

AN APPEAL TO PIOUS TRINITARIANS

By Henry Grew (1857)

What Henry Grew Believed



Jehovah's name has been reproached, and it needs to be sanctified.

The Trinity, immortality of the soul, and hellfire are fraudulent doctrines.

The Christian congregation must be separate from the world.

Christians should have no part in wars of the nations.

Christians are not under a Saturday or Sunday Sabbath law.

Christians should not belong to secret societies, such as the freemasons.

There are to be no clergy and laity classes among Christians.

Religious titles are from the antichrist.

All congregations are to have a body of elders.

Elders must be holy in all their conduct, above reproach.

All Christians must preach the good news.

There will be people living forever in Paradise on earth.

Christian song should be praises to Jehovah and Christ.

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DEAR BRETHREN, - We acknowledge our fallibility. Truth will endure the closest investigation. I bear you record that you have a zeal for God. Is it, or is it not according to knowledge? Is it in the holy word, which you declare is the ONLY rule of faith, that you have found the declaration, that the one God is three persons? Have you been taught it by Jesus Christ, or by fallible men?

You admit that it is a subject of vast importance to understand correctly, what person, or being in the universe, has the rightful claim to the supreme worship of all intelligences, and the glory of being, exclusively, the one great and infinite source, "OF whom are all things." If one person rightfully claims this unrivaled glory, it must certainly be an error of no ordinary magnitude to give it to another.

No proposition is to be rejected because it cannot be perfectly comprehended by a finite mind. Yet a revelation to the human mind of anything, necessarily implies some intelligent understanding of it. The first question, however, for our serious consideration, is, Is the doctrine that God exists in three equal and infinite persons, a doctrine of divine revelation, or of human imagination?

Christian brother; can you open your bible and read, God is three; or that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, are one God; or any words of equivalent import? Even the interpolation of 1Jo 5:7, does not affirm that the three are one God. What do we read in the Word of the Lord on this important subject? "Hear, O Israel? The LORD our God is ONE LORD." De 6:4. "God is ONE." Ga 3:20. "There is but one God, the Father." 1Co 8:6.

What is the testimony of "The faithful Witness" of the Truth? Addressing his "Father," Joh 17:1-3, he plainly and positively declares THE FATHER TO BE "THE ONLY TRUE GOD." You believe that the Father is one person. If then you believe that "the only true God" is

three persons, does not your faith stand in the wisdom of men," which denies the testimony of Jesus Christ, that ONE person is "the ONLY true God?" Please to consider the testimony of the inspired apostle, 1Co 8:6. It is not only that "there is but one God," but that this one God is "THE FATHER." He plainly distinguishes the Father as the "one God" "or whom are all things." The Father the PRINCIPAL, the Son the AGENT. Now behold the harmony of divine truth. "God created all things BY Jesus Christ." Eph 3:9. "By whom also he made the worlds." Heb 1:2. All his works of love and power, were what "God did BY him." Ac 2:22. "God our Saviour" SAVES US BY, or "through, Jesus Christ our Saviour." Tit 3:4-6. He "shall raise us up also (from the grave) BY Jesus." 2Co 4:14. "God will judge the world in righteousness BY" him. Ac 17:31. All this the Saviour confirms in his own declaration, "I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." Joh 6:38. The humanity did not come down from heaven. The divine and "only begotten Son of God" came down, and took the body "prepared" for him. Heb 10:5. Does not this prove the inferiority of his highest nature to the supreme God? Does not the supreme God seek to do the will of another rather than his own?

