellent Men  
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cou'd not, but know, that there was once an Attempt to substitute *Ὁμοιόσιος*, in the room of *Ὁμοούσιος*, but it wou'd not be admitted; *of a like Substance*, instead of the same. Which is a plain Evidence that the Holy Fathers, did esteem the Son to be absolutely of the same Substance or Essence with the Father; or else they might safely have assented to the desir'd Alteration. They wou'd not subscribe to a word that imported different Substances; tho' they might be understood to come ever so near one another in Nature and Perfections. Therefore by obstinately adhering to the Term, *Ὁμοούσιος*, *They plainly declar'd Him to be of the same Essence with the Father.* This I say the Compilers of our *Liturgy* undoubtedly knew, and consequently wou'd have abhor'd the thought of admitting this *Creed*, thus express'd, into it; were They not fully perswaded, that Christ is the Co-essential Son of God: Especially if we consider, that it wou'd be absurd, in this case, to depart from that Sense of the Word, which the *Orthodox* contend for; because it is of a determinate, fix'd and perpetual Signification.

The Article of the *Descent into Hell* may be interpreted several ways; because the Word, *Hell*, is an ambiguous Term, signifying *the Place of the Damn'd, the*  
*Recep-*



*Receptacle of Departed Spirits, &c.* And it is uncertain in what Sense, the original Word was understood by the Inserters of it into the *Creed*. But we know for what Reason, and in what Sense, The Term, 'Ομοῦσι, was us'd: And, as 'tis distinguish'd from 'Ομοιούσι, it must always signify being of One, or the same Substance. For 'Ομοιούσι wou'd have express'd coming as near as possible in Nature and Essence: But because it did not clearly and fully declare the Son to be of one or the same Substance with the Father, those Venerable and Wise Men adher'd to the Other; which, as 'tis distinguish'd from *this*, must ascertain and determine the Point, and be of a fix'd and perpetual Signification. And our Translation is an Evident Testimony, that the Compilers understood it of an Unity of Essence: The Word is not render'd of a like, but of *one Substance*; which one cannot conceive they shou'd agree to, if they did not understand it of an Unity of Essence.

And the other Expressions, I cited, are not intelligible, if they do not denote the same Truth. How can He, in such an Emphatical Manner, be stil'd *God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God*, unless He be Partaker of the same Substance

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stance and Properties with the Father?

The Learned Doctor is pleas'd to talk much of the Son's deriving His Being from the Father, by *an ineffable, incomprehensible, &c. Generation*. We own the *Generation* of the Son to be *ineffable and incomprehensible*. But what is this to the Purpose? The Question is not, whether He deriv'd His Being in *an ineffable, incomprehensible way*? But what kind of Being, Nature and Essence He did derive in *an ineffable, incomprehensible way*? Whether the Divine, or not? If the Divine; He must be of one and the same Substance with the Father; and then His *Generation* is truly *ineffable and incomprehensible*. If not; He does not owe His Being to His Father's Nature and Essence, but to His Power, Wisdom and Goodness, as *Angels and Men* do: And then what is become of the Doctor's *ineffable and incomprehensible way of Generation*? Except it be applicable to the Production of all Beings; which I suppose he does not mean. But to return to the Opinion of our Compilers.

As to that, which is commonly call'd the *Creed* of St. *Atbanasius*; except those excellent Men had the same Talent, as the Reverend Doctor has shewn, at interpreting  
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ing the Force and Meaning of it away; their admitting of it into the *Liturgy* of our Church, is a plain Testimony of their *Orthodoxy in the Article of our Blessed Saviour's Divinity*. Who was the Author of that *Creed*, is not the Question now? we have establish'd our Doctrine upon other Authorities: But whether its being a part of our Publick Religious Service, be not an Argument, that those that made it so, did believe Christ to be really and absolutely God, is to be consider'd here?

