

The Son

Dear Brother,

In answer to your enquiry, I am sending you this short criticism. That this tract called "Remarks" needs careful perusal I admit, but that it puts the *theory* of "Non-eternal Sonship" in a clearer light — as you say — I cannot agree with. You tell me you cannot see much wrong with it. Well, we cannot see much that is right in it. We are told in Scripture that after the prophets have spoken, the others are to judge. You will have to be the judge of what is said in the tract and in this feeble attempt to answer it. You can then hold for yourself what you judge to be right on this matter. It appears to be a subject which has caused speculation and heresy from the earliest days of the history of the Church. To call it "*new light*" is a little humorous to men who read "Church History." Now, at so late a date, we have the matter raised again, first by J.T., with C.A.C. and other men of the same party trying to support him. The tract is before us so we will see what this "*new light*" is worth.

The first obvious mistake we noticed when we first read through this tract, is the hopeless confusion between **names** and **titles**. At the first read through we noticed that six times our author speaks of the Son and Son of God as *names* and six times as *titles*, affirming in capitals on the last page that they are "Titles." This one mistake alone is sufficient to bear out the writer's own words on the last page, that he **lacks the needed ability to write on this theme**. A man who has not yet made up his mind as to whether the Son is a *name* or a *title*, should have hesitated before writing so boldly on this subject. We judge that it is of primary importance to see that Son and Son of God are Names and not Titles, connected as they are with the Person of the Son of God. This we believe can easily be seen from Scripture.

A title is what we might call official and conveys the thought that one is appointed to fill a certain sphere or perform a certain office. On the other hand a name is **personal**. It describes for us some personal quality in the one who bears that particular name. A few of the titles of our Lord are, "Priest"; "Lord"; "Head"; "Son of Man"; "Son of David." You will notice in regard to all of these that our Lord is appointed by God to perform some office. Moreover, we must keep in mind that these titles are connected with the Lord in Manhood. Look at them for a moment.

Priest. He was *called* of God as was Aaron. Heb. 5: 4.

Lord and Christ. God has *made* Him these. Acts 2: 36.

Head. God has *given* Him to be the Head. Eph. 1: 22.

Son of Man. God has *put* all under Him. Heb. 2: 8.

Son of David. God will *give* Him the throne. Luke 1: 32.

Now where do we ever read that God has "*called*"; "*made*"; or "*given*" Him to be Son? Nowhere. And why? we may ask. Because He is the Son surely. As we have not said "Son" and "Son of God" are *names* and not *titles* at all. They are descriptive of His Person and not of some office He fills in Manhood. Had "Son" really been a title as they want us to accept, it would have made the revelation of God official and robbed us of that wonderfully personal touch which we have so much enjoyed in the writings of John. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." How very personal this is. We have another good example in Ps. 2 of the very point we are trying to establish. "Yet have I *set* my king," and "Thou *art* my Son." In the first, note, He is set by God, but in the second, it is who He is. The

King — what He is. The Son — who He is.

Suppose we subject the Name "Word" — *logos* — to the same test? You will notice that C.A.C. also calls this a *title*. Where do we read that God *made; appointed; set or called* Him to be the Word? Here again dear brother the same truth comes out that the "Word" is a *name* and describes who our Lord is in Person; the great expression of the mind of God whether in creation or revelation. Once more we call scripture to witness. "His name is called the Word of God." Rev. 19: 13. We just call this up here to shew the same confusion between *names* and *titles*.

You will be thinking I am putting too much stress on this point after all this, but it is a root error all through. It has landed the author into further confusion on page 24. Note how carefully here how he puts the titles Christ and Christ Jesus alongside of the Name Jehovah. He then tries to deduce from this that "Names" given to our Lord in Manhood, cannot be carried back into eternity. The writer has before told us that "Son" and "Son of God" are "Titles" page 4. Now he wants us to accept that Christ and Christ Jesus are "Names." But we have seen from scripture that it is exactly the other way round. What hopeless confusion. We are sure that all bible students will accept that these two titles — Christ and Christ Jesus — only apply to our Lord in Manhood. Names are another matter. They describe for us the Person and are thus true of Him at all times. When Scripture speaks of "purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the ages of time" (2 Tim. 1: 9) it simply means the Person we know **now** as Jesus Christ or Christ Jesus, was there in eternity as the One in whom this purpose was established. With these titles we have no difficulty at all. But this alternating between names and titles by our author is remarkable, **if it is not intentional**. It may be that he has never yet learned of this distinction. All the same, one is left to wonder if it is ignorance or wilfulness.

