

An Answer of G. V. Wigram,
to "Mr. H. Craik's Letter, dated 15th November, 1848."
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Notice.

I would engage my reader to consider attentively pages 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, of "Remarks, by J. N. Darby, etc., Oct. 1848," which tract, as I informed Mr. Craik at first, was what awakened my mind to the error of his statements.

The more I ponder Mr. C.'s hypothesis, the more it seems to me untenable: dishonouring to Christ, and destructive of the faith once delivered to the saints. It confounds "humanity" with "the *state* in which humanity may be;" as if "destroyable by the sword" was part of humanity, instead of being connected with its state.

It supposes that the humanity of the Lord had no perfect relationship to God *per se*, as being of the obedient one; and it overlooks *THE* grand difference of the state of Christ's humanity from ours; how it was *sui generis*, as being united to Godhead, which no one else's humanity ever was.

Mr. Craik's explanation (in his letter to T. M.) is only a fuller exposition of what I had stated in my "Appeal:" only the error is stated a great deal more clearly. In many leading points, it is identical with Mr. Newton's; from whom, I doubt not, it was unconsciously adopted.

So solemn a sin do I think it to attempt to define the person of the Son, that I would assure the reader I have no such thought in view in this paper. Mr. C. having unguardedly made statements calculated to puzzle some and to mislead others (with no such intention) upon matters connected with the *foundation* of their faith, I have endeavoured to point out the trespass of his statements against the common faith and against common sense.

An Answer, etc.

My Dear Brother, — I have received the letter you sent me, from three different parts of England. One of the sad ways of Mr. Newton was so to circulate papers as that it was hard to say whether they were public or private. Two or three hundred copies would go out through England, in MS., or a small edition in print, the distribution of which was confided to one or two confidential friends of his own — these not obtainable until an answer was forth-coming, when they were put on sale; which made any printed statement, in the answer, about his mode of publishing, appear to be false. This happened to myself, as to two of his tracts. I was shown two tracts by a friend, — I endeavoured to get these at Plymouth; — they were not sold nor to be had. I noticed this in print, and was told the *walls of Plymouth* would prove I was mistaken. I am sure I had no claim on Mr. Craik for a copy to be sent to me, but I think it would have been wiser in him for the sake of himself, the Lord, and the Church, to have sent me a copy, as well as the many to whom he did so. However, here the letter to T. M. is, — as something meant to bear upon the church's conscience, it is in the light — and as I have determined to be no party to shooting or stabbing in the dark, I present it in full, as having been *sent to me to answer*.*

*Part of our vocation as Christians, is *perception*: "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and

ye know all things"; "He that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man." In judging one's self, as much as in every thing else, we have to discern things that differ: and it is the more difficult in this case, because it is *SELF-judgment*. Singular phenomena in connexion with this are observable. Thus, a young Christian will, when he is rebuked, take the feeling of mortified pride for conscience toward God, or for zeal against slander. Again, the excessive disgust at a sin in another, will be taken for the conviction that it does not exist; and I have seen the excessive pain produced, rightly produced, in an affectionate heart by a case of excision, mistaken, when the power of self-judgment was weak, for grief at *the bad way* in which it was supposed to be done, when really it was done quietly and graciously. The decision and unwaveringness of true love, are mistaken for harshness and unrelentingness. It is love alone which will not tolerate evil in an object loved. It was a wise word of Lady P — 's, "No one loves me enough to rebuke me, or enough to point out my faults." And in discipline in the church, I have uniformly observed, that restoration of a sinner from the evil of his ways, and decision in dealing with the evil, go together. If evil is slurred over, the sinner goes on in it, and it spreads; if in known evil, it is dealt with decidedly and firmly, as dangerous to the body of poor sinners whom grace has gathered, and as unworthy of the place into which they are gathered, there is often restoration.

In the present case, I must say my own conscience has its answer, I trust, in the presence of the Lord. The question to me is simply this: — Is neutrality between God and the devil possible? Scripture tells me, "No." H. Craik would say, as unhesitatingly, "No," also. But he does not see that God and the devil are the two parties in this case. Hence his attempt at *neutrality*. "We have been all naughty children quarrelling — he will not sanction it, or Mr. Newton's being so mercilessly dealt with." [Some such thoughts seem to have led him]. Hence [Satan really being the one who is using Mr. Newton to blaspheme Christ, and subvert the faith] his position; hence too, his failure in doctrine, in statements, utterly unlike himself; and hence the need of pointing these out as *indices of the presence of the power of Satan*. I avow I do this, as myself "a brand plucked from the burning", *always*, if I can. And in the present case, I see no other way of hope to save H. Craik himself or to honour Christ, or warn his lambs. Brethren may sit at home and find fault with *me* — it is an easy task both ways. I would they gave themselves the rather to prayer: or they may speak soft things, and let Satan take his course. I confess I desire to "*resist the devil*", knowing he shall flee for Christ's name's sake.

Bristol, Wednesday, 15th Nov., 1848.

