On the Trinity (part 2 of 2)

Hilary of Poitiers (c. AD 310–367)

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Book 9

1. In the last book we treated of the indistinguishable nature of God the Father and God the Son, and demonstrated that the words, I and the Father are One , go to prove not a solitary God, but a unity of the Godhead unbroken by the birth of the Son: for God can be born only of God, and He that is born God of God must be all that God is. We reviewed, although not exhaustively, yet enough to make our meaning clear, the sayings of our Lord and the Apostles, which teach the inseparable nature and power of the Father and the Son; and we came to the passage in the teaching of the Apostle, where he says, Take heed lest there shall be any one that leadeth you astray through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ; for in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily . We pointed out that here the words, in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, prove Him true and perfect God of His Father's nature, neither severing Him from, nor identifying Him with, the Father. On the one hand we are taught that, since the incorporeal God dwelt in Him bodily, the Son as God begotten of God is in natural unity with the Father: and on the other hand, if God dwelt in Christ, this proves the birth of the personal Christ in Whom He dwell .

We have thus, it seems to me, more than answered the irreverence of those who refer to a unity or agreement of will such words of the Lord as, He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father , or, The Father is in Me and I in the Father , or, I and the Father are One , or, All things whatsoever the Father hath are Mine . Not daring to deny the words themselves, these false teachers, in the mask of religion, corrupt the sense of the words. For instance, it is true that where the unity of nature is proclaimed the agreement of will cannot be denied; but in order to set aside that unity which follows from the birth, they profess merely a relationship of mutual harmony. But the blessed Apostle, after many indubitable statements of the real truth, cuts short their rash and profane assertions, by saying, in Christ dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, for by the bodily indwelling of the incorporeal God in Christ is taught the strict unity of Their nature. It is, therefore, not a matter of words, but a real truth that the Son was not alone, but the Father abode in Him: and not only abode, but also worked and spoke: not only worked and spoke, but also manifested Himself in Him. Through the Mystery of the birth the Son's power is the power of the Father, His authority the Father's authority, His nature the Father's nature.

By His birth the Son possesses the nature of the Father: as the Father's image, He reproduces from the Father all that is in the Father, because He is the reality as well as the image of the Father, for a perfect birth produces a perfect image, and the fulness of the Godhead dwelling bodily in Him indicates the truth of His nature.

2. All this is indeed as it is: He, Who is by nature God of God, must possess the nature of His origin, which God possesses, and the indistinguishable unity of a living nature cannot be divided by the birth of a living nature. Yet nevertheless the heretics, under cover of the saving confession of the Gospel faith, are stealing on to the subversion of the truth: for by forcing their own interpretations on words uttered with other meanings and intentions, they are robbing the Son of His natural unity. Thus to deny the Son of God, they quote the authority of His own words, Why callest than Me good? None is good, save one, God . These words, they say, proclaim the Oneness of God: anything else, therefore, which shares the name of God, cannot possess the nature of God, for God is One. And from His words, This is life eternal, that they should know Thee the only true God , they attempt to establish the theory that Christ is called God by a mere title, not as being very God. Further, to exclude Him from the proper nature of the true God, they quote, The Son can do nothing of Himself except that which He hath seen the Father do .

They use also the text, The Father is greater than I Finally, when they repeat the words, Of that day and that hour knoweth no one, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only , as though they were the absolute renunciation of His claim to divinity, they boast that they have overthrown the faith of the Church. The birth, they say, cannot raise to equality the nature which the limitation of ignorance degrades. The Father's omniscience and the Son's ignorance reveal unlikeness in the Divinity, for God must be ignorant of nothing, and the ignorant cannot be compared with the omniscient. All these passages they neither understand rationally, nor distinguish as to their occasions, nor apprehend in the light of the Gospel mysteries, nor realize in the strict meaning of the words and so they impugn the divine nature of Christ with crude and insensate rashness, quoting single detached utterances to catch the ears of the unwary, and keeping back either the sequel which explains or the incidents which prompted them, though the meaning of words must be sought in the context before or after them.

3. We will offer later an explanation of these texts in the words of the Gospels and Epistles themselves. But first we hold it right to remind the members of our common faith, that the knowledge of the Eternal is presented in the same confession which gives eternal life . He does not, he cannot know his own life, who is ignorant that Christ Jesus was very God, as He was very man. It is equally perilous, whether we deny that Christ Jesus was God the Spirit, or that He was flesh of our body: Every one therefore who shall confess Me before men, him will I also confess before My Father which is in Heaven. But whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father which is in heaven . So said the Word made flesh; so taught the man Jesus Christ, the Lord of majesty, constituted Mediator in His own person for the salvation of the Church, and being in that very mystery

of Mediatorship between men and God, Himself one Person, both man and God. For He, being of two natures united for that Mediatorship, is the full reality of each nature; while abiding in each, He is wanting in neither; He does not cease to be God because He becomes man, nor fail to be mall because He remains for ever God. This is the true faith for human blessedness, to preach at once the Godhead and the manhood, to confess the Word and the flesh, neither forgetting the God, because He is man, nor ignoring the flesh, because He is the Word.

4. It is contrary to our experience of nature, that He should be born man and still remain God; bill it accords with the tenor of our expectation, that being born man, He still remained God, for when the higher nature is born into the lower, it is credible that the lower should also be born into the higher. And, indeed, according to the laws and habits of nature, the working of our expectation even anticipates the divine mystery. For in every tiling that is born, nature has the capacity for increase, but has no power of decrease. Look at the trees, the crops, the cattle. Regard man himself, the possessor of reason. He always expands by growth, he does not contract by decrease; nor does he ever lose the self into which he has grown. He wastes indeed with age, or is cut off by death; he undergoes change by lapse of time, or reaches the end allotted to the constitution of life, yet it is not in his power to cease to be what he is; I mean that he cannot make a new self by decrease from his old self, that is, become a child again from an old man. So the necessity of perpetual increase, which is imposed on our nature by natural law, leads us on good grounds to expect its promotion into a higher nature, since its increase is according to, and its decrease contrary to, nature. It was God alone Who could become something other than before, and yet not cease to be what He had ever been; Who could shrink within the limits of womb, cradle, anti infancy, yet not depart from the power of God. This is a mystery, not for Himself, but for us. The assumption of our nature was no advancement for God, but His willingness to lower Himself is our promotion, for He did not resign His divinity but conferred divinity on man.

5. The Only-begotten God, therefore, when He was born man of the Virgin, and in the fulness of time was about in His own person to raise humanity to divinity, always maintained this form of the Gospel teaching. He taught, namely, to believe Him the Son of God, and exhorted to preach Him the Son of Man; man saying and doing all that belongs to God; God saying and doing all that belongs to man. Yet never did He speak without signifying by the twofold aspect of these very utterances both His manhood and His divinity. Though He proclaimed one God the Father, He declared Himself to be in the nature of the one God, by the truth of His generation. Yet in His office as Son and His condition as man, He subjected Himself to God the Father, since everything that is born must refer itself back to its author, and all flesh must confess itself weak before God. Here, accordingly, the heretics find opportunity to deceive the simple and ignorant. These words, uttered in His human character, they falsely refer to the weakness of His divine nature; and because He was one and the same Person in all His utterances, they claim that He spoke always of His entire self.

6. We do not deny that all the sayings which are preserved of His, refer to His nature. But, if Jesus Christ be man and God, neither God for the first time, when He became man, nor then ceasing to be God, nor after He became Man in God less than perfect man and perfect God, then the mystery of His words must be one and the same with that of His nature. When according to the time indicated, we disconnect His divinity from humanity, then let us also disconnect His language as God from the language of man; when we confess Him God and man at the same time, let us distinguish at the same time tits words as God and His words as man; when after His manhood and Godhead, we recognise again the time when His whole manhood is wholly God, let us refer to that time all that is revealed concerning it . It is one thing, that He was God before He was man, another, that He was man and God, and another, that after being man and God, He was perfect man and perfect God. Do not then confuse the times and natures in the mystery of the dispensation, for according to the attributes of His different natures, He must speak of Himself in relation to the mystery of His humanity, in one way before His birth, in another while He was yet to die, and in another as eternal.

7. For our sake, therefore, Jesus Christ, retaining all these attributes, and being born man in our body, spoke after the fashion of our nature without concealing that divinity belonged to His own nature. In His birth, His passion, and His death, He passed through all the circumstances of our nature, but He bore them all by the power of His own. He was Himself the cause of His birth, He willed to suffer what He could not suffer, He died though He lives for ever. Yet God did all this not merely through man, for He was born of Himself, He suffered of His own free will, and died of Himself. He did it also as man, for He was really born, suffered and died. These were the mysteries of the secret counsels of heaven, determined before the world was made. The Only-begotten God was to become man of His own will, and man was to abide eternally in God. God was to suffer of His own will, that the malice of the devil, working in the weakness of human infirmity, might not confirm the law of sin in us, since God had assumed our weakness. God was to die of His own will, that no power, after that the immortal God had constrained Himself within the law of death, might raise up its head against Him, or put forth the natural strength which He bad created in it. Thus God was born to take us into Himself, suffered to justify us, and died to avenge us; for our manhood abides for ever in Him, the weakness of our infirmity is united with His strength, and the spiritual powers of iniquity and wickedness are subdued in the triumph of our flesh, since God died through the flesh.

8. The Apostle, who knew this mystery, and had received the knowledge of the faith through the Lord Himself, was not unmindful, that neither the world, nor mankind, nor philosophy could contain Him, for he writes, Take heed, lest there shall be any one that leadeth you astray through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Jesus Christ, for in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and in Him ye are made full, Who is the head of all principalities and powers . After the announcement that in Christ dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, follows immediately the mystery of our assumption, in the words, in Him ye are made full. As the

fulness of the Godhead is in Him, so we are made full in Him. The Apostle says not merely ye are made full, but, in Him ye are made full; for all who are, or shall be, regenerated through the hope of faith to life eternal, abide even now in the body of Christ; and afterwards they shall be made full no longer in Him, but in themselves, at the time of which the Apostle says, Who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of His glory . Now, therefore, we are made full in Him, that is, by the assumption of His flesh, for in Him dwelleth the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

Nor has this our hope a light authority in Him. Our fulness in Him constitutes His headship and principality over all power, as it is written, That in His name every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things below, and every tongue confess that fester is Lord in the glory of God life Father . Jesus shall be confessed in the glory of God the Father, born in man, yet now no longer abiding in the infirmity of our body. but in the glory of God. Every tongue shall confess this. But though all things in heaven and earth shall bow the knee to Him, yet herein He is head of all principalities and powers, that to Him the whole universe shall bow the knee in submission, in Whom we are made full, Who through the fulness of the Godhead dwelling in Him bodily, shall be confessed in the glory of God the Father.

9. But after the announcement of the mystery of Christ's nature, and our assumption, that is, the fulness of Godhead abiding in Christ, and ourselves made full in Him by His birth as man, the Apostle continues the dispensation of human salvation in the words. In whom ye were also circumcised with a circumcison not made with hands, in the stripping off of the body of the flesh, but with the circumcision of Christ, having been buried with Him in baptism, wherein ye were also raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead . We are circumcised not with a fleshly circumcision but with the circumcision of Christ, that is, we are born again into a new man; for, being buried with Him in His baptism, we must die to the old man, because the regeneration of baptism has the force of resurrection. The circumcision of Christ does not mean the putting off of foreskins, but to die entirely with Him, and by that death to live henceforth entirely to Him. For we rise again in Him through faith in God, Who raised Him from the dead; wherefore we must believe in God, by Whose Working Christ was raised from the dead, for our faith rises again in and with Christ.

10. Then is completed the entire mystery of the assumed manhood, And you being dead through your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, you I say, did He quicken together with Him, having, forgiven you all your trespasses, blotting out the bond written in ordinances, that was against us, which was contrary to us; and He hath taken it out of the way, nailing a to the cross, and having put off from Himself His flesh, He hath made a shew of powers, triumphing over them in Himself . The worldly man cannot receive the faith of the Apostle, nor can any language but that of the Apostle explain his meaning. God raised Christ from the dead; Christ in Whom the fulness of the Godhead dwelt bodily. But He quickened us also together with Him, forgiving us our sins, blotting out the bond of the

law of sin, which through the ordinances made aforetime was against us, taking it out of the way, and fixing it to His cross, stripping Himself of His flesh by the law of death, holding up the powers to shew, and triumphing over them in Himself. Concerning the powers and how He triumphed over them in Himself, and held them up to shew, and the bond which he blotted out, and the life which He gave us, we have already spoken . But who can understand or express this mystery? The working of God raises Christ from the dead;

the same working of God quickens us together with Christ, forgives our sins, blots out the bond, and fixes it to the cross; He puts off from Himself His flesh, holds up the powers to shew, and triumphs over them in Himself. We have the working of God raising Christ from the dead, and we have Christ working in Himself the very things which God works in Him, for it was Christ who died, stripping from Himself His flesh. Hold fast then to Christ the man, raised from the dead by God, and hold fast to Christ the God, working out our salvation when He was yet to die. God works in Christ, but it is Christ Who strips from Himself His flesh and dies. It was Christ who died, and Christ Who worked with the power of God before His death, yet it was the working of God which raised the dead Christ, and it was none other who raised Christ from the dead but Christ Himself, Who worked before His death, and put off His flesh to die.

11. Do you understand already the Mysteries of the Apostle's Faith? Do you think to know Christ already? Tell me, then, Who is it Who strips from Himself His flesh, and what is that flesh stripped off? I see two thoughts expressed by the Apostle, the flesh stripped off, and Him Who strips it off: and then I hear of Christ raised from the dead by the working of God. If it is Christ Who is raised from the dead, and God Who raises Him; Who, pray, strips from Himself the flesh? Who raises Christ from the dead, and quickens us with Him? If the dead Christ be not the same as the flesh stripped off, tell me the name of the flesh stripped off, and expound me the nature of Him Who strips it off. I find that Christ the God, Who was raised from the dead, is the same as He Who stripped from Himself His flesh, and that flesh, the same as Christ Who was raised from the dead; then I see Him holding principalities and powers up to shew, and triumphing in Himself. Do you understand this triumphing in Himself? Do you perceive that the flesh stripped off, and He Who strips it off, are not different from one another? He triumphs in Himself, that is in that flesh which He stripped from Himself.

Do you see that thus are proclaimed His humanity and His divinity, that death is attributed to the man, and the quickening of the flesh to the God, though He Who dies and He Who raises the dead to life are not two, but one Person? The flesh stripped off is the dead Christ: He Who raises Christ from the dead is the same Christ Who stripped from Himself the flesh. See His divine nature in the power to raise again, and recognise in His death the dispensation of His manhood. And though either function is performed by its proper nature, yet remember that He Who died, and raised to life, was one, Christ Jesus.

