

Sonship by Incarnation or the Incarnation of the Son

A Letter

J. McBroom

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To the Reader,

The following letter was written to meet an attack lately made on Divine Persons by denying eternal relationships; a pamphlet by Mr. C. A. Coates is chiefly in view. To give evidence to the theory a new way of reading Scripture is brought in which outrages common sense and makes its inventors look foolish indeed. To the opened eye the foundations of our faith are attacked while the deluded are boasting of new light for our day.

Some who accepted the error are enraged at those who protest: others who grieve at it, counsel quietness because of the holy part of the truth in question.

Instead of seeking to clear the matter, we are told it is only a change of a word here and there, and on the other hand, while pushing it on others, it is said to be too holy for controversy.

Since this letter was written a booklet by Mr W. H. Westcott has been published also one by Mr. A. J. Pollock. Mr. Coates makes clear that he is writing for his party, (see pages 3, 4, 5, and 29.) I have written on my own exercise before the Lord desiring to be clear of party even in meeting evil. There are other errors coming out from the same people. These I leave preferring to keep to the one point because of its fundamental importance.

May the Lord graciously stir up His people to meet such an attack both upon Himself and Holy Scripture.

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36, Glebe Road,

KILMARNOCK,

Ayrshire. 1932.

Dear Brother,

I have the Pamphlet entitled "Remarks" etc., by Mr. C.A. Coates. One cannot but be pained to think that such a brother should rush into print on this solemn matter. That sarcasm and what is "ungentlemanly" should come from one whose praise is in many of the churches is sad indeed. May it be a warning to all of us and particularly to those who venture to touch such a holy theme.

The paper compels us with sorrow of heart to conclude that the writer has with certain others,

become affected with darkness of mind, and in spite of the greatest apparent zeal for the truth he is leading many astray. He has taken ground where he cannot have the Lord's support, consequently he is found making confused statements on the holiest of all subjects, contradicting himself and taking ground which must eventually put an end to all proper interpretation of Holy Scripture. I shall go over a few of the points with you prayerfully in the absence of both the heat of debate and strife of party, and endeavour to point out, with fairness, where there is confusion of statement and self-contradiction.

There is one point, however, which marks the sayings of these men, which, if attended to, would expose the theory and clear the matter.

Briefly stated the point is this:

While maintaining that "Sonship" for our Lord began with Incarnation, it is affirmed that the relationship as such subsists in His Person as Divine. Along with this the important truth to which all subscribe is emphasised, namely, that there could be no change in the Person. Now, it must be carefully noted that if there could be no change in our Lord's Person as Divine, and the relationship of Son, even while in Manhood, subsists in His Divine Personality, then His Sonship must be unchangeable and subsisting within the ever blessed Godhead eternally. This is incontrovertible and brings the theory to a collapse from the very lips of its propounders.

Connected with this is the assumption, apart from Scripture proof, that "Son" is a title of rank, a mere appellation conferred or assumed by Incarnation, such as title conferred on one who has been elevated to the peerage. In attempting to prove this, illustrations have been used which are irreverent and border on the profane. As it is clear that Mr. C. is endeavouring to support Mr. J. Taylor in the matter I shall quote from each, taking the latter first. See "The Divine Standard".

"He is a Divine Person and that underlies the fact that He is capable of representing God. As Man the designation "Son" undoubtedly regards Him in that light, but to make it apply to Him as in the form of God is another matter." (p. 49-50).

"The speaking was in a Divine Person of course, the title "Son" conveys that, but nevertheless, what is alluded to right through is mediatorial, God speaking as in Christ become Man." (p. 52).

"It is a term, therefore, while applying to Him in Manhood only, asserts His Deity. The Person is before the adoring Believer."

(Letter to Mr. Carter)

Great care is here taken to show that "Sonship" exists in our Lord's Person as Divine by one who affirms that there could be no change in the Person.

If, therefore, "Sonship" subsists in our Lord's Person (as is here admitted) He is Son for evermore.

Following on to Mr. Coates there is the same line of reasoning:

"Scripture makes clear that His Person is eternal and changeless whether as in the form of God as in eternity, or as come in the flesh, or as glorified as Man as God's right hand, or as the subject Son in eternity to come. He is ever the same... a divine title conveying the thought of eternal immutability". (Remarks p. 3 also p. 7 & p. 13).

NOTE 1

I have taken this sentence as it is in view of establishing the one great point of eternal Sonship. Will the reader look again at the words quoted. (See "Remarks" page 3). How could an eternal changeless Person be subject? If He is ever the same in eternal immutability how could He be the subject Son?

No words could more clearly show the unchanging character of our Lord's Person as Divine. If, then, we insist that the ground of Sonship is in His Divine Personality we are compelled to own that it is eternal. A relationship between Divine Persons as such can no more have a beginning than Divine Persons themselves. If our Lord is Son as a Divine Person at any moment He is Son for evermore.

Scripture shows that by Incarnation the Son became Man. This theory attempts to set it aside by asserting that by Incarnation a Divine Person became Son. This error involves something even worse, for if one Divine Person became Son by Incarnation then another became Father by the same act. Now, He who is Father ever remains in absolute Deity where there can be no change. If then He is Father at any moment He is Father to eternity.

This solemn negation would deny that we have a revelation of what God is, and supplant it by something which He became; some change in Godhead which is admitted to be impossible. Moreover, it would assert that the sphere of love and glory which the relations of Father and Son presuppose began to exist in time.