They cou'd not but see, that His *Godhead* is declar'd in that *Creed* to be *the same with that of the Father*; that *He is such as the Father is*; *Uncreate, Incomprehensible, Eternal, Almighty; God and Lord*; that *He is not after, nor less than, the Father, but Co-eternal and Co-equal with Him*— that *He is God of the Substance of His Father*— *Perfect God—Equal to the Father, as touching His Godhead*. 'Tis as plain here as words can make it, that the Son is describ'd as *Co-essential with the Father; Co-equal and Co-eternal with Him in Glory, Majesty and Greatness*; which is all we contend for. So plain, that 'tis impossible but that our Compilers shou'd apprehend it. Since then it is insert'd by them into the Form of Divine Service, and is so

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clear and exprefs for the Son's *Divinity*, as maintain'd by us; we may fairly conclude, that they did believe Him to be of the fame Nature and Effence with the Father.

Our Learned Author fays, we must not understand that *Creed*, as enjoining a Belief of either *feveral Un-originated, Self-existent Beings*, or of *different Denominations only of the fame Being*; but of a *Plurality of Persons in the Godhead*; whereof *One only is Un-originated and Self-existent*; and the Others derive their Being, in an *ineffable Manner from Him*. Here I entirely agree with him; as the former part of the *Vindication* fufficiently testifies.

The Equality of Persons infifted upon in the *Athanasian Creed*, is not with regard to their Origination; but to Their Substance and Perfections: That They are all Three of the fame Nature and Effence; all of 'em *Uncreate, Eternal, Incomprehenfible, Almighty, Holy, God and Lord*; *Co-equal and Co-eternal together in Glory and Majesty*. It is exprefsly declar'd that *the Father is of None*; but that *the Son is begotten*, and *the Holy Ghost proceeding*; which is a plain acknowledgment of a different Origination. But this Diversity of Origination implies only a Personal



nal Relation, and does not at all affect the Character of Real and Absolute Divinity.

The Character of Real and Absolute Divinity consists in an unlimited Essence, in Eternity and Necessity of Existence; in Infinite Power, Knowledge and Justice; and in such other Attributes, Natural and Moral, as necessarily flow from these. But the Son and the Holy Ghost have an absolute Title to this Character in general, by a full Communication of the Divine Nature and Essence. Their Existence, and all Their Powers are Necessary and Eternal, as the Father's are; and therefore They are equal to Him, in Substance, and in all the Perfections of the Godhead.

In the Hymn, call'd, *Te Deum*, Our Saviour is stil'd God's *true and only Son*:—  
And, *the everlasting Son of the Father*.  
But how cou'd our Compilers acknowledge Him to be His Father's *true and only Son*, in Opposition to Men and Angels, who are His Sons by Creation; unless they were perswaded that He deriv'd His Nature and Essence from the Father, by Eternal Generation? And that They subscrib'd to an Eternal Generation, in this Case; appears from the last Words I cited, *the everlasting Son of the Father*. The Collect for *Whitsunday*, concludes thus;

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*Through the Merits of Christ Jesus our Saviour, who liveth and reigneth with thee (God) in the Unity of the same Spirit, one God, World without End. Amen. Our Compilers here declare, that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, live and reign together in Unity, one God, World without End. But how They cou'd justly recognize Their living and reigning together in Unity, and affirm Them to be One God, without believing Them to be of the same Nature and Essence, is above My Comprehension.*

True and sincere Christians may be said to be *one with God*; as they endeavour a Conformity to His Purity and Holiness, and are zealous and ambitious to be *Perfect, even as He is Perfect*. But let 'em aspire at, and attain ever so many Divine Qualities and Perfections, in as great a Degree as they are able; their Heavenly Father and They, notwithstanding, can never be stil'd, in any Sense whatever, *one God*. And the same may be affirm'd of any other *Being*, inferiour to *the Father*, in Nature and Essence; that *it* cannot, without Blasphemy, be call'd *one God with Him*. When *Two* are, in such an eminent and compleat Manner, *One*; that They may be justly stil'd *One God*; They must be look'd upon to have an Unity of Substance,

stance, as well as an Equality of Powers and Attributes.