12. I remember that the Apostle often refers to God the Father as raising Christ from the dead; but he is not inconsistent with himself or at variance with the Gospel faith, for the

Lord Himself says:-Therefore doth the Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I may take it again. No one shall take it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command have I received from the Father : and again, when asked to shew a sign concerning Himself, that they night believe in Him, He says of the Temple of His body, Detroy this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up . By the power to take His soul again and to raise the Temple up, He declares Himself God, and the Resurrection His own work: yet He refers all to the authority of His Father's command. This is not contrary to the meaning of the Apostle, when He proclaims Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God , thus referring all the magnificence of His work to the glory of the Father: for whatever Christ does, the power and the wisdom of God does: and whatever the power and the wisdom of God does, without doubt God Himself does, Whose power and wisdom Christ is. So Christ was raised from the dead by the working of God; for He Himself worked the works of God the Father with a nature indistinguishable from God's. And our faith in the Resurrection rests on the God Who raised Christ from the dead.

13. It is this preaching of the double aspect of Christ's Person which the blessed Apostle emphasises. He points out in Christ His human infirmity, and His divine power and nature. Thus to the Corinthians he writes, For though He was crucified through weakness, yet He liveth through the power of God , attributing His death to human infirmity, but His life to divine power: and again to the Romans, For the death, that He died unto sin, He died once: but the life, that He liveth, He liveth unto God. Even so reckon ye yourselves also to he dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus , ascribing His death to sin, that is, to our body, but His life to God, Whose nature it is to live We ought, therefore, he says, to die to our body, that we may live to God in Christ Jesus, Who after the assumption of our body of sin, lives now wholly unto God, uniting the nature He shared with us with the participation of divine immortality.

14. I have been compelled to dwell briefly on this, lest we should forget our Lord Jesus Christ is being treated of as a Person of two natures, since He, Who was abiding in the form of God, took the form of a servant, in which He was obedient even unto death. The obedience of death has nothing to do with the form of God, just as the form of God is not inherent in the form of a servant. Yet through the Mystery of the Gospel Dispensation the I same Person is in the form of a servant and in the form of God, though it is not the same thing to take the form of a servant and to be abiding in the form of God; nor could He Who was abiding in the form of God, take the form of a servant without emptying Himself, since the combination of the two forms would be incongruous. Yet it was not another and a different Person Who emptied Himself and Who took the form of a servant. To take anything cannot be predicated of some one who is not, for he only can take who exists. The emptying of the form does not then imply the abolition of the nature: He emptied Himself, but did not lose His self: He took a new form, but remained what He was. Again, whether emptying or taking, He was the same Person:

there is, therefore, a mystery, in that He emptied Himself, and took the form of a servant, but He does not come to an end, so as to cease to exist in emptying Himself, and to be non-existent when He took. The emptying availed to bring about the taking of the servant's form, but not to prevent Christ, Who was in the form of God, from continuing to be Christ, for it was in very deed Christ Who took the form of a servant. When He emptied Himself to become Christ the man, while continuing to be Christ the Spirit, the changing of His bodily fashion, and the assumption of another nature in His body, did not put an end to the nature of His eternal divinity, for He was one and the same Christ when He changed His fashion, and when He assumed our nature.

15. We have now expounded the Dispensation of the Mysteries, through which the heretics deceive certain of the unlearned into ascribing to infirmity in the divinity, what Christ said and did through His assumed human nature, and attributing to the form of God what is appropriate only to the form of the servant. Let us pass on, then, to answer their statements in detail. We can always safely distinguish the two kinds of utterances, since the only true faith lies in the confession of Jesus Christ as Word and flesh, that is, God and Man. The heretics consider it necessary to deny that our Lord Jesus Christ by virtue of His nature was divine, because He said, Why callest thou Me good? None is good save one, God . Now a satisfactory answer must stand in direct relation to the matter of enquiry, for only in that case will it furnish a reply to the question put. At the outset, then, I would ask these misinterpreters, "Do you think that the Lord resented being called good? Would He rather have been called bad, as seems to be signified by the words, Why callest thou Me good? I do not think any one is so unreasonable as to ascribe to Him a confession of wickedness, when it was He Who said, Come unto Me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me:

for I am meek and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light . He says He is meek and lowly: can we believe that He was angry because He was called good? The two propositions are inconsistent. He Who witnesses to His own goodness would not repudiate the name of Good. Plainly, then, He was not angry because He was called good: and if we cannot believe that He resented being called good, we must ask what was said of Him which He did resent.

16. Let us see, then, how the questioner styled Him, beside calling Him good. He said, Good Master, what good thing shall I do ? adding to the title of "good" that of master. If Christ then did not chide because He was called good, it must have been because He was called "good Master." Further the manner of His reproof shews that it was the disbelief of the questioner, rather than the name of master, or of good, which He resented. A youth, who provides himself upon the observance of the law, but did not know the end of the law , which is Christ, who thought himself justified by works, without perceiving that Christ came to the lost sheep of the house of Israel , and to those who believe that the law cannot save through the faith of justification , questioned the Lord of the law, tile Only-begotten God, as though He were a teacher of the common precepts and the writings of the law. But the

Lord, abhorring this declaration of irreverent unbelief, which addresses Him as a teacher of the law, answered, Why callest thou Me good? and to shew how we may know, and call Him good, He added, None is good, save one, God, not repudiating the name of good, if it be given to Him as God.

17. Then, as a proof that He resents the name "good master," on the ground of the unbelief, which addresses Him as a man, He replies to the vain-glorious youth, and his boast that he had fulfilled the law, One thing thou lackest; go, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me. There is no shrinking from the title of "good" in the promise of heavenly treasures, no reluctance to be regarded as "master" in the offer to lead the way to perfect blessedness. But there is reproof of the unbelief which draws an earthly opinion of Him from the teaching, that goodness belongs to God alone. To signify that He is both good and God, He exercises the functions of goodness, opening the heavenly treasures, and offering Himself as guide to them. All the homage offered to Him as man He repudiates, but he does not disown that which He paid to God; for at the moment when He confesses that the one God is good, His words and actions are those of the power and the goodness and the nature of the one God.

18. That He did not shrink from the title of good, or decline the office of master, but resented the unbelief which perceived no more in Him than body and flesh, may be proved from the difference of His language, when the apostles confessed Him their Master, Ye call Me Master, and Lord, and ye say well, for so I am ; and on another occasion, Be yet not called masters, far Christ is your Master . From the faithful, to whom He is master, He accepts the title with words of praise, but here He rejects the name "good master," when He is not acknowledged to be the Lord and the Christ, and pronounces the one God alone good, but without distinguishing Himself from God, for He calls Himself Lord, and Christ, and guide to the heavenly treasures.

19. The Lord always maintained this definition of the faith of the Church, which consists in teaching that there is one God the Father, but without separating Himself from the mystery of the one God, for He declared Himself, by the nature which is His by birth, neither a second God, nor the sole God. Since the nature of the One God is in Him, He cannot be God of a different kind from Him; His birth requires that, being Son, it should be with a perfect Sonship . So He can neither be separated from God nor merged in God. Hence He speaks in words deliberately chosen, so that whatever He claims for the Father, He signifies in modest language to be appropriate to Himself also. Take as an instance the command, Believe in God, and believe also in Me . He is identified with God in honour; how, pray, can He be separated from His nature? He says, Believe in Me also, just as He said Believe in God. Do not the words in Me signify His nature? Separate the two natures, but you must separate also the two beliefs. If it be life, that we should believe in God without Christ, strip Christ of the name and qualities of God.

But if perfect life is given to those who believe in God, only when they believe in Christ also, let the careful reader ponder the meaning of the saying, Believe in God, and believe

in Me also, for these words, uniting faith in Him with faith in God, unite His nature to God's. He enjoins first of all the duty of belief in God, but adds to it the command that we should believe in Himself also; which implies that He is God, since they who believe in God must also believe in Him. Yet He excludes the suggestion of a unity contrary to religion , for the exhortation Believe in God, believe in Me also, forbids us to think of Him as alone in solitude.

20. In many, nay almost all His discourses, He offers the explanation of this mystery, never separating Himself from the divine unity, when He confesses God the Father, and never characterising God as single and solitary, when He places Himself in unity with Him. But nowhere does He more plainly teach the mystery of His unity and His birth than when He says, But the witness which I have is greater than that of John, for the works which the Father hath given Me to accomplish, the very works that I do, bear witness of Me, that the Father hath sent Me, and the Father which sent Me, He hath borne witness of Me. Ye have neither heard His voice at any time nor seen His form. And ye have not His word abiding in you, for Whom He sent, Him ye believe not How can the Father be truly said to have borne witness of the Son, when neither He Himself was seen, nor His voice heard? Yet I remember that a voice was heard from Heaven, which said, This is My beloved Son, in Whom I have been well pleased; hear ye Him . How can it be said that they did not hear the voice of God, when the voice which they heard itself asserted that it was the Father's voice? But perhaps the dwellers in Jerusalem had not heard what John had heard in the solitude of the desert. We must ask, then, "How did the Father bear witness in Jerusalem?

It is no longer the witness given to John, who heard the voice from heaven, but a witness greater than that of John. What that witness is He goes on to say, The works which the Father hath given me to accomplish, the very works which I do, bear witness of Me, that the Father hath sent Me. We must admit the authority of the testimony, for no one, except the Son sent of the Father, could do such works. His works are therefore His testimony. But what follows? And the Father, which sent Me, He hath borne witness of Me. Ye have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His form, and ye have not His word abiding in you. Are they blameless, in that they did not know the testimony of the Father, Who was never heard or seen amongst them, and Whose word was not abiding in them? No, for they cannot plead that His testimony was hidden from them; as Christ says, the testimony of His works is the testimony of the Father concerning Him. His works testify of Him that He was sent of the Father; but the testimony of these works is the Father's testimony; since, therefore, the working of the Son is the Father's testimony, it follows of necessity that the same nature was operative in Christ, by which the Father testifies of Him.

So Christ, Who works the works, and the Father Who testifies through them, are revealed as possessing one inseparable nature through the birth, for the operation of Christ is signified to be itself the testimony of God concerning Him.

21. They are not, therefore, acquitted of blame for not recognising the testimony; for the works of Christ are the Father's testimony concerning Him. Nor can they plead ignorance

of the testimony on the ground that they had not heard the voice of the Testifier, nor seen His form, nor had His word abiding in them. For immediately after the words, Ye have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His form, and ye have not His word abiding in you, He points out why the voice was not heard, nor the form seen, and the word did not abide in them, though the Father had testified concerning Him: For Whom He sent, Him ye believe not; that is, if they had believed Him, they would have heard the voice of God, and seen the form of God, and His word would have been in them, since through the unity of Their nature the Father is heard and manifested and possessed in the Son. Is He not also the expression of the Father, since He was sent from Him? Does He distinguish Himself by any difference of nature from the Father, when He says that the Father, testifying of Him, was neither heard, nor seen, nor understood, because they did not believe in Him, Whom the Father sent? The Only-begotten God does not, therefore, separate Himself from God when He confesses God the Father; but, proclaiming by the word "Father" His relationship to God. He includes Himself in the honour due to God.

22. For, in this very same discourse in which He pronounces that His works testify of Him that He was sent of the Father, and asserts that the Father testifies of Him, that He was sent from Him, He says, The honour of Him, Who alone is God, ye seek not . This is not, however, a bare statement, without any previous preparation for the belief in His unity with the Father. Hear what precedes it, Ye will not come to Me that ye may have life. I receive not glory from men. But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in yourselves. I am come in My Father's name, and ye receive Me not: if another shall come in His name , him ye will receive. How can ye believe, which receive glory, from men, and the glory of Him, Who alone is God, ye seek not He disdains the glory of men, for glory should rather be sought of God. It is the mark of unbelievers to receive glory of one another: for what glory can man give to man? He says He knows that the love of God is not in them, and pronounces, as the cause, that they do not receive Him coming in His Father's name. "Coming in His Father's name: what does that mean but "coming in the name of God? Is it not because they rejected Him Who came in the name of God, that the love of God is not in them?

Is it not implied that He has the nature of God, when He says, Ye will not come to Me that ye may have life. Hear what He said of Himself in the same discourse, Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour cometh, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they there hear shall live . He comes in the name of the Father: that is, He is not Himself the Father, yet is in the same divine nature as the Father: for as Son and God it is natural for Him to come in the name of the Father. Then, another coming in the same name they will receive: but he is one from whom men will expect glory, and to whom they will give glory in return, though he will feign to have come in the name of the Father. By this, doubtless, is signified the Antichrist, glorying in his false use of the Father's name. Him they will glorify, and will be glorified of him: but the glory of Him, Who alone is God, they will not seek.

23. They have not the love of God in them, He says, because they rejected Him coming in the name of the Father, but accepted another, who came in the same name, and received glory of one another, but neglected the glory of Him, Who is the only true God. Is it possible to think that He separates Himself from the glory of the only God, when He gives as the reason why they seek not the glory of the only God, that they receive Antichrist, and Himself they will not receive? To reject Him is to neglect the glory of the only God; is not, then, His glory the glory of the only God, if to receive Him steadfastly was to seek the glory of the only God? This very discourse is our witness: for at its beginning we read, That all may honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which sent Him . It is only things of the same nature that are equal in honour; equality of honour denotes that there is no separation between the honoured. But with the revelation of the birth is combined, the demand for equality of honour. Since the Son is to be honoured as the Father , and since they seek not the honour of Him, Who is the only God, He is not excluded from the honour of the only God, for His honour is one and the same as that of God:

just as He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father also, so he who seeks not the honour of the only God, seeks not the honour of Christ also. Accordingly the honour of Christ is inseparable from the honour of God. By His words, when the news of Lazarus' sickness was brought to Him, He illustrates the complete identification of Father and Son in honour: This sickness is not unto death, but far the glory of God, that the Son of Man may be glorified through him Lazarus dies for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through him. Is there any doubt that the glory of the Son of God is the glory of God, when the death of Lazarus, which is glorious to God, glorifies the Son of God? Thus Christ is declared to be one in nature with God the Father through His birth, since the sickness of Lazarus is for the glory of God, and at the same time the Mystery of the faith is not violated, for the Son of God is to be glorified through Lazarus. The Son of God is to be regarded as God, yet He is none the less to be confessed also Son of God: for by glorifying God through Lazarus, the Son of God is glorified.

24. By the mystery of the divine nature we are forbidden to separate the birth of the living Son from His living Father. The Son of God suffers no such change of kind, that the truth of His Father's nature does not abide in Him. For even where, by the confession of one God only, He seems to disclaim for Himself the nature of God by the term "only," nevertheless, without destroying the belief in one God, He places Himself in the unity of the Father's nature. Thus, when the Scribe asked Him, which is the chief commandment of the law, He answered, Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord: thou shall love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy spirit, and with all thy strength. This is the first commandment. And the second is like unto it, Than shall love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these . They think that He severs Himself from the nature and worship of the One God when He pronounces as the chief commandment, Hear, O Israel, the Land our God is one Lord, and does not even make Himself the object of worship in the second commandment, since the law bids us to love our

neighbour, as it bids us to believe in one God. Nor must we pass over the answer of the Scribe, Of a truth thou hast well said, that God is one, and there is none other but He:

and to love Him with all the heart, and all the strength and all the soul, and to love his neighbour as himself, this is greater than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices . The answer of the Scribe seems to accord with the words of the Lord, for He too proclaims the innermost and inmost love of one God, and professes the love of one's neighbour as real as the love of self, and places love of God and love of one's neighbour above all the burnt offerings of sacrifices. But let us see what follows.