Coming back then to page 24 which we are considering, we notice another colossal blunder in regard to the Name Jehovah. We read, "The Name Jehovah was not made known until Exodus vi., but Moses, as knowing that Name, continually uses it throughout the book of Genesis in relating circumstances which took place **long before God was known by that Name.**" Observe that C.A.C. is trying to work out a case for carrying the titles Christ and Christ Jesus back in retrospect. In demonstration of his point he has unhappily linked the Name Jehovah with the titles Christ and Christ Jesus. If the Name Jehovah was not made known till Exodus vi., how are we to explain the fact that Abraham used this Name in Gen. 15: 2. Isaac also used it in Gen. 27: 7. Jacob also in Gen. 28: 16. But God Himself had used this Name in Gen. 15: 7. Do you see the point in this? It affords us further proof of what we say describes a person and — unlike a title — not some office to be filled at a given moment. All this confusion flows from failing to distinguish between the bearing of a *name* as distinct from a *title*. Truly, Jehovah was ever Jehovah as surely as the Son was ever the Son. The titles of our Lord cannot be put alongside the names of God. Each must stand in its own right connection and use in Scripture. We believe if C.A.C. had been bent on the simple opening up of the truth, he would not have been guilty of such patent mistakes but it is a theory he is propounding hence these many blunders.

Now let us try and gather the fruit of the ground we have covered so far. Keep in mind then that a name describes a person and turn back to page 1 of the tract. Here we read,

"Scripture makes it clear that His Person is **eternal and changeless**, whether as in the form of God in the past eternity, or as come in flesh, or as glorified as Man at God's right hand, or as the subject Son in eternity to come."

We are of course in full agreement with this statement. Why then does the man, who pens a statement like this object to the term "Eternal Son"? If His Person is "*eternal and changeless*" and, in Person He is the Son, He must be *Personally and Eternally* the Son. What else can these words mean? We have but to turn to page 10 to find that our author does believe that in Person our Lord is Son, for he speaks there of,

"The glorious Person of the Son of God."

We have only to put these two statements together to see how, from the pen of C.A.C. himself, he really believes our Lord was Son Eternally. He has told us on page 10 our Lord is in Person, Son, and, on page 1 that His Person is eternal and changeless. What is the error then in speaking of the "ETERNAL SON?" It is but another way of saying shortly what our author says in greater fulness. We are sure our Lord did not change His Person when He came into Manhood. This note will help on this head.

"As through the epistle, the Messiah is the subject. In the Psalm it is the Messiah who speaks, that is, the Anointed here below. He expresses His patience and faithfulness in the position which he had taken addressing Jehovah as His God; and He tells us that He took this place willingly according to the eternal counsels respecting His own Person. *For the Person is not changed.*

(Syn. Vol. 5. Page 306, footnote.)

Yes, His person is eternal and changeless and in Person He is the Son, so we need not be afraid to go on as we have always done, speaking of the "Eternal Son." Mark, it is his own words we are quoting. Does it not seem that when C.A.C. does let Scripture govern his thoughts, he is forced to write the very truth he is out to destroy? Quite unwittingly I admit, but there it is down in his own words. You must judge whether we have dealt fairly with him.

In line with the foregoing, we have a very serious issue raised on pages 13 and 14. These pages are very complicating and need to be read very carefully. If we have got the thought our author is trying to establish, we think he is trying to make out that there is a distinction between the Person Who is eternal and the Son — which he asserts, is only true of our Lord in Manhood. Simple persons like you and me may be excused if we cannot see this fine distinction in Scripture. But we need not be dismayed as it is evident our author is not clear himself. More than once in this tract he speaks of the *Person of the Son*. He has told us that *in Person He is Son*. He has also said — *His Person is eternal*. Yet on these two pages he is labouring to try and prove a difference between the eternal Person and the Son. What else can one gather from these statements? Here are his words.