My Dear Brother, — I have just a few minutes ago received your kind note. Although pressed for time and longing for rest, I would not seem utterly reckless of your brotherly interest, although I much prefer leaving Mr. Wigram's unjust and unprovoked accusation to Him who "judgeth righteously." The consciousness of innocence helps me to leave the cause with Him who is the God of truth and righteousness.

With reference to the reports, as to what I am charged with having said respecting our Lord's humanity, etc. I have to remark:

1. That Mr. W. wrote the tract while living in the neighbourhood of my house, i.e. half an hour's walk from Kingsdown; *yet never availed himself of the opportunity of personally inquiring as to the fact of certain expressions [having] been employed by me, or of the connexion in which they were used, or of the meaning intended to be conveyed by them.* I ask any godly Christian, Is such conduct according to the law of Christ? Is it right to print and publish reports relative to a brother without inquiry? I press this point; because, if persons do not admit the wrongness of such conduct, [could not walk with them in Christian fellowship. I should be thankful to have your judgment about this point.

2. That the statement relative to my questioning the soundness of Mr. Darby and his followers, was made at a church meeting in a moment of excitement. That it was *at the same meeting* confessed as sin before the brethren, and acknowledged as such before God in prayer. I last Monday week appealed to those *present at the time* the expression was used, whether I had added the words about "shrivelled old man"; and on all sides the answer was "No." Not a creature present heard any such words employed.

3. I inquired about the statement from Miss E. E.,* one of the most zealous and unwearied supporters of Mr. Wigram's party in Bristol, *and she declared, that not only had she never heard me employ such an expression, but that she had never even heard the report of it, until she saw it in Mr. Wigram's "Appeal."*

(*I leave out the name. — G. V. W.)

4. After this, all I can say is, that I know nothing of having employed the grossly objectionable expression; that it is utterly unlike my habitual way of speaking of our blessed Lord and Saviour; and that the very mode in which the charge is made resembles "shooting in the dark." Mr. W. says he had a letter informing him that I had said so. Who wrote the letter? Did the writer report what he himself heard, or only at second-hand? May not the writer have been misinformed? or, may he not have heard imperfectly, and thus the charge have originated in mistake? I put it to any upright intelligent Christian, whether all these points ought not to have been settled, before the charge of my having said so was published to the world, and reasoned upon as a proof of my having been guilty of heresy and blasphemy?

5. With regard to illustrations, statements, etc. used in discussing questions of difficult solution, it is utterly unfair for parts of conversations to be reported, and these published without inquiry. This way of acting must destroy all brotherly confidence, and introduce all the results of gross misrepresentation. Certain brethren amongst us, in their zeal against Mr. Newton's errors, seemed to me to be in danger of departing from the truth as to the reality of our Lord's humanity. I have ever maintained that He was in all things made like unto his brethren, sin only excepted; that the flesh and blood which he assumed was the flesh and blood of the children; that the physical or chemical properties of his body were the same as ours. In this I see the evidence of his love. That he should stoop so low for our sakes, is that which endears him to our hearts. Certain brethren seemed to me desirous of making out that the flesh of Christ was substantially different from ours. Hence arose the employment of such illustrations as the other expressions alluded to. What I asserted was, that our blessed Lord, having life in himself, could have prolonged his life for ever if he had so chosen. Secondly, that he could not by any possibility die but as the sacrifice for sin; but that he was so truly human* that poison, or the sword piercing his heart, would have destroyed the union between his soul and body, had he not put forth his power to prevent the natural result. If this be denied, it seems to me that the faith of the Catholic Church (in all ages) is repudiated; and the necessary inference would be, that the Blessed One did not take our flesh, but flesh and blood essentially different from ours. I see no irreverence in the asserting that His flesh and blood was really of the same nature with yours and mine, only with this momentous difference, that he was always entirely *without sin*.

(*I put it to the conscience of the poor saints — whether this sentence is not shocking?

A resurrection body will be truly human; yet not subject to such things.)

6. With regard to Isaiah 53: 2, I have understood the prophet as describing the circumstances of outward meanness and humiliation into which, for our sakes, the Son of God was pleased to come. If you can refer to Mr. Henry's "Commentary" and to Dr. Hawker's on the verse, you will find that both of

these eminently godly men understood and applied the expression just as I have done in my letters. If Mr. W. will take the trouble to read the remarks of the above-mentioned commentators, he will be compelled either to take back his charge of heresy and blasphemy against me, or to prefer the same charge against them. I had not seen what they had written, on the passage, until Mr. W.'s monstrous accusation led me to examine them.

7. I assert most explicitly that it was utterly impossible that the Holy One of God could have seen corruption; neither have I said or written any thing to imply the contrary assertion.

