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INQUIRY

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INTO THE

SCRIPTURE-ACCOUNT

OF

JESUS CHRIST :

OR, A

SHORT ARGUMENT

Concerning

His Deity and Glory,

According to the

G O S P E L.

1 Cor. viii. 5. *To us there is but One God, and he is the Father, of whom are all things; and One Lord, viz. Jesus Christ, through whom are all things.*

Augus. cont. Maxim. l. 3. c. 14.

Nec ego Nicenam Synodum tibi, nec tu Ariminensem mihi debes, objicere. Scripturarum Autoritatibus, &c.

Thou shalt not urge me with the Council of Ariminum, nor I thee with the Council of Nice, but let us decide the Cause by Scripture Authority

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A Short
ARGUMENT,
 Concerning the
DEITY of our
LORD JESUS CHRIST.

THAT the Blessed Jesus has the Title of God, ascribed sometimes to him in the H. Scriptures, is not denied by *Arians*, or *Socinians*, but it remains to be Examined in what Sense that Character, as given to him, is intended. Nor is this an unreasonable or needless enquiry, since it is beyond all reasonable denial, that the Title of *God* is given in very different Senses in the Scripture.

1. Sometimes it signifies the most High, Perfect and Infinite Being, who is of himself alone, and owes neither his Being, nor Authority, nor any thing to another; and this is what is most commonly intended, when we speak of *God* in ordinary discourse, and in Prayer and Praise; we mean it of *God* in the most Eminent Sense.

2. At other times it has a lower Sense, and is made the Character of Persons who are invested with Subordinate Authority and Power, from that Supreme Being: Thus *Angels* are stiled *Gods*: *Pf. 97. 7. Pf. 8. 5.* *Thou' hast made him a little lower than the Gods*; as 'tis in the *Margine*; So *Magistrates* are *Gods*; *Ex. 22. 28. Pf. 82. 1.* *John Prince of the Kings of the Earth*, and far above the greatest *Angels*, *Eph. 1. 21. the*

number, one Person is Stiled *God*, as *Moses* is twice so called; a *God* to *Aaron*, *Ex. 4. 16.* and afterwards a *God* to *Pharaoh*. *Ch 7. 1.* and thus the Devil is called the *God* of this World. *i. e.* the Prince and mighty Ruler of it; tho' by unjust Usurpation, and Gods Permission, now as he who alone is *God*, in the former Sense, is infinitely above all these; So we find him distinguish'd from all others who are called *God*, by this Character, *viz. a God of Gods*, *Deut. 10. 17.* so *Jos. 22. 22.* or the Chief of all *Gods*, with whom none of those *Gods* may be compared. *Pf. 86. 8. Pf. 135. 5.* so *Philo* describes him, to be not only the *God of Men*, but the *God of Gods* also. This is the highest and most Glorious Epithete given him in the *O. T.* when it is designed to make a most Magnificent mention of his Peerless Greatness and Glory. Equivalent to this I take that Title to be, which is so much used in the *N. T.* *viz. the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, *Eph 1. 3. 17.* *the God of our Lord Jesus*, *the Father of the Glory.* For since Jesus Christ is the Chief of all Subordinate Powers, *Rev. 1. 5. the Prince of the Kings of the Earth*, and far above the greatest *Angels*, *Eph. 1. 21. the*

Lord of Lords, and King of Kings, he who is Stiled the God of our Lord Jesus Christ is therein, in Effect, Stiled the God of Gods, or above all Gods.

Now the Question to be resolved is, in which of these two Senses Christ is said to be God in the Holy Scriptures; the bare Character of God determines nothing in this case, because it belongs both to the Supream and Subordinate Beings in Power and Authority; But the Question is, whether Jesus Christ be the God of Gods, or above all Gods?

He is indeed the *Lord of Lords*, but that Notes an Inferior Character, compared with that of *God of Gods*, as appears by that, 1 Cor. 8. 5. tho' it be included in the Superior, so that he who is above all Gods, is also over all Lords, but not contrariwise: *In short*, has Jesus Christ any God over him, who has greater Authority, and greater Ability than himself or not? This will decide the matter; for if he have a God above him, then is he not the Absolutely Supream God, tho' in Relation to Created Beings, he may be a God (or Ruler) over all.

Nor can we more clearly demonstrate this point, than by shewing; *First*, that Jesus Christ expressly speaks of another God than himself. *Secondly*, that he owns this God to be above, or over himself. *Thirdly*, That he wants those Super eminent and Infinite Perfections, which belong only to the Lord God of Gods: Of these I shall treat in a manner suited to vulgar Capacities; for I judge it very indecent to speak or write of Important Articles, (which the Common People must believe, and must so far understand) in such a manner as leaves them wholly unintelligible.

First, Our Lord Jesus Christ expressly speaks of another God distinct from himself: Several times, we find him saying, *My God* of another, *Mat. 27. 46. My God, my God, Why hast thou forsaken me?* So *John* 20. 17. sure he intended not to say, my

Self, my Self, why hast thou forsaken me? This God then was distinct from himself, as he declares in other places, *John* 7. 17. *he shall know my Doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.* So *John* 8. 42. where 'tis to be noted that he does not distinguish himself from him, as the *Father*, but as *God*; and therefore, in all just Construction, he cannot be supposed to be that self same God, from whom he distinguishes, and to whom he Opposeth himself. How manifestly are the one God, and the one Lord distinguished, 1 Cor. 8. 6. and that there may be no just pretence to say with *Placens*, that the God and the Lord; or the Cause of which all things are, and the Cause by or through which they are, are but two things said of the same one God; We may see them more clearly distinguished, *Eph. 4. 5, 6.* where by the Interposing other things between the one Lord, and one God, *viz. one Faith, one Baptism*; it appears evidently that these were not intended as two Characters of the same Being. I think that none who impartially attends to the Scripture History, can doubt, whether God, and his Christ, are not two distinct things.

Secondly, Our Lord Jesus owns not only another than himself to be God; but also that *he is above*, or over himself, which is plainly intimated also by his Apostles: Himself loudly proclaims his Subjection to the Father in many Instances: In General, he declares his *Father to be greater than he*, *John. 14. 28. 50. Ch. 10. 29.* he says he came not in his own, but his *Fathers* Name or Authority, *John. 5. 43.* That he sought not his own, but Gods Glory, nor made his own Will, but Gods, his Rule; and in such a Posture of Subjection *he came down from Heaven* into this Earth; so that it should seem, that Nature which did pre-exist, did not possess the Supream Will; even before it was incarnate, *John* 6. 38. Again he owns his dependence upon his God and Father, even for those Things, which

which it is pretended belong to him as God, viz. the Power of working Miracles, *John. 5. 19, 20. of raising the Dead, v. 26. of executing universal Judgment, v. 27. of all which he says, of my own self I can do nothing, v. 30.* In like manner his Apostles declare his Subjection to another, not only as his Father, but as his God, which is Emphatically expressed, in calling the most B. God, *the God of our Lord Jesus*, after his Humiliation was over, *Eph. 1. 17.* and *the Head of Christ is God; 1 Cor. 11.* They declare his *Headship* over the Universe, and the very Foundations of his Claim to Honour

and Service, to be owing to the gracious Gift of God, *Phil 2. 9. exaltatus auro.* and yet these are some of the highest Glories of Jesus Christ.

Let me only add under this Head, that great Text, so full of irresistible evidence, for proving an Inferiority in the Son to his Father or to God, *1 Cor. 15. from the 24 v. to the 29.* where the Apostle says several Things to this purpose,

1. That all Things are to be put under Christ's Feet; all Enemies and Powers are to be subdued to him: But adds that 'tis Manifest, *God must be excepted* out of these Things that are under him; and that for this reason, because 'tis he who did put all under him; And how comes it to pass, that it is so evident a Thing, that another must be supposed to be the great Author of this Triumph of Christ? Why might it not be done by himself independently as the Supreme God, and then there need have been no exception, of any one Being, out of the all things under him? But the Apostle knew that Jesus Christ must needs Triumph by a Power derived from God; to whom it was most eminently to be ascribed, and then to one who had such thoughts, it was manifest that there must be one excepted from the all Things under him, because he must needs be above Christ who enables him to subdue all things, or makes him a God over all.

2. The Son shall deliver his Kingdom to God, that is (not to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as some pretend, but) the Father only; since it was the Father, *Mat. 28. 18.* who gave him all Power in Heaven and Earth, and who made him King in Zion: Into his Hands he will make a Surrender of all, in Testimony of his having done all in a Subordination to him; and having Acted and Ruled in dependence on him, who shall have a Satisfactory Account of all given to him in the end. This is a Glory peculiar to the Father, as Supreme.

3. Then the Son himself shall be Subject to him that put all things under him, i. e. to God his Father, that God may be all in all, that is, his Subjection shall be then manifested by an open Solemn acknowledgment of it, when he shall recognize the Supremacy of the Father in that publick Act of Surrender; so that, tho' formerly (in the present State) all Judgment and Rule was committed to the Son; yet then it shall be otherwise, and God will more immediately appear in the Government of the future State, which shall not be so much shared Probably, between him and the Redeemer, as the present Administration appears to be. This then will be the Issue of all our Disputes; *God all in all*; and the Son himself Subject under him. Can any thing be more Expressive of an Inequality between God and Christ? But it will be said by some, that by the Son here, is meant the Son of Man, or Christ as Man; while as God, he shall not be Subjected to the Father.