"It is not said that that place was the **place of Sonship**, or that the glory was the **glory of Sonship**. It was the place and glory of **His eternal Person**."

A distinction you see between **Sonship** and **Person**. Is there then a dual personality in our Lord? The one Person Eternal. The other bound by time — the Son. Now do you see why he speaks of the

Son as a **Title**? Can we put his case for him? That the eternal Person coming into Manhood takes the title, "Son." This, dear brother, is the whole case for them if we have understood them right. But if we are to accept from C.A.C. that the Son is a title, why does he speak so often of the *Person of the Son*? So far as we know there is nothing personal in a title. A person has a title of course but the title is one thing the person another. If the "Son" is a title which our Lord takes when coming into Manhood, then the case is sure for them. If it is a name describing His eternal Person, they are just as surely wrong. Which side does our author take? BOTH! Six times he tells us that the Son is a *title* and to keep the balance, six times he tells us it is a *name*. His final vote on the last page, in capitals is "TITLES." So there you have it. To say the least, this is very careless writing for one who has a reputation like C.A.C.. But think carefully over the statements on these two pages. Our author has made mention that our Lord is a Person "Eternal and changeless." He also speaks about "The Person of the Son of God." That is, an eternal person coming into manhood *becomes; takes* or *adds* to Himself another Person — the Son. This is what they want us to accept. The men of God who taught us simply about the "Eternal Son" were never guilty of hopeless confusion like this.

Something even worse confronts us on page 33. In reply to A.J.P. concerning the meaning of the "Only-begotten Son," C.A.C. is almost guilty of a deliberate deception. Note how in reply to such verses as John 1: 18, C.A.C. quotes Heb. 1: 5. Now why did not C.A.C. tell his readers that Mr. Pollock, was speaking of one word and he another? No one that I know will doubt that Hebrews speaks of our Lord as coming into the world in Manhood, but, to put this against what A.J.P. was bringing forward, shews either great ignorance of words, or an attempt to deceive simple readers. If you have the means, look up these two words and you will find that the word A.J.P. is using is — MONOGENES. The word C.A.C. is using is — GEGENNEKA [GENNAO]. The first means, as it is translated — "Only begotten," the second — "Have begotten." Why then does our author try to nullify the meaning of one word by adducing another with a totally distinct meaning? Does C.A.C. think he is going to get students of Scripture to accept such preposterous conclusions? To think that because gegenneka [gennao] means, "have I begotten thee," we are to accept that monogenes "Only -begotten" means the same, is surely so absurd, that no right thinking person taught of God will accept it for one moment. It was might do for the simple members of the London party who are prepared to say yes to these monstrosities, but no one else I am sure.

The point at issue is, whether the word "Only-begotten" refers to our Lord before coming into Manhood, or is only a time name given to Him when here. This is why he puts forward Heb. 1-5, where coming into the world is the simple meaning. It is a bad omen to note how he presses for the literal meaning of "begotten," when A.J.P. says "Scripture forbids its being used in the case of the Son of God in the sense of derivation, or generation." The fact that Scripture does use words that can only be understood by their Scriptural use, is wholly lost sight of. He knows, as well as you and I know, that to take up many words in Scripture and give them merely their English meaning, would make even God a time Being. No, we are not going to accept that in John 1: 18 "Only-begotten" means begotten as we understand it in grammar. Here is a note by T.H.R..

"the Greek word for only-begotten is the Septuagint translation of only-one; in Hebrew, sometimes "Beloved," sometimes "only-begotten," is used in the L.X.X. for the same Hebrew word signifying "Only-one." In English it is translated "Only." Gen. 22. "Thine only son whom thou lovest." In Ps. 22 it is the same word "My Darling;" the margin puts it "Mine only-one." That is really the meaning of it. *Only-begotten has nothing to do with being born at all.* It is simply the fact that He is God's only beloved Son.