In conclusion, I would ask, "Ought Mr. Wigram's conduct in this matter to be allowed to pass unrebuked by those who are associated with him?" If John Darby and the others are really zealous for the truth — which I am disposed to think many of them are — can they allow themselves to pass over such a breach of Christian morality as that of which Mr. W. has been guilty? Every man has a conscience, and is bound to judge of right and wrong. I have found no one capable of defending Mr. W's "Appeal." His own party — at least the best part of them — are ashamed of it. Yet, while they countenance him, not only as a brother, but as a leading teacher, they are responsible for his public walk. I leave my cause with God; but I can have no respect for the consistency of that man who is inflamed with the most fiery zeal against doctrinal errors, but who can coolly allow the most flagrant violation of truth and honesty to pass unrebuked. Either I am righteously accused of heresy and blasphemy, or Mr. Wigram must be dealt with as a false accuser. I am willing to submit the paragraph (pp. 92, 93 of the Letters) to the whole church of Christ, satisfied that no person of sound mind and unprejudiced judgment could possibly fasten upon the very harmless sentences in that paragraph the charge of blasphemy. This is not my matter; I have to deal with God about it. It remains to be seen whether, among those who have laid claim to superior light and purity, such conduct is to be allowed as would not be tolerated even among the moral and respectable portion of those who are living without God in the world.

But I am too weak to write any longer. Exercise of mind, lying awake at night, the difficulty of maintaining a neutral position, the evil effect of these controversies upon the spirit, render me the object of your sympathy. I would not be implicated in Mr. Newton's errors, nor have I sympathy with his teaching; but I dare not reject those whom Christ has received. The opposing party will give us no rest, because we will not yield to these demands, and refuse to hold fellowship with those who are unable to denounce Mr. Newton. I must conclude. Pray for us.

Yours affectionately in the Lord, Henry Craik.

To T. M. (copy.)

On the first paragraph, I cannot but remark, that, though written to an individual, doubtless, *it was meant* for circulation. How do I know this? As well from internal evidence as from facts; and also because one friend of Mr. Craik's to whom he sent it, wrote me he was told to send copies to some; and very honorably thought it only right that I should have one: and Mr. Craik has sent it elsewhere. The internal evidence of the letter is not like conscious innocence, leaving its case to the Lord; and now as to 1,

*Why, when I wrote the tract at Bristol, - "did I never avail myself of the opportunity of personally enquiring as to the fact of certain expressions being employed by Mr. C., or of the connexion in which they were used, or of the meaning intended to be conveyed by them?"**

*I did write to tell Mr. C. that I had written one, and was about to write another, paper condemnatory of his doctrine. I staid in Bristol until after the church meeting in Bethesda, when Mr. C.

(as I expected he would) informed the congregation of my coming Appeal, and prepared their minds for it: I staid, thinking he might cite me to appear and prefer my charge before the brethren there.

To this I answer, with sadness of heart, I knew, and had proof unquestionable to my own mind, that Mr. Craik was under a delusion, and had identified himself with a system which makes every one in it to be reckless as to truth. Take Robert Chapman, a truthful man as need to be; what sense or spiritual wisdom would there have been, after my telling him at Bristol, "You are *deluded*; Satan brought you here to dishonor God, and mislead his sheep, just as you did at Plymouth"; in my asking him for any explanation. Having settled that Mr. Craik was under the Newtonian delusion, it would not have been common *sense* in me to go to him; neither would it have been common *honesty* to have asked for evidence, when my judgment was formed; nor common *grace*, believing he was in a position in which he was tempted to the sin of evasion and deception if asked, to have asked him any questions. It is a very pretty thing for an accused party to be his own judge and jury. The government, in the late trials in Ireland, however, did not ask the arraigned "as to the fact of certain expressions," or as to "the connexion" or "meaning intended to be conveyed." They proved the facts, against the arraigned's wish; showed what connexion the words were used in; and left the words to speak their own meaning. To me this demand of Mr. Craik's is, really, nothing more than special pleading. And observe, it takes for granted, as does his declaration, that brethren must judge my conduct — for he cannot go with those who do not — that we were and are in fellowship as brethren. We were not in outward fellowship at the time; and he knows, I have said I will not go where he is received: not upon any personal pique. He has not injured or wronged me at all. But he is aiding Mr. Newton to corrupt the faith and dishonor Christ. And why were we not in fellowship? Because Mr. Müller and Mr. Craik had resisted every entreaty of every varied kind not to identify themselves with the active partisans of Mr. Newton's heresy, and yet would do so — although their doing so forced out some very godly brethren from Bethesda, who were, at the time I went, breaking bread elsewhere; and with them I broke bread.

Now there were several points connected with the rupture of the brotherly standing, all of which rest their burden at Mr. Craik's and Mr. Müller's door.

1. God having allowed Mr. B. [N.] Newton to be proved a heretic and a blasphemer of Christ, and subverter of the faith, G. Müller and H. Craik would have Bethesda count him a brother, and try to stand *neutral*. Now where God and Satan are the parties, as in this case, between whom a man seeks to be neutral — it is not hard to say on whose side such will appear.

2. Brethren, not only connected with the past painful controversy, but quiet godly brethren disconnected from these troubles, and from those in Bethesda too, had spoken and written to G. Müller and Craik, again and again, but all in vain. I might name many such.