In the words of Mr. C. "Let the saints of God watch diligently that they be not diverted from the apprehension of how Divine Persons are known now through the Incarnation of the blessed Son of God." If our Lord's Sonship is not within the Godhead and eternal it is limited to His manhood and He is reduced to the "Adoption" which is the portion of the saints.

The same inconsistency is seen in the effort to limit the term "Son" to creation and the mediatorial sphere. The King and the Prince of Wales have been mentioned; also the Duke of Wellington and Lord Kitchener in an attempt to illustrate this. Here is one of the best examples:

"We say the King was born in 1865, or the Duke of Wellington was educated at Eton. But we quite understand that the King was not king when he was born, nor the Duke such when he was at Eton". (The Deity of the Lord Jesus." M. W. Biggs.)

This example taken from one of the worst papers written on the subject goes against the writer. Was not the King a son long before he became King? Both the office and title lay ahead of him, but he was son from the time he began to live, The Duke of Wellington when a boy at Eton could not be Duke but was a son. The word designates a positive participation in nature and relationship, a relationship which is inherent in the very being, apart altogether from what is official. Here the illustration fails for the Son of God had no beginning. "I and my Father are one", shows that His "Sonship" subsists in Essential Being where there can be nothing official either in office or title.

That this may be further amplified I ask your attention to pages 6 and 7 of "Remarks". "The glory of the Lord's eternal Person appears in a wonderful way in John's Gospel." Read the paragraph through and rest upon the words. "The essential truth of His Person is interwoven with His Mediatorship." This we welcome and assert on the strength of it that the Godhead glory of our Lord shone out during His life upon the earth. That His Person gives character to all He does we gladly own, and that the stoop to Manhood to carry out "His God appointed mission," implied a relative position which is not one of absolute equality.

It may be asked how a Divine Person could be in a position which is not one of absolute equality. The answer is, by His becoming a Man. The new position was the result of a new condition, that of Manhood. This condition and the position proper to it were perfect in their order, but taking these did not for a moment mean that the condition and position of Godhead were relinquished. When here in Manhood He was still unchanged in Person, co-equal and co-eternal in fulness of glory, majesty and splendour, GOD. But having become Man He was, in virtue of Manhood, under God, (1 Cor. 15: 27; Heb. 2: 9), in a position which was “not one of absolute equality.”

I ask your careful consideration of this. The point must not be missed that both Godhead and Manhood were there. It is thus we can understand how the lips that said “I and my Father are one”, also said “My Father is greater than I”.

Look at the five passages quoted here by Mr. C. in John 3: 31, our Lord is above all; in John 8: 58, He is before all; in John 5: 17, there is community of action; John 10: 30, unity of essence, and in John 16: 15, community of possessions. These are brought forward by Mr. C. to show out the Godhead glory of our Lord when in Manhood, and we thankfully agree. But He was Man and stood at the same time in the moral beauty which in Him attached to Manhood.

In conformity with the passages quoted by the writer showing the side of His Godhead I would note other five which describe His moral perfection on the side of Manhood. “The Father loves the Son and has given all things to be in His hand.” (John 3: 35) “I do always those things that are pleasing to Him” (John 8: 29). “I have received this commandment of my Father.” (John 10: 18). “My Father is greater than all.” (John 10: 29). “The Father is greater than I”. (John 14: 28).

In touching here the mystery of Incarnation it is indeed difficult to proceed. We would gladly linger on these Scriptures which show the wondrous stoop and full moral glory of Him who has forever bound the soul to Himself in holy affection. Blessed, blessed, holy Lord. Thine obedience, dependence and submission to the Father's will produce in us a holy enchantment by which deepest worship flows.

I beg of you, dear brother, at this point to note that which must settle the matter for every unbiased mind. Most of the passages quoted by Mr. C. which describe the Divine side and thus apply to Deity and eternity, include the relations of Father and Son just the same as the passages which so sweetly describe Him in Manhood. This proves His Sonship to be eternal.

To prove the truth beyond controversy, I ask again, wherein did the relationship of Son subsist in our incarnate Lord? We have already had the answer from both Mr. Taylor and Mr. Coates, but the latter gives a beautiful answer from Scripture. (See the scriptures quoted here). “I and the Father are one.” (John 10: 30). Two Persons. “I and the Father are one”. One what? One in essence. Can anyone in the face of these words be so bold as to deny that the Father and Son subsisted in an eternally related state within the Godhead as Father and Son?

Still more wonderful is the way the Spirit passes from Godhead to Manhood when speaking of our Lord. As I said to Mr. Higgins in my letter to him of Nov. 1931; we often get a divine designation with human characteristics as in Romans 5: 10, Romans 8: 32, and Gal. 2: 20, and in other places a human designation with divine attributes as in John 3: 13, John 6: 62. The same thought in other words I put before Mr. Taylor in a letter dated 5th April, 1932. “Scripture uses the words 'I' 'He' 'Him' when speaking of our Lord whether as God or as Man, passing from the one side to the other in matchless simplicity, because of the mystery and Majesty of Who He is.”

I had intended to put the group of texts quoted by Mr. C. alongside the other five passages so that they might be more easily compared as showing our Lord both on the side of Deity and Humanity.

Space is limited, so I ask you to compare one text from each group.