We are sure that the reference to Isaac on page 32 does prove the point, in spite of what C.A.C. says about it. Notice how he puts all the weight on begotten, and asserts that Isaac was truly "begotten by Abraham. Page 33. Of course this is true. But what about *only*? This is where the emphasis should be put. He says at the foot of page 32 "Isaac **alone** was born according to Spirit." Gal. 4: 29. This is quite true and it is the reason why the term "Only-begotten" is applied to him in Heb. 11: 17. If this word simply means begotten by Abraham, what are we to say about Ishmael who also was begotten by Abraham? It is because the word does mean more than *begotten* that it is applied to Isaac. One of a special kind is the idea. We had always thought this was one place where we could rightly see what the word "only-begotten" really did mean, and we are not disposed to alter our thoughts in the face of this weak argument. It is really amazing that C.A.C. should evidence such crude reasoning. Is it not because he is more bent on supporting a theory than opening up the truth for our learning? Such untaught reasoning might have caused us doubts had it been told us, but here it is from the hand of C.A.C. himself. But we pass on to point out another serious departure from the truth which we hope will give you to see yet more, the serious character of this tract.

Will you turn on to pages 36, 37 and 38. Here we come on to his remarks on the Name — Word. You will have heard by this time from other sources that the Word is not a Divine Name of our Lord given to Him by the Spirit or by God the Father. Here is a quotation from "The Divine Standard," page 53.

W.R.P. You would not carry the title "Word" into what He was in Deity.

J.T. No. He had acquired that name among the saints.

What proof does J.T. offer in support of this **new light**? Not a tittle. No, not even from profane writings, much less the Scriptures. Men of God in past years seem to have been singularly blind to this important matter. I suppose it awaited a super-spiritual man like J.T. to propound this. You may know that F.E.R. put out the same idea but, if I remember rightly, he said it was an impression. J.T. boldly asserts it as though it was a well authenticated truth of Scripture. He seems to speak this forth with almost Apostolic authority, and, lo, it is an article of faith now. I suppose we are to accept it just because he says it is so. No one I suppose dare say anything to the contrary under the threat of being told to "stand aside." You may be thankful that you are in a company where, after the prophets have spoken, the others are free to judge, without the fear of "withdrawal" being applied to them. I suppose party spirit will keep many quiet.

Coming back to our tract it is interesting to note that our author brings before us the name of Mr. Darby as an authority in regard to the meaning of this Name LOGOS — "Word." One is really glad to note he still has some regard for this greatest of all teachers since Apostolic times. I doubt if they would agree with me saying this in the light of the "spiritual men among them through whom the truth is coming out." (J.T.) Yet one is certain as one reads through the writings of J.N.D. and compares them with the statements of these new-light men, that they are rapidly slipping away from the wealth of Divine truth he was raised up of God to bring out for our learning in these last days. Did you note the remark on page 12 about "pious persons?" Possibly a tilt at J.N.D. though it is abstract. Yet, C.A.C. has fallen back on the reputed authority of at least one "pious person" by quoting a note of J.N.D. It is

interesting to note where C.A.C. quotes from. "Note to 1 Cor. 1: 5 in New Translation." He took care not to quote J.N.D. in the Synopsis. Why? He knows only too well what his quoted authority says about the meaning of this Name "Word." Here it is. "It is the revelation of the eternal *logos* before all creation." Syn. Vol. 3. p. 385. Now will C.A.C. listen to the authority he himself brought forward? *He will not.* While introducing the name of J.N.D. as an authority on the **meaning** of this word, he flatly refuses to accept his **use** of the word. That J.N.D. with his great learning and spirituality knew the bearing of this word *logos* far in excess of any modern teachers to-day is certainly true, yet he, with his **vastly superior knowledge** of the matter had no hesitation in speaking of the "*Eternal Word.*" Nor had the compilers of the original hymn book apparently for, as you know, they inserted the hymn "*Thou art the Everlasting Word*" twice. Are we then going to give up the precious truth we have received through men like J.N.D. for these vagaries of C.A.C.? We trow not.