3. The work of God, the Holy Ghost, in restoring some from the error of their ways, was ascribed to bad motives. Never were men in more trying position than those who, in May last, met us at Bath. And never, perhaps, was the Lord's grace more signally shown toward any, than towards and in them. When all was forgotten, and confidence and love restored among us, Bethesda asserted bad motives had led them to return; and trampled under foot the mercy of God in restoring his people.

4. A mass had been driven out from Bethesda upon this question, and in connection with it appeared the paper of the ten. Now it was this paper which first shut up my mind from present hope as to Bethesda. It showed me that the very same special pleading and want of all conscience which had characterised Newtonism at Plymouth, in its immoral system, had a fast hold of Bethesda.

The letters from Bristol to some eight or ten parties I had seen and felt dissatisfied with. The self-sufficiency and superciliousness, the impeccability and infallibility assumed by George Müller, were

really alarming. But there was nothing immoral, that I saw, till this letter of the ten. "Puffed up in a fleshly mind" was all that I saw of evil in the writer's state, until this letter of the ten. The effect of it upon myself and some twenty-five or thirty, from various places, who read it together, seemed uniform. From that hour, I felt the immoral system of Newtonism had Bethesda as its hold. And if I felt this from the internal evidence of the paper — much more did I feel it, when I had sifted some of the things stated as facts in it, and found they were not facts at all. This paper also, entirely in principle, denies the competency of the saints to judge evil, and so denies the very being of the church.

As to No. 2. in Mr. C.'s letter, I may remark: I did not know there had been confession before brethren, and acknowledgment before God, at that meeting by Mr. C. about what Mr. C. has said as to the unsoundness of Mr. D. and followers; nor do I understand now why or what he confessed; because in this same letter, under division five, he again charges some with unsoundness, and has elsewhere. The fact is, he does differ from J. N. D. and myself, and (as I believe) the sound faith which cannot be gainsaid; and therefore we must appear to him unsound.

As to the appeal he made "last Monday week," to those *present at the time*, as to whether he had used the expression "*about shrivelled old man*" *at the time*, does he forget that some sixty or eighty at least have left, Bethesda *since that time*. And is it not monstrous to appeal to a mass, four and a half months after a tumultuous meeting (when sixty or eighty have left the assembly, and party spirit is now running high), and then to quote it as having any value whatever? The statement was made to me in two letters: — I found the report current in London, and at Bristol; the report about "shrivelled old man." I asked the party from whom it came, and got it confirmed. But all this is really special pleading; for, if Mr. Craik could set aside the having said these words, he cannot deny his having said what is equally bad; that had the Lord taken arsenic he must have died; and he cannot deny the same doctrine stated by himself in his own letter. Neither can he disprove or undo what I found among the poor of Bethesda: the doctrine discussed and held, and attributed to him by the poor of the flock.

I do not understand why Mr. Craik singles out my quotation from my friend's letter.

That letter was not the gravamen of my charge, but a part of Mr. Craik's pastoral letter. While reports pained me, I never should have been free to have noticed them at all, but for the statement in the pastoral letter; and the challenge of the ten upon it. The statement in the pastoral letter was *the real* question. And why is Mr. Craik to be pained by my searching to see whether he is sound in the faith, when he and his nine fellow-signers, threw down the "Pastoral Letters," as a gauntlet of orthodoxy in the arena of the church of God (as they supposed) in Bethesda, see page 6 and 7 of my appeal. Nothing in the church of God is private. Neither is one part of it exclusive of another. If Bethesda was part of the church of God, I was of it — and its acts are public before God, and His church and the world.

As to the statement quoted from my friend's letter; there are three things objectionable in it. 1st, — it is the language of a mind which feels itself free to pry into the person of the Son, "Whom no one knoweth save the Father only." That Mr. Craik does feel thus free is largely evidenced by his own letter to T. M.; where he states, as to the Lord. "that the physical or chemical properties of his body were the same as ours," etc., etc.

2. The language is disrespectful. By this I mean that language which may fairly suit us in describing what is around us, if we do not want to give it honor, is used of Him who is presented to us as our object of worship; as to whom a worshipful soul will look at nothing, save in the connection with his moral glory, and as it is revealed.

The letter to T. M. contains this evil also, *far more largely*.

3. What is worst of all, there is quiet assumption that the Lord's humanity was in the same state of broken relationship to God as is ours.* Now this is quite as much assumed by Mr. Craik's own statements, which he cannot deny. Does he deny that he said that if the Lord had taken arsenic he would have died, or his letter to T.M.? But of this more anon.

*Consequently, His humanity was not, of itself, in acceptable relationship to God at all.

Mr. Craik ought (No. 3) to have stated *all*, not one-third, of what the sister referred to said.

Who wrote the letter? (No .4) A poor man or a poor woman are as credible as a rich; but their shops or character are staked in their statements. I saw enough done to ruin, at Plymouth, those who withstood Mr. Newton; and have seen enough of the same thing in Bethesda. My witnesses told me as having heard it — not second-hand — the writer was not misinformed, etc. I shall not trust myself to express my feelings as to these questions of Mr. C. Let us remove the witness, and introduce Mr. Craik himself to give witness.