Please to observe in what character our blessed Mediator presented himself to a sinful and dying world as the object of faith. To the healed man he said, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" Joh 9:35. When he asked his disciples-"Whom say ye that I am?" what did the apostle reply, to whom our "Father in heaven" had

revealed the truth on this important subject? Did he reply, thou art the second person in the adorable trinity, or thou art the supreme God? He replied, "Thou art the Christ, the SON of the living God." Mt 16:16,17. Is it a significant fact that our Lord never claimed any higher title than this? When the captious Jews charged him with making himself equal with God, did he not immediately repel the charge by the solemn asseveration, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, the Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do?" Joh 5:19. The omnipotent Jehovah cannot be thus dependent on another. "I live by the Father," Joh 6:57. "My Father is greater than I", Joh 14:28. The connection proves that this refers to his highest nature. His prayer, Joh 17:5, for the glory of his divine nature which he had with the Father "before the world was" proves the dependence of his nature.

The scriptural doctrine of the divine Sonship is essential to the true doctrine of atonement or reconciliation. The inspired testimony on this great doctrine is, that God gave HIS OWN SON to be a "sacrifice" or "propitiation" for the sins of the world. Joh 3:16, 1Jo 2:2 4:10 Ro 3:25, &c. He made the "soul" of his son "an offering for sin." Isa 53. Trinitarianism admits of no such offering. It supposes that the human body only died, and that the union to supreme deity gave efficacy to the sufferings and death of humanity. It should be considered, that it is the dignity of the nature and character of the real sufferer and dying Lamb, as "the first" and "only begotten of the Father," which gives virtue to the offering. "We have a great High

Priest, Jesus, THE SON OF GOD." His soul was in sheol [the grave in Hebrew] until "God raised him from the death state," and in sheol" there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge." Ec 9:10, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest." "He offered HIMSELF without spot to God." Heb 9:14. It was not for the death of humanity only, that the sun withdrew its shining, the earth shook to its center, and the curtain of the Holy of Holies in the Temple was rent in twain. "Surely this was the Son of God."

Please to consider candidly, whether or not you can truthfully reconcile his constant declarations of dependence on the Father, with his supposed supreme deity, by referring those declarations to his human nature. If this nature was united to the second infinite person, how could it be dependent on the first? The dependence must necessarily have been on the second person and not on the Father.

You ask, Is not our dear Lord "the Word" which John declares "was with God and was God?" Certainly; but is not the term God, used (like the term Lord,) in different senses in the sacred scriptures? Is it not applied to the rulers of Israel, Ps 82:6?, "I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High." Moses was a god to Aaron, Ex 4:16, "And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people: and he shall be, even he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God.". Satan is "the god of this world." 2Co

4:4. The Son of the Blessed is "God over all." Is he God or ruler over all, independently, or by appointment of the Father, "the only true God?" Joh 17:1-3. Let the holy scriptures answer. 1Co 15:24-28, "God, even the Father-hath put all things under him." This is equivalent to his being "over all;" -"it is manifest that he is excepted which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subjected unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God (not the Trinity, but "THE FATHER," as verse 24 proves) may be ALL in ALL." Is not this divine testimony fatal to trinitarianism? Our blessed Lord as God, has a GOD. Heb 1:8,9. The Father has no god above him. You believe that the God with whom the Word was, is the supreme God. If then the Word was also supreme God, is it not a truth of divine revelation, that there are two supreme Gods? Scripture is its own best interpreter. See the context (verse 14) where the Word is defined to be "the only begotten (Son) of the Father, full of grace and truth." Mr. Andrew Fuller has well observed, that "the glory of the Word, and the glory of the only begotten of the Father, is one and the same." The Word was "begotten" and not self-existent. Again we read, that he is "the first born of every creature." Col 1:15, which must refer to his pre-existent state; for the apostle argues that he is so, from the fact of all things being "created by him." He is "the beginning of the creating power, that the intelligent universe will ever behold; "being the brightness of his glory and the express image of his person." The universe gains nothing, but sustains an inconceivable loss by substituting an infinite person for the matchless Son of

God. To infinity you cannot add. One infinite person is equal to any number. The Father is "the alone (monou) God." Joh 5:44.