Res. As there is no intimation of any such distinction between the pretended two Natures of the Son here; so there is enough in the Words, to shew, that they are spoken of him, under his Highest Capacity and Character; in omuch, that Monsieur Claude maintains it to be true of the Son of God, as to his (supposed) Divine Nature: But tho' there is no need

of Supposing such a *Nature*, (which I think the Text plainly contradicts) yet his Reasons will hold so far, as to prove the Words do speak of Christ, under the Highest Character he bears, by the Name of Son; for *First*, as he says, 'tis not said the *Son of Man*, but *the Son* absolutely which he thinks in the Scripture Use is wont to mean more than the Son of Man; and undoubtedly it imports all that comes under that Title; Nay more, 'tis said, *even the Son himself*, with great Emphasis, *qu. d.* as Great and Glorious as he is with all his Grandeur and Power; he himself shall be Subject. *Secondly*, His Subjection being opposed to his Reign, both must be understood of the same Subject; be sure the delivering up the Kingdom can only be done by the same to which it was committed, and by which it was managed: Now I shall allow, that only in his humane Nature Christ cou'd give up his Kingdom; but then 'tis, *because* 'tis as Man Delegated, and Inhabited by God, that he sways and manages this Kingdom; and if this be allow'd (as I think it needs must) that the Man Christ is sufficient, by help from God, to manage his Universal Spiritual Kingdom, I see no reason there will be to oppose those *Unitarians* who think him to be a sufficient Saviour and Prince, tho' he be not the only Supreme God; nor can any with reason attempt to prove him to be such, from his Works and Office as King of his Church, since 'tis implied that as such, he must do Homage to God the Father, in *delivering up his Kingdom to him*; and this very expression *to God the Father*, makes it plain, that there is no God the Son in the same Sense, or in the same Supreme Essence with the Father, because if there were, then he ought not to be excluded from this Glory of having such open Homage paid to him, (which is here appropriated to the Father only; and since the Apostle speaks of the same God, (whom he explains to be the Father) to the end of this Discourse, and says he shall be *in all*: How evidently do's he shew him to be far beyond all that are *not* God the Fa-

ther, what ever Character else they bear? So then Jesus Christ in his Highest Capacity, is inferior to the Father; how can he be the same God, to which he is Subject, or of the same Rank and Dignity? Thus it appears that Christ is so God, as to be under a Superior God, who has set him over all: And Suitable to this, is that Account which the Scripture gives us of the God-head of the B. Jesus, *viz.* Because he is invested with a God-like Authority and Power, from the Supreme God his Father. Thus when he was accused by the captious *Jews*, for assuming the Character of Son of God (which they perversly wou'd stretch, as tho' it implied an equality with God) *John* 10. 35, 36. he explains in what Sense only he justified it, *viz.* as one whom the Father had Sanctified, *i. e.* called to a greater Office, and honoured with an Higher Commission than those Magistrates, on whom the Scripture so freely bestows the Title of Gods. So *Heb* 1. 8, 9. when he is called God, 'tis explained in what Sense, or of what sort of God, 'Tis to be understood, by saying that *his God*, (intimating he had a God over him) had *anointed him with Oyl*, &c. That is, had invested him with Royal Power and Dignity (as Kings were installed in their Office, by anointing with Oyl, among the *Jews*) which is an Explication of his God-head or Dominion; And this is said to be *above all his Fellows*, not sure above the Father and Holy Spirit, (which only are pretended to be his Fellows, as God, by them who understand it of the Supreme God head) but above all other subordinate Beings; This is one plain Scripture Account of his being called God, for the same Things are spoken to him, and of him, under the Character of God. *O God: Thy Throne*, &c. *v. 8.* I think men shou'd be well assured on what Grounds they go, before they assign other reasons of this Character, to different from the Scripture Account: Let it suffice us, that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, *Acts* 2. 36. of this Discourse, and says he shall be *in all*: How evidently do's he shew him to be far beyond all that are *not* God the Fa-

However, our Adversaries will gain nothing by alledging Texts to prove the Title of God, to be given to Christ since that may be, and yet it will not prove him to be the Supreme independent God; but only one who is inhabited of, and Commissioned and enabled by him who is so. As to that place, *Philip. 2. 6.* which is Corruptly rendered in our Translation; *he thought it no Robbery to be equal to God*: It is confess'd by adversaries themselves, that it shou'd be read thus, *viz.* that he did not *assume*, or *Arrogate*, or *Snatch at*, or *Covet* an equality with God; the Words are never known to be used in any other Sense, as is shown by *Doctor Tillotson* in his Discourses against the *Socinians*; also by *Dr. Whitby* in his Exposition on the place, and others. So that this rather denies than asserts Christs equality to God, tho' still he was in the *Form of God*, as that Notes the outward Resemblance of him in his mighty Power and Works, &c. which is the constant meaning of the word *form* in the New Testament.

But because some think such Perfections are in Scripture ascribed to Christ, as will prove him to be God in the highest Sense, I proceed to shew;

Thirdly, That our Blessed Lord Jesus Disclaims those Infinite perfections which belong only to the Supreme God of Gods. And 'tis most certain, that if he want one, or any of these Perfections that are Essential to the Deity; He is not God in the Chief Sense: And if we find him Disclaiming the *One*, he cannot challenge the *Other*; for to deny Himself to have all Divine Perfections; or to deny Himself to be the Infinite God, is the same Thing: Let us observe some Instances for the Proof of this Point.

1. One Great and Peculiar Perfection of the Deity, is Absolute, underived Omnipotence: He who cannot Work all Miracles, and do whatever he List of *Himself*, without help from A-

nother, can never be the Supreme Being, or God; Because he appears to be an *Imperfect*, Defective Being, Comparatively, since he needs help, and can Receive additional Strength from Another than Himself.

Now, it is most evident, that our Lord Jesus (whatever Power he had) Confesses again and again, that he had not Infinite Power of Himself, *John 5. 30.* *Of my Self I can do nothing.* He had been Speaking of great Miracles, *viz.* Raising the Dead, and Executing all Judgment; but all along takes Care, Men shou'd know that His *Sufficiency* for these Things was of God the Father. In the beginning of the Discourse, *v. 19.* *the Son can do nothing but what he sees the Father do*: So in the *Middle. v. 26, 27.* *the Father has given to the Son to have life in Himself*; and as if he cou'd never too much Inculcate this great Truth, he adds towards the Conclusion; *I can do nothing of my Self ἀπ' ἐμαυτοῦ*, or from nothing that is my Self do I draw this Power and Authority. *Sure* this is not the *Voice* of God, but of a Man! For the most High can Receive from none; he cannot be made more Mighty or Wise, &c. because to Absolute Perfection can be no Addition, *Rom. 11. 35.* And since Power in God, is an Essential Perfection; it follows, that if it be derived, Then so is the Essence or Being it Self, which is Blasphemy against the Most High, for 'tis to *Ungod* Him; to Number Him among Poor Dependent Derivative Beings; Whilst the Supreme God *indeed*, is only he who is the *First Cause*, and Absolute Original of all.

Nay further, Our Lord considers Himself here, in Opposition to his *Father*; who he says, gave him all Power: Now if he had such an *Eternal Divine Word*, United more nearly to Him than the *Father*; Surely he wou'd have owned his Power to be from that *Word* or *Divine Son*.

How comes he to Ascribe nothing to that, since 'tis supposed to be equal in Power to the Father Himself, and more nearly Allied to Jesus Christ, as the Operating Principal in Him? So *John 14. 10. My Father in me does the Works*; by which, 'tis evident there was no Divine Agent in and with Him, but the Father; He only has all Power of Himself, and needs no Assistance.

2. Another Infinite Perfection, that must needs be in the Deity, is Supreme Absolute Goodness: *All Nations* have consented to this by the Light of Nature; that *Τύραβον, & Optimus Maximus*, are the Prime Characters of the Supreme as the Orator says, he is One; *quò nec Melius, nec Majus concipi Potest*: The Fullest, and Highest of all that are called Good; For indeed all other Good is derived from Him.

Now the Lord Jesus expressly Disclaims this Character, *Mat. 19. 17.* Jesus said to him, *Why callest thou me Good? there is none Good but one, that is God*; where 'tis most evident that he distinguishes Himself from God, as not the same with Him, and denies of Himself, what he affirms of God: And as to that Divine Perfection of Supreme Infinite Goodness; He Challenges the Man for presuming to say what seemed to Attribute it to Him, and leads Him off to Another; who, and who only was more Eminently so.

'Tis astonishing to see what Violence is Offered to the Sacred Text, by such as Mantain the Equality of Jesus Christ to God His Father: What a strange fetch is it to suppose our Lords Meaning to be This? *qu. d. I know Man, thou dost not take Me for God as I am; Why then dost thou give Me the Title belonging to Him only?* when there is not one Word in the Context looking this Way; For Christ never Challenges the Poor Man, with this, that he thought too meanly of him (as they suppose) but quite contrary, that he

Thought or Spake too *highly* of Him; And *verily* if the Mans Error lay in this, that he thought too meanly of Christ, whilst His words otherwise were justly enough applied to Him: I cannot think our Lord would have rebuked Him in that Manner; for instead of keeping him still to the right Object, and rectifying His apprehensions about it, which only were wrong, He seems clearly to carry Him off to another from *Himself*, as not the right Object, without rectifying His Thoughts of Christ at all; and to what End could Christ Reprove Him in such away, as never tells Him what was his Fault, rather tempts Him to run into another, and leads Him out of the Way.