25. And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, He said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God . What is the meaning of such moderate praise? Believe in one God, and love Him with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy heart, and love thy neighbour as thyself; if this be the faith which makes man perfect for the Kingdom of God, why is not the Scribe already within, instead of not far from the Kingdom of Heaven? It is in another strain that He grants the Kingdom of Heaven to those who clothe the naked, feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, and visit the sick and the prisoner, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world ; or rewards the poor in spirit, Blessed are the poor in spirit: far theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven . Their gain is perfect, their possession complete, their inheritance of the kingdom prepared for them is secured. But was this young man's confession short of theirs? His ideal of duty raises love of neighbour to the level of love of self; what more did he want to attain to the perfection of good conduct? To be occasionally charitable, and ready to help, is not perfect love; but perfect love has fulfilled the whole duty of charity, when a man leaves no debt to his neighbour unpaid, but gives him as much as he gives ,himself.

But the Scribe was debarred from perfection, because he did not know the mystery which had been accomplished. He received, indeed, the praise of the Lord for his profession of faith, he heard the reply that he was not far from the kingdom, but he was not put in actual possession of the blessed hope. His course, though ignorant, was favourable; he put the love of God before all things, and charity towards his neighbour on a level with love of self. And when he ranked the love of God even higher than charity towards his neighbour, he broke through the law of burnt offerings and sacrifices; and that was not far from the mystery of the Gospel.

26. We may perceive also, from the words of our Lord Himself, why He said, Thou art not far from the Kingdom of Heaven, rather than, Thou shall be in the Kingdom of Heaven. Then follows: And no man after that durst ask Him any question. And Jesus answered and said, as He taught in the Temple, How say the Scribes that the Christ is the Son of David? David himself saith in the Holy Spirit, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou an My right hand, till I make Thine enemies the footstool of Thy feet (Ps. cx. 1). David himself calleth Him Lord, and whence is He his Son ? The Scribe is not far from the Kingdom of God when he confesses one God, Who is to be loved above all things. But his own statement of the law is a reproach to him that the mystery of the law has escaped him, that he does not know

Christ the Lord, the Son of God, by the nature of His birth to be included in the confession of the one God. The confession of one God according to the law seemed to leave no room for the Son of God in the mystery of the one Lord; so He asks the Scribe, how he can call Christ the Son of David, when David calls Him his Lord, since it is against the order of nature that the son of so great a Patriarch should be also his Lord.

He would bid the Scribe, who regards Him only in respect of His flesh, and His birth from Mary, the daughter of David, to remember that, in respect of His Spirit, He is David's Lord rather than his son; that the words, Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord, do not sever Christ from the mystery of the One Lord, since so great a Patriarch and Prophet calls Him his Lord, as the Son begotten of the Lord before the morning star. He does not pass over the law, or forget that none other is to be confessed Lord, but without violating the faith of the law, He teaches that He is Lord, in that He had His being by the mystery of a natural birth from the substance of the incorporeal God. He is one, born of one, and the nature of the one Lord has made Him by nature Lord.

27. What room is any longer left for doubt? The Lord Himself proclaiming that the chief commandment of the law is to confess and love the one Lord, proves Himself to be Lord not by words of His own, but by the Prophet's testimony, always signifying, however, that He is Lord, because He is the Son of God. By virtue of His birth He abides in the mystery of the one God, for the birth transmitting with it, as it did, the nature of God is not the issuing forth of another God with a different nature; and, because the generation is real, neither is the Father degraded from being Lord, nor is the Son born less than Lord. The Father retains His authority, the Son obtains His nature. God the Father is one Lord, but the Only-begotten God the Lord is not separated from the One, since He derives His nature as Lord from the one Lord. Thus by the law Christ teaches that there is one Lord; by the witness of the prophets He proves Himself Lord also.

28. May the faith of the Gospel ever profit thus by the rash contentions of the ungodly to defend itself with the weapons of their attack, and conquering with the arms prepared for its destruction, prove that the words of the one Spirit are the doctrine of the one faith! For Christ is none other than. He is preached, namely the true God, and abiding in the glory of the one true God. Just as He proclaims Himself Lord out of the law, even when He seems to deny the fact, so in the Gospels He proves Himself the true God, even when He appears to confess the opposite. To escape the acknowledgment that He is the true God, the heretics plead that He said, And this is life eternal, that they should know Thee, the only true God. and Him Whom Thou didst send, even Jesus Christ . When He says, Thee, the only true God, they think He excludes Himself from the reality of God by the restriction of solitariness; for the only true God cannot be understood except as a solitary God. It is true the Apostolic faith does not suffer us to believe in two true Gods, for nothing which is foreign to the nature of the one God can be put on equality with the truth of that nature; and there is more than one God in the reality of the one God, if there exists outside the nature of the

only true God a true God of another kind, not possessing by virtue of His birth the same nature with Him.

29. But by these very words He proclaims Himself plainly to be true God in the nature of the only true God. To understand this, let our answer proceed from statements which He made previously, though the connection is unbroken right down to these words. We can then establish the faith step by step, and let the confidence of our freedom rest at last on the summit of our argument, the true Godhead of Christ. There comes first the mystery of His words, He that hath seen Me, hath seen tire Father ; and, Do ye not believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me? The words that I say unto you, I speak not front Myself; but the Father abiding in Me, Himself doeth His works. Believe Me that I and in the Father and the Father in Me: or else believe Me for the very works' sake . At the close of this discourse, teeming with deep mysteries, follows the reply of the disciples, Now know we that Thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that Thou camest forth front God . They perceived in Him the nature of God l by the divine powers which He exercised; for to know all things, and to read the thoughts of the heart belongs to the Son, not to the mere messenger of God. They confessed, therefore, that He was come from God, because the power of the divine nature was in Him.

30. The Lord praised their understanding, and answered not that He was sent from, but that He was come out from, God, signifying by the words "come out from" the great fact of His birth from the incorporeal God. He had already proclaimed the birth in the same language, when He said, Ye love Me, and believe that I came out from the Father, and came from the Father into this world . He had come from the Father into this world, because He had come out from God. To shew that He signifies His birth by the coming out, He adds that He has come from the Father; and since He had come out from God, because He had come from the Father, that "coming out," followed, as it is, by the confession of the Father's name, is simply and solely the birth. To the Apostles, then, as understanding this mystery of His coming out, He continues, Ye believe now, Behold the hour cometh, yea is come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone: yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me . He would shew that the "coming out" is not a separation from God the Father, but a birth, which by His being born continues in Him the nature of God the Father, and therefore He adds that He is not alone, but the Father is with Him;

in power, that is, and unity of nature, for the Father was abiding in Him, speaking in His words, and working in His works. Lastly to shew the reason of this whole discourse, He adds, These things I have spoken to you, that in Me ye may have peace. In this world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer, for I have overcame the worlds . He has spoken these things unto them, that in Him they may abide in peace, not torn asunder by the passion of dissension over debates about the faith. He was left alone, but was not alone, for He had come out from God, and there abode still in Him the God, from Whom He had come out. Therefore he bade them, when they were harassed in the world, to wait for His

promises, for since He had come out from God, and God was still in Him, He had conquered the world.

31. Then, finally, to express in words the whole Mystery, He raised His eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come: glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son may glorify Thee. Even as Thou gavest Him authority over all flesh, that, whatsoever Thou hast given Him, to them He should give eternal life . Do you call Him weak because He asks to be glorified? So be it, if He does not ask to be glorified in order that He may Himself glorify Him by Whom He is glorified. Of the receiving and giving of glory we have spoken in another book , and it would be superfluous to go over the question again. But of this at least we are certain, that He prays for glory in order that the Father may be glorified by granting it. But perhaps He is weak in that He receives power over all flesh. And indeed the receiving of power might be a sign of weakness if He were not able to give to those whom He receives life eternal. Yet the very fact of receiving is used to prove inferiority of nature. It might, if Christ were not true God by birth as truly as is the Unbegotten. But if the receiving of power signifies neither more nor less than the Birth, by which He received all that He has, that gift does not degrade the Begotten, because it makes Him perfectly and entirely what God is. God Unbegotten brought God Only-begotten to a perfect birth of divine blessedness:

it is, then, the mystery of the Father to be the Author of the Birth, but it is no degradation to the Son to be made the perfect image of His Author by a real birth. The giving of power over all flesh, and this, in order that to all flesh might be given eternal life, postulates the Fatherhood of the Giver and the Divinity of the Receiver: for by giving is signified that the One is the Father, and in receiving the power to give eternal life, the Other remains God the Son. All power is therefore natural and congenital to the Son of God; and though it is given, that does not separate Him from His Author, for that which is given is the property of His Author, power to bestow eternal life. to change the corruptible into the incorruptible. The Father gave all, the Son received all; as is plain from His words, All things, whatsoever the Father hath, are Mine . He is not speaking here of species of created things, and processes of material change , but He unfolds to us the glory of the blessed and perfect Divinity, and teaches us that God is here manifested as the sum of His attributes, His power, His eternity. His providence, His authority; not that we should think that He possesses these as something extraneous to Himself, but that by these His qualities He Himself has been expressed in terms partly comprehensible by our sense.

The Only-begotten, therefore, taught that He had all that the Father has, and that the Holy Spirit should receive of Him: as He says, All things, whatsoever the Father hath, are Mine; therefore I said, He shall take of Mine . All that the Father hath are His, delivered and received: but these gifts do not degrade His divinity, since they give Him the same attributes as the Father.

32. These are the steps by which He advances the knowledge of Himself. He teaches that He is come out from the Father, proclaims that the Father is with Him, and testifies that He has conquered the world. He is to be glorified of the Father, and will glorify Him: He will

use the power He has received, to give to all flesh eternal life. Then hear the crowning point, which concludes the whole series, ,And this is life eternal, that they should know Thee, the only true God, and Him Whom Thou didst send, even Jesus Christ . Learn, heretic, to confess, if you cannot believe, the faith which gives eternal life. Separate, if you can, Christ from God, the Son from the Father, God over all from the true God, the One from the Only: if, as you say, eternal life is to believe in one only true God without Jesus Christ. But if there is no eternal life in a confession of the only true God, which separates Christ from Him, how, pray, can Christ be separated from the true God for our faith, when He is not separable for our salvation?

33. I know that laboured solutions of difficult questions do not find favour with the reader, but it will perhaps be to the advantage of the faith if I permit myself to postpone for a time the exposition of the full truth, and wrestle against the heretics with these wonts of the Gospel. You hear the statement of the Lord, This is life eternal, that they should know Thee, the only true God, and Him Whom Thou didst send, even Jesus Christ. What is it, pray, which suggests to you that Christ is not the true God? No further indication is given to shew you what you should think of Christ. There is nothing but Jesus Christ: not Son of Man, as He generally called Himself: not Son of God, as He often declared Himself: not the living bread which cometh down from Heaven , as He repeated to the scandal of many. He says, Thee, the only true God, and Him Whom Thou didst send, even Jesus Christ, omitting all His usual names and titles, natural and assumed. Hence, if the confession of the only true God, and at Jesus Christ, gives us eternal life, without doubt the name Jesus Christ has here the full sense of that of God.

34. But perhaps by saying, Thee the only, Christ severs Himself from communion and unity with God. Yes, but after the words, Thee the only true God, does He not immediately continue, and Him Whom Thou didst send, even Jesus Christ? I appeal to the sense of the reader: what must we believe Christ to be, when we are commanded to believe in Him also, as well as the Father the only true God? Or, perhaps, if the Father is the only true God, there is no room for Christ to be God. It might be so, if, because there is one God the Father, Christ were not the one Lord . The fact that God the Father is one, leaves Christ none the less the one Lord: and similarly the Father's one true Godhead makes Christ none the less true God: for we can only obtain eternal life if we believe in Christ, as well as in the only true God

35. Come, heretic, what will your fatuous doctrine instruct us to believe of Christ; Christ, Who dispenses eternal life, Who is glorified of, and glorifies, the Father, Who overcame the world, Who, deserted, is not alone, but has the Father with Him, Who came out from God, and came from the Father? He is born with such divine powers; what of the nature and reality of God will you allow Him? It is in vain that we believe in the only true God the Father, unless we believe also in Him, Whom He sent, even Jesus Christ. Why do you hesitate? Tell us, what is Christ to be confessed? You deny what has been written: what is left, but to believe what has not been written? O unhappy wilfulness! O falsehood striving

against the truth! Christ is united in belief and con fession with the only true God the Father: what faith is it, pray, to deny Him to be true God, and to call Him a creature, when it is no faith to believe in the only true God without Christ? But you are narrow, heretic, and unable to receive the Holy Spirit. The sense of the heavenly words escapes you; stung with the asp's poison of error, you forget that Christ is to be confessed true God in the faith of the only true God, if we would obtain eternal life.

36. But the faith of the Church, while confessing the only true God the Father, confesses Christ also. It does not confess Christ true God without the Father the only true God; nor the Father the only true God without Christ. It confesses Christ true God, because it confesses the Father the only true God. Thus the fact that God the Father is the only true God constitutes Christ also true God. The Only-begotten God suffered no change of nature by His natural birth: and He Who, according to the nature of His divine origin was born God from the living God, is, by the truth of that nature, inalienable from the only true God. Thus there follows from the true divine nature its necessary result, that the outcome of true divinity must be a true birth, and that the one God could not produce from Himself a God of a second kind. The mystery of God consists neither in simplicity, nor in multiplicity: for neither is there another God, Who springs from God with qualities of His own nature, nor does God remain as a single Person, for the true birth of the Son teaches us to confess Him as Father. The begotten God did not, therefore, lose the qualities of His nature: He possesses the natural power of Him, Whose nature He retains in Himself by a natural birth. The divinity in Him is not changed, or degenerate, for if His birth had brought with it any defect, it would more justly cast upon the Nature, through which He came into being, the reflection of having failed to implant in its offspring the properties of itself. The change would not degrade the Son, Who had passed into a new substance by birth, but the Father, Who had been unable to maintain the constancy of His nature in the birth of the Son, and had brought forth something external and foreign to Himself.