It is affirmed, that the same infinite attributes are ascribed to the Son as to the Father. Let us see. Peter said, "Lord, thou knowest all things." John said to his brethren, "ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things," 1Jo 2:20. Let us allow the sacred word to determine the source of the knowledge of our blessed Jesus. "God GIVETH not the Spirit by measure unto him," Joh 3:34. Will you not allow that, if there is any thing unknown to the Son, in any nature, that he cannot be omniscient? He himself plainly declares that there is. He affirms that his "Father ONLY knows of the day of his second coming, Mt 24:30-36. He assures us that all the power he has "in heaven and in earth," "over all flesh," for the gracious purpose of giving eternal life to God's elect, is GIVEN him by the Father, Mt 28:18 Joh 17:2. I ask, for Jehovah's honor, if it is not contemning the divine wisdom, and charging God foolishly, if we say that an "given" power is inadequate for this purpose? Is it not the plainly revealed fact that "God our Saviour" hath "saved us, through (or by) Jesus Christ our Saviour?" Tit 3:4-6. The context of Re 1:8, does not require its application to the Son; it refers to the Father. -"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." See verses 4, 5, "John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are

before his throne; 5: And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood". If the spirit of Paul could be present with his absent brethren in their assembly, 1Co 5:4, cannot the spirit of Jesus Christ be present, in a more effective sense, with "two or three" who assemble in his name?

We have too little conception of the capacity of the Infinite to delegate "treasures of wisdom, and knowledge," and power, as he pleases. Infinite perfections are indeed incommunicable; but what a vast amount may be possessed within this boundary! It pleased the Father that in him (Jesus Christ) should all the fullness dwell," Col 1:19. "I and my Father are one." He did not say one God. He prayed that his disciples may be one with him and his Father," even as" he and the Father "are one," Joh 17:21-23 Php 2:5-11. "Christ Jesus-thought it not robbery to be equal with God." Doddridge and Macknight (both trinitarians) consider the word "equal" an incorrect translation, rendering the Greek word "like," or "as." As an example of humility, the apostle presents to the consideration of his brethren, a real and great change of condition of the pre-existing Son of God, which can never be predicated of immutable deity, being totally incompatible therewith.

Joh 5:22,23. "The Father hath committed all judgment unto the Son, that all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father." Observe the ground of this

great honor; it is judgment committed to him by the Father. We honor the Father, not on the ground of any thing committed to him by another, but as the independent source of all things, 1Co 8:6. Joseph was honored "even as Pharaoh," Ge 44:18. Yet Pharaoh was greater "in the throne" than Jos#Eph 41:40. So our Saviour affirms, "my Father is greater than I" Isa 6:1-5, compared with Joh 12:41, is supposed to prove that Jesus is Jehovah. In the Hebrew the first word Adonai, and not Jehovah occurs. In the 5th it is Jehovah. Compare this passage with Ps 110:1, and it appears that Isaiah saw both Christ and Jehovah. Now it is declared that "no man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him," Joh 1:18. Must we not then understand that Isaiah saw the glory of God "in the face of Jesus Christ," who is "the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of his person," see 2Co 4:6. Jesus said, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." How? "The Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works," Joh 14:10. He doth not say the second person in the Trinity, of my own deity that dwelleth in me, doeth the works; but THE FATHER. In respect to his power to forgive sins, see Joh 20:23, " Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." [Editor: I like the comparison someone used to express this thought: He said, "One cannot look at the sun with his eyes, but one can see the effects of the sun by looking at the world," likewise with God; one cannot look at Jehovah, but one can see the effects of Him by looking at the effects of Jesus.]

Re 5:13. "Blessing and honor and glory and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever." 1Ch 29:20. "And all the congregation worshiped the LORD (Jehovah) and the king," i.e., David. Jehovah is worshipped as "the only true God," Jesus Christ as "his first begotten" Son, as Heb 1:6 proves, and as the Lamb that was slain. Re 5:12. David was worshiped as the King of Israel. Each in his true station. It is in the highest sense only, that we are forbidden to worship any but the Supreme. See Lu 14:10, "But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee."