John 16: 15, cited by Mr. C., gives our Lord pre-eminence from His own lips. Not of Person or relationship which are both eternal, but of possessions. "All things that the Father hath are mine." Placing alongside of this the words of John 3: 35, we get a most precious distinction. "The Father loves the Son and has given all things to be in His hand." If all things are given to Him as in Manhood, the same "all things" are HIS OWN as in Godhead. The Spirit always guards the glory of HIM who stooped to become Man and here in His pre-eminence with regard to the "all things".

The manner in which these men contradict themselves and make Scripture bend to their own theories while claiming to be "the testimony" is truly pathetic. Having endeavoured to show you a little of this I will leave this point and ask you to note the following. After the attack on the truth of a few years ago Mr. T. remarked at Bristol: "I think we ought to see in the Son becoming Man, one adequate for God to express all that He is. No finite being would be adequate for God, but in the Son you have a Person great enough for God's heart." ("Eternity to Eternity" p. 20). Also at Birmingham, this year, a brother asked the question, "Is it possible to have the love of relationships without the relationships?" and referred to John 17: 24, "Father..... Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world." Mr. T. replied: "No, there must be the relationships." The truth of eternal Sonship is here asserted at the same time as it is attacked. This indeed is bad, but what can we say to such things when we see it forced upon brethren in the revised hymn book and brethren everywhere rudely cut off for protesting against it.

A few words must suffice concerning the attack upon "THE WORD". The same inconsistency marks each of these brethren here. In the same meeting in which Mr. T. attacked this truth he said: "It has to be borne in mind that the Divine Personality of our Lord is properly based on the statement, "In the beginning was the Word" (The Divine Standard p. 49).

Nor is Mr. C. less distinct. In "Remarks" we read: "But in face of the enemy's efforts to obscure the truth they...the saints...needed to know the eternal Personality and Deity of the Word." (p. 27)

Much more might be brought forward, but this will suffice to show how the men that rudely attack the glories of our Lord are made to confute themselves. If we need to know the eternal Personality and Deity of the Word, how can the Word as such have a beginning? The evidence put forward in defence of this solemn negation would not be accepted in a court of law. Yet, with an effrontery which disregards the ministry of the saintliest of teachers and practically the whole church through all her history, they persist in their folly and speak of "new light". May He whom it concerns be graciously pleased to show them the solemnity of it all.

I am not able to credit them with integrity of purpose concerning what they say of John 1: 18. The denial that the Father's bosom is the Son's eternal home is necessary to Sonship by incarnation. To put it baldly, if the Father's bosom is the place of Sonship and He was not Son till incarnate then He was not there eternally.

This came out first in various letters by Mr. T. in which he spoke of the Greek preposition in a way that has exposed him to the same charge as some of the worst heretics of the age. He has been remonstrated with, but has given no answer. Is it right to spring such a solemn negation on saints and force its acceptance in spite of Godly protest? The hymn (No. 27), containing the words:

"Son of God, Thy Father's bosom

Ever was Thy dwelling place;"

is taken away. Please note that the booklet, "The hymn book revision", passes over this without comment. Now Mr. C. alludes to the point in a few ambiguous words which seem to indicate that he is not quite clear in the matter.

It is well known that John 1: 18, possesses such a holy charm that this attack is resented even where there is no ability to reason out the matter. Is this attack not laying rude hands upon the innermost treasures of Divine revelation? Even then, instead of trying to clear the matter, it is deliberately forced upon saints in the hymn book with the assurance that it is only a word here and there to bring it into line with scripture. Then there is a deliberate hiding behind the sacred character of the subject by saying it is too holy for debate.

Mr. C. says on page 20 of "Remarks": "God was declared, and the Father's Name made known, by the Son as Man on earth, who was at that very time the only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father," His theory so outrages the law of language that even while asserting it he states the truth. No one questions that God was declared and the Father's Name made known by the Son as Man on earth. That He was at that very time the "only-begotten Son in the bosom of the Father," all delight to own. So also on page 30. "It is a statement of what was true of Him when He declared God."

It has been the delight of the most spiritual minds to own that not only was it true then but in virtue of His essential oneness with the Father it stands true for evermore. It is true too that "millions have found their affections quickened and their souls warmed by contemplating it," but the writer well knows that the quickening of these affections was not by the passage robbed of its precious fulness. Is he conscious that while saying what is true of the passage he contrives to rob the saints of the wealth of relationships and affections proper to the Father and Son for eternity?

It should be remembered that while relegating our Lord's Sonship and the Father's bosom to incarnation these brothers have not yet said (so far as I know) that the Father's bosom is not peculiar to Himself. This would expose the theory to the simplest. If Sonship is not in His Divine Personality, and eternal, then it subsists in His Manhood and He is reduced to the "adoption" proper to the saints and robbed of His own unique place in the Father's affections from which all that is heavenly and eternal has reached us.

Part Two

So far we have looked at the three points which I have already treated in "An Appeal", namely, "Sonship", "The Word", and "The Father's Bosom". One or two things yet call for remark. Take what is said on John 17, beginning at page 12. One who has been known as helpful in written ministry is here seen to be both vague and mystical and while attempting to prove his theory makes it difficult for us to get sense.

Referring to the words of John 17: 5, Mr. C. says: "They do prove His pre-existence, and that He had glory with the Father in eternity and was loved by the Father." We all delight to own this. Note that he admits a Father in eternity, the very thing that his book is written to deny.

And again he says: "But who could define the glory which attached to His presence and place with the Father in eternity?" The truth is again admitted while attempting to deny it: but we are bound to show that it is the writer who is defining and the folly is made evident by the magnitude of the truth in question. He tells us on the opposite page (13) what the glory was not, and then tells us what it is. He attempts to define what he had just before said there was "an unrevealed depth about" which no creature could define.