It shou'd seem *rather* (if any such notion had been then conceived by any,) that the Man did think Him to be God; for if he thought Him to be the *Supream Good*, that was to make Him God in His eye; and if He did not intend so much, but only meant it of an *Inferior Good*, how cou'd Christ rebuke Him for it, since that was no Fault or Error? And truly they who say Christs Receiving *Worship*, when on Earth, proves His Deity, can hardly give an Account why the Man should give, or Christ Receive *Worship* from Him, as He did, *Mark 10. 17.* if he did not take him for God? However, whatsoever the Man thought, he says what Jesus Christ *thought*, was only proper to be said of God, and too much to be said of Himself, as the Obvious Sense of His Words declares.

And let me add, that if our Lord Jesus had on purpose left the Matter Disguised, not willing to discover who he was then; yet 'tis strange that the Evangelists who many Years after relate the Matter, when it was *Necessary* to have it believed, that Christ was Supreme God (as is pretended) that they *I say*, shou'd not unriddle the Matter, by inserting some Cautious Clause, as *that this He said to prove him,*

him, or because he knew he denied His God-head, or the like; For *sometimes* on less Occasions they enter such *Cautions*, *John 6. 6. Ch. 21. 23.* And yet tho' *Three* of the Evangelists relate this Discourse, they all do it the same way, and not one of them Says a tittle to direct us to this Secret way of Interpretation, but leaves us to the hazard of a most Fatal mistake (even Recommended to us by this History;) if Jesus Christ were indeed the Supream Good in as High a Sense as God His *Father*, which he so apparently here denies, and by that he denies Himself to be the most High God:

3. I will only add one perfection more, *viz. Absolute Omniscience* or unlimited Knowledge of all Things, *Past, Present, and to come, Ps. 147. 5. His understanding is Infinite.* So *Isa. 41. 23. Acts 15. 18. known to God are all His works from the Beginning.*

Now, 'tis plain our Lord Jesus Christ had not this Infinite Knowledge, Particularly not of *future* Things, such as of the day of Judgment, *Mark 13. 32.* Says he, *of that Day knows no Man, no, not the Angels in Heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only.* Here the *Son* professes His knowledge to be *limited*, and Inferior to the *Fathers, i. e. the Son of the Father*, or Son of God; the *Son* as *above* Angels in Knowledge, the *Son* in the most *Eminent* Sense: Now how is it possible the *Son* can be God Infinite, and yet have but a finite understanding? or can he be Equal in Knowledge to the *Father*, and yet not know as much as the *Father*? And be sure if he was not an Infinite God, when on Earth, he cannot be such afterwards: Thus we have seen Christ Himself, with His own mouth *Disclaiming* Infinite Original Power, Goodness and Knowledge to belong to Him, but attributes them to His *Father only* as another, distinct from Himself, from whom he derived of each in a dependent limited Manner.

What can be said against these plain Arguments? I imagine our Opposers have but one *Shift* left for the evading them, and that is a distinction which serves 'em in all Cases; for *they say*, Jesus Christ speaks these Things of Himself, as *Man only*, while he had another Nature as *God*, which he Reserved, and Excepted out of the Case; So that when he says, *I cannot do thus my Self*, or *I am not to be called the Chief Good*, or do not know this, &c. according to *them*, the meaning is *qu. d.* I have not these perfections in my *humane Nature*, but yet I know, and can do all unassisted, and am the Chief Good in My Divine Nature, which also is more properly my Self: The Vanity of which Subterfuge I intend now to lay open, by shewing how Absurdly this Distinction of the *two Natures* is pretended, to take off the Force of such Expressions from Christs own Mouth, which in their Natural and Undisguised appearance, do proclaim His Inferiority to God, even the *Father*, and I shall Dwell the more upon this, because 'tis the most Popular and Common Evasion, and comes in at every turn, when all other relief fails.

It wou'd be no unreasonable Demand, to ask, what Intimation of any such *Distinction* of two Natures they can point us to, in any of these Discourses of Christ? Why shou'd Men Devise or Imagine for Him, such a Strange, and seemingly Deceitful way of Speaking; from no Ground, nor Necessity, other than that of upholding their own precarious Opinion? But I have several Remarks to make upon this common Answer.

That which in the *First* place I have to Object against it is; That our Blessed Lord Jesus Christ, if *Himself* was the Supream God in any Nature of His *own*, Cou'd not have said such Things, (as I conceive) in any Consistency, with Truth and Sincerity; (which

(which he always maintained, strictly) he cou'd not say Himself cou'd not do, or did not know the Thing, which all this while *Himself* cou'd do, and did know very well, as before if he was the Supreme God, he cou'd and did, for this were to make Him say what is most False, and to *Equivocate* in the most deceitful manner; for tho' we shou'd suppose he consisted of two Infinitely distant Natures, and so had two Capacities of Knowledge, &c. Yet since *Himself* includes them both, it follows, that the denying a Thing of *Himself* in absolute Terms, without any Limitation in the Words, or other obvious *Circumstances*, does plainly imply a denial of its belonging to any part of His Person; or to any Nature in it; For tho' we may affirm a Thing of a Person, which belongs *only* to a part of him; as I may properly say a Man is wounded or hurt, tho' it be only in one Member, suppose an Arm; Yet I cannot justly deny a Thing of him which belongs only to one part, because it belongs not to another; as I cannot say a Man is not wounded, because tho' one Arm be Shot or Wounded, yet the other is whole.

For instance, I have two Organs of sight, *two Eyes*; Now suppose I converse with a Man with one Eye *shut* and the other *open*; if being asked whether I saw him, I shou'd dare to say I saw him not (without any limitation) *meaning* to my self, that I saw him not with the Eye which was shut, tho' still I saw him well enough with the Eye which was open; I fear I shou'd bear the reproach of a Lyar and *Deceiver*, notwithstanding such a mental Reservation as some wou'd attribute to the *Holy Jesus*. For knowledge is the *Eye* of the Person, Jesus Christ is supposed to have two of these knowing Capacities; the *one* weak, the *other* strong and peircing that discerns all Things; now as *such* an one, the Disciples repair to Him, and ask Him, when the end of the World and time of His

coming shall be? *Mat. 24. 3.* He answers them, by giving them some General Account of the Matter, but says that the particular *Day and Hour* he knew not, nor did any know but the Father, *meaning*, (say my opposers) that he knew it not with his *Humane* knowledge, tho' he knew it well enough with His *Divine*, at the same time, that he said, *the Son knows it not*, absolutely and indefinitely.

And yet if Jesus Christ had a *Divine* Knowledge and Nature, no doubt his Disciples (who, if *any Body* must be supposed to believe it) directed the question to that, rather than to the imperfect humane capacity; and yet in answer to it, he says, he *knew not the day*, which wou'd not be counted Sincerity or Truth in Men, much less was Jesus Christ in danger of it, in His mouth *no Guile was*; let us not impute it to Him.

That you may see this is fair reasoning, hear how some of the other side own it, when out of the heat of this controversy. See Doctor Stillingfleets Sermon, on *Mat. 10. 16.* speaking of the *Equivocations* of Popish Priests, whose common Answer, when Examined about what they have known by Confession, is that they *know it not*, which they think to vindicate from the charge of Lying; by saying, that in *Confession, the Priest knows Matters as God, not as Man, and therefore he denies to know them, meaning it, as Man.* But says the Doctor this is absur'd; because to say he does not know, is as much as to say he doth not *any way know*: Now if this be a good answer against the *Papists*, as no doubt it is; Then sure 'tis so in the present Case: Therefore when Christ says, he knows not the Day of Judgment; 'tis as much as to say he does not *any way* know it; and consequently, 'tis a vain Shift to say, it was as Man only; we must beware least we bring the Holy Jesus under such reproach for Equivocation, as the Romish Priests lye under; and

and make the *Jesuits* themselves think they have a good Title to that *Name*, by imitating *herein*, his own Example; which in this very *instance* they alledge with so great Advantage according to this Interpretation.

2. As a further Evidence, That Jesus Christ intended no such Distinction of two Natures, as is pretended; 'tis to be observed, that he puts not the *distinction*, or opposition between the Son of *Man*, and the Eternal *Word* (as some speak) but between the *Son* and his *Father*, *Mark* 13. 32. *Not the Son knows, but only the Father*; by which 'tis plain, He had no thought of including any Person or Nature of his own among the excepted: For whatever was not the *Father*, he says, was ignorant of that *Day*; now 'tis certain, that in *no Nature* was the Son the Father; and consequently where *None* but the Father knows, none who is *not* the Father, can be intended; and since our Lord was making an exception in the *Case*, he wou'd not have forgotten to except the Eternal *Word* too, if there had been such a Divine principle in himself, *equal* to the Father and distinct from him; for 'tis a known *Rule*, that an exception from a general Assertion, confirms it as to other instances not excepted.