37. But, as we have often said, the inadequacy of human ideas has no corresponding inadequacy in the unity of God the Father and God the Son: as though there were extension, or series, or flux, like a spring pouring forth its stream from the source, or a tree supporting its branch on the stem, or fire giving out its heat into space. In these cases we have expansion without any separation: the parts are bound together and do not exist of themselves, but the heat is in the fire, the branch in the tree, the stream in the spring. So the thing itself alone has an independent existence; the one does not pass into the other, for the tree and the branch are one and the same, as also the fire and the heat, the spring and the stream. But the Only-begotten God is God, subsisting by virtue of a perfect and ineffable birth, true Scion of the Unbegotten God, incorporeal offspring of an incorporeal nature, living and true God of living and true God, God of a nature inseparable from God. The fact of birth does not make Him God with a different nature, nor did the generation, which produced His substance, change its nature in kind.

38. Put in the dispensation of the flesh which He assumed, and through the obedience whereby He emptied Himself of the form of God, Christ, born man, took to Himself a new nature, not by loss of virtue or nature but by change of fashion. He emptied Himself of the form of God and took the form of a servant, when He was born. But the Fathers nature, with which He was in natural unity, was not affected by this assumption of flesh; while Christ, though abiding in the virtue of His nature, yet in respect of the humanity assumed in this temporal change, lost together with the form of God the unity with the divine nature also. But the Incarnation is summed up in this, that the whole Son, that is, His manhood as well as His divinity, was permitted by the Father's gracious favour to continue in the unity of the Father's nature, and retained not only the powers of the divine nature, but also that nature's self. For the object to be gained was that man might become God. But the assumed manhood could not in any wise abide in the unity of God, unless, through unity with God, it attained to unity with the nature of God. Then, since God the Word was in the nature of God, the Word made flesh would in its turn also be in the nature of God.

Thus, if the flesh were united to the glory of the Word, the man Jesus Christ could abide in the glory of God the Father, and the Word made flesh could be restored to the unity of the Father's nature, even as regards His manhood, since the assumed flesh had obtained the glory of the Word. Therefore the Father must reinstate the Word in His unity, that the offspring of His nature might again return to be glorified in Himself: for the unity had been infringed by the new dispensation, and could only be restored perfect as before if the Father glorified with Himself the flesh assumed by the Son.

39. For this reason, having already so well prepared their minds for the understanding of this belief, the Lord follows up the words, And this is eternal life, that they should know Thee, the only true God, and Him Whom Thou didst send, even Jesus Christ, with a reference to the obedience displayed in His incarnation I have glorified Thee on the earth, I have accomplished the work which Thou gavest Me to do . And then, that we might know the reward of His obedience, and the secret purpose of the whole divine plan, He continued, And now, O Father, glorify Thou slate with Thine own self, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was . Does any one deny that Christ remained in the nature of God or believe Him separable and distinct from the only true God? Let him tell us what is the meaning of this prayer. And now, 0 Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self. For what purpose should the Father glorify Him with His own self? What is the signification of these words? What follows from their signification? The Father neither stood in need of glory, nor had He emptied Himself of the form of His glory. How should He glorify the Son with His own self, and with that glory which He had with Him before the world was made? And what is the sense of which He had with Him?

Christ does not say, "The glory which I had before the world was made, when I was with Thee," but, The glory which I had with Thee. When I was with Thee would signify, "when I dwelt by Thy side: but which I had with Thee teaches the Mystery of His nature. Further, Glorify Me with Thyself is not the same as "Glorify Me. He does not ask merely that He

may be glorified, that He may have some special glory of His own, but prays that He may be glorified of the Father with Himself. The Father was to glorify Him with Himself, that He might abide in unity with Him as before, since the unity with the Father's glory had left Him through the obedience of the Incarnation. And this means that the glorifying should reinstate Him in that nature, with which He was united by the Mystery of His divine birth; that He might be glorified of the Father with Himself; that He should resume all that He had had with the Father before; that the assumption of the servant's form should not estrange from Him the nature of the form of God, but that God should glorify in Himself the form of the servant, that it might become for ever the form of God, since He, Who had before abode in the form of God, was now in the form of a servant.

And since the form of a servant was to be glorified in the form of God, it was to be glorified in Him in Whose form the fashion of the servant's form was to be honoured.

40. But these words of the Lord are not new, or attested now for the first time in the teaching of the Gospels, for He testified to this very mystery of God the Father glorifying the Son with Himself by the noble joy at the fulfilment of His hope, with which He rejoiced at the very moment when Judas went forth to betray Him. Filled with joy that His purpose was now to be fully accomplished. He said, Now is the Son of Man glorified and God is glorified in Him. If God is glorified in Him, He hath glorified Him in Himself, and straightway hath He glorified Him . How can we whose souls are burdened with bodies of clay, whose minds are polluted and stained with foul consciousness of sin, be so puffed up as to judge of His divine claim? How can we set up ourselves to criticise His heavenly nature, rebelling against God with our unhallowed and blasphemous disputations? The Lord enunciated the faith of the Gospel in the simplest words that could be found, and fitted His discourses to our understanding, so far as the weakness of our nature allowed Him, without saying anything unworthy of the majesty of His own nature. The signification of His opening words cannot, I think, be doubted, Now is the Son of Man glorified; that is, all the glory which He obtains is not for the Word but for His flesh: not for the birth of His Godhead, but for the dispensation of His manhood born into the world.

What then, may I ask, is the meaning of what follows, And God is glorified in Him? I hear that God is glorified in Him; but what that can be according to your interpretation, heretic, I do not know. God is glorified in Him, in the Son of Man, that is: tell me, then, is the Son of Man the same as the Son of God? And since the Son of Man is not one and the Son of God another, but He Who is Son of God is Himself also Son of Man, Who, pray, is the God Who is glorified in this Son of Man, Who is also Son of God?

41. So God is glorified in the Son of Man, Who is also Son of God. Let us see, then, what is this third clause which is added, If God is glorified in Him, God hath also glorified Him in Himself. What, pray, is this secret mystery? God, in the glorified Son of Man, glorifies a glorified God in Himself The glory of God is in the Son of Man, and the glory of God is in the glory of the Son of Man. God glorifies in Himself, but man is not glorified through himself. Again the God Who is glorified in the man, though He receives the glory, yet is Himself

none other than God. But since in the glorifying of the Son of Man. the God, Who glorifies, glorifies God in Himself, I recognise that the glory of Christ's nature is taken into the glory of that nature which glorifies His nature. God does not glorify Himself; but He glorifies in Himself God glorified in man. And this "glorifies in Himself," though it is not a glorifying of Himself, yet means that He took the nature, which He glorified, into the glory of His own nature Since the God, Who glorifies the God glorified in man, glorifies Him in Himself, He proves that the God Whom He glorifies is in Himself, for He glorifies Him in Himself. Come, heretic, whoever you be, produce the inextricable objections of your tortuous doctrine;

though they bind themselves in their own tangles, yet, marshal them as you will, we shall not be in danger of sticking in their snares. The Son of Man is glorified; God is glorified in Him; God glorifies in Himself Him, Who is glorified in the man. It is not the same that the Son of Man is glorified, as that God is glorified in the Son of Man, or that God glorifies in Himself Him, Who is glorified in the man. Express in the terms of your unholy belief, what you mean by God being glorified in the Son of Man. It must certainly be either Christ Who is glorified in the flesh, or the Father Who is glorified in Christ. If it is Christ Christ is manifestly God, Who is glorified in the flesh. If it is the Father, we are face to face with the mystery of the unity, since the Father is glorified in the Son. Thus, if you allow it to be Christ, despite yourself you confess Him God; if you understand it of God the Father, you cannot deny the nature of God the Father in Christ. Let this be enough concerning the glorified Son of Man and God glorified in Him. But when we consider that God glorifies in Himself God, Who is glorified in the Son of Man, by what loophole, pray, can your profane doctrine escape from the confession that Christ is very God according to the verity of His nature? God glorifies in Himself Christ, Who was born a man;

is Christ then outside Him, when He glorifies Him in Himself? He restores to Christ in Himself the glory which He had with Himself, and now that the servant's form, which He assumed, is in turn assumed into the form of God, God Who is glorified in man is glorified in Himself; He was in God's self before the dispensation, by which He emptied Himself, and now He is united with God's self, both in the form of the servant, and in the nature belonging to His birth. For His birth did not make Him God of a new and foreign nature, but by generation He was made natural Son of a natural Father. After His human birth, when He is glorified in His manhood, He shines again with the glory of His own nature; the Father glorifies Him in Himself, when He is assumed into the glory of His Father's nature, of which He had emptied Himself in the dispensation.

42. The words of the Apostle's faith are a barrier against your reckless and frenzied profanity, which forbids you to turn the freedom of speculation into licence, and wander into error. Every tongue, he says, shall confess that Jesus is Lord in the glory of God the Father . The Father has glorified Him in Himself, therefore He must be confessed in the glory of the Father. And if He is to be confessed in the Father's glory, and the Father has glorified Him in Himself, is He not plainly all that His Father is, since the Father has glorified Him in Himself and He is to be confessed in the Father's glory? He is now not merely in

the glory of God, but in the glory of God the Father. The Father glorifies Him. not with a glory from without, but in Himself. By taking Him back into that glory, which belongs to Himself, and which He had with Him before, the Father glorifies Him with Himself and in Himself. Therefore this confession is inseparable from Christ even in the humiliation of His manhood, as He says, And this is eternal life, that they should know Thee, the only true God, Him, Whom Thou didst send, even Jesus Christ ; for firstly there is no life eternal in the confession of God the Father without Jesus Christ, and secondly Christ is glorified in the Father. Eternal life is precisely this, to know the only true God and Him, Whom He sent, even Jesus Christ;

deny that Christ is true God, if you can have life by believing in God without Him. As for the truth that God the Father is the only true God let this be untrue of the God Christ, unless Christ's glory is wholly in the only true God the Father. For if the Father glorifies Him in Himself, and the Father is the only true God, Christ is not outside the only true God, since the Father, Who is the only true God, glorifies in Himself Christ, Who is raised into the glory of God. And in that He is glorified by the only true God in Himself, He is not estranged from the only true God, for He is glorified by the true God in Himself, the only God.

43. But perhaps the godless unbeliever meets the pious believer with the assertion that we cannot understand of the true God a confession of powerlessness, such as, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He hath seen the Father doing . If the twofold anger of the Jews had not demanded a twofold answer, it would indeed have been a confession of weakness, that the Son could do nothing of Himself, except what He had seen the Father doing. But Christ was answering in the same sentence the double charge of the Jews, who accused Him of violating the Sabbath, and of making Himself equal with God by calling God His Father. Do you think, then, that by fixing attention upon the form of His reply you can withdraw it for the substance? We have already treated of this passage in another book ; yet as the exposition of the faith gains rather than loses by repetition, let us ponder once more on the words, since the occasion demands it of us.

44. Hear how the necessity for the reply arose:- And for this cause did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to kill Him, because He did these things on the Sabbath . Their anger was so kindled against Him, that they desired to kill Him, because He did His works on the Sabbath. But let us see also what the Lord answered, My Father worketh even until now, and I work . Tell us, heretic, what is that work of the Father; since through the Son, and in the Son, are all things, visible and invisible? You, who are wise beyond the Gospels, have doubtless obtained from some other secret source of learning the knowledge of the Father's work, to reveal Him to us. But the Father works in the Son, as the Son Himself says, The words that I say unto you, I speak not from Myself, but the Father who abideth in Me, He doeth His works . Do you grasp the meaning of the words, My Father worketh even until now? He speaks that we may recognise in Him the power of the Father's nature employing the nature, which has that power, to work on the Sabbath. The Father works in

Him while He works; without doubt, then, He works along with the working of the Father, and therefore He says, My Father worketh even until now, that this present work of His words and actions may be regarded as the working of the Father's nature in Himself.

This worketh even until now identifies the time with the moment of speaking, and therefore we must regard Him as referring to that very work of the Father's which He was then doing, for it implies the working of the Father at the very time of His words. And lest the Faith, being restricted to a knowledge of the Father only, should fair of the hope of eternal life, He adds at once, And I work; that is, what the Father worketh even until now, the Son also worketh. Thus He expounds the whole of the faith; for the work which is now, belongs to the present time; and if the Father works, and the Son works, no union exists between them, which merges them into a single Person . But the wrath of the bystanders is now redoubled. Hear what follows, For this cause, therefore, the Jews sought the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but because He called God His own Father, making Himself equal with God . Allow me here to repeat that, by the judgment of the Evangelist and by common consent of mankind, the Son is in equality with the Father's nature; and that equality cannot exist except by identity of nature. The begotten cannot derive what it is save from its source and the thing generated cannot be foreign to that which generates it, since from that alone has it come to be what it is.

Let us see, then, what the Lord replied to this double outburst of wrath, Verily, verily, I say unto you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He hath seen the Father doing: for what things soever He doeth, these the Son also doeth in like manner .

45. Unless we regard these words as an integral part of His statement, we do them violence by forcing upon them an arbitrary and unbelieving interpretation. But if His answer refers to the grounds of their anger, our faith expresses rightly what He meant to teach, and the perversity of the ungodly is left without support for its profane delusion. Let us see then whether this reply is suitable to an accusation of working on the Sabbath. The Son can do nothing, of Himself, but what He hath seen the Father doing. He has said just above, My Father worketh even until now, and I work. If by virtue of the authority of the Father's nature within Him, all that He works, He works with the Father in Him, and the Father works even until now on the Sabbath, then the Son, Who pleads the authority of the Father's working, is acquitted of blame. For the words, can do nothing, refer not to strength hut to authority; He can do nothing of Himself, except what He has seen. Now, to have seen does not confer the power to do, and therefore He is not weak, if He can do nothing without having seen, but His authority is shewn to depend on seeing. Again the words, unless He hath seen, signify the consciousness derived from seeing, as when He says to the Apostles, Behold I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, that they are while already unto harvest .

With the consciousness that the Father's nature is abiding in Him, and working in Him when He works, to forestall the idea that the Lord of the Sabbath has violated the Sabbath, He pronounces that, The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He hath seen the Father

doing. And thus He demonstrates that His every action springs from His consciousness of the nature working within Him; when He works on the Sabbath, the Father worketh even until now on the Sabbath. In what follows, however, He refers to the second cause of their indignation, For what things soever He doeth, the Son doeth in like manner. Is it false that, what things soever the Father doeth, the Son doeth in like manner? Does the Son of God admit a distinction between the Father's power and working and His own? Does He shrink from claiming the equality of homage befitting an equal in power and nature? If He does, disdain His weakness, and degrade Him from equality of nature with the Father But He Himself says only a little later, That all may honour the Son, even as they honour the Father, He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which sent Him . Discover, if you can, the inferiority, when Both are equal in honour; make out the weakness, when Both work with the same power.