Passing by the next two sentences so badly contravened by the writer, we read: “But to say that His glory in the past eternity was the glory of Sonship is more than Scripture says.” The phrase “the glory of Sonship” is misleading and supposes the glory of Fatherhood also. Instead of seeing the Father and Son in the one glory proper to Godhead, the writer implies two glories, an idea foreign to the passage. The Father and Son are seen in Scripture in glories which are distinctive of each but not so in John 17: 5. From this part of the page it is difficult to get sense. The word “Place” is used eight times in sixteen lines and there is confusion between “Persons” and “Place”.

With the utmost reverence and apart from any attempts at definitions we see in this glory (John 17: 5) what is external to the Persons. The equipage, splendour and magnificence of a king is distinct though connected with his person. On one side of the truth our Lord had left a scene of radiant splendour and come into one of sin and death; He now seeks to be along with the Father in that heavenly scene.

But, as indicated, there is another side to this truth. We speak with holy reverence of infinite Godhead and must not press one side of truth to violate another. The Father had not left that glory. Whatever is the glory of absolute Godhead He remained there. As being in the Father and the Father in Him neither had the Son left that glory. All that is proper to Deity in Being, nature and attributes, shone out through the veil of His Humanity here.

Need we stop to prove this? Besides being in the Father and the Father in Him, while walking on earth He is in heaven (John 3: 13). He beheld and took part in all the Father was doing. (John 5: 19) Controlled the intelligence of heaven. (Heb. 1: 7) Beheld Satan cast out of heaven; which combines the prophetic with Omniscience. (Luke 10: 18). He upholds all things; heaven, earth and hell are under His eye and control. Consider the detail; men bow before Him, demons are silenced, the wild beast, (Mark 1), the fish, (Luke 5 — Matt. 17), the winds and sea, (Matt. 8) and tree (Matt. 21: 19), disease, death and demon. How amazing! He is everywhere, in all places at all times.

But there are not three Self-Existing Beings. I have pointed out to Mr. Taylor that his language would lead one to accept the doctrine of Tritheism. Take note, therefore, that all the above is true of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and when our Lord was here upon earth the whole Trinity was engaged in all that He did. This truth we get from His own lips. In the light of this please note: “Not for a moment ceasing to be what He was, but taking a new place which, by its very nature, had not the glory (emphasis his) of His eternal place.” The writer here forgets that Godhead glory cannot be affected by locality. Again; “It was the place and glory of His eternal Person, but it is not defined by any Name,”... i.e., the place is not defined by any name... “as if God would engage us with the Person rather than with any relative Name or title.” Comment is needless. I only bring it forth that it may be seen how a good man gets confused when leaving the Truth. With holy reverence we accept in faith that which we can never explain, namely, that He who came forth from the Father is eternally without a break in and with the Father. (John 16: 28, John 10: 30-38).

Note 2

The writer is here apparently oblivious of the fact, (see “Remarks” page 13), that he is applying divine attributes to “place”, he says: “It was the place and glory of His eternal Person but it is not defined by any name,” etc. It is a Person and not a place that is in view. In his determination to shut out relationships while owning the Person the writer is reduced to the folly of implying that a place may have attributes or relative titles.

Have you noted the way these teachers labour on the words which emphasise the Godhead glory of our Lord when attacking His holy relationships? There is assuredly here that which is kindred to the Unitarian. The latter use the richest language about God at the expense of our Lord, the former use the richest about our Lord's Godhead when denying His relationships in the Godhead. Mr. Taylor at Barnet, used the words "The Person", "Eternal Person", "Eternal Personality", in such a way that it came from him, in some way or other, over thirty times in one meeting while denying that our Lord was "The Son" and "The Word", before incarnation. Mr. Biggs writes on the Deity of our Lord and uses the word "Deity" sixteen times when deliberately excluding His eternal Sonship. Now from Mr. Coates we get "Unrevealed depth", "Transcendently great and glorious", "transcendent glory", "ineffable Divine greatness", as well as "Eternal immutability", and other words of a like character, while deliberately seeking to rob us of the richest part of Divine revelation. To his challenge, "Does not this suffice?" we say NO! You are taking from us the very sweetest of our precious and eternal portion.

Regarding the remarks about Melchizedec, it is a great pity that our brother should become sarcastic. It may simplify matters if we cite the passage as it might properly be put.

"For this Melchizedec, King of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from smiting the Kings, and blessed him; to whom Abraham gave also the tenth portion of all; (first being interpreted King of righteousness, and then also King of Salem, which is King of peace; without father, without mother, without genealogy; having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but assimilated to the Son of God;) abides a priest continually." Heb. 7: 1-3)

Read in this way the parenthesis is seen in its setting as being supplementary and therefore capable of separate consideration. "Without father, without mother, without genealogy; having neither beginning of days nor end of life but assimilated to the Son of God", shows Melchisedec as one who is brought in mysteriously to set forth an eternal Person. This is so clear that one wonders why it is not laid hold of. I am thankful to say that J. T. differs with both D.L.H. and C.A.C. here and clears the point. In his letter to me, dated 26th Dec. 1931, he says: "But while the designation 'Son of God' implies that God is Christ's Father, it also denotes the greatness of His Person — who He is. He is derived from no one. He is 'I am' and has neither beginning of days nor end of life. Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever!" The writer goes on to say that "Son of God" is a time name carried back to describe an eternal Person, but I am thankful to see that he concedes that which neither D.L.H. nor C.A.C. will allow.