Will they say, That by the *Father* is meant all Three Persons here? *Viz.* Father Son and Holy Ghost: What! can the *Father* as opposed to the Son, be put for the Father and the Son? What woful work will this make with Scripture, to suppose that what are *Opposed* to each other, do include each other, under the very Characters by which they are opposed? As well may they say; that in the Baptismal Form; by the *Father* is meant, Father, Son, and Spirit, tho' he be distinguished from the other two; and I shou'd despair of ever understanding the Scriptures above all Books that ever were written, at this *Rate* of Interpretation: No doubt therefore, but the *Father* as opposed to the Son, ex-

cludes all that is the Son, and then there cou'd be no Son of God that knew of the *Day* which only the *Father* knew of, and consequently no Son that is God *equal* to the Father.

3. Moreover, That Interpretation must needs be unjust, which if admitted, will make all, even the most plain Speech *uncertain*, and utterly insignificant: as this interpretation of Christ's words wou'd do: For as I ask the *Patrons* of this Opinion, in what words Jesus Christ cou'd *in Brief* have denied himself to be God most High; if he had a mind to do it, more plain and full than these? In which he says, he knew not all things as the Father did, nor cou'd do all things, &c. So I wou'd fain have them shew me, what words of that Nature he cou'd have used, which the *same* way of interpretation, as they here use, will not *evade* and make insignificant. For had he said, or *Sworn* in plain words thus, *Viz.* *I tell you I am not the Supreme God; and none but my Father has that Glory.* They wou'd upon the *same Reason* still have said, This was to be understood of him as *Man* only: So that no words professing himself *not* to be God, cou'd be a proof of it, if this way of interpretation be Allowed: So that I may safely say thus much, that the Blessed Jesus has declared himself *not* to be the Supreme God, nor equal to the *Father*, as plainly as words cou'd speak; or in brief, express: And that this Declaration made by him already is not to be evaded, any *other way*, that what will make it impossible his mind shou'd be understood by any words he cou'd have designedly used in the matter: Let any one try if this do not hold True; and sure it must be an absur'd way of interpretation which leaves a Man no Opportunity or Power of speaking his Meaning *plainly*, so as to be understood.

4. Again, This way of interpretation, which the Advocates of the Opinion I oppose, are so much necessitated to, for upholding

their Cause, does plainly overthrow it again, and may be turned against themselves; for if it be just and true to deny of Christ absolutely what belongs to him in one Nature, because there is another Nature in which it belongs not to him; then, since to be the chief God belongs to him (according to our Adversaries) only in one Nature, and not in respect of the other, or humane Nature, it follows that it may as justly be said Jesus Christ is not God, nor to be *Worshiped* or *Trusted* as such; Nay, That he was not before the *Virgin Mary*; according to them and the like; and this without adding any limitation or restriction, any more than our Lord does in the place mentioned.

What would they say to one who shou'd speak or preach so, *That Jesus is not God*, that he cannot do all things, nor is equal to the Father; &c. Wou'd they not conclude he was a Denyer of the Deity of Christ? else he wou'd never speak so unguarded: upon the *same* Account, when Jesus Christ himself says it; that he cannot of *himself* do all things, nor knows all things, and makes no reserves in his words, we may conclude he also *denies* his being Supream God; *else*, if it be a just way of speaking in him, it cannot be unjust in us to imitate him, by denying him indefinitely, to be, what he in any one Nature is not, *i. e.* that he is *not God*, without adding more.

Nay, After this way of Speaking which they Attribute to Christ, a Man may be Taught to say his Creed *Backward*; and yet make a true profession of his Faith, by denying of Jesus Christ in absolute Expressions, what ever may be denied of one of his Natures; thus since the *Apostles Creed* takes Notice of nothing to be believed concerning Christ, but what belongs to his *Manhood* (which is very strange, if there were any Articles relating to his Divinity, which must needs be most important) one may venture to deny them all; with this

secret unexpressed Reserve, Viz: Meaning it of the Divine Nature (to which they belong not) So that one may say, I believe not that Jesus Christ was Conceived of the *Holy Ghost*, or *Born* of the *Virgin Mary*; I believe that he never was Crucified under *Pontius Pilate*, nor was Dead or Buried; that he never *Rose* nor *Ascended*, nor will *Return* visibly again; for his Divine Nature (which 'tis pretended he had) was not capable of these Things; and since they say, the Personality is Divine, here seems more warrant to be bolder in denying indefinitely of the person what belongs not to the Divine Nature, whose the Personality is, than in so denying, of the person what only belongs not to the humane Nature; as this interpretation makes Christ to do.

5. Finally, it welghs something with me, in opposition to this way of interpretation, that the Evangelists never take any occasion (when they had so many) to subjoyn any *Caution* against taking Christ's words in their obvious Sense, when he says, *He did not know the Hour*, &c. and the like. If as we said, our Lord had no mind to reveal his Divinity (tho' I see not still why he shou'd deny it thus) yet *sure* his Apostles who wrote so many Years after, whom it concerned to Reveal all important Truths most clearly, wou'd not fail to have set the Reader Right, by removing such obvious Objections as these are against the Supream Deity of Christ; and saying, he spake this only in respect of his *Manhood*, that he *knew not all things*, &c. But here is not one Caution given, as often we find there was about less Matters, *John 2. 21. ch. 11. 13.* No doubt it was, because they wou'd have the thing understood as it fairly lyes, not thinking of any such secret Reserve in Christ, of a *Divine Nature* in his Person, to be tacitly excepted, when he had denied such perfections of his Person indefinitely.

Thus it remains Good, that Jesus Christ disclaims infinite perfections, to belong to him

him as to the Father; and therefore that he is not the same infinite God with him, if we can believe his own Words: But before I conclude this Argument, I shall endeavour to Answer what our Opposers offer on the *contrary* side: They say there is abundant Evidence from other Scriptures, that Jesus Christ has those perfections in him, which I have shewed in the forementioned places, he denies of himself; these they lay in *Ballance* to the other, and since both sides cannot be proved, it must be examined, which ought to yield? Particularly they say *Omniscience* is ascribed to Jesus Christ, even such as is peculiar to the Supreme God, and since this indeed is that infinite perfection which they seem to alledge the most plausible Testimonies for its belonging to him, therefore I chuse to single out this in particular: I think I have made good the *Negative* already from his own Mouth, that he did not know all things: Nor can any thing of equal Evidence and Force be produced for the *Affirmative*, as will appear upon considerate Examination.

The instances usually alledged to prove the infinite *Omniscience* of Jesus Christ are either; 1. Such as speak of his knowing *all* things in General; or, 2. Of his knowing Mens Thoughts and *Hearts* in particular: To both which I Reply.

First, 'Tis Objected, that the Disciples ascribe to him the Knowledge of all things, as *John* 16. 30. *ch.* 21. 17. *Thou knowest all things: I Answer*, That as those Expressions are words of Admiration from the Disciples *not yet inspired*: So they are intended only to express a very great and comprehensive Knowledge far from infinite, *Divine Omniscience*, as appears.

1. By Christ's own words he knew not what the Father knew, *Viz.* The time of the *Day of Judgment*.

2. In that it was common to ascribe *all* knowledge to Men of extraordinary Wisdom, especially when any intended to

commend them highly, and were affected with wonder; for Admiration and Praise naturally inclines to run out into *Hyperboles*; thus the Woman of *Tekoah* under a surprizing wonder of *David's* Sagacity cries out: *My Lord knows all things on Earth, and is as Wise as an Angel*, 2 *Sam.* 14. 20. and the Apostle in commendation of some Christians says, *They knew all Things*, 1 *John* 2. 20. and 27. and yet 'tis plain such *Encomiums* must have their limitations; and indeed the Jews seem to have thought that their Prophets knew, in a manner, *all Things*, Thus *Luke* 7. 39. When a woman of ill Fame Anointed our Lords Head; the *Pharisee* says of him, *If this Man were a Prophet, he would know what manner of Woman this is*: And when the woman of *Samaria* found that he told her of *all* her secret Acts that ever she did, she concludes thus, *Sir I perceive thou art a Prophet*, *John* 4. 19. 'Tis no wonder then if the Disciples speak thus of him, thou knowest *all* things, without esteeming him more than the greatest of Prophets.

3. 'Tis evident they never intended more, by attributing *all knowledge* to him, from their *own* words in one of the Texts mentioned, *John* 16. 30. Where the Disciples tell us, how much they inferred from his Great Knowledge (which they describe and extol, by saying, Thou knowest *all* things) not that he was *God*, but one *sent* of God, *by this we believe that thou comest forth from God*: Not that thou thy self art that God. So that by these large expressions, they only intend to Attribute to him what a created Being is, by Divine Assistance, capable of; and therefore 'tis Violence to their words, to infer from them, that Jesus Christ is *God*, when themselves infer no such thing; who best knew their own meaning.