Did you notice what C.A.C. says about the Spirit coming into the World? "Another of those Persons *condescended* to be sent by the Father and the Son." Page 18. We live and learn. Suppose we ask C.A.C. who told him this? We can but say, "Certainly John did not tell him so." But why introduce this new idea of the Spirit condescending to come into the world to fill believers? Is it not to try and get over the difficulty of the Father sending the Son in pre-incarnation? You see if the Spirit — who is co-equal with the Father and the Son — could be sent as from Godhead and heaven, so also could the Son. These brothers are trying to prove that the Son was not sent from Godhead and from heaven, hence, they must do something about the very evident fact of the Spirit being sent from heaven and by the other two Persons of the Godhead, so C.A.C. *invents* the idea that the Spirit condescended to come. The point he is trying to establish is, that one Divine Person could not send another co-equal Divine Person, hence the idea of the Son first coming into Manhood and, being here, was available to be sent, is put out. The evident fact that the Spirit did not become man yet was sent, absolutely destroys this new theory so we are told, the Spirit condescended to be sent. Mr. Coates says on page 13, "One shrinks from going a hair's breadth beyond what Scripture says." Then he will have to drop this idea of condescension for no such term appears in any part of Scripture. Scripture of course does speak quite clearly on the subject of being sent. If you turn to the Epistle to the Galatians you will read that "God sent forth His Son" 4: 4, and "God hath sent forth the Spirit" 4: 6. Both sent as from Godhead no doubt. The one sending is the same as the other except the fact that the Son became Man but this does not alter the thought in the sending. You can well afford then to refuse both the idea that the Son was sent as in Manhood and the Spirit condescended to come.

With one more reference we will bring this long letter to a close. Turn to page 36. Here he labours to try and prove that the description given about Melchisedec refers to our Lord's Manhood and not to His person as Son. He says "It is the *Son born in time* according to Hebrews 5: 5, perfected through suffering (v. 9), and now "A son perfected for ever" (Heb. 7: 28), who is constituted Priest." How could "Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life" apply to our Lord's Manhood in this world? Father here is the idea of derivation as we have before considered in Heb. 1: 5. But, was He without **mother** as to His Manhood? Was He without **beginning of days** when in this world? Yea, was He **without end of life** in so far as His responsible life in this world was concerned? Even in resurrection He is not without beginning of days, though thank God He is now a Man in the power of endless life. As a Man then, "born in this world" as our author says, He had *Father; Mother; beginning of days and end of life.* Transfer these statements from His Manhood to His Person as Son, and every difficulty is removed. The Eternal Son was *ever* without an ancestry, without a beginning and without an end. It is such a Person as this who is a Priest for ever in the power of an endless life. Take note it is the Person and not so much the Priesthood which is brought before us in this verse. So here we leave it to you.

In closing we may say we have learned that J.T. does not agree with C.A.C. on this head. This must be a pity when our author was evidently trying to support his leader in this tract. No doubt they will find a point of agreement on the matter so long as neither will admit anything before incarnation but "Abstract Deity." Pardon me using these unscriptural terms as I am just quoting their own flamboyant language. Be wise and keep off such terms as "**abstract Deity**"; "**inscrutability**"; "**inferiority**" and such like high sounding terms. They may make it appear that those who use them are super-spiritual men, but they only delude simple souls and are not essential in Divine teaching. I believe they are used by these men to create the impression of greatness and thus assure to themselves the ears of the simple. It was this very idea which Paul scorned at Corinth as he tells us. "Which also we speak, not in words taught by *human wisdom* but in those taught by the Spirit," 1 Cor. 2: 13., New Trans.

In closing, we hope we have at least aroused you to see the dangerous character of this tract. We do not doubt that it is cleverly written. Nor are we in any doubt that a mere read through as you gave it, will leave many with the impression that it is not far wrong. These matters need a lot of time in their consideration and therein lies their great danger. So few have the time or exercise to go over the points carefully in the light of Scripture. Most will accept what is written just because C.A.C. has written it. We hope you are not like that. Do not accept what we have written without being sure it is scriptural. We are assured if everybody did seek to "Prove all things" half of the current errors of the day would never make progress. But we are in days when men can say the most extravagant things which are eagerly swallowed by admiring devotees. If those who drink them in cannot understand them or find them in Scripture, they just conclude they themselves are not spiritual enough and these great men are far beyond them in this elusive "spirituality." So far indeed beyond the smaller elements that they get as it were **beyond Scripture**. This very statement has appeared in a published reading with J.T. Do not be surprised then when tracts like this one "Remarks" make their appearance, but do not be content to swallow the "Remarks" without an inquisition.

Yours in the service of our Lord,

QUARTUS.

[George Davison]