In the passages we get type and antitype, but it must be noticed that we have Prototype as well. Melchisedec was the type of Him who came as the great Antitype. But he stood also in relation to Christ as the One who is "before all", how else could he be assimilated to One who, as to His Manhood, came after him? Our Lord as born in time, had parentage as in flesh and blood with beginning and end of days. How could He be a priest otherwise? I ask any person of ordinary intelligence to look at this parenthetical passage and say if the words "without father", etc., refer to Him in that connection. No! The Son of God to whom Melchizedec was assimilated is beyond both time and birth. He is before us as Son in His eternal glory in Hebrews 1: 2, but in Hebrews 5: 5-6, two prophetic passages are used from the Psalms to show him called to be a priest as the risen Son of God. Thus in spite of all the reasoning of Mr. C. and others the passage is clear and Mr. T. agrees with this as against both D.L.H. and C.A.C.

That this may be clear to the simplest I ask you to note that the negative words to Heb. 7: 3, "without father, without mother, without genealogy; having neither beginning of days nor end of life", show that the comparison with the Son of God is on the Divine side of His Person. This Mr. C. will not

have and it spoils all his reasoning on the passage. Mr. T. on the other hand, admits that the words prove that the comparison is on the Divine side. Is not such a discrepancy a serious thing? The former says: "It is the Son born in time according to Heb 5: 5, perfected through suffering (v. 9), and now a Son perfected for ever.....as the glorified Man at God's right hand." That is, he limits the negative words "without father", etc., to our Lord's humanity. The latter says, "It also denotes the greatness of His Person — who He is. He is derived from no one.....the same yesterday and to-day and forever." While Mr. C. is all wrong, Mr. T. avoids the plain force of his own words by resorting to the usual subterfuge, "that names applying to our Lord in time may be employed to designate His Person as in the past eternity."

There are two leading thoughts of our Lord in the verse, first, His endless Being; second, His eternal relationship. The words "Without father" etc., give the one; the words, "the Son of God", the other. This disposes of the rather foolish reasoning of the writer when he says "without father" could not apply to our Lord in such a relation.

It may be said that the passage (v. 1-3), shows Melchizedec as foreshadowing our Lord in three distinct ways, two positive and one negative. (1) Royalty: "King of Salem" (2) Priest: "Priest of the most high God" (3) Absence of pedigree: "without father" etc. The writer says that the first thing said of Melchizedec is that he is without father. The scripture shows us that it is the last thing.

A rather conspicuous example of unfair dealing is seen in connection with 1 John 1: 2. (See pages 26 and 30). The passage is in parenthesis and reads thus: "And the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and report to you the eternal life, which was with the Father, and has been manifested to us". The writer Mr. C. is combating what he had said that the life which was with the Father referred to what was before time began. (pages 26 and 30). Mr. C. says "this is what the writer thinks, and not what scripture says. Or, if Scripture does say so, let him tell us where." And on page 26, "How does Mr. P. know this? Certainly John did not tell him so."

After all this it is amazing to see the way in which Mr. C. asserts that he knows all about it. After seeking to throw obloquy on another while on the most holy ground, he is quite certain. "I have no doubt that eternal life was with the Father in the Person of the Son in Manhood, and as being there was manifested to the apostles." If it can be proved that he is wrong and with the utmost modesty I believe it can — see the place it puts him in.

Eternal life is personified in the passage. This is often done. The Scripture itself is personified in Gal. 3: 8. Eternal life was along with the Father and has been, says the apostle, manifested to us. I ask any intelligent reader, does not the first clause refer to a time anterior to the second clause? This may well be borne out if we remember that we are speaking of that which had no beginning. If it was manifested to the Apostles, seen and handled by them as personified in our Lord, where was it before He became Man? Surely there can be but one answer. It was with the Father. It did not cease to be with the Father when the Son became Man. No! we believe, with the writer, that it was with the Father when our Lord was here, but we also hold to be perfectly clear what he refuses, that eternal life was ever along with the Father. Surely, if life was in "the Word" in eternity past (John 1: 3), and "the Father hath life in Himself". (John 5: 26), it was with the Father in eternity. It is remarkable that the tendency in all this is to rob us of the blessed range of holy relationships of love and life eternally reciprocated between the blessed Trinity, and insist on what has been revealed as something God has become. As if the counsels of the Godhead necessitated a change in the Godhead itself.

That "we only know Divine Persons as and when they are made known to us," is blessedly true; but having been made known as existing in a circle of relationships with the affections proper to such,

we can never give this up for that which puts Him at a distance from us as a dim and distant all-powerful Being.

The remarks about the Name “Jehovah” are rather startling. On page 24, we read: “The Name Jehovah was not made known until Exodus 6, 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.” This sounds rather like the modernist. A comparison with his “Outline of Exodus” will show that the writer has been changing, not for the better, since taking up these novelties. What he says there is true and corrects what is here though he scarcely catches the point even there.

The love of God which is His nature lies behind all His dealings. He was known to the Patriarchs as Almighty. (Gen. 17: 1, Gen. 33: 11, Gen. 48: 3). That was morally suitable for them in the life they were called to. The God of resurrection was certainly apprehended by Abraham. (Rom. 4: 19, Heb. 11: 19, see also Job 19: 26-27), but the time had come to unfold what was enfolded in the Name Jehovah. The blessed God would have His people's confidence by giving them to know that He is the “I Am” and by that they would see that all through the centuries of their oppression He had been watching and had come down to deliver and would be for them in all history to come. If “Almighty God” speaks of His power for His own, “Jehovah” speaks of the love of the “I Am” that never slumbers, working the present in view of both past and future for His own glory and the blessing of His people.