46. Why do you misrepresent the occasion of the reply in order to detract from His divinity? To the working on the Sabbath He answers that He can do nothing of Himself, but what He hath seen the Father doing: to demonstrate His equality, He professes to do what things soever the Father doeth. Enforce your charge of weakness, by His answer concerning the Sabbath, if you can disprove that what things soever the Father doeth, the Son doeth in like manner. But if what things soever includes all things without exception; in what is He found weak, when there is nothing that the Father doeth, which He cannot also do? Where is His claim to equality refuted by any episode of weakness, when one and the same honour is demanded for Him and for the Father? If Both have the same power in operation, and both claim the same reverence in worship, I cannot understand what dishonour of inferiority can exist, since Father and Son possess the same power of operation, and equality of honour.

47. Although we have treated this passage as the facts themselves explain it, yet to prove that the Lord's words, The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He hath seen the Father doing, so far from supporting this unholy degradation of His nature, testify to His conscious possession of the nature of the Father, by Whose authority He worked on the Sabbath, let us shew them that we can produce another saying of the Lord, which bears upon the question, I do nothing of Myself, but as the Father taught Me, I speak these things. And He that sent Me is with Me: He hath not left Me alone, for I do always the things that are pleasing to Him . Do you feel what is implied in the words, The San can do nothing, but what He hath seen the Father doing? Or what a mystery is contained in the saying, I can do nothing of myself, and He hath not left me alone, far I do always the things that are pleasing to Him? He does nothing of Himself, because the Father abides in Him; can you reconcile with this the fact that the Father does not leave Him, because He does the things which are pleasing to Him? Your interpretation, heretic, sets up a contradiction between these two statements, that He does nothing of Himself, unless taught of the Father abiding in Him, and that the Father abides in Him, because He does always the things which are pleasing to Him.

For if the Father's abiding in Him means that He does nothing of Himself, how could He have deserved that the Father should abide in Him, by doing always the things which are

pleasing to the Father. It is no merit, not to do of oneself what one does. Conversely, how are the Son's deeds pleasing to the Father, if the Father Himself, abiding in the Son, be their Author? Impiety, thou art in a sore strait; the well-armed piety of the faith hath hemmed thee in. The Son is either an Agent, or He is not. If He is not an Agent, how does He please by his acts? If He is an Agent, in what sense are deeds, done not of Himself, His own? On the one hand, He must have done the things which are pleasing; on the other, it is no merit to have done, yet not of oneself, what one does.

48. But, my opponent, the unity of Their nature is such, that the several action of Each implies the con oint action of Both, and Their joint activity a several activity of Each. Conceive the Son acting, and the Father acting through Him. He acts not of Himself, for we have to explain how the Father abides in Him. He acts in His own Person, for in accordance with His birth as the Son, He does Himself what is pleasing. His acting not of Himself would prove Him weak, were it not the case that He so acts that what He does is pleasing to the Father. But He would not be in the unity of the divine nature, if the deeds which He does, and wherein He pleases, were not His own, and He were merely prompted to action by the Father abiding in Him. The Father then in abiding in Him, teaches Him, and the Son in acting, acts not of Himself; while, on the other hand, the Son, though not acting of Himself, acts Himself, for what He does is pleasing. Thus is the unity of Their nature retained in Their action, for the One, though He acts Himself, does not act of Himself, while the Other, Who has abstained from action, is yet active.

49. Connect with this that saying, which you lay hold of to support the imputation of infirmity, All that the Father giveth Me shall come unto Me, and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise east out; for I am come down from heaven not to do Mine own will, but the will of the Father that sent Me . But, perhaps you say, the Son has no freedom of will: the weakness of His nature subjects Him to necessity, and He is denied free-will, and subjected to necessity that He may not reject those who are given to Him and come from the Father. Nor was the Lord content to demonstrate the mystery of the Unity by His action in not rejecting those who are given to Him, nor seeking to do His own will instead of the will of him that sent Him, but when the Jews, after the repetition of the words, Him that sent Me, began to murmur, He confirms our interpretation by saying, Every one who heareth from the Father and learneth, cometh unto Me. Not that any man hath seen the Father, save He which is from God, He hath seen the Father. Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth in Me hath eternal life . Now, tell me first, where has the Father been heard, and where has He taught His hearers? No one hath seen the Father, save Him Who is from God: has any one ever heard Him Whom no one has ever seen?

He that has heard from the Father, comes to the Son: and he that has heard the teaching of the Son, has heard the teaching of the Father's nature, for its properties are revealed in the Son. When, therefore, we hear the Son teaching, we must understand that we are hearing the teaching of the Father. No one hath seen the Father, yet he who comes to the Son, hears and learns from the Father to come: it is manifest, therefore, that the Father teaches

through the words of the Son, and, though seen of none, speaks to us in the manifestation of the Son, because the Son, by virtue of His perfect birth, possesses all the properties of His Father's nature. The Only-begotten God desiring, therefore, to testify of the Father's authority, yet inculcating His own unity with tile Father's nature. does not cast out those who are given to Him of the Father, or work His own will instead of the will of Him that sent Him: not that the does not will what He does, or is not Himself heard when He teaches; but in order that He may reveal Him Who sent Him, and Himself the Sent, under the aspect of one indistinguishable nature, He shews all that He wills, and says, and does, to be the will and works of the Father.

50. But He proves abundantly that His will is free by the words, As the Father raiseth the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son also quickeneth whom He will . When the equality of Father and Son in power and honour is indicated, then the freedom of the Son's will is made manifest: when Their unity is demonstrated, His conformity to the Father's will is signified, for what the Father wills, the Son does. But to do is something more than to obey a will: the latter would imply external necessity, while to do another's will requires unity with him, being an act of volition. In doing the will of the Father the Son teaches that through the identity of Their nature His will is the same in nature with the Father's, since all that He does is the Father's will. The Son plainly wills all that the Father wills, for wills of the same nature cannot dissent from one another. It is the will of the Father which is revealed in the words, For this is the will of My Father, that every one that beholdeth the Son and believeth in Him, should have eternal life, and that I should raise Him up at the last day . Hear now, whether the will of the Son is discordant with the Father's, when He says, Father, those whom Thou hast given Me, I will that where I am they also may be with Me . Here is no doubt that the Son wills:

for while the Father wills that those who believe in the Son should have eternal life, the Son wills that the believer should be where He is. For is it not eternal life to dwell together with Christ? And does He not grant to the believer in Him all perfection of blessing when He says, No one hath known the Son save the Father, neither hath any known the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal Him ? Has He not freedom of will, when He wills to impart to us the knowledge of the Father's mystery? Is not His will so free that He can bestow on whom He will the knowledge of Himself and His Father? Thus Father anti Son are manifestly joint Possessors of a nature common to Both through birth and common through unity: for the Son is free of will, hut what He does willingly is an act of the Father's will.

51. He who has not grasped the manifest truths of the faith, obviously cannot have an understanding of its mysteries; because he has not the doctrine of the Gospel he is an alien to the hope of the Gospel. We must confess the Father to be in the Son and the Son in the Father, by unity of nature, by might of power, as equal in honour as Begetter and Begotten. But. perhaps you say, the witness of our Lord Himself is contrary to this declaration, for He says, The Father is greater than I . Is this, heretic, the weapon of your profanity? Are

these the arms of your frenzy? Has it escaped you, that the Church does not admit two Unbegotten, or confess two Fathers? Have you forgotten the Incarnation of the Mediator, with the birth, the cradle, the child hood, the passion, the cross and the death belonging to it? When you were born again, did you not confess the Son of God, born of Mary? If the Son of God, of Whom these things are true, says, The Father is greater than I, can you be ignorant that the Incarnation for your salvation was an emptying of the form of God, and that the Father, unaffected by this assumption of human conditions, abode in the blessed eternity of His own incorrupt nature without taking our flesh?

We confess that the Only-begotten God, while He abode in the form of God, abode in the nature of God, but we do not at once reabsorb into the substance of the divine unity His unity bearing the form of a servant. Nor do we teach that the Father is in the Son, as if He entered into Him bodily; but that the nature which was begotten by the Father of the same kind as His own, possessed by nature the nature which begot it : and that this nature, abiding in the form of the nature which begot it, took the form of human nature and weakness. Christ possessed all that was proper to His nature: but the form of God had departed from Him, for by emptying Himself of it. He had taken the form of a servant. The divine nature had not ceased to be, but still abiding in Him, it had taken upon itself the humility of earthly birth, and was exercising its proper power in the fashion of the humility it assumed. So God, born of God, being found as man in the form of a servant, but acting as God in His miracles, was at once God as His deeds proved, and yet man, for He was found in the fashion of man

52. Therefore, in the discourse we have expounded above, He had borne witness to the unity of His nature with the Father's: He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father also : The Father is in Me, and I in the Father . These two passages perfectly agree, since Both Persons are of equal nature; to behold the Son is the same as to behold the Father; that the One abides in the One shows that They are inseparable And. lest they should misunderstand Him, as though when they beheld His body, they beheld the Father in Him, He had added, Believe Me, that I am in the Father and the Father in Me: or else believe Me for the very works' sake . His power belonged to His nature, and His working was the exercise of that power; in the exercise of that power, then, they might recognise in Him the unity with the Father's nature. In proportion as any one recognised Him to be God in the power of His nature, he would come to know God the Father, present in that mighty nature. The Son, Who is equal with the Father, shewed by His works that the Father could be seen in Him: in order that we, perceiving in the Son a nature like the Father's in its power, might know that in Father and Son there is no distinction of nature.

53. So the Only-begotten God, just before He finished His work in the flesh, and completed the mystery of taking the servant's form, in order to establish our faith, thus speaks, Ye heard how I said unto you, I go away, and I came unto you. If ye loved Me, ye would rejoice, because I go unto the Father; for the Father is greater than I . He has already, in an earlier part of this very discourse unfolded in all its aspects the teaching of His divine nature: can

we, then, on the strength of this confession deprive the Son of that equality, which His true birth has perfected in Him? Or is it an indignity to the Only-begotten God, that the Unbegotten God is His Father, seeing that His Only-begotten birth from the Unbegotten gives Him the Only-begotten nature? He is not the source of His own being, nor did He, being Himself non-existent, bring to pass His own birth out of nothing; but, existing as a living nature and from a living nature, He possesses the power of that nature, and declares the authority of that nature, by bearing witness to His honour, and in His honour to the grace belonging to the birth He received. He pays to the Father the tribute of obedience to the will of Him Who sent Him, but the obedience of humility does not dissolve the unity of His nature: He becomes obedient unto death, but, after death, He is above every name .

54. But if His equality is doubted because the Name is given Him after He put off the form of God, we dishonour Him by ignoring the mystery of the humility which He assumed. The birth of His humanity brought to Him a new nature, and His form was changed in His humility, by the assumption of a servant's form, but now the giving of the Name restores to Him equality of form. Ask yourself what it is, which is given. If the gift be something pertaining to God, the grant to the receiving nature does not impair the divinity of the giving nature. Again, the words, And gave Him the Name, involve a mystery in the giving, but the giving of the Name does not make it another name. To Jesus is given, that to Him, Every knee shall bow of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord in the glory of God the Father . The honour is given Him that He should be confessed in the glory of God the Father. Do you hear Him say, The Father is greater than I? Know Him also, of Whom it is said in reward of His obedience, And gave unto Him the Name which is above every name ; hear Him Who said, I and the Father are one; He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father also; I am in the Father, and the Father in Me.

Consider the honour of the confession which is granted Him, that Jesus is Lord in the glory of God the Father. When, then, is the Father greater than the Son? Surely, when He gives Him the Name above every name. And on the other hand, when is it that the Son and the Father are one? Surely, when every tongue confesses that Jesus is Lord in the glory of God the Father. If, then, the Father is greater through His authority to give, is the Son less through the confession of receiving? The Giver is greater: but the Receiver is not less, for to Him it is given to be one with the Giver. If it is not given to Jesus to be confessed in the glory of God the Father, He is less than the Father. But if it is given Him to be in that glory, in which the Father is, we see in the prerogative of giving, that the Giver is greater, and in the confession of the gift, that the Two are One. The Father is, therefore, greater than the Son:

for manifestly the is greater, Who makes another to be all that He Himself is, Who imparts to the Son by the mystery of the birth the image of His own unbegotten nature, Who begets Him from Himself into His own form, and restores Him again from the form of a servant to the form of God, Whose work it is that Christ, born God according to the Spirit in the glory

of the Father, but now Jesus Christ dead in the flesh, should be once more God in the glory of the Father. When, therefore, Christ says that He is going to the Father, He reveals the reason why they should rejoice if they loved Him, because the Father is greater than He.

55. After the explanation that love is the source of this joy, because love rejoices that Jesus is to be confessed in the glory of God the Father, He next expresses His claim to receive back that glory, in the words, For the prince of this world cometh, and he hath nothing in Me . The prince of this world hath nothing in Him: for being found in fashion as a man, He dwelt in the likeness of the flesh of sin, yet apart from the sin of the flesh, and in the flesh condemned sin by sin . Then, giving obedience to the Father's command as His only motive, He adds, But that the world may know that I love the Father, even as the Father gave Me commandment, so I do. Arise, let us go hence . In His zeal to do the Father's commandment, He rises and hastens to complete the mystery of His bodily passion. But the next moment He unfolds the mystery of His assumption of flesh. Through this assumption we are in Him, as the branches in the vinestock ; and unless He had become the Vine. we could have borne no good fruit. He exhorts us to abide in Himself, through faith in His assumed body, that, since the Word has been made flesh, we may be in the nature of His flesh, as the branches are in the Vine.

He separates the form of the Father's majesty from the humiliation of the assumed flesh by calling Himself the Vine, the source of unity for all the branches, and the Father the careful Husbandman, Who prunes away its useless and barren branches to be burnt in the fire. In the words, He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father also, and The words that I say unto you, I speak not of Myself, but the Father abiding in Me, He do the His works, and Believe Me, that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me, He reveals the truth of His birth and the mystery of His Incarnation. He then continues the thread of His discourse, until He comes to the saying, The Father is greater than I; and after this, to complete the meaning of these words, He hastens to add the illustration of the husbandman, the vine, and the branches, which directs our notice to His submission to bodily humiliation. He says that, because the Father is greater than Himself, He is going to the Father, and that love should rejoice, that He is going to the Father, that is, to receive back His glory from the Father: with Him, and in Him, to be glorified not with a brand-new honour, but with the old, not with some strange honour but with that which He had with Him before. If then Christ shall not enter into Him with glory, to abide in the glory of God, you may disparage His nature:

but if the glory which He receives is the proof of His Godhead, recognise that it as Giver of this proof that the Father is the greater.

56. Why do you distort the Incarnation into a blasphemy? Why pervert the mystery of salvation into a weapon of destruction? The Father, Who glorifies the Son, is greater: The Son, Who is glorified in the Father, is not less. How can He be less, when He is in the glory of God the Father? And how can the Father not be greater? The Father therefore is greater, because He is Father: but the Son, because He is Son, is not less. By the birth of the Son the Father is constituted greater: the nature that is His by birth, does not suffer the Son

to be less. The Father is greater, for the Son prays Him to render glory to manhood He has assumed. The Son is not less, for He receives back His glory with the Father. Thus are consummated at once the mystery of the Birth, and the dispensation of the Incarnation. The Father, as Father, and as glorifying Him Who now is Son of Man, is greater: Father and Son are one, in that the Son, born of the Father, after assuming an earthly body is taken back to the glory of the Father.