And yet if it were Granted that our Lord Jesus knows all things, *i. e.* which *actually* are; yet if he knows not all *Futurities* too, which himself Denies, he comes short of infinite

infinite Omniscience. For ought I know, a finite Being may have a Knowledge commensurate to this poor Earth, which is but *a dust of the Ballance*; and yet not know all Gods secret Purposes, or the Seasons which the Father keeps in his own Hand, *Acts 1. 7.*

2. 'Tis Objected, That the knowledge of the Heart is ascribed to Christ, *John 2. 25. Mat. 9. 9.* But especially, *Rev. 2. 23.* and this they say is what belongs to God only, as *Solomon* judges, *1 Kin. 8. 39.* and God claims it as his eminent Glory, *Jer. 17. 10.* and yet *Jesus Christ* says, *I am he who searches the Heart*; therefore say they, surely he must be that God, *Who only knows the Hearts of all the Children of men.* I take this to be the strongest instance that can be produced from the Sacred Text, for proving any infinite Divine Perfections to belong to the Lord *Jesus Christ*, and it shall be seriously considered.

In Answer hereto, I shall shew *Two* things. 1. In what Sense, the searching and knowing the Heart is made peculiar to God, and incommunicable to others; by those Texts: 2. That notwithstanding it be peculiar to him in *some* Sense, yet these Acts may in another Sense be justly Attributed to another, and perform'd by him who is not the Most High God.

1. As to the former, tho' *Solomon* say, Thou Lord *only* knowest the Hearts of all Men. Yet what if I say, 'tis no wonder that *Solomon* shou'd not know of any other to whom that Excellency was Communicated. since this *Mystery* of the Unsearchable Riches and Fulness of Christ, and of Gods being *manifest* in his Flesh, and his High Exaltation of him, was hidden in the Ages past, and only manifested in the times of the Gospel; for 'tis in these latter times that our Lord *Jesus* has obtained his great Authority and Dignity, for which he has Received answerable Abilities: Yet I add, such Expressions in Scripture, appropriating some perfections to God, do only im-

port that God has *no equal* herein, or that there is an *Eminent* Sense only in which such perfections are peculiar to God, and incommunicable to all others; tho' still in a *Lower* Sense something of them may be Communicated by him to others; and this shall be seen, to be no forced Supposition, but according to the current strain of plain Scripture, in a multitude of instances. Thus 'tis said, That *God only is Wise*, *Rom. 16. 27. 1 Tim. 1. 17.* So *Ch. 6. 16. God only has Immortality.* So Thou *only* art Holy, *Rev. 15. 4.* and yet there are Wise and Holy Men, and immortal Holy Angels and Spirits; but the meaning of those appropriate Expressions is, that the Blessed God is Wise, and Holy, and Immortal, in a more *Excellent* way and higher Sense than all others, and in which Sense others cannot be so, so when 'tis said God *only* knows the hearts of Men, it must be interpreted the same way, *Viz.* That there is none can know the Heart as God does, so Universally, so immediately and independently: And yet 'tis no contradiction, to say that he enables another to do it, in great measure, under him; and as he wou'd Argue but very weakly who shou'd go about to prove an Angel to be God, from this that he is called Holy and Wise, &c. which are said to belong to God only: *Even* so in the same manner must they Argue who wou'd prove *Jesus Christ* to be the Supream God, from his knowing Mens Hearts, because 'tis said to belong to God only; except they can shew that *Jesus Christ* knows in the same excellent independent manner and degree as his Father, and that he is no more beholden to him for Ability and Assistance than he is to his Son *Jesus Christ.* So I might Argue from *Isa. 46. 9.* That God only knows *Futurities*, and yet how often have the Prophets foretold them from him?

And 'tis not hard to suppose that as Holiness and Wisdom, so to know the thoughts and Hearts of Men, hath been Communicated

cated to Prophets and Apostles; was there not something of this, if not in the Prophet *Elishas*, telling the secret Counsels of the *Syrian King*, 2 *Kings* 6. 12. yet at least in the *Spirit of Discerning* mentioned 1 *Cor.* 12. 10. and in the case of *Ananias* and *Saphira*? *Acts* 5. I grant this was by Divine assistance of the Spirit of God, and by Revelation: Neither is our Lord *Jesus Christ* ashamed to own that His knowledge is sometimes owing to *Revelation from God His Father*, *Rev.* 1. 1. If any shou'd ask, how *Jesus Christ* comes to know all that he Reveals in those Seven Epistles to the Seven Churches, &c. The very *First Words* of that Book of the Revelations, may be an answer, *It was the Revelation which God gave to Jesus Christ*, &c. No wonder then that he says, he knows their Works, their Hearts, and their approaching Judgments and Tryals, when His own vast Abilities are assisted by Gods Revelation.

But it will be said, that His *searching the Heart*, Imports it to be His own Act. *Answer*; So it may very well be; for whatever a Man knows, he knows it by his own Act; And why may not the *Mind* search, and yet be under the light of Revelation, and the Influence of Superior assistance? But yet after all, these Words of *searching the Heart*, are only an expression that denotes the *Accuracy* of His Knowledge, not the *Manner* of attaining to it, for taken *properly*, as applyed to God, 'tis dishonourable to say, he is put to make a *search*, since all things are naked and open to His view. And if they must be taken *Strictly* and *Properly*, as applyed to Christ, then they belong not to Him in the *same* Sence as they do to God, and so can be no Argument of His being that God, which leads me to shew:

Secondly, That theres no absurdity in attributing *this* Knowledge of the Heart to *Jesus Christ*, tho' He be not the Most High God. That he knows things with some limitation as to the *Degree*, and in

dependence on His Father, as to the *Manner*, appears by what has been said already: And therefore the knowledge of the heart attributed to Him, must be such as is consistent with His Subordination to the Fathers *greater* Knowledge.

'Tis pleaded, That 'tis not possible for a *Finite* Being to have such Universal knowledge of the hearts and ways of Men, as is ascribed to *Jesus Christ*, and which as *Head* and Ruler of the Church, and World, He ought to have, and therefore he is infinite God.

Answer, I am pretty sure, it can never be demonstrated, that it exceeds a *Finite* capacity to know the concerns of all on this Earth, when the enlarged understanding is assisted in the highest Manner by Divine influence and Revelation. The reason is, because the *Object* is *Finite*, and I challenge any Man to shew me how it can be impossible for a *Finite* capacity to Comprehend a *Finite* Object, as this World is, and wou'd be, tho' it were Ten thousand times greater than it is? I am Satisfy'd this can never be demonstrated to imply any contradiction in it; And that all such imaginations concerning it, Proceed Chiefly from too high a Conceit of Man, and too low apprehension of the infinite God; as if the distance between these two was so small, that there cou'd not be one made of a Capacity so much above Men, as to be Commensurate to them all, but presently he must be the most High God, as tho' that Supreme Being cou'd not produce one who shou'd be a Thousand times beyond all this Earth and its Inhabitants, and yet it be infinitely below Himself: Methinks, if the *Sun* was but an Intelligent Creature, and cou'd diffuse his Intellectual Influences as he do's his Natural; cou'd but see and understand with his Beams and secret Influences, 'Tis easy to imagine what a Penetrating and Comprehensive knowledge he might have, but we may Entertain much greater thoughts of the *Sun of Righteousness, Jesus Christ*. And

And I conceive a strong argument to prove Jesus Christ as Man, capable of such deep and extensive Knowledge, may be drawn from the Offices of Dignity and Power conferred on Him by God. For God has *given to Him to be Head over all things*, Eph. 1. 22. *He has given or committed to Him all Judgment*, John 5. 22. And that as the *Son of Man*, v. 27. in short, His Kingly Office by which he Rules over all the World, and takes special care of all His Members, as it Necessarily supposes His knowledge of the whole Estate of His Church and every Member of it, as far as is necessary for the Discharge of that *Trust*; So I think it undeniably proves this large Knowledge to be Exercised by Him as *Man*, however he gains it;

For, since this Office and Power is given, it cannot *Terminate* in the Divine Nature; for who can *give* to God, any Dignity or Power, who has all *Originally* in His own Being? it must then be given to the *Man*, or humane Nature only: And if the Man Christ Jesus sustain this Office, and be invested with this Kingly Power, even with *all* Power in Heaven and Earth, then as *Man* we cannot deny Him to be suitably qualified for it, with all requisite Abilities, lest we reproach *God*, as calling one to an Employment, who is not fitted for it, or *Himself* in assuming a trust which he is not able to discharge; besides, unless His humane Nature can execute this Power, it cannot be said to be given to it, for a Power which cannot be exerted, or is impossible to be executed, is not given nor Received, any more than a Commission, or Grant to a Stock or a Tree, to bear Rule, not over the other Trees (as in *Fo-thams* Apologue) but over a Nation, or to Command an Army: 'Tis no Gift at all, if this were the case, that the *Man* Christ Jesus be utterly incapable of the Office and Government lodged in Him:

If it be said, That tho' the Office and delegated Authority be committed to the

humane; yet 'tis only executed by the Divine Nature in Christ. I *Answer*, 'Tis most unreasonable to suppose this *Trust* committed to the Man Christ, who must at last *deliver* it up, 1 Cor. 15. 24. and yet the Management of it belong only to another Being: How can he be Commended for being *Faithful*, over the *House of God*, to Him who appointed or constituted Him, Heb. 3. 2. 6. when 'tis not expected he shou'd execute His Office? I Grant indeed that His *Kingly Office* is executed by the assistance of God, as he exerts His Divine Power and Wisdom, through the humane Nature of Christ, and Communicates of them in *all fulness* to Him, in whom it dwells; *But* to say, that the Man Christ does not Exercise His Kingly Universal Power, but that His Divine Nature (supposing it) does solely and immediately execute the Office given to Him as *Man* or Mediator, (for to God can nothing be given) is in my Mind a most Gross absurdity; for 'tis to say, That God *Officiates* for Man, in Execution of a *Delegated*, or Subordinate Authority; or that he *Acts* under the Authority, and in the Name of a Creature, which is not meet to be said of the Supreme God. *It remains* therefore, That as Christ's Universal Kingdom and Headship, is by Gift from God (of which only the Man Christ is the Receiver) committed as a *Trust* to Him; So he certainly wants no ability to execute that Trust in the *Nature* entrusted with it; I say no ability, whether of Power or Knowledge, sufficient to render Him, a careful, vigorous, and every way most *Effectual Head* of His Body, and Ruler of the World, and to deny this, is to Rob Him of His greatest Glory.