Our Compilers have taught us, in the *Collect for Trinity Sunday*, to acknowledge the *Glory of the Eternal Trinity*; and, at the same time, to worship the *Unity*. But They are no where more express and full to our purpose, than in the *Proper Preface for Trinity Sunday*: *Who art One God, One Lord; not One only Person, but three Persons in One Substance. For that which we believe of the Glory of the Father, the same we believe of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; without any difference or inequality.* Words, surely, cou'd not be found more fully and determinately to express Their Sense and Opinion. They affirm God to be *Three Persons in One Substance*; and declare that *the Glory of these Three Persons is the same*, with Regard to Each of Them distinctly; *without the least difference or inequality.*

They cou'd understand by *Substance*, no less than the *Essence of God*; or *the Subject* of all Divine Powers and Perfections; for without the greatest Violence, it can bear no other Construction: And consequently, if They esteem'd *the Son* to be a *Person in One Substance* with *the Father*; They must believe *Them* to have the same  
Essence,

*Essence, or One Common Subject of Their Powers and Perfections.*

I will conclude this *Section*, with a short Enquiry into the Doctrine of *the Homilies* in this Case: which were compos'd in King *Edward* the Sixth's Reign; Chiefly, (I think) by those Excellent Men, that drew up the *Liturgy*. In the *Homily* or *Sermon of the Nativity*, we find these Passages; *He (Christ) was perfect God, Co-equal with the Father, as touching His Deity, — Where are now those Arians which deny Christ to have been perfect God, of equal Substance with the Father? — That He was by Nature and Substance perfect God.* In the *Second Homily of the Passion*; *Christ being the Son of God, and perfect God Himself, — His only Son, His Natural Son.* In the *Homily of the Resurrection*, as follows; *how dare we be so bold to renounce the Presence of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost? (For where One is, there is God all whole in Majesty, together with all His Power Wisdom and Goodness.)*

I shall mention but one Passage more; in the first part of the *Homily for Whitsunday*; as for His (the Holy Ghost's) proper Nature and Substance it is altogether One with God the Father and God the Son; that is to say, *Spiritual, Eternal, Uncreated, Incomprehensible, Almighty.*

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From these Instances it plainly appears, that *our Church*, at that time, did really believe our *Blessed Saviour* to be the *Consubstantial* or *Co-essential* Son of God. And 'tis evident likewise from the *Liturgy* (as was shewn just before) that the *Compilers of it* did embrace and profess the same Truth.

I have now dispatch'd, what was, at first, propos'd; and have been as short and clear in the Management of the Whole, as I cou'd. To avoid the multiplying of Pages, I have seldom quoted what the Learned Doctor has offer'd upon the Particulars I undertook to consider. But my Arguments, especially those Concerning Christ's *Co-essentiality* with the Father, and His strict and proper Eternity, are directly level'd against his *Doctrine*; and, I hope, are an Answer to it. If that Great Man shall think fit to *reply* to the Whole; or to any Part of this *Vindication*; I am willing and ready (if my Health will permit) to examine farther into the *Subject*. But I trust he will not put me upon explaining the *Mode* of distinct Persons subsistence, in the same Individual Essence or Substance. *That* is the *Mysterious Part* of the Article; which was design'd to be conceal'd from us. If he endeavour from *Receiv'd* Principles of Reason, to prove  
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it a Contradiction; it will be necessary to appear so far in Defense of it, as to clear it from that Imputation. In the mean time, I heartily wish and pray, that those, whose Misfortune it is, to entertain such pernicious Notions of this Necessary Article of Christianity, may be enlighten'd with a Bright Ray of Divine and Saving Knowledge, and\* reduc'd to the Acknowledgment of the Truth; that they may not at last be oblig'd to lament and bewail their Condition, in a more melancholy Place, for not knowing *the God*, than with *St. Peter* at the Door, for not knowing *the Man*; that while they explode the *Divinity* of the Second Person in the *Ever Blessed Trinity*, they be not depriv'd of the Presence, and Assistance of the Third.

F I N I S.