57. The birth, therefore, does not constitute His nature inferior, for He is in the form of God, as being born of God. And though by their very signification, 'Unbegotten' and 'Begotten' seem to be opposed, yet the Begotten cannot be excluded from the nature of the Unbegotten, for there is none other from whom He could derive His substance. He does not indeed share in the supreme majesty of being unbegotten: but He has received from the Unbegotten God the nature of divinity. Thus faith confesses the eternity of the Only-begotten God, though it can give no meaning to begetting or beginning in His case. His nature forbids us to say that He ever began to be, for His birth lies beyond the beginnings of time. But while we confess Him existent before all ages, we do not hesitate to pronounce Him born in timeless eternity, for we believe His birth, though we know it never had a beginning.

58 Seeking to disparage His nature, the heretics lay hold of such sayings as, The Father is greater than I, or, But of that day and hour knoweth no one, not even the angels in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father only . It is turned to a reproach against the Only-begotten God that He did not know the day and the hour: that, though God, born of God, He is not in the perfection of divine nature, since He is subjected to the limitation of ignorance; that is, an external force stronger than Himself, triumphing, as it were, over His weakness, makes Him captive to this infirmity. And, indeed, it is with an apparent right to claim that this confession is inevitable, that the heretics, in their frenzy, would drive us to such a blasphemous interpretation. The words are those of the Lord Himself, and what, it may be asked, could be more unholy than to corrupt His express assertion by our attempt to explain it away.

59. But, before we investigate the meaning and occasion of these words, let us first appear to the judgment of common sense. Is it credible, that He, Who stands to all things as the Author of their present and future, should not know all things? If all things are through and in Christ, and in such a way through Christ that they are also in Him, must not that, which is both in Him and through Him, be also in His knowledge, when that knowledge, by virtue of a nature which cannot be nescient, habitually apprehends what is neither in, nor through Him ? But that which derives from Him alone its origin, and has in Him alone the efficient cause of its present state and future development, can that be beyond the ken of His nature, through which is effected, and in which is contained, all that it is and shall be? Jesus Christ knows the thoughts of the mind, as it is now, stirred by present motives, and as it will be to-morrow, aroused by the impulse of future desires. Hear the witness of the Evangelist, For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who it was that should betray Him . By its virtue His nature could perceive the unborn future,

and foresee the awakening of passions yet dormant in the mind: do you believe that it did not know what is through itself, and within itself?

He is Lord of all that belongs to others, is He not Lord of His own? Remember what is written of Him, All things have been created through Him, and in Him: and He is before all things : or again, For it was the good pleasure of the Father, that in Him should all the fulness dwell, and through Him to reconcile all things unto Himself , all fulness is in Him, all things were made through Him, and are reconciled in Him, and for that day of reconciliation we wait expectant; did He not, then, know it, when its time was in His bands, and fixed by His mystery, for it is the day of His coming, of which the Apostle wrote, When Christ, Who is your life, shall be manifested, then shall ye also with Him be manifested in glory . No one is ignorant of that which is through himself and Within himself: shall Christ come, and does He not know the day of His coming? It is His day, for the same Apostle says, The day of the Lord shall come as a thief in the night : can we believe, then, that He did not know it? Human natures, so far as in them lies, foresee what they determine to do: knowledge of the end desired accompanies the desire to act: does not He Who is born God, know what is in, and through, Himself?

The times are through Him, the day is in His hand, for the future is constituted through Him, and the Dispensation of His coming is in His power: is His understanding so dull, that the sense of His torpid nature does not tell Him what He has Himself determined? Is He like the brute and the beast, which, animated by no reason or foresight, not even conscious of acting but driven to and fro by the impulse of irrational desire, proceed to their end with fortuitous and uncertain course?

60. But, again, how can we believe that the Lord of glory, because He was able not to know the day of His own coming, was of a discordant and imperfect nature, subject to the necessity of coming, but ignorant of the day of His coming? This would make God weaker than the power of ignorance, which took from Him the prerogative of knowledge. Then, too, how we redouble occasions of blasphemy, if we impute not only infirmity to Christ, but also defect to God the Father, saying that He defrauded of foreknowledge of this day the Only-begotten God, the Son of His love, and in malice denied Him certainty concerning the future consummation: suffered Him to know the day and hour of His passion, but withheld from Him the day of His power, and the hour of His glory among His Saints: took from Him the knowledge of His blessedness, while He granted Him prescience of His death? The trembling conscience of man dare not presume to think thus of God, or ascribe to Him such taint of human fickleness, that the Father should deny anything to the Son, or the Son, Who was born as God, should possess an imperfect knowledge.

61. But God can never be anything but love, or anything but the Father: and He, Who loves, does not envy; He Who is Father, is wholly and entirely Father. This name admits of no compromise: no one can be partly father, and partly not. A father is father in respect of his whole personality; all that he is present in the child, for paternity by piecemeal is impossible: not that paternity extends to self-generation, but that a father is altogether

father in all his qualities, to the offsprings born of him. According to the constitution of human bodies, which are made of dissimilar elements, and composed of various parts, the father must be father of the whole, since a perfect birth hands on to the child all the different elements and parts, which are in the father. The father is, therefore, father of all that is his; the birth proceeds from the whole of himself, and constitutes the whole of the child. God, however, has no body, but simple essence: no parts, but an all-embracing whole: nothing quickened, but everything living. God is therefore all life, and all one, not compounded of parts, but perfect in His simplicity, and, as the Father, must be Father to His begotten in all that He Himself is, for the perfect birth of the Son makes Him perfect Father in all that He has. So, if He is proper Father to the Son the Son must possess all the properties of the Father.

Yet how can this be, if the Son has not the quality of prescience, if there is anything from His Author, which is wanting in His birth? To say that there is one of God's properties which He has not, is almost equivalent to saying that He has none of them. And what is proper to God, if not the knowledge of the future, a vision, which embraces the invisible and unborn world, and has within its scope that which is not yet, hut is to be?

62. Moreover Paul, the teacher of the Gentiles, forestalls the impious falsehood, that the Only-begotten God was partially nescient. Listen to his words, Being instructed in love, unto all riches of the fulness of understanding, unto knowledge of the mystery of God, even Christ, in Whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden . God, even Christ, is the mystery, and all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden in Him. But a portion is one thing, the whole another: a part is not the same as all, nor can all be called a part. If the Son does not know the day, all the treasures of knowledge are not in Him; but He has all the treasures of knowledge in Him, therefore He is not ignorant of the day. But we must remember that those treasures of knowledge were hidden in Him, though not, because hidden, therefore wanting. As in God, they are in Him: as in the mystery, they are hidden. But Christ, the mystery of God, in Whom are all the treasures of knowledge hidden, is not Himself hidden from our eyes and minds. Since then He is Himself the mystery, let us see whether He is ignorant when He does not know. If elsewhere His profession of ignorance does not imply that He does not know, here also it will be wrong to call Him ignorant, if He does not know. In Him are hidden all the treasures of knowledge, and so His ignorance is an economy rather than ignorance. Thus we can assign a reason for His ignorance, without the assumption that He did not know.

63. Whenever God says that He does not know, He professes ignorance indeed, but is not under the defect of ignorance. It is not because of the infirmity of ignorance that He does not know, but because it is not yet the time to speak, or the divine Plan to act. Thus He says to Abraham, The cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is full, and their sin is very grievous. Therefore I will go down now, and see if they have done altogether according to the cry of it: and if not, I will know . Here we perceive God not knowing that which notwithstanding He knows. He knows that their sins are very grievous, but He comes down again to see whether

they have done altogether, and to know if they have not. We observe, then, that He is not ignorant, although He does not know, but that, when the time comes for action, He knows. This knowledge is not, therefore, a change from ignorance, but the coming of the fulness of time. He waits still to know, but we cannot suppose that He does not know: therefore His not knowing what He knows, and His knowing what He does not know, is nothing else than a divine economy in word and deed.

64. We cannot, then, doubt that the knowledge of God depends on the occasion and not on any change on His part: by the occasion being meant the occasion, not of obtaining but of declaring knowledge, as we learn from His words to Abraham, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto hint, far now I know that thou fearest thy God, and hast not withheld thy beloved son, for My sake . God knows now, but that now I know is a profession of previous ignorance: yet it is not true, that until now God did not know the faith of Abraham, for it is written, Abraham believed in God, and it was counted to him for righteousness , and therefore this now I know marks the time when Abraham received this testimony, not when God began to know. Abraham had proved, by the sacrifice of his son, the love he bore to God, and God knew it at the time He spoke: but as we cannot suppose that He did not know before, we must for this reason suppose that He took knowledge of it then because He spoke.

By way of example, we have chosen, for our consideration this passage out of many in the Old Testament, which treat of, the knowledge of God, in order to skew that when God does not know, the cause lies, not in His ignorance, but in the occasion.

65. We find our Lord in the Gospels knowing, yet not knowing, many things. Thus He does not know the workers of iniquity, who glory in their mighty works and in His name, for He says to them, Then will swear, I never knew you; depart from all ye that work iniquity . He declares with an oath even, that He does not know them, but nevertheless He knows them to be workers of iniquity. He does not know them, not because He does not know, but because by the iniquity of their deeds they are unworthy of His knowledge, and He even confirms His denial with the sanctity of an oath. By the virtue of His nature He could not be ignorant, by the mystery of His will He refused to know. Again the Unbegotten God does not know the foolish virgins; He is ignorant of those who were too careless to have their oil ready, when He entered the chamber of His glorious coming. They come and implore, and so far from not knowing them, He cries, Verily, I say unto you, I know you not . Their coming and their prayer compel Him to recognize them, but His profession of ignorance refers to His will, not to His nature they are unworthy to be known of Him to Whom nothing is unknown. Hence, in order that we should not impute His ignorance to infirmity, He says immediately to the Apostles, Watch therefore, for ye know not the day north the hour . When He bids them watch, for they know not the day or the hour, He points out that He knew not the virgins, because through sleep and neglect they had no oil, and therefore were unworthy to enter into His is chamber.

66. The Lord Jesus Christ, then, Who searcheth the heart and the reins , has no weakness in His nature, that He should not know, for, as we perceive, even the fact of His ignorance proceeds from the omniscience of His nature. Yet if any there be, who impute to Him ignorance, let them tremble, lest He Who knows their thoughts should say to them, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts ? The All-knowing, though not ignorant of thoughts and deeds, sometimes enquires as if He were, as for instance when He asks the woman who it was that touched the hem of His garment, or the Apostles, why they quarrelled among themselves, or the mourners, where the sepulchre of Lazarus was: but His ignorance was not ignorance, except in words. It is against reason that He should know from afar the death and burial of Lazarus, but not the place of his sepulchre: that He should read the thoughts of the mind, and not recognise the faith of the woman: that He should not need to ask concerning anything , yet be ignorant of the dissension of the Apostles. But He, Who knows all things, sometimes by a practice of economy professes ignorance, even though He is not ignorant. Thus, in the case of Abraham, God concealed His knowledge for a time: in that of the foolish virgins and the workers of iniquity, He refused to recognise the unworthy: in the mystery of the Son of Man, His asking, as if ignorant, expressed His humanity.

He accommodated Himself to the reality of His birth in the flesh in everything to which the weakness of our nature is subject, not in such wise that He became weak in His divine nature, but that God, born man, assumed the weaknesses of humanity, yet without thereby reducing His unchangeable nature to a weak nature, for the unchangeable nature was that wherein He mysteriously assumed flesh. He, Who was God is man, but, being man, has not ceased to remain God. Conducting Himself then as one born man, and proving Himself such, though remaining God the Word, He often uses the language of man (though God, speaking as God, makes frequent use of human terms), and does not know that which it is not yet time to declare, or which is not deserving of His recognition.

67. We can now understand why He said that He knew not the day. If we believe Him to have been really ignorant, we contradict the Apostle, who says, In Whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden . There is knowledge which is hidden in Him, and because it has to be hidden, it must sometimes for this purpose be professed as ignorance, for once declared, it will no longer he secret. In order, therefore, that the knowledge may remain hidden, He declares that He does not know. But if He does not know, in order that the knowledge may remain hidden, this ignorance is not due to His nature, which is omniscient, for He is ignorant solely in order that it may be hidden. Nor is it hard to see why the knowledge of the day is hidden. He exhorts us to watch continually with unrelaxing faith, and withholds from us the security of certain knowledge, that our minds may be kept on the stretch by the uncertainty of suspense, and while they hasten towards and continually look for the day of His coming, may always watch in hope; and that, though we know the time must come, its very uncertainty may make us careful and vigilant. Thus the Lord says, Therefore be ye also ready, for ye know not what hour the Son of Man shall come ; and again, Blessed is that servant whom His lord, when He cometh, shall find so doing .

The ignorance is, therefore, a means not to delude, but to encourage in perseverance. It is no loss to be denied a knowledge which it is an advantage not to have, for the security of knowledge might breed negligence of the faith, which now is concealed, while the uncertainty of expectation keeps us continually prepared, even as the master of the house, with the fear of loss before his eyes, watches and guards against the dreaded com ing of the thief, who chooses the time of sleep for his work.

68. Manifestly, therefore, the ignorance of God is not ignorance but a mystery: in the economy of His actions and words and manifestations, He does not know and at the same time He knows, or knows and at the same time does not know. But we must ask, whether it may not be through the Son's infirmity that He knows not what the Father knows. He could perhaps read the thoughts of the human heart, because His stronger nature can unite itself with a weaker in all its movement's, and by the force of its power, as it were, pass through and through the feeble nature. But a weaker nature is powerless to penetrate a stronger: light things may be penetrated by heavy, rare by dense, liquid by solid, but the heavy are impenetrable to the light, the dense to the rare, and the solid to the liquid: the strong are not exposed to the weak, but the weak are penetrated by the strong. Therefore, the heretics say, the Son knew not the thoughts of the Father, because, being Himself weak, He could not approach tire more powerful and enter into Him, or pass through Him.

69. Should any one presume, not merely to speak thus of the Only-begotten God in the rashness of his tongue, but even to think so in the wickedness of his heart, let him hear what the Apostle thought of the Holy Ghost, from the words he wrote to the Corinthians, But unto us God revealed them through the Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God. For who among men knoweth the things of a man, which are in him, save the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the things which are in God, none knoweth, save the Spirit of God . But let us cast aside these empty illustrations of material things, and measure God born of God, Spirit of Spirit, by His own powers and not by earthly conditions. Let us measure Him not by our own senses, but by His divine claims. Let us believe Him Who said, He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father also . Let us not forget that He said, Believe, if only by My works, that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father , and again, I and the Father are one . If the names which correspond to realities, when intelligibly used, impart to us any true information, then He Who is seen in Another by the eye of understanding is not different in nature from that Other; not different in kind, since He abides in the Father, and the Father in Him;

not separate, since Both are One. Perceive their unity in the indivisibility of their nature, and apprehend the mystery of that indivisible nature by regarding the One as the mirror of the Other. But remember that He is the mirror, not as the image reflected by the splendour of a nature outside Himself, but as being a living nature, indistinguishable from the Father's living nature, derived wholly from the whole of His Father's, having the Father's in Him because He is the Only begotten, and abiding in the Father, because He is God.