Besides, What Benefit or *Gift* is it to the Man Christ, that the Divine Nature shou'd execute a Power which it *always* had, and cou'd Exercise without any Gift to Him? What Reward, or what Addition was this to Him.

Another *Argument* may be drawn, from that Comfortable Ground of confidence in a *Christians* Address to God, which the Scripture lays down, *viz.* The Sympathizing Compassion of our Lord Jesus Christ, towards His distressed Servants, arising from His own sufferings when on Earth, *Heb. 4. 15. 16. Seeing we have not an High Priest, who cannot be touched with the feeling of our Infirmities, but was in all points Tempted as we are: Let us therefore come boldly to the Throne of Grace.* Christ's having been tryed with Sufferings, makes Him a more Compassionate earnest Advocate for us; and this is our Comfort

Now 'tis certain, This Compassion arising from His own experience of trouble, can belong to none but His humane Nature; the Divine Nature is Compassionate, but *not* for this reason, *because* it was Tempted, or grieved with Misery: No, it was only the Man Christ Suffered, and consequently feels a *Sympathy* from hence with His distressed Servants: And 'tis most certain, that if he Sympathize with them in their troubles, he must then know them in *that Nature*, which only has a *fellow feeling* of them, for none can Sympathize with the Miseries of others which he knows not of; So that they who deny Christ's humane Nature to be capable of the knowledge of all our Miseries, do in effect deny Him to be such a *Compassionate* Advocate as the Scripture represents Him, and Rob us of this Strong ground of Consolation and Hope in our approaches to God, which the *Apostle* wou'd have us to build on.

And this Doctrine has been so far from appearing, either impossible, or *absurd* to the reason of Mankind, that I might produce the consent of a very great Number of learned Men, even among them who oppose my other Opinions. The *Lutherans* allow the Man Christ a sort of universal knowledge, as well as universal Presence which they Plead for. The School-Men,

both *Thomists* and *Scotists*, allow Him universal Knowledge, tho' they differ in their way of explaining it.

And there was a time in the *Sixth Century*, when in the Christian Church some were branded with *Heresie*, under the Name of *Agnoeta*, who held Christ was ignorant of any thing, which I conceive must have been in relation to His *humane* Nature; for those Persons owned Him to have a *Divine Nature*, and 'tis hard to imagine they cou'd attribute Ignorance to that. But (waving that Matter which is disputed) it is enough for my purpose, *viz.* to prove what Sense the Christian Church then had of Christ's *extensive* Knowledge, as *Man*; that they who wrote against those *Hereticks*, do expressly deny any ignorance in Christ as *Man*; for this we may produce two famous *Patriarchs* of the Christian Church at that time, *viz.* *Enlogius* of *Alexandria*, and *Gregory* of *Rome*: Those *Hereticks* produced for their Opinion, Christ's Words, That he knew not the time of the last Judgment, as an instance of His ignorance: To this the *Former* Person says, that he was not ignorant of it, *not as Man, and much less as God*: The *latter* says, *In Natura quidem humanitatis novisse, sed non ex Natura humanitatis.* He knew it with the humane Nature, but that knowledge did not rise from the humanity; which is what I maintain as to the knowledge I attribute to him, but not extending it so far as to all *futurities*, which they did.

And I find not a few of the *Modern Reformed Divines*, (who when out of this Dispute) speak agreeably to this, and are far from thinking it Idolatry, to ascribe as much knowledge as I have done, to the *Man* Christ. Thus the Reverend Mr. *Baxter*, in his notes on *Eph. 4. 16.* plainly intimates, that he conceives an *Angel* might be made capable of Ruling the *Universal* Church on Earth by Legislation, Judgment, and Execution: For having said
this.

this Task was impossible to any Power but *Divine*; He corrects himself by a *d- ing, or Angelical at least*; And sure the *Man* Christ's Ability, is far Superior to Angels; besides that he has them *Ministring* to Him, and giving Him notice of Matters if there be any Occasion; for he has Seven Principal Spirits, who are the *Eyes of the Lamb sent forth through all the Earth*, as the same Author interprets, *Rev. 5. 6.*

So the Author of a little Book, called the *Future State*, the same who wrote the *Good Samaritan*, a worthy Divine of the Church of *England*, says many things very Rational concerning the large extent of Christ's humane Knowledge; that probably, *He can as easily inspect the whole Globe of this Earth, and the Heavens that encompass it, as we can view a Globe of an Inch Diameter*, P. 46. 47. *that he intercedes as Man, and can he intercede in a case which he knows not?* So again, P. 150. The like says *Limborch* in his *Theol. Christ.* lib. 5. C. 18.

Let me add only the Testimony of Dr. *Thomas Goodwin*, who was never I suppose censured for an *Idolater* among *Dissenters*; And yet 'tis scarce possible that I shou'd attribute greater knowledge to the *Man* Jesus Christ than he. See his *Select cases*, part 3d, where he says, *The humane understanding of Christ takes in all occurrences which concerns His Church. And that as he said all Power in Heaven and Earth is given me of my Father, so might he say all knowledge in Heaven and Earth is given me, that his Beams pierce into every corner, that he knows the Sore of every Heart, and concludes with these remarkable words, that as a Looking-Glass wrought in the form of a Globe, represents the Images of all that is in the Room: So the enlarged humane understanding of Christ, takes in all things in Heaven and Earth at once.* It seems these Men did not take it to be the Peculiar Perfection of the Divine Nature to know the *Hearts*; So as that no Creature cou'd partake of it by Divine assistance and Revelation.

Indeed, as to the manner of knowing the heart; We cannot tell how the inhabitants of the other World have access to our minds or to each others, but without doubt, *Jesus Christ*; whose eyes are as a *Flame of Fire*, has more proper abilities for penetration, as well as more Revelation from God, and more Capacity, for receiving and Treasuring it up, than all others. In short, 'tis evident Christ as *Man*, is the Great *Administrator* of Gods providential Kingdom, *John 5. 27.* As *Man*, he must Judge the whole World, *Acts 17. 31.* which implies vast and universal Knowledge: Who then dares say, that the *Man* Christ Jesus, has not a Knowledge as large as this narrow Earth, or as the *Sand by the Sea shore*, without any *Hyperbole*? I think 'tis beyond all reasonable doubt, and as this Doctrine has appeared Rational enough, and escaped all Censure, as far as I know, when delivered by others than the *Unitarians*: So I hope it must not be counted *Heretical* in them, for which others never forfeited the Glorious Title of *Orthodox*:

Thus it appears, That all which is said of Christ's extensive Knowledge in Scripture, is far from proving Him to be the Supreme *Infinite God*, it may be Accounted for otherwise very fairly; And the like may be also said with respect to other (which some call) *Divine* perfections attributed to Him, that they are no more truly infinite, as attributed to Him, than this of Knowledge, but that there are plain evidences of their being attributed to Him in a *limited*, and inferior Sense, in comparison of what they are, in the most Glorious *God over all Gods*; and therefore Men had need produce other sort of Arguments for the Supreme *Deity* of Christ, than from these *Topicks*.

Nor do I doubt but I cou'd maintain my cause with equal advantage, upon the Head of *Divine worship*, which is another *Topick*, whence my opposers wou'd infer the *Deity* of the Lord Jesus Christ; it

were

were easy to shew, there is no Instance of supreme Divine Worship given ultimately to him in Scripture, but on the contrary, that all the Honour it assigns to him, is such as speaks him to be inferior to the Father, and dependent on him; since it is wholly grounded upon what God his Father has graciously bestowed on him: Thus he requires *Baptism* (if that be an act of immediate proper Worship) *in his Name*, because *all power* in Heaven and Earth was given to him. Thus we must honour the Son as (truly not as greatly as) we honour the Father, because the Father hath committed, or given, all judgment to him, Joh. 5. 22, 23. Thus at the Name of Jesus must every Knee bow, and every Tongue confess him to be Lord; because as a reward of his Obedience the Father hath given him a Name above every Name: And 'tis added, that all this Homage is ultimately to the Glory of the Father. Worship which is thus grounded upon derived and borrowed Excellency, is not supremely Divine, and cannot be offered to the Infinite Self-originate, Independent Deity, without a great Affront, because 'tis not the most excellent, Mal. 1. 14. to praise an independent God, for Honour and Power granted to him by another, supposes a Falshood, and mingles Reproaches with Praise.