"I have ever maintained . . . that the flesh and blood which Christ assumed, was the flesh and blood of the children; that *the physical or chemical properties of his body were the same as ours* . . . the Lord having life in Himself, could have prolonged his life for ever, if he had so chosen. Secondly, that he could not by any possibility die but as the sacrifice for sin; but that he was so truly human that poison, or the sword piercing his heart, would have destroyed the union between his soul and body, had he not put forth his power to prevent the natural results."

Here the whole doctrine is ten times more objectionably stated than I ever could have said before.

I see no reverence in talking of the physical or chemical properties of the Lord's body.

"The Lord having life in himself, COULD *have prolonged* his life for ever, if he had so chosen." I understand its being said, "The Lord having life in himself, could have prolonged Paul's life for ever if he had chosen"; because Paul had death in himself, and it required power to counterwork it; but I would not admit it to be said, that, if Adam had not sinned in Eden, God could have prolonged his life for ever; not because I doubt of the competency of God to do so, but because the expression implies uncertainty as to whether or not Adam was in the state of being upheld. Clearly he was. God would have upheld him; and he had no tendency to die before sin entered. Much less can I admit the expression as applied to our Lord, because he was not only 'abiding' as sinless, but impeccable; not only had Satan nothing in him (and *certès* no power of death); but, being Son of God, necessity of death could not enter from, either below or around. He took it up, as in obedience to God, in fellowship with his Father's counsels — His most perfect act of moral glory. Death was Adam the first's penal disgrace from God; it was Adam the second's distinctive act of moral glory.

When Adam was first set in Eden, he had not immortality essentially in himself; for if he had he would have been God, who only hath immortality. He stood in honored relationship to God however, and the continuity of his abiding in life and blessing, hung upon *the unchangeableness of God*, who said, "In the day thou eatest thou shalt surely die." He did eat, and this dishonor of the relationship involved to him the loss of the blessing, moral and circumstantial, and entailed death; so has every man, but One, been since. Was this true of the Lord's humanity? Was his moral state such as was Adam's after the fall? Most surely not. Was he in the circumstantial ruin and wretchedness, *as* one that had forfeited Eden or *his own inheritance*? Most surely not. Was death entailed on him penally as being a man? Most surely not. Death to every other man was the wages of sin, to him it was the fruit of an obedience which none but himself could render.

The statement reported above to have been made by Mr. Craik, predicates of the Lord's humanity

that his body was in the state of subjection to the same contingencies to which ours in fallen humanity are. This is just what Mr. Craik does likewise elsewhere. If he had taken arsenic, he would have died, "he was so truly human that poison, or the sword piercing his heart, would have destroyed the union between his soul and body" [I intentionally leave out the rest of the sentence, because it is *really* a false light to mislead].

Now what would be the sense of saying this of unfallen Adam in the Garden of Eden, "If he had taken poison, or the sword had pierced his heart, it would have killed him." It would be simply the proof that the person who said it forgot the presence of God there, pledged in *faithfulness to himself* to control all things for his obedient creature. It supposes man, fallen and unfallen, in Eden and out of Eden, in an acceptable relationship and not in an acceptable relationship *at the same time*; and entirely denies the faithfulness of God to Himself in man, innocent and obedient. It looks at man as God in himself; leaves out the all-important question of the Living God's relationship to him being honoured or dishonoured, and what was dependant thereon. I need not say the results of saying it of the Lord are *worse*. And if you add to Mr. Craik's sentence, as above, the residue of it, "had he not put forth his power to prevent the natural result," you do as bad, or worse. A great deal worse; for, while it seems to suggest a scriptural reason 'why a thing should not be which might have been'; it supposes the Lord was not what He was, under the protective blessing due to his acceptable relationship as a man; and was and was not what He was at the same time. It divides, too, the person of Christ, in a way Scripture never does; and which sickens the godly soul. 1st, it presents his humanity as being, as to relationship, not peculiar to himself alone, but broken like ours; and then, 2ndly, would account for different results by suggesting, that, though his humanity was in itself the same as ours, yet it was not the same as ours, but peculiar to himself alone. Now Godhead in manhood was his and his alone.

The simple truth is, the Spirit of God never leads us in our speculations; and it shows a bad state of soul to be speculating about the person of the Lord — statements thence flowing are always in part erroneous. If we think of Infinite Godhead; of who the only-begotten Son of the Father distinctively is, and what his works in creation and providence; of Him manifest in the flesh in the little babe, youth, and man of sorrow; of the entire dependance and subjection of the life of that Christ who was the seed of the woman; of the marvels connected with His death, resurrection, and glory; surely one must bow one's head and worship, and not speculate.

But what, let me ask, does this (5) teach as to Mr. Craik's thoughts of the Lord's humanity?

Why just this: that it was impossible, but that the Divine glory Christ had in himself as Son, should prevent, as it could always have prevented, the effects of the broken relationship between his human nature and God becoming manifest.