Admitting with Mr. C. that Moses uses the Name Jehovah, throughout the book of Genesis, are we to suppose that he put it into the mouth of Abram in Genesis 14: 22, or his servant in 24: 12, or Isaac in 27: 7, or Jacob in 28: 16? But above all, we may ask did Moses put it into the mouth of God Himself? Gen 15: 7. This surely is enough to correct the statement quoted above. A rich blessing is connected with the study of Deut. 32, where, in his glorious song, Moses publishes the Name or the Fame of Jehovah.

The word “mediator” is used in this booklet some twenty times in one form or another. “mediatorship”, “mediatorial”, “mediatorial designation”, “mediatorial glory”, “mediatorial place, position and character”, etc. The word occurs six times in the Scriptures and only in the New Testament. With the exception of 1 Tim. 2: 5, where the whole race is in view, it refers to Israel and the Covenants. The Kingdom in glory is the full expression of mediatorial glory. The blessing of Sonship supposes our Lord as Firstborn of many brethren. It would spoil everything to bring in mediatorship there. So with the place of children. How foreign to the truth is the idea of a mediator between a Father and His children. This surely is enough to guard out thoughts as to mediatorship in John's Gospel. In displayed glory the side of truth presented in this Gospel passes beyond display. At that time the Mediator will be seen in the full blaze of glory in the creation, but inside there is a holy intimacy where the mediatorial thought would be out of place.

It is well-known, however, that in the poverty of language this word is used by respected teachers in a much wider sense. As long as it is kept within the bounds of truth there is no cause to differ. If we think of Divine Persons in relation to each other we have the Trinity in the eternal reciprocation of what is proper to God. We may think of them also in relation to something external to Godhead. In the one we have what is inside the Godhead, in the other what is outside, namely, creation. We gather from the use of the word in this booklet that the writer will agree that every movement of the Godhead is in and by the Son, and in this wider use of the word, creation itself is a mediatorial act. “He was the mediator of creation as well as redemption. God could do nothing towards the creation but by mediation” (J.N.D., “Notes and Comments”, Vol. 7, p. 2). The Scripture proof is John 1, Col. 1, and Heb. 1, where we learn that the Godhead work of creation was in and by the Son. Mr. C. is not consistent here for

although he speaks of mediation in its widest sense he excludes its action till the incarnation.

Observe page 27. J.N.D. is quoted to support what he stood against. It is well known that this servant was raised up and made the medium through whom the truth was in great measure recovered for the Church. Mr. C. while deliberately setting aside what he taught, contrives, for the sake of its influence, to link his name with what, it is well known, was abhorrent to him. Mr. J. Taylor, in a still more glaring way, has wronged the same servant, and when remonstrated with has refused to answer. Where is conscience in all this?

Look at what is selected from J.N.D. to support the theory. Read also first two sentences of bottom paragraph of page 27. The writer is endeavouring to prove that our Lord revealed God as “the Word” in Manhood but when creating it was an unnamed Divine Person. Justice claims that the writer cited by him should be heard. Note, therefore, the following: “It is the revelation of the eternal Logos before all creation.” And again “But there is another thing, besides the supreme act of creating all things, (an act that characterises the Word), there is that which is in Him. All creation was made by Him; but it does not exist in Him”. (Synopsis John 1). This clearly proves that the writer, quoted for support, held that our Lord was “mediator of creation as well as redemption”.

An important question is asked in page 28. “Is anything taken from Him by saying that the intelligible expression in Him of every divine thought was in Manhood?” We say, Yes! emphatically, Yes! for all the expressions on same page about “Eternal Being”, “distinct Personality”, “His action as universal Creator”, may be used, and we are still left with a mighty Being, but without the blessedness of holy love which is seen in the blessed relationships of Father and Son.

The point in the quotation from J.N.D. about the “Word” is clearly “Expression”, While agreeing with Mr. C. that our Lord has told out the heart of God in redemption, we affirm, in the light of these Scriptures as well as the writings of the servant cited, that creation (John 1: 3), was the expression of the mind of God by our Lord as the eternal Word.

I say again, “let the saints of God watch diligently,” and I here ask the question; can we have nothing but inscrutability, nothing but the form of God which all admit is unknowable? If we can have nothing but a God who dwells in light unapproachable till one of the Divine Persons come to earth to place Him within our range, what of the Old Testament? We have there Creation, Providence, Government, besides a display of the moral character of God before the eyes of higher intelligence in righteousness and holiness with His mercy and loving-kindness, yet we are told we can have nothing but Deity till the incarnation. I have already pointed out to Mr. Taylor, from his own writings, that the incarnation did no more bring the essential Being of God — the unapproachable — within our range than did the creation.

Part Three

Having looked at some of the Scriptures under consideration I will close by calling attention to one or two blemishes which may serve to further confirm the truth.