So that however there may be the same common external Acts, or Words; (such as bowing the Knee, and saying *Glory and Praise, &c.*) used to God and the Mediator; as also in some Instances, they are given in common to ordinary Men, yet the Mind of a rational Worshiper, will make a Distinction in his inward Intention, as no doubt but those devout Jews did, who in the same act, bowed their Heads, and worshipped both God and the King, 1 Chron. 29. 20. but I shall not pursue this any farther at present

Moreover, I judge, that to assert Jesus Christ to be the *supreme* God, subverts the Gospel-Doctrine of his *Mediation*; for if

I must have one who is *supreme God and Man*, for my Mediator with God, then when I address to Jesus Christ as the *supreme* God, where is the *God-man* that must be my Mediator with him? To say he Mediates with *himself*, is the same as to say, that I must go to him without a Mediator, and turns the whole Business of Mediation into a *Metaphor*, contrary to the common sense of things, as well as against the *Scripture*; and I wou'd gladly know what is the notion of going to God without a Mediator, If this be all, that he mediates with himself? Who ever doubted the exercise of his own *Wisdom* or *Mercy*, that these do in a sort plead in him? But sure the *Scriptures* speak of a Mediator without him, when they set forth Jesus Christ as such; and who is this Mediator, when we go to Jesus Christ as the *ultimate* Object? If it be said *his Humane Nature only*, acts in this Mediation, tho' as united to the *Divine*; I answer, That as this is still to make Christ Mediator with *himself*; so the *Humane Nature* is not *God man*; and if the *Man*, or *Humane Nature alone*, be capable of doing the part of a Mediator, then 'tis not necessary that *Jesus Christ* shou'd be more than a *Man* inhabited by, and related to God, in order to that Office: Nor may it be said, that the *union* to the *Divine Nature*, gives an *infinite efficacy* to those Acts, of which the *Humane* only is the principle; for unless by that union, the *Humane Nature* was turn'd into an *Infinite* or *Divine Nature*; its acts can no more be reckoned properly and *intrinsically* Infinite in this case; than his *Body* or *Humane Understanding* are infinite, because so united to an *Infinite Nature*.

But what fully demonstrates, that the *Humane* nature of Christ can never be an *effectual* Mediator, (according to them) no, not tho' it were personally united to the *Divine* is this, *viz.* That they deny this *Humane* nature so united, to have the knowledge of the secret, mental Prayers, the

inward Desires and Distresses of all Christians, or to know any ones Heart; And how then can he be a compassionate Intercessor in cases that he knows nothing of? Or how can he have a fellow-feeling of their Sufferings, which he knows not that they feel at all? What comfort is there in this account of Christ's Mediation? The Divine Nature is præcluded from it, because they direct us to seek to that as the ultimate Object thro' a Mediator; and the Humane Nature, they say, may know nothing of our case, nor knows our Hearts, whether we Worship sincerely, or Repent sincerely, or hypocritically only; and so knows not how to represent, or recommend us to God: What a case now do these Men bring us into? There is no Mediator left, to interpose with the supreme God, so that we must deal with him immediately and alone, which they will own is far from the Gospel Doctrine or Method. Thus is the Ld. Jesus turn'd out of his Office, on a pretence of giving him higher honour: So that upon the whole, 'as far as I see, we had even as good be content with the Apostles fair and plain account of this matter; if its being so very intelligible, may not be an unpardonable Objection against it, viz. That there is but one God, and one Mediator between God and Man, the Man Christ Jesus, 1 Tim. 2. 5. Never let us fear, but Paul knew how to describe the Mediator, without leaving out the better half of him, or the principal Nature: Our Mediator, according to him, was only a Man; who also is by Office a God, or Ruler over all; made so by him who puts all things under him.

And indeed as there are two principal distinguishing Doctrines of Christianity, relating to the Unity of the supreme God, and the one Mediator with him; so the Trinitarians have lost them both among their several Parties. For as they are divided into two principal Parties (besides several Sub-divisions) both among Confor-

mists and Dissenters, one part holding three real Persons, or infinite Beings, the other but one (for they are not yet agreed whether they worship three infinite supreme Beings or but One) so between them both, these two great Doctrines are subverted, the Realists leave room for a Mediator in the Godhead; but they destroy the Unity of God, who is one Infinite Being; on the other hand, they who hold true to the Divine Unity, or one infinite Being under three modes, or Properties, or Relations, do by plain consequence leave no place for such a Mediator as they require, viz. One who is an infinite God, to be Mediator with the infinite God; when there is no other infinite Being but his own, and he cannot be thought to intercede with himself neither: So that to keep the Gospel Faith whole and undefiled, 'tis necessary that we avoid both these Rocks, by believing God and his Christ to be Two Beings, that so there may be room for One to Mediate with the Other: And that these Two are not two equal or supreme Beings, but one subordinate to the other, that so we may preserve the Unity of the supreme God.

Let us then bethink our selves seriously, not what the Church in latter Days has thought of Jesus Christ; but what his own Apostles, when inspired, have thought of him: Methinks none was more likely, or ever had a fairer Occasion to represent his Lord in the height of his Glory, than the Apostle Peter, in the Day of Pentecost! That Day of Triumph, with the newly and visibly inspired Apostles: Hear how magnificently he describes his glorious Lord Jesus before his Murtherers, Acts 2. 22. Ye men of Israel hear these words, Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you, by Miracles, Wonders and Signs, which God did by him in the midst of you: Again v. 36. Let all the House of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have Crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now 'tis observable; the Apostle

was aiming at such a Description of Jesus Christ, as might strike the Hearts of his *Murderers* with the greatest horror of their Crime, v. 23. and therefore cou'd never omit the most *emphatical* Branch of his Description, viz. His *Infinite Deity*, if he had really been such; what a terrifying Argument had that been to beget Conviction in his Persecutors beyond all the rest, to tell them they had shed the Blood of the *Infinite God himself*? 'Tis certainly all flat and low, that *Peter* says in comparison of this, viz. *That he was but a Man approved of God*. Did he not understand, or would he *betray his Cause* by such an Omission? And yet he only represents Christ as a God by *Inhabitation* and *Exaltation*. When he was far from being daunted with any fear to own Christ fully; nay, if this *Deity of Christ* were a fundamental Article of the *Christian Faith*, how comes it to pass, that when poor *convinced* Souls, in anguish for their Crimes, seek Direction how to be saved from them? v. 37. The Apostle shou'd not acquaint them with *this Article*, but directs them to believe in *this Jesus*, such as he had described him? Did he direct wounded Souls to an *insufficient* Saviour, without telling 'em he was the infinite God? Yet they are Baptiz'd and added to the Church, and numbred among such as shall be saved: How can this be, if the *supreme Godhead of Christ* be a fundamental Article of the *Christian Faith*? So *Acts* 10. 38. *God was with him*. This was all to conclude God and Christ (or one appointed) are two *Disparates*, or different Things, as much as *Christ's Body*, and *Bread* are, and therefore cannot be predicated one of the other, in a proper sense, or without a figure, as all our Writers against the *Romish* Transubstantiation, argue, and is of equal force in the present case. *To be anointed*, imports, to be raised by Authority and Honour conferr'd; 'tis in effect to say, the Person is a Creature, or inferior Being; and therefore to say that

properly Christ is most High God, is to say the inferior is supreme, and the Man is God; which cannot be, only by a Figure, as the Bread is Christ's Body, viz. by relation, &c. And truly if the Business can be salved here, by making a personal Union between God and Christ, I see not why the Papists may not set up such another Union between Christ's Body and the Bread in the Eucharist, and then they may stoutly defend that 'tis the Body of Christ properly. But indeed nothing is more obvious than the unsteadiness of many Protestant Writers, when they write against the Papists and the Unitarians: How do they go backwards and forwards? And when they have triumphantly and fully beaten off the vain Assaults and Objections of the Papists, they take up their baffled Arguments, and urge them the same way (as others did against them) against the Unitarians; and what they have maintained against the former, as good Argument, notwithstanding *Romish* Evasions; these Arguments they oppose, when the Unitarians turn them against themselves, in the point of the Trinity, and they betake themselves to like Shifts and Evasions. Thus let the Papists object to them the Novelty of the Protestant Religion, and ask them where was their Religion and Church before *Luther*? They think it a weak Cavil, and can tell 'em their Religion was in the Bible, and their Church among the Primitive Christians, however it lay hid in the time of common Apostacy; and yet to the Unitarian they can make the same Objection, where has any Christian Church for so many Ages held that Christ was not God? Against the Papist they will prove that the *Fathers* did not hold the Elements to be Christ's real Body and Blood, because they oft call them the *Images* thereof: But let the Unitarian argue that Christ is not styled him the *Image* of God, and therefore

fore not the God whose Image only he is; then, the thing it self and its image must be the same thing. *Against* the Papist they can prove S. Peter was inferior to the Church, and the rest of the Apostles, (tho' not singly to each) because he was *sent* up and down by them: This *Baronius* takes hold of, and tells them by the same reason, they must grant the *Arians* Argument to be good, *viz.* That the *Father* is greater than the *Son*, because the *Son* is *sent* by him: But let an *Unitarian* argue thus, and then tho' the *Father* sends, and the *Son* be *sent* by him, yet they shall both be *equal*, and this shall make no difference: *Against* the *Papists* they will boast, that they don't hoodwink the People in Ignorance; but bid them inquire and examine; and the more the better, while 'tis ground of Suspicion, that the *Papists* cheat Men, by their keeping them from the Light; but now having to do with the *Unitarians*, they tack about, and bid beware of Reading and Disputing; they are for an *implicit Faith*, without examining into deep Mysteries; they bid us believe, not pry into them; tho' we only desire to examine whether the *Scriptures* do reveal any such Mysteries at all; the rest we will believe, if we cou'd see that, and desire no other liberty in interpreting Scripture, than they take so justly, in interpreting Christ's words, *This is my Body*. Upon Protestant Principles the *Unitarians* think they can stand their ground, and defend themselves in these Matters, as easily as the *Protestants* can against the *Papists*.