70. The heretics cannot deny that the Lord used these words to signify the mystery His birth, but they attempt to escape from them by referring them to a harmony of will. They make the unity of God the Father and God the Son not one of divinity, but merely of will: as if the divine teaching were poor in expression and the Lord could not have said, I and the Father are one in will; or as if those words could have the same meaning as I and the Father are one; or as if He meant, He that hath seen My will, hath seen the will of My Father also, but, being unskilled statement, tried to express that idea in the words, He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father also: or as if the divine vocabulary did not contain the terms, The will of My Father is in Me, and My will is in the Father, but this thought could be expressed by I the Father and the Father in Me. All this is nauseous and irreverent nonsense; common sense condemns the judgment of such silly fancies, as that the Lord could not say what He wanted, or did not say what He said. True, we find Him speaking in parables and allegories, but it is a different thing to strengthen one's words with illustrations, or satisfy the dignity of the subject with the help of suggestive proverbs, or adapt one's language to the needs of the moment.

But this passage concerning the unity, of which we are speaking, does not allow us to look for the meaning outside the plain sound of the words. If Father and Son are one, in the sense that They are one in will, and if separable natures cannot be one in will, because their diversity of kind and nature must draw them into diversities of will and judgment, how call They be one in will. not being one in knowledge? There can be no unity of will between ignorance and knowledge. Omniscience and nescience are opposites, and opposites cannot be of the same will.

71. But perhaps it may be held to confirm the Son in His confession of ignorance that He says the Father alone knows. But unless He had plainly said that the Father alone knows, it would have been a matter of the greatest danger for our under standing, since we might have thought that He Himself did not know. For, since His ignorance is due to the economy of hidden knowledge, and not to a nature capable of ignorance, now that He says the Father alone knows, we cannot believe that He does not know; for, as we said above, God's knowledge is not the discovery of what He did not know, but its declaration. The fact that the Father alone knows, is no proof that the Son ignorant: He says that He does not know, that others may not know: that the Father alone knows, to shew that He Himself also knows. If we say that God came to know the love of Abraham , when He ceased to conceal His knowledge, it follows that only because He did not conceal it from the Son, can the Father be said to know the day, for God does not learn by sudden perception, but declares His knowledge with the occasion. If, then, the Son according to the mystery does not know the day, that He may not reveal it: on the other hand, only by the fact that He has revealed it can the Father be proved to know the day.

72. Far be it from us to imagine vicissitudes of bodily change in the Father and Son, as though the Father sometimes spoke to the Son, and sometimes was silent. We remember, indeed, that a voice was sometimes uttered from heaven for us, that the power of the Father's

words might confirm for us the mystery of the Son, as the Lord says, This voice hath not come from Heaven for My sake but for your sakes . But the divine nature can dispense with the various combinations necessary for human functions, the motion of the tongue, the adjustment of the mouth, the forcing of the breath, and the vibration of the air. God is a simple Being: we must understand Him by devotion, and confess Him by reverence. He is to be worshipped, not pursued by our senses, for a conditioned and weak nature cannot grasp with the guesses of its imagination the mystery of an infinite and omnipotent nature. In God is no variability, no parts, as of a composite divinity, that in Him will should follow inaction, speech silence, or work rest, or that He should not will, without passing from some other mental state to volition, or speak, without breaking the silence with His voice, or act, without going forth to labour. He is not subject to the laws of nature, for nature has received its law from Him: He never suffers weakness or change when He acts, for His power is boundless, as the Lord said, Father, all things are possible unto Thee .

He can do more than human sense can conceive. The Lord does not deprive even Himself of the quality of omnipotence, for He says, What things soever the Father doeht, these the Son also doeth in like manner . Nothing is difficult, when there is no weakness; for only a power which is weak to effect, knows the need of effort. The cause of difficulty is the weakness of the motive force; a force of limitless power rises above the conditions of impotence.

73. We have established this point to exclude the idea that after silence God spoke to the Son, or after ignorance the Son began to know. To reach our intelligence terms must be used applicable to our own nature: thus we do not understand communication except by word of mouth, or comprehend the opposite of nescience except as knowledge. Thus the Son does not know the day for the reason that He does not reveal it: the Father, He says, alone knows it for the reason that He reveals it to the Son alone. But, as we have said, Christ is conscious of no such natural impediments as an ignorance which must be removed before He can come to know, or a knowledge which is not His before the Father begins to speak. He declares the unity of His nature, as the only-begotten, with the Father, by the unmistakable words, All things whatsoever the Father hath, are Mine . There is no mention here of coming into possession: it is one tiring, to be the Possessor of things external to Him; another, to be self-contained and self-existent. The former is to possess heaven and earth and the universe, the latter to be able to describe Himself by His own properties, which are His, not as something external and subject, but as something of which He Himself subsists. When He says, therefore, that all things which the Father has, are His, He alludes to the divine nature, and not to a joint ownership of gifts bestowed.

For referring to His words that the Holy Spirit should take of His , He says, All things whatsoever the Father hath are Mine, therefore said I, He shall take of Mine: that is, the Holy Spirit takes of His, but takes also of the Father's: and if He receives of the Father's, He receives also of His. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, and does not receive of a creature, but teaches us that He receives all these gifts, because they are all God's. All things that belong to the Father are the Spirit's; but we must not think that whatever He received of

the Son, He did not receive of the Father also; for all that the Father hath belongs equally to the Son.

74. So the nature of Christ needed no change, or question, or answer, that it should advance from ignorance to knowledge, or ask of One Who had continued in silence, and wait to receive His answer: but, abiding perfectly in mysterious unity with Him, it received of God its whole being as it derived from Him its origin. And, further, it received all that belonged to the whole being of God, namely, His knowledge and His will. What the Father knows, the Son does not learn by question and answer; what the Father wills, the Son does not will by command. Since all that the Father has, is His, it is the property of His nature to will and know, exactly as the Father wills and knows. But to prove His birth He often expounds the doctrine of His Person, as when He says, I came not to do Mine own will, but, the will of Him that sent Me. He does the Father's will, not His own, and by the will of Him that sent Me, He means His Father. But that He Himself wills the same, is unmistakeably declared in the words, Father, those whom Thou hast given Me, I will, that, where also may be with Me . The Father wills that we should be with Christ, in Whom, according to the Apostle, He chose us before the foundation of the world , and the Son wills the same, namely that we should be with Him. His will is, therefore, the same in nature as the Father's will, though to make plain the fact of the birth it is distinguished from the Father's.

75. The Son is ignorant, then, of nothing which the Father knows, nor does it follow because the Father alone knows, that the Son does not know. Father and Son abide in unity of nature, and the ignorance of the Son belongs to the divine Plan of silence seeing that in Him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. This the Lord Himself testified, when He answered the question of the Apostles concerning the times, It is not yours to know times or moments, which the Father hath set within His own authority . The knowledge is denied them, and not only that, but the anxiety to learn is forbidden, because it is not theirs to know these times. Yet now that He is risen, they ask again, though their question on the former occasion had been met with the reply, that not even the Son knew. They cannot possibly have understood literally that the Son did not know, for they ask Him again as though He did know. They perceived in the mystery of His ignorance a divine Plan of silence, and now, after His resurrection, they renew the question, thinking that the time has come to speak. And the Son no longer denies that He knows, but tells them that it is not theirs to know, because the Father has set it within His own authority.

If then, the Apostles attributed it to the divine Plan, and not to weakness, that the Son did not know the day, shall we say that the Son knew not the day for the simple reason that He was not God? Remember, God the Father set the day within His authority, that it might not come to the knowledge of man, and the Son, when asked before, replied that He did not know, but now, no longer denying His knowledge, replies that it is theirs not to know, for the Father has set the times not in His own knowledge, but in His own authority. The day and the moment are included in the word 'times': can it be, then, that He, Who was to restore Israel to its kingdom, did not Himself know the day and the moment of that

restoration? He instructs us to see an evidence of His birth in this exclusive prerogative of the Father, yet He does not deny that He knows: and while He proclaims that the possession of this knowledge is withheld from ourselves, He asserts that it belongs to the mystery of the Father's authority.

We must not therefore think, because He said He did not know the day and the moment, that the Son did not know. As man He wept, and slept, and sorrowed, but God is incapable of tears, or fear, or sleep. According to the weakness of His flesh He shed tears, slept, hungered, thirsted, was weary, and feared, yet without impairing the reality of His Only-begotten nature; equally so must we refer to His human nature, the words that He knew not the day or the hour.

Book 10

1. It is manifest that there is nothing which men have ever said which is not liable to opposition. Where the will dissents the mind also dissents: under the bias of opposing judgment it joins battle, and denies the assertions to which it objects. Though every word we say be incontrovertible if gauged by the standard of truth, yet so long as men think or feel differently, the truth is always exposed, to the cavils of opponents, because they attack, under the delusion of error or prejudice, the truth they misunderstand or dislike. For decisions once formed cling with excessive obstinacy: and the passion of controversy cannot be driven from the course it has taken, when the will is not subject to the reason. Enquiry after truth gives way to the search for proofs of what we wish to believe; desire is paramount over truth. Then the theories we concoct build themselves on names rather than things the logic of truth gives place to the logic of prejudice: a logic which the will adjusts to defend its fancies, not one which stimulates the will through the understanding of truth by the reason. From these defects of partisan spirit arise all controversies between opposing theories. Then follows an obstinate battle between truth asserting itself, and prejudice defending itself: truth maintains its ground and prejudice resists. But if desire had not forestalled reason: if the understanding of the truth had moved us to desire what was true: instead of trying to set up our desires as doctrines, we should let our doctrines dictate our desires; there would be no contradiction of the truth, for every one would begin by desiring what was true, not by defending the truth of that which he desired.

2. Not unmindful of this sin of wilfulness, the Apostle, writing to Timothy, after many injunctions to bear witness to the faith and to preach the word, adds, For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but having itching ears will heap up teachers to themselves after their own lusts, and will turn away their ears from the truth, and turn aside unto fables . For when their unhallowed zeal shall drive them beyond the endurance of sound doctrine, they will heap up teachers for their lusts, that is, construct schemes of doctrine to suit their own desires, not wishing to be taught, hut getting together teachers who will tell them what they wish: that the crowd of teachers whom they have ferreted out and gathered together, may satisfy them with the doctrines of their own tumultuous desires. And if these madmen in their godless folly do not know with what spirit they reject the sound, and yearn after the corrupt doctrine, let them hear the words of the same Apostle to the same Timothy, But the Spirit saith expressly that in the last days some shall away

from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils through the hypocrisy of lying talk . What advancement of doctrine is it to discover what one fancies, and not what one ought to learn? Or what piety in doctrine is it not to desire what one ought to learn, but to heap up doctrine after our desires?

But this is what the promptings of seducing spirits supply. They confirm the falsehoods of pretended godliness, for a canting hypocrisy always succeeds to defection from the faith: so that at least in word the reverence is retained, which the conscience has lost. Even that pretended piety they make impious by all manner of lies, violating by schemes of false doctrine the sacredness of the faith: for they pile up doctrines to suit their desires, and not according to the faith of the Gospel. They delight, with an uncontrollable pleasure, to have their itching ears tickled by the novelty of their favourite preaching; they estrange themselves utterly from the hearing of the truth, and surrender themselves entirely to fables: so that their incapacity for either speaking or understanding the truth invests their discourse with what is, to them, a semblance of truth.

3. We have clearly fallen on the evil times prophesied by the Apostle; for nowadays teachers are sought after who preach not God but a creature . And men are more zealous for what they themselves desire, than for what the sound faith teaches. So far have their itching ears stirred them to listen to what they desire, that for the moment that preaching alone rules among their crowd of doctors which estranges the Only-begotten God from the power and nature of God the Father, and makes Him in our faith either a God of the second order, or not a God at all; in either case a damning profession of impiety, whether one profess two Gods by making different grades of divinity; or else deny divinity altogether to Him Who drew His nature by birth from God. Such doctrines please those whose ears are estranged from the hearing of the truth and turned to fables, while the hearing of this our sound faith is not endured, and is driven bodily into exile with its preachers.

4. But though many may heap up teachers according to their desires, and banish sound doctrine, yet from the company of the Saints the preaching of truth can never be exiled. From our exile we shall speak by these our writings, and the Word of God which cannot be bound will run unhindered, warning us of this time which the Apostle prophesied. For when men shew themselves impatient of the true message, and heap up teachers according to their own human desires, we can no longer doubt about the times, but know that while the preachers of sound doctrine are banished truth is banished too. We do not complain of the times: we rejoice rather, that iniquity has revealed itself in this our exile, when, unable to endure the truth, it banishes the preachers of sound doctrine, that it may heap up for itself teachers after its own desires. We glory in our exile, and rejoice in the Lord that in our person the Apostle's prophecy should be fulfilled.

5. In the earlier books, then, while maintaining the profession of a faith, I trust, sincere, and a truth uncorrupted, we arranged the method of our answer throughout, so that (though such are our limitations, that human language can never be safe from exception) no one could contradict us without an open profession of godlessness. For so completely have we

demonstrated the true meaning of those texts which they cunningly filch from the Gospels and appropriate for their own teaching, that if any one denies it, he cannot escape on the plea of ignorance, but is condemned out of his own mouth of godlessness. Further, we have, according to the gift of the Holy Ghost, so cautiously proceeded throughout in our proof of the faith, that no charge could possibly be trumped up against us. For it is their way to fill the ears of the unwary with declarations that we deny the birth of Christ , when we preach the unity of the Godhead; and they say that by the text, I and the Father are one , we confess that God is solitary: thus, according to them, we say that the Unbegotten God descended into the Virgin, and was born man, and that He refers the opening word 'I' to the dispensation of His flesh, but adds to it the proof of His divinity, And the Father, as being the Father of Himself as man; and further, that, consisting of two Persons, human and divine, He said of Himself, We are one .

6. But we have always maintained the birth existing out of time: we have taught that God the Son is God of the same nature with God the Father, not co-equal with the Unbegotten, for He was not Himself Unbegotten, but, as the Only-begotten, not unequal because begotten; that the Two are One, not by the giving of a double name to one Person, but by a true begetting and being begotten; that neither are there two Gods, different in kind, in our faith, nor is God solitary because He is one, in the sense in which we confess the mystery of the Only-begotten God: but that the Son is both indicated in the name of, and exists in, the Father, Whose name and Whose nature are in Him, while the Father by His name implies, and abides in, the Son, since a son cannot be spoken of, or exist, except as born of a father. Further, we say that He is the living copy of the living nature, the impression of the divine seal upon the divine nature, so undistinguished from God in power and kind, that neither His works nor His words nor His form are other than the Father's: but that, since the image by nature possesses the nature of its author, the Author also has worked and spoken and appeared through His natural image.