If we are to have a mental deduction every time we read “The Father sent the Son”, or “I come out from the Father”, and conclude that an unnamed Divine Person became “Son” by becoming Man, then there is an end to all interpretation of the Word of God. Let one text of Scripture correct this. “I came out from (with) the Father....again I leave the world and go to the Father.” This text has to be outraged to suit the “new light”. They will admit He went back to the Father, but by denying His eternal Sonship they are compelled to refuse that He came out from the Father. This writer is here

condemned out of his own mouth. On page 39 he says: "It would be interesting to know why, if Scripture says one thing, it entitles us to say something quite different." Scripture says, "The Father sent the Son". No! says Mr. C., one Divine Person sent another and by coming He became Son and the Sender Father. On page 6 we read: "It will be obvious to any careful reader that Scripture does not speak of the Lord as 'sent' until He was actually here."

We may take it that it would be impossible to raise such a question until the Person was come. But the moment He is here the mind enquires "from Whom"? or "from where", Scripture meets both. He came from God, from the Father. (John 13: 3, John 16: 28). He came also from heaven. (John 6: 58) Now, take the last sentence of this paragraph. "Let any reader look at the Scriptures which speak of the Lord as being 'sent' and ask himself if there is one of them that could apply to Him before He was actually here." (Underlining Mr. C.)

Apart from the question of divine relationships the scriptural authority for seeing in the Man, Christ Jesus, the eternal God, is taken from us. Is the writer conjuring with words? It can easily be shown that he and others count on passive credulity in their hearers, but this surpasses all. If not one of the Scriptures which speak of the Lord as being 'sent' COULD APPLY TO HIM before He was here, what meaning can the word "sent" have? Let the writer answer. "The word 'sent' implies a relative position which is not one of absolute authority. It implies authority on the part of the sender, subjection on the part of the 'sent' (page 7). This may be true in human things, and is the evil of this whole line of reasoning. It is working up from the creature to God. Who told this brother that in abstract Deity one Divine Person could not be sent by another? Is this not a gratuitous assumption by a creature who has ventured into a region beyond his right?

But it does not end here. While denying that the Son could be sent because of co-equality he tells us that the Spirit could be sent although He is also co-equal. On page 18, we read; "Another of those Persons condescended to be sent by the Father and the Son." Strange it is indeed that this brother can venture upon ground of absolute Godhead and tell us what could and what could not be. He is quite certain about it too, for just when he is speaking of "a region utterly beyond creature apprehension", he tells us that "Names of revelation were certainly not needed within the sphere of Deity." (page 25). It is all very solemn. The Holy Spirit, though co-equal with the Father and the Son could be sent; the Son could not be sent because that implies subjection on the part of the One sent. We desire to speak of these things in holy reverence, but how a creature can venture into the region of absolute Godhead and tell us that one Divine Person condescended to the other two is more than we can understand.

And note, that all this confusion flows from a determination to show that our Lord could not be 'sent' until here, in spite of a full blaze of Scripture testimony against such a thought. Here again we have a discrepancy between the two men at the head of this new school of teaching. Mr. C. insists that the word 'sent' implies a relative position which is not one of absolute equality, therefore the Son could not be sent till He was here in an inferior place. Mr. T. says in a letter: "I have never had the thought that the idea of the Lord, the Son, being sent did not precede incarnation. The Father sent the Son is a full general thought and I should not limit it to time, but I do believe that the bearing of it includes the Lord's formal entering on His service." — this no one denies — "as anointed after His baptism. That He came down from heaven as sent is surely true."

Look now at a sentence on page 14. "He had the glory of Sonship when here, for He was saluted as Son when begotten, and at His baptism, and on the holy mount." This mixture comes badly from one who is castigating another for what he takes to be much the same. See his strong condemnation of another (page 31), for using what is said in Heb. 1: 8, taken from Psalm 45, applying to the Son as

outside of time. Here he takes a prophetic statement of the Lord and puts it along with two historic statements without the slightest apparent sense of the difference. The blessed Lord was saluted at His baptism and on the holy mount, but where or how was He saluted when begotten?

The writer is evidently confusing between being begotten and being born. The same word is translated in both ways, but the context makes clear which is in view. In the order of our creaturehood God has set a time between begetting and birth, and when coming into Manhood our Lord took the divinely appointed way. Ever bear in mind Luke 1: 35, “The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee,” etc.

This deeply sacred scene is for worship and not controversy. If compelled to speak of it may it be with becoming reverence. It is impossible to address a human being when begotten. (Remember, Mr. C. has taken us into the human circumstances of the birth of our holy Lord). This is the impossible barrier to the application of the words of Psalm 2: 7, to that wondrous birth, and Acts 13, properly understood bears it out.

It is most amazing in the light of this to read the language of this brother on pages 32 and 33. While charging another with statements in direct opposition to Scripture he not only applies — in a dogmatic manner where he ought to tread lightly — the word “begotten” to the birth in time, but actually makes the word “Begotten” of Psalm 2, the same as the “Only-Begotten” of John. I would be sorry to misunderstand our brother here, yet I would prefer to do so rather than think that he was robbing our Lord of His place as the Monogenes the Only-Begotten, of which J.N.D. says “Is His relationship to God eternally.” That I may not do him an injustice, here are his words: “The word “begotten” is definitely used of our Lord as born in time, and in no other sense is the word ever used of Him.”

Think of such a person as C.A.C. ranging himself on the side of the assailants of that precious Gospel which was written to bring out the Godhead glory of the Son in His eternal relationships, at the time His Deity was attacked. These five precious passages (John 1: 14-18, John 3: 16-18, 1 John 4: 9), in which “Only-begotten” asserts not only pre-incarnate existence, but eternal existence in an eternally related state, are reduced to the level of His birth in time. Could Russellism or Unitarianism ask for better support?