There is much confusion I admit, — the reality of our Lord's humanity — the flesh and blood of the children — physical and chemical properties of our bodies — flesh (not) *substantially* different from ours — COULD have prolonged his life for ever, if he had so chosen; so truly human that poison, or the sword piercing his heart, would have destroyed the union between his soul and body, *had he not put forth* his power to prevent the NATURAL result, — flesh and blood really of the same nature as ours: but what is taught is still plain enough; and it is this, that we may not suppose that there was a perfect relationship, unbroken, between the human nature of Christ and God, because the relationship between the human nature of us and God is broken. As though human nature was not the same human nature in Eden and out of Eden. And then the dangerous consequences are guarded against by a division of his person.*

*What scripture presents to us on the subject, seems to me to be this: — Man has a body and

soul. As set in Eden, while he owned his dependence by not eating of a certain tree, God upheld him in life, and in moral and circumstantial blessedness. When he assumed independence, and God no longer was in all his thoughts, nor his one end and object, he took and eat — moral evil was his: the sentence of death was over him, and he was forcibly ejected in disgrace from Eden. Of all his posterity these three things were true, save of One: — All were naturally morally dead — under death — exiled from Eden in disgrace. Adam brought the same flesh and blood out of Eden as had been in Eden. Partaker of flesh and blood was the Lord Jesus, He was God manifest in the flesh; but the vacuum of God in Adam, with all its attendant consequences, was not found in Jesus. As man, all was morally perfect; no sentence of death rested, in the nature of things, in Satan's hand from God against Him; neither was He out of Eden, or Heaven either, through disgrace. I cannot divide His person in twain; neither can I speak exactly of what to Him was the result naturally, naturally according to God and His individual perfectness, of what He was as a man. But why not? because it was not true of Him? No: but because a higher glory was His also, for in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. The fountain of life was there — in Him. He did not die, like others, because He was a man; but He became a man, that He might die; fulfilled not righteousness as a man, that He might live; but lived as a man, that He might fulfil righteousness. And in all was found, divinely perfect. His perfectness too was found not in what He had power to do — but in his entire self-emptying and subjection. Oh how wondrously deep, yea, eternally, infinitely deep, are the wonders of the death of the Lamb of God! whether looked at in itself, in its connexion with the vindication of the Divine glory against Satan, fallen flesh, and the world; or in its connexion with the rich clusters of grace and glory there found. The open door of grace, whence shall flow glory — the glory of God and the Lamb, till

"All in heaven and earth adoring
Father, Son, and Holy Ghost," etc.

The person of our Lord — Divine Focus of all our light — has (though the object of our adoration) its lessons of instruction for the humble. The question before us is one of the deepest interest in this connexion.

Mr. C.'s hypothesis teaches that the relationship between Christ, as a man and God, was PRACTICALLY MERGED in that he had as Son of God, and thus he had no relationship as a man; so, at least, we are left to suppose. Though this is inconsistent with the rest.

On the other hand, there is clearly error in the way the statement leads us to suppose Christ was exercising His own power of Son for himself, by which his servant character is lost sight of. Now, observe, Christ took his ground quite otherwise (and may I not say, kept upon the contrary ground?) all through his course. In the temptation, recorded at the beginning of His public acts, the ground he took was the opposite of what Mr. C. suggests. Satan himself was the first who tried to divide the person of the Christ into two. In the temptation he brought three dilemmas, in which Divinity and humanity were artfully set in antithesis, as he thought, — severally addressed to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life. The Lord's answer in each case turns upon His assumption of Divine faithfulness to man, if dependant. In grace he turned to the book of Deuteronomy, with its record of the path for the obedience of faith, and cast all upon the question: "Can man fail, if dependant upon God? Man doth not live by bread alone," etc., etc. So through all his course. His power as Son never is put forth; it was held in abeyance; and, as a servant, through grace to us, he cast himself upon the unchangeableness of Divine faithfulness to man, walking in dependance upon God, even amid ruin.

I pray this may be observed. Instead of putting forth power, or pleading that He could do this that, his answer, practically, always was: "I am in the place of dependence, and trust all to God, as faithful

servant." In Mr. C.'s statement there is theological error of no little magnitude, viz.: the supposition, that the Lord's sustainment was in the energy of his own Sonship. He had all power course, as ever; that is not the question. But it was all held in abeyance; and, though still full of power, his life as the Christ was a life of dependence and entire subjection. He went not into the wilderness save as led of the Spirit. Morning by morning he opened his ear, and his every word and work was the expression of the perfect servant (though of the Son of God.)*

*This is argued out at some length in a paper called "The Sent One." — Christian Witness, vol. 5.

The connection of this subject with Irvingism and Socinianism is one that makes it familiar to many. Unless we see "the fulness of the Godhead bodily," *on the one hand*, and "the entirely dependant state" of the man Christ Jesus upon God, *on the other*, the mind will never be clear from error; nor get, I believe, its proper intelligent rest *in atonement*.

Observe again, Mr. C. says "he was so truly human, that poison, or the sword piercing his heart, would have destroyed the union between his soul and body, had he not put forth his power to prevent the natural results."