As to Primitive Antiquity, so many *Inquirers* both among the *Romish* and *Reformed* Writers, have given their impartial Testimony, that it runs for *Arius's Doctrine*, and have made such poor Apologies for those *Fathers*, as tho' they knew not, or were not careful of their fundamental Articles of Faith, till they came to be bandied about in General *Councils*, that I think it not needful to say more here,

only *one thing* I wou'd suggest. That allowing the Primitive Writers to speak in different places with great, at least seeming Discord (which any ingenuous Man must grant) sometimes plainly declaring Jesus Christ inferior to, and the *Servant* of the Father, *before his Incarnation*; at other times giving him high Titles, as of one equal with *God*; yet 'tis far more reasonable to suppose the higher Expressions shou'd be expounded according to the *other*, than the contrary; because in discoursing of, and pleading for a *beloved* admired Object, as the Lord *Jesus* deserves to be, 'tis very easy and natural to run out into strains of Eloquence, and lofty flights of Praise, which must be interpreted not with strict Rigour, but with great Abate-ments; as is to be observed in some of their high *Encomiums* on the venerable Mystery of the Eucharist, as tho' with the *Papists*, they took the Elements for Christ's real Body, which yet they evidently did deny. But *on the contrary*, no Men are wont ever to speak *diminutively* on such occasions; they cou'd not have a thought to lessen their Master's Glory; and therefore if they ever represent him as *not* the supreme God, nor equal to him, we have all reason to think, they then spake only the Words of Truth and Sobriety, what the exact Matter required.

For my own part, as I write this under the serious Impressions of those great Relations in which the Blessed *Jesus* stands to me, whom I *credit* as my great *Teacher*; whom I desire to *admire* and love as my gracious endeared *Benefactor*, beyond Father or Mother, or Friends, &c. Whom I reverence as my Lord and Ruler, and solemnly *expect*, as my Final Glorious *Judge*, who is to come in his own, and in his *Fathers* Glory, *Luk. 9. 26*. And in the mean time deal with *God* thro' him, as my only *Mediator* and Intercessor: So I earnestly profess, that 'tis not without grievous and bitter Relentments, that I shou'd

shon'd be employ'd in Writing Things, which by so many well-meaning Christians will be *misinterpreted*, to be derogatory to the Honour of this Great Redeemer; but I know he loves nothing but Truth in his Cause, and will never be offended, I hope, with any who stand by his own Words, *viz. The Father is greater than I*, Joh. 14. 28. I think it a dangerous thing to say *God is not greater than he*, or is not the *Head of Christ*; for, *whom will ye equal to me, saith the Holy One?* Isa. 40. 25. I am perswaded 'tis Truth I plead for, and that Supports me:

However I wish they who are Adversaries to my Perswasion, wou'd learn at least the Modesty of one of the earliest Writers for *Christianity* since the Apostles, that we have, I mean *Justin Martyr*, who disputing with a Jew, and pleading for the Honour of Jesus Christ, whom he calls *a God by the Will of the Father*, and one who *ministered to his Will*, before his Incarnation: This Person attempts to shew, that Jesus Christ did *præexist* of old, as a God, (in his sense) and was born afterwards of a Virgin; but because as he says, there were some who confessed him to be Christ, and yet denied *those Points* of his *Præexistence* and his miraculous Birth of a Virgin, that Father calmly says to his Adversary, *If I shall not demonstrate those things that he did præexist, &c. And was born of a Virgin; yet still, the Cause is not lost, as to his being the Christ of God; if I do not prove that he did Præexist, &c. It is just to say that I am mistaken in this Thing only, and not to deny that he is the Christ; for whosoever he be, that is every way demonstrated, that he is the Christ.* And as for those *Christians* who denied the abovesaid things, and held him to be only a Man, born in the ordinary way he only says of them; *to whom I accord not.* He does not damn them who differed from him, nor will say the *Christian Religion* is subverted, and Christ but an *Impostor*, and a *Broken*

Reed to trust on, if he be not the very supreme God, (the ranting *Dialect* of our profane Age) no, but still he was sure he is the true Christ, whatever else he might be mistaken in: 'Tis desperate wickedness in Men to hazard the Reputation of the Truth and Holiness of the blessed *Jesus*, upon a difficult and disputable *Opinion*; to dare to say, That if they are mistaken in their Opinion (which I verily believe) then Jesus Christ is a Liar and Deceiver, a *Mock Saviour*, and the like: What is this but to expose him to the Scorn of Infidels?

So that I see, with sorrow, that to this very Day, even among professed *Christians* themselves, Christ Crucified is to some a Stumbling block, and to others Foolishness: If he be not as Good and Great, as the God who *appointed* him for a *Saviour*, tho' he be allowed to be a *Man approved of God*, by Signs and mighty Wonders which God did by him; and by whom God made the *Worlds*, as the Instrument; tho' he be granted to be *One* in whom *dwelt* all the fulness of the *Godhead*, Joh. 14. 10. So as it never dwelt before in Prophets or any other, tho' He be *One with the Father*, by Unity of Consent and Will, as *Calvin* interprets Joh. 10. 30. *One in testimony* with the Father and Spirit, as *Beza* and many others understand that in 1 John 5. 7. Tho' he be the most lively visible image of God that the World ever saw, so that he who sees him, does in great measure *see the Father*, as in a bright *Mirror*, Joh. 14. 10. Tho' he be owned and served, as one far above Angels, and Archangels; and over all Powers in Heaven and Earth, a God or Ruler: The great *Administrator* of God's Kingdom, both on Earth, and in the invisible *Hades*, as *having the Keys*, or Ministerial Power of *Death and Hell*, Rev. 1. 18. Yet after all this, if he be not the very *supreme God* himself; nay to compleat the *Absurdity*; if he be not the *same* very God.

God, whose *Son and Image*, he is; He shall be no *Mediator* for them; they do *ex Hypothesi*; or on this Supposition, openly disown him for their Saviour and Confidence; they are *ashamed* to trust in him, and seem rather to Deride and Repeach him, as *Insufficient* and Contemprible, than to Believe on him. These things are to me a very grievous *Offence*, who think it a great pity, that so excellent a Constitution as the Gospel is, so *amiable* to contemplate, so proper to entertain our thankful *Admiration*, for the *Grace and Wisdom* it contains, shou'd either be lost in the clouds of an *affected* Obscurity, or exposed to the derision of ungodly Scoffers.

'Tis yet a further grief to think what a fatal stop is hereby put to the Progress of the Gospel, whose Rejection by *Jews, Mahometans and Pagans*, is undeniably occasioned by the *common Doctrine* of the Incarnation of *God*; one may read in *Le Comptre's History of China*, how the Heathens derided the Christians Doctrine of a *Mortal God*; and upon that account look'd upon Christianity as *fabulous*, as their own Religion: And Doctor *Causabon*, in his *Book of Credulity and Incredulity*, p. 118. Says he could prove by many Instances out of

History, that this *Doctrine* has kept more People from embracing the *Christian Faith*, than any other thing he knew of. Now tho' I grant, that if it be the certain *Truth of God*, this must be no argument against receiving it; yet surely it shou'd make Men very cautious and impartial in their Inquiry about it, lest they bring on themselves the *No* denounced against them, by whom *Offences* (*that is*, *Stumbling blocks* in the way of the Gospel) do come.

In the mean time, in midst of these Troubles, 'tis a great and sweet *Refreshment* to wait and hope for a *Remove* to the *Mount Moriab*, the Land of *Vision* above, where all these Shades of the melancholly Night shall vanish away, and an eternal Day of clear *Light* and Peace shall shine on them who love our Lord *Jesus* in sincerity, in whose glorious Dignity I rejoyce; nay, I desire to boast and Glory in this Exalted; Enthroned *Redeemer*; for *worthy is the Lamb to receive Glory*, and Honour and Blessing and Power, *Amen*; So be it!

Now to *Him* who loved us, and washed us from our Sins in his own Blood, and hath made us Kings and Priests to *God*; even the *Father*, to Him be *Glory and Dominion for ever*.

But this I confess unto thee, that after the way, which they call Heresy, so Worship I the God of my Fathers, believing all things which are written in the Law and the Prophets, Acts 24. 14.