A question here may lead us into the truth. Wherein does our Lord's Sonship subsist? That it resides inherently in His Being we have already proved from the words of the writer. Had he kept to it he would have been saved from many wild and foolish words.

But it may be inferred, (indeed it has been) that sonship for the saints would necessitate partaking of Deity if this were true. Here we have another proof that these men have wandered from the truth. While we are made partakers of the divine nature it is inconceivable that a creature can ever partake of Deity. Sonship has been brought into time, “God sent forth His Son, come of woman..... that we might receive sonship.” (Gal. 4: 4) Could words be found to make the truth more simple? Instead of an unnamed Divine Person becoming Son, the Son becomes Man, taking thereby a condition in which He could die. This was a necessity because of the state the co-heirs were in. By His death that state was removed for God. By resurrection He came forth the Son in a condition of Manhood that abides for eternity. It is as the risen Son of God that saints are associated with Him, so that not only is the impious thought that saints partake of Deity by Sonship set aside, but it is clearly seen that death and resurrection were as much a necessity as incarnation before we could receive sonship and be thus associated with Him. He, the Firstborn among many brethren, the saints, the many sons whom God is leading home to glory.

One more point: page 26. “When Scripture speaks precisely of our Lord as in eternal Deity, with

no reference to what is mediatorial, we are simply told that He was God, and that He subsisted in the form of God.” Are we expected to accept these things without scripture proof? The sentence is not true. The words used seem to indicate what John 1: 1-2, and Phil. 2-6, are before the mind. The first of these speaks of Him apart from creation as God the Word, so that we are not “simply told that He was God”. Phil. 2; “Subsisting in the form of God.” is one link in a chain of separate clauses brought in to show the infinite stoop as in the form of God to that of a bondman. “I and the Father are one.” Here is a complete sentence standing almost alone, insisting on His place in eternal Deity, and in His own consummate wisdom it shows the eternal relations of Father and Son.

Coming to Proverbs 8, we have to remark, again with sorrow, that all is loss. The reasoning may pamper perverted tastes, but will not meet the affections. It may suit a few devotees who see men as trees walking, not because they understand it but because they mistake mysticism for truth. Without knowing it the writer is certainly very near Sabellianism here, Scripture shows the Godhead at work in creation. We have Jehovah and an abstract quality. It may be asked; did Jehovah make an abstract quality the nursling of His love? How could an abstract quality rejoice before Him, and how could that abstract quality rejoice with the sons of men? Creation was for the Son. The power, wisdom and goodness of God are seen planning, measuring and decreeing, but in holy love He is rejoicing. Love and joy suppose moral beings and not merely material things or abstract qualities. In the light of John 17: 5-24, we prefer to see here the rejoicing of the Father and Son, recorded by the Holy Spirit as anticipating Eph. 1: 10, Eph. 3: 10-20-21.

Note 3

The reasoning on Proverbs 8 ignores the supremacy of Holy Scripture. In certain cases a passage of Scripture begins with the ordinary and passes imperceptibly to the extraordinary. Psalm 16 begins with David and passes over to our Lord. So on the side of evil. Ezek. 28: 11 begins with the King of Tyre and passes over imperceptibly to describe the Evil One. Proverbs 8 passes clearly from what would be thought of as an abstract principle to Divine Persons as all respected teachers have noted.

I close with an expression of unfeigned sorrow that a brother with such a long record of faithful service should be found in such a predicament at the close. While saying many precious things he boldly denies the eternal relations of Father and Son, the pre-incarnate distinction of our Lord as the Word and His place in the Fathers bosom eternally. To do this holy Scripture is violated while making the highest pretension to honour it. The confusion and self-contradiction shows that he is not supported of God, and we see in himself the verification of his own words: “But if the 'brethren' become hostile to what is of God they no longer have His support in holding what He may have given them in time past.” (Outline of Deuteronomy, page 20).

With Mr. Taylor there is also confusion and self-contradiction as I have pointed out to him. But besides this there is stilted language. Among other expressions of assumed superiority note the following: “What I detect in the papers urging so-called eternal Sonship is disregard (unconsciously I believe), of the magnitude of the Incarnation. The enemy is in this.” While bowing before this wondrous miracle of grace in the deep sense of its infinite wealth of glory — and how little we can apprehend it — we may justly apply the word “disregard” to the man who has gone wrong about it and not only refuses the pleadings of his brethren but deliberately forces it upon them at the pain of excommunication.

In “The Divine Standard” page 4, we read:

“Scripture records two things presented in the voice from heaven. 'Thou art my beloved Son.' and 'This is my beloved Son: hear Him.' Applied to us as servants, the former would be to impress us that God is pleased with us, and then in the latter He calls the attention of others to us.”

In speaking thus Mr. T. shows a lack of the sense of the unique glory of the Son incarnate. Our blessed Lord is here allowed but a first application of that which is peculiarly and properly His own. Such was the delight of the Father in His Son that He must bring it within the cognisance of human sense. “Thou art MY SON the Beloved.” Does not the person who uses the words quoted here betray a very feeble sense of the magnitude of the incarnation?

Although a number are carried away with these erroneous negations there is evidence that with many there are great searchings of heart. To these we would appeal. “Thou shalt not follow the multitude for evil; neither shalt thou answer in a cause to go after the multitude to pervert judgement.” (Exodus 23: 2)

Affectionately yours in Christ,

J. McBroom.