I confess, I repudiate this, and reject it *in toto*. It contains an entire misapprehension about "What is sin?" Moreover, it is a mere fallacy grown out of confusion of mind as to the distinctive difference of the Lord's humanity and our humanity.*

* See some very valuable remarks on this, in "Remarks by J. N. Darby," (Oct., 1848), pages 16-19.

6. — As to this, I have only to say that here, I believe, is the REAL root of the whole error. I trust H. Craik is indeed a dear child of God, and one, it may be, who has done good service in days past. Many a sweet labour of love of his, and many a sweet word of his about the person and work of Christ I can recall. Alas! of poor Mr. Newton, in a seventeen years' intimacy, I *cannot recall* one single expression such as I can comfort my heart with — or as enables me to say, "Surely *that* was the utterance of a poor sinner's heart touched by grace": not one such prayer, sermon, breathing, or thought can I recall. Mr. Newton's supposed mental superiority may have attraction for Mr. Craik, and the many hard questions the former has raised may have given him a place in Mr. C.'s mind. Certainly, in this question Mr. Newton took the lead. And as certainly, Mr. Craik of 1848 is not the same in doctrine as Mr. Craik of 1832-1844. As to this subject, the solution of the whole is found in the first clause (of 5): — "With regard to illustrations, statements, etc., used in discussing questions of difficult solution." The questions at issue are prohibited us in scripture: "No one knoweth the Son, save the Father only." No wonder if, like every one else who endeavours to understand (discuss, is the word) questions about the Lord's person, Mr. C. only makes statements which are in collision with scripture, and offensive to his brethren. And I beg to observe, that Mr. Craik does not confine himself (as I have endeavoured to do) to showing out the inconsistency of statements made with scripture; but goes on to discuss the question, as of *understanding*, which Scripture presents as "above understanding," though presented to simple faith. As to the common faith, I ought to know it, and how to contend for it: Scripture enjoins me to do so. As to the faith of the catholic church in all ages* being repudiated — I do not like the reference to it; what is called so, has no authority with the man of God, and is constantly only partially correct, and if honoured as such, always misleads the soul.

*As the sanction of the catholic faith is pleaded in defence of an error, I add a word more as to that error:

The fallacy lies in predicating of a whole species, a quality of which belongs only to some

individuals of it. This quality flows out of a *state*, and a state not *essential* to the species into which, however, some of its members might enter. Into that state, all could not at all times enter; because to some there is, as a property, that which excludes the idea of the accidental quality referred to.

"Man" is the species; — "destroyable by arsenic or the sword" is in the quality. It flows out of the non-perfect sustainment by God of his creature, man, in blessing. It is not a state essential to man; though some, through sin, have entered into, or be in it — a state inconsistent to them, as dependent creatures of God. All could not enter into it — for, as *a property*, eternal Sonship prevented One; He had power to lay down and take up his life, and none could take it from him in any way. And we, in glory, shall not be able to enter into it, for this mortal shall have put on immortality (flesh and *blood* shall not inherit the kingdom, and yet men will be there): in both these cases there is *a property*, which prevents the quality being true: in Eden, ere sin entered, it was not; and in the apostles, for a time, Grace, to show what had entered, prevented its being true. It is a catholic (or universal) opinion, or at least a very, very common one, that "Death is the debt of nature"; but it is a catholic or commonly received error. "Death being the debt of nature", and "death being the debt of *fallen* nature", are two very different things.

The fallacy referred to above is merely (as plain people speak) saying something of every member of a family which is true only of most of them at some time; for it is not necessarily true of them apart from the question of the state and condition in which they are. Destroyable by arsenic or the sword is true of *me* now; it was not true of Adam in Eden, and will not be true of me in glory. The simplest mind can see the folly of this mistake, even as the simplest mind can feel spiritual disgust at such things being said of Christ. And that spiritual *taste* is a safer guide than understanding is plain; because every godly heart is disgusted with certain things, while but few minds can unravel the tangle. Killable by arsenic or the sword is, in logic, an "accident," and a "separable accident" too, to man. It is an "accident," for it may be absent or present, the essence of the species remaining the same; and it is "a *separable* accident," because it may be separated from an individual. It is not joined to man *necessarily* (that is, to the whole species, in other words, to every individual man); then it would be a property; but contingently, i.e. to *some* individuals.

7. — As to Isaiah 53: 2, I must refer to my appeal. Dr. Hawker and M. Henry were good men doubtless. Though they went far beyond their own day, yet they were both defective in many things, and exceedingly erroneous in others. I bless God for the beloved Doctor's personal love to his adorable Lord, and would learn this lesson from his *example*. I would only add, that nothing shows to me error of soul more than a reference to commentaries (which, however good, can only contain the bearing of the word upon a very tiny part of that to which it applies) to establish a present error, which the commentator never thought of perhaps — to the dishonour of the Lord Jesus, whom the commentator loved; and of His Spirit. Fifty mis-statements in Dr. H.'s book, would not be so bad as one false statement in a scene in which Satan is labouring with all his energy to set up a deep and subtle heresy against the person of Christ, and his salvation among living saints.