Mr. MacWhorter of Yale College has published a volume, to prove two things. First, That the Hebrew word Jehovah signifying "I AM," should be Yahveh, signifying, "I will be." Second, that Yahveh or Jehovah is Christ.

To test the correctness of the term Jehovah, he proposes to "substitute the English I AM, as an equivalent for Lord" where "the latter occurs in the Old Testament." "This (he affirms) is a perfectly valid test, and should such a rendering seem unmeaning or unworthy, in any connection in which it is made to stand, this fact of itself, would afford a strong presumption that we have not arrived at the true significance of the term." Page 14.

Let us now apply this "perfectly valid test" to determine, whether or not the learned author is correct, in affirming that Yahweh or Jehovah is Christ, and substitute the word Christ where the word Lord in capitals occurs, which, in the Hebrew, is usually, Jehovah or Yahveh.

Ps 110:1 "The Christ said unto my Lord, (Adonai, i.e., Christ,) sit thou on my right hand until I make thine enemies they footstool." Here we see the rendering is "unmeaning and unworthy;" and that the Father, and not Christ, is Yahveh or Jehovah. The dying martyr saw Jesus Christ, "on the right hand of God." Ac 7:56. Did he see two Jehovah, or is the Father not Jehovah? Isa 42:6. "I the Christ have called thee in righteousness, - and will give thee (Christ) for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles."

Isa 53:6-10. The Christ hath laid on him (Christ) the iniquities of us all." Ps 40. "I (Christ) have preached righteousness in the great congregation, O Christ thou knowest." Isa 53:10. "It pleased the Christ to bruise him," i.e., Christ. Ps 2:2. "The rulers take counsel against the Christ and against his anointed" (Christ.) See also verse #6, Isa 61:1. "The Christ hath anointed me (Christ) to preach good tidings to the meek," &c. See also Mic 5:4. He of Bethlehem (i.e., Christ) "shall stand and feed in the name of the Christ HIS GOD." See also Isa 55:5, and other passages.

This we see is all "unmeaning and unworthy," according

to the learned author's own "perfectly valid test;" demonstrating that Christ is not Jehovah or Yahveh. Isa 63:16, positively declares; "O Jehovah (or Yahveh) thou art our Father."

The fallacious impression that we dishonor the Savior, if we withhold from him the highest possible divine nature, presents many from believing his testimony, that the Father is "the only true God." Joh 17:1,3. The writer was, for a time, the subject of such an impression. Having found at the Cross that deliverance from the guilt and dominion of sin, which reading, prayer, and resolutions had failed to remove; his love abounded towards his precious Redeemer; but not "in all knowledge." Php 1:9. He has since learned, like Peter, that all regard for "the Son of the Blessed," (who delights to honor his Father) which is contrary to truth, will only meet his rebuke. Mt 16:22.

It plainly appears from 1Co 2:11, that "the Spirit of God" is no more a distinct person from God, than the spirit of a man is a distinct person from the man. It would be an anomaly of a most extraordinary character; if there was an infinite intelligent person in the universe, to whom no prophet, priest, apostle, or saint of the sacred Scriptures, ever offered any direct prayer or praise See the true doxology, Re 5:13. The Spirit of God is "poured out" or "shed forth," Ac 2:17,33; terms inapplicable to personality.

For the honor and glory of the ever blessed God, our Father; "the GOD and FATHER of our Lord Jesus

Christ;" I submit this brief essay to your serious candid consideration.

Finally, "forbearing one another in love;" let our chief concern be to possess the holy, the humble, the benevolent spirit of Him who has loved us and given himself for us, walking daily in his imitable footsteps; "that when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming."

Yours for the truth, in Christian love.

HENRY GREW (1857)