8. — In my appeal, I merely followed out the first point; the rest was intentionally not followed out — perhaps it may be as well to resume it, in order that we may see what is implied in Mr. C.'s statement.

As to the conclusion, I again say: — Is this conscious innocency leaving its cause to the Lord? I see a good deal of wounded personal feeling, and nothing, I avow it, like an humbled spirit in Mr. Craik's letter. He will judge every body and every thing, save himself. Misled by Mr. Newton, he has used expressions altogether unlike his own. His pastoral letters are so far not all of a piece. That

introduced in 1848, contains some bad statements learned of Mr. N. He has, at Bethesda, so spoken as for it to be a common question among those that know him, as to how far he agrees with Mr. N. and how far not, and how far Mr. N.'s statements ought to be accredited for Mr. C.'s sake. And how comes it that when R. Chapman, G. Müller, and of late Mr. Groves are said to have spoken in Bethesda some hard things against Mr. N.'s doctrines, we never hear of Mr. C. doing so. The sheep have been wounded — scattered, some. The evil has been pointed out — rudely, badly pointed out — Mr. C. is offended; and the man who feels that Christ's person and work, and the lambs, are more worth caring for than Mr. Craik's feelings, or than his own quietness or good name, must be judged by the saints of God, or Mr. Craik will keep no company with them. I do unfeignedly grieve to have grieved Mr. Craik, but Christ and the sheep must be honoured. And if Mr. C. thinks he knows as yet what is "the difficulty of maintaining a neutral position" in this case, I believe he is mistaken.

It is, and I know and feel it is, a solemn thing for such a one as I am — so unintelligent, so prone to mistake and sliding, to appear even to accuse any one — much more one who has been an esteemed fellow-servant, much looked up to. Still, where Christ's honour, the warning of the flock, and the pointing out of Satan's wickedness makes it needful, "is there not a cause?" One must do what one can, to show one is clear and free from voluntary participation in strengthening Satan to dishonour Christ and scatter the sheep. As to myself, I can unfeignedly say it is not on the ground of pretending to be anything, save a *poor sinner saved by grace*, and having the treasure in an *earthen vessel*; neither do I it with destruction in my heart, but salvation. God knows whether the three years of warfare with Ebrington-street, or His crowning grace at the close, are most in my heart. And He knows too, whether my heart's desire and prayer to Him is to sink, or to save Bethesda — whether when George Müller and H. Craik are delivered from the evil of their present confederacy for Mr. N., I shall remember one thing against them. As to Bethesda, when pressed by Robert Chapman as to whether I was willing to return there, I said, unhesitatingly, "Yes." Whatever others might say or do, I was willing and *ready*, and would return. When he asked me what was the condition on which I would return — proposing a number of different things (which it would be unlovely to mention, and which he *may* have named just as much to search me by, as to ascertain how far his desire of my return could be accomplished) — I said, "Let me be certified, that if Satan is guiding Bethesda, they are willing to allow him to be discovered, and then they will turn him out, and I will be back tonight or tomorrow morning, and with all my might and main I will serve them." If I could have said more, I would have said it. This I said once and again. To share with the feeblest the sorrows of conflict, or the patience of waiting upon God to turn captivity, I was willing: but I could not, with a good conscience to Christ, be where the testimony of men of God to evil, as an existing thing, was trampled under foot. I have no unkind feeling to H. Craik: I thank God I can pray for him heartily.

Dec. 1848. G. V. W.

P.S. — To say — "If a thing, which could only befall a man *who was not* standing in perfect relationship to God, had befallen a man *who was* standing in perfect relationship to God" — is ABSURD, and contains the naughty suggestion that God could be unfaithful to Himself, it involves also Mr. N.'s error about the *humanity*.

If it be said: "No — the supposition (though absurd nonsense) is only made in order that the glory of the One of whom it is supposed, may be seen, viz., that, as Creator and Upholder, He had all power of self-protection and sustainment in Himself, and could put it forth as He pleased;" — I reply, "That also supposes that he had no acceptable relationship as *a man*; it is foolish and irreverent nonsense; and it presents another form of error. It confounds together the glories and manifestations distinctive to the three titles, "God the Son"; "second Adam, Lord from Heaven"; and "Man of Sorrows." This prepares

the way for Mr. N.'s other error as to *Deity* - that the Church is to be omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent.

May we learn more of the wisdom and accuracy of God's own Word; and shun speculation on every subject! On such a subject as this, speculation is perversion. I pray, brethren, to read this in the presence of the Lord; and if, while handling man's perversions (in the hope to show the error of certain statements, derogatory to Christ, and destructive of the foundations), I have myself in any way failed, — may the Lord graciously preserve his own sheep from the wrong, and cause them to reject it at once.

[There is a suggestion that this paper was withdrawn by G. V. Wigram, I would be glad to have proof of this, and of the reason for its withdrawal. L.H.]