7. But by the side of this timeless and ineffable generation of the Only-begotten, which transcends the perception of human understanding, we taught as well the mystery of God born to be man from the womb of the Virgin, shewing how according to the plan of the Incarnation, when He emptied Himself of the form of God and took the form of a servant, the weakness of the assumed humanity did not weaken the divine nature, but that Divine power was imparted to humanity without the virtue of divinity being lost in the human form. For when God was born to be man the purpose was not that the Godhead should be lost, but that, the Godhead remaining, man should be born to be God. Thus Emmanuel is His name, which is God with us , that God might not be lowered to the level of man, but man raised to that of God. Nor, when He asks that lie may be glorified , is it in any way a glorifying of His divine nature, but of the lower nature He assumed: for He asks for that glory which He had with God before the world was made.

8. As we are answering all, even their most insensate statements, we come now to the discussion of the unknown hour . Now, I even if, as they say, the Son had not known it,

this could give no ground for an attack upon His Godhead as the Only-begotten. It was not in the nature of things that His birth should avail to put His beginning back, until it was equivalent to the existence which is unbegotten, and had no beginning; and the Farther reserves as His prerogative, to demonstrate His authority as the Unbegotten, the fixing of this still undetermined day. Nor may we conclude that in His Person there is any defect in that nature which contained by right of birth all the fulness of that nature which a perfect birth could impart. Nor again could the ignorance of day and hour be imputed in the Only-begotten God to a lower degree of Divinity. It is to demonstrate against the Sabellian heretics that the Father's authority is without birth or beginning, that this prerogative of unbegotten authority is not granted to the Son . But if, as we have maintained, when He said that He knew not the day, He kept silence not from ignorance, but in accordance with the Divine Plan, all occasion for irreverent declarations must be removed, and the blasphemous teachings of heresy thwarted, that the truth of the Gospel may be illustrated by the very words which seem to obscure it.

9. Thus the greater number of them will not allow Him to have the impossible nature of God because He feared His Passion and shewed Himself weak by submitting to suffering . They assert that He Who feared and felt pain could not enjoy that confidence of power which is above fear, or that incorruption of spirit which is not conscious of suffering: but, being of a nature lower than God the Father, He trembled with fear at human suffering, and groaned before the violence of bodily pain. These impious assertions are based on the words, My soul is sorrowful event unto death , and "Father if it be possible let this cup pass away from He" , and also, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken He ? to which they also add, Father into Thy hands I commend My Spirit. All these words of our holy faith they appropriate to the use of their unholy blasphemy: that He feared, Who was sorrowful, and even prayed that the cup might be taken away from Him; that He felt pain, because He complained that God had deserted Him in His suffering; that He was infirm, because He commended His Spirit to the Father. His doubts and anxieties preclude us, they say, from assigning to Him that likeness to God which would belong to a nature equal to God as being born His Only-begotten. He proclaims His own weakness and inferiority by the prayer to remove the cup, by the complaint of desertion and the commending of His Spirit.

10. Now first of all, before we shew from these very texts, that He was subject to no infirmity of fear or sorrow on His own account, let us ask, "What can we find for Him to fear, that the dread of an unendurable pain should have seized Him?" The objects of His fear, which they allege, are, I suppose, suffering and death. Now I ask those who are of this opinion, "Can we reasonably suppose that He feared death, Who drove away the terrors of death from His Apostles, exhorting them to the glory of martyrdom with the words, He that doth not take his crass and follow after Me is not worth of Me; and, He that findeth his life shall lose it, and he that hath last his life far My sake shall find it ? If to die for Him is life, what pain can we think He had to suffer in the mystery of death, Who rewards with life those who die for Him? Could death make Him fear what could be done to the body, when He exhorted the disciples, Fear not those which kill the body ?

11. Further, what terror had the pain of death for Him, to Whom death was an act of His own free will? In the human race death is brought on either by an attack upon the body of an external enemy, such as fever wound, accident or fall: or our bodily nature is overcome by age, and yields to death. But the Only-begotten God, Who had the power of laying down His life, and of taking it up again , after the drought of vinegar, having borne witness that His work of human suffering was finished, in order to accomplish in Himself the mystery of death, bowed His head and gave up His Spirit . If it has been granted to our mortal nature of its own will to breathe its last breath, and seek rest in death; if the buffeted soul may depart, without the breaking up of the body, and the spirit burst forth and flee away, without being as it were violated in its own home by the breaking and piercing and crushing of limbs; then fear of death might seize the Lord of life; if, that is, when He gave up the ghost and died, His death were not an exercise of His own free will. But if He died of His own will, and through His own will gave back His Spirit, death had no terror; because it was in His own power.

12. But perchance with the fearfulness of human ignorance, He feared the very power of death, which He possessed; so, though He died of His own accord, He feared because He was to die. If any think so, let them ask "To which was death terrible, to His Spirit or to His body?" If to His body, are they ignorant that the Holy One should not see corruption , that within three days He was to revive the temple of His body ? But if death was terrible to His Spirit, should Christ fear the abyss of hell, while Lazarus was rejoicing in Abraham's bosom? It is foolish and absurd, that He should fear death, Who could lay down His soul, and take it up again, Who, to fulfil the mystery of human life, was about to die of His own free will. He cannot fear death Whose power and purpose in dying is to die but for a moment: fear is incompatible with willingness to die, and the power to live again, for both of these rob death of his terrors.

13. But was it perhaps the physical pain of hanging on the cross, or the rough cords with which He was bound, or the cruel wounds, where the nails were driven in, that dismayed Him? Let us see of what body the Man Jesus was, that pain should dwell in His crucified, bound, and pierced body. 14. The nature of our bodies is such, that when endued with life and feeling by conjunction with a sentient soul, they become something more than inert, insensate matter. They feel when touched, suffer when pricked, shiver with cold, feet pleasure in warmth, waste with hunger, and grow fat with food. By a certain transfusion of the soul, which supports and penetrates them, they feel pleasure or pain according to the surrounding circumstances. When the body is pricked or pierced, it is the sold which pervades it that is conscious, and suffers pain. For instance a flesh-wound is felt even to the bone, while the fingers feel nothing when we cut the nails which protrude from the flesh. And if through some disease a limb becomes withered, it loses the feeling of living flesh: it can be cut or burnt, it feels no pain whatever, because the soul is no longer mingled with it. Also when through some grave necessity part of the body must be cut away, the soul can be lulled to sleep by drugs, which overcome the pain, and produce in the mind a death-like forgetfulness of its power of sense. Then limbs can be cut off without pain: the flesh is dead

to all feeling, and does not heed the deep thrust of the knife, because the soul within it is asleep. It is, therefore, because the body lives by admixture with a weak soul, that it is subject to the weakness of pain.

15. If the Man Jesus Christ began His bodily life with the same beginning as our body and soul, if He were not, as God, the immediate Author of His own body and soul alike, when He was fashioned in the likeness and form of man, and born as man, then we may suppose that He felt the pain of our body; since by His beginning, a conception like ours, He had a body animated with a soul like our own. But if through His own act He took to Himself flesh from the Virgin, and likewise by His own act joined a soul to the body thus conceived, then the nature of His suffering must have corresponded with the nature of His body and soul. For when He emptied Himself of the form of God and received the form of a servant when the Son of God was born also Son of Man, without losing His own self and power, God the Word formed the perfect living Man. For how was the Son of God born Son of Man, how did He receive the form of a servant, still remaining in the forth of God, unless (God the Word being able of Himself to take flesh from the Virgin and to give that flesh a soul, for the redemption of our soul and body), the Man Christ Jesus was born perfect, and made in the form of a servant by the assumption of the body, which the Virgin conceived?

For the Virgin conceived, what she conceived, from the Holy Ghost alone , and though for His birth in the flesh she supplied from herself that element, which women always contribute to the seed planted in them, still Jesus Christ was not formed by an ordinary human conception. In His birth, the cause of which was transmitted solely by the Holy Ghost, His mother performed the same part as in all human conceptions: but by virtue of His origin He never ceased to be God.

16. This deep and beautiful mystery of His assumption of manhood the Lord Himself reveals in the words, No man hath ascended into heaven, but He that descended from heaven, even the Son of Man which is in heaven . 'Descended from heaven' refers to His origin from the Spirit: for though Mary contributed to His growth in the womb and birth all that is natural to her sex, His body did not owe to her its origin. The 'Son of Man' refers to the birth of the flesh conceived in the Virgin; 'Who is in heaven' implies the power of His eternal nature: an infinite nature, which could not restrict itself to the limits of the body, of which it was itself the source and base. By the virtue of the Spirit and the power of God the Word, though He abode in the form of a servant, He was ever present as Lord of all, within and beyond the circle of heaven and earth. So He descended from heaven and is the Son of Man, yet is in heaven: for the Word made flesh did not cease to be the Word. As the Word, He is in heaven, as flesh He is the Son of Man. As Word made flesh, He is at once from heaven, and Son of Man, and in heaven, for the power of the Word, abiding eternally without body, was present still in the heaven He had left: to Him and to none other the flesh owed its origin. So the Word made flesh, though He was flesh, yet never ceased to be the Word.

17. The blessed Apostle also perfectly describes this mystery of the ineffable birth of Christ's body in the words, The first man was from the soil of the ground, the second man from

heaven . Calling Him 'Man' he expresses His birth from the Virgin, who in the exercise of her office as mother, performed the duties of her sex in the conception and birth of man. And when he says, The second man from heaven he testifies His origin from the Holy Ghost, Who came upon the Virgin . As He is then man, and from heaven, this Man was born of the Virgin, and conceived of the Holy Ghost. So speaks the Apostle. 18. Again the Lord Himself revealing this mystery of His birth, speaks thus: I am the living bread Who have descended from Heaven: if any one shall eat of My bread he shall live far ever : calling Himself the Bread since He is the origin of His own body. Further, that it may not be thought the Word left His own virtue and nature for the flesh, He says again that it is His bread; since He is the bread which descends from heaven, His body cannot be regarded as sprung from human conception, because it is shewn to be from heaven. And His language concerning His bread is an assertion that the Word took a body, for He adds, Unless ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, ye have not life in you . Hence, inasmuch as the Being Who is Son of Man descended also as bread from heaven, by the 'Bread descending from heaven' and by the 'Flesh and Blood of the Son of Man' must be understood His assumption of the flesh, conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin.

19. Being, then, Man with this body, Jesus Christ is both the Son of God and Son of Man, Who emptied Himself of the form of God, and received the form of a servant. There is not one Son of Man and another Son of God; nor one in the form of God, and another born perfect man in the form of a servant: so that, as by the nature determined for us by God, the Author of our being, man is born with body and soul, so likewise Jesus Christ, by His own power, is God and Man with flesh and soul, possessing in Himself whole and perfect manhood, and whole and perfect Godhead. 20. Yet many, with the art by which they seek to prove their heresy, are wont to delude the ears of the unlearned with the error, that as the body and soul of Adam both sinned, so the Lord must have taken the soul and body of Adam from the Virgin, and that it was not the whole Man that she conceived from the Holy Ghost . If they had understood the mystery of the Incarnation, these men would have understood at the same time the mystery that the Son of Man is also Son of God. As if in receiving so much from the Virgin, He received from her His soul also; whereas though flesh is always born of flesh, every soul is the direct work of God.

21. With a view to deprive of substantive divinity the Only-begotten God, Who was God the Word with God in the beginning, they make Him merely the utterance of the voice of God. The Son is related to God His Father, they say, as the words to the speaker. They are trying to creep into the position, that it was not God the eternal Word, abiding in the form of God, Who was born as Christ the Man, Whose life therefore springs from a human origin, not from the mystery of a spiritual conception; that He was not God the Word, making Himself man by birth from the Virgin, but the Word of God dwelling in Jesus as the spirit of prophecy dwelt in the prophets. They accuse us of saying that Christ was born man with body and soul different from ours. But we preach the Word made flesh Christ emptying Himself of the form of God and taking the form of a servant, perfect according to the fashion of human form, born a man after the likeness of ourselves: that being true Son of God, He is indeed

true Son of Man, neither the less Man because born of God, nor the less God because Man born of God.

22. But as He by His own act assumed a body from the Virgin, so He assumed from Himself a soul; though even in ordinary human birth the soul is never derived from the parents. If, then, the Virgin received from God alone the flesh which she conceived, far more certain is it that the soul of that body can have come from God alone. If, too, the same Christ be the Son of Man, Who is also the Son of God (for the whole Son of Man is the whole Son of God), how ridiculous is it to preach besides the Son of God, the Word made flesh, another I know not whom, inspired, like a prophet, by God the Word; whereas our Lord Jesus Christ is both Son of Man and Son of God. Yet because His soul was sorrowful unto death, and because He had the power to lay down His soul and the power to take it up again, they want to derive it from some alien source, and not from tire Holy Ghost, the Author of His body's conception: for God the Word became man without departing from the mystery of His own nature. He was born also not to be at one time two separate beings, but that it might be made plain, that He Who was God before He was Man, now that He has taken humanity, is God and Man. How could Jesus Christ, the Son of God, have been born of Mary, except by the Word becoming flesh:

that is by the Son of God, though in the form of God, taking the form of a slave? When He Who was in the form of God took the form of a slave, two contraries were brought together . Thus it was just as true, that He received the form of a slave, as that He remained in the form of God. The use of the one word 'form' to describe both natures compels us to recognise that He truly possessed both. He is in the form of a servant, Who is also in the form of God . And though He is the latter by His eternal nature, and the former in accordance with the divine Plan of Grace, the word has its true significance equally in both cases, because He is both: as truly in the form of God as in the form of Man. Just as to take the form of a servant is none other than to be born a man, so to be in the form of God is none other than to be God: and we confess Him as one and the same Person, not by loss of the Godhead, but by assumption of the manhood: in tire form of God through His divine nature, in the form of man from His conception by the Holy Ghost, being found in fashion as a man. That is why alter His birth as Jesus Christ, His suffering, death, and burial, He also rose again.

We cannot separate Him from Himself in all these diverse mysteries, so that He should be no longer Christ; for Christ, Who took the form of a servant, was none other than He Who was in the form of God: He Who died was the same as He Who was born: He Who rose again as He Who died; He Who is in heaven as He Who rose again; lastly, He Who is in heaven as He Who before descended from heaven.

23. So the Man Jesus Christ, Only-begotten God, as flesh and as Word at the same time Son of Man and Son of God, without ceasing to be Himself, that is, God, took true humanity after the likeness of our humanity. But when, in this humanity, He was struck with blows, or smitten with wounds, or bound with ropes, or lifted on high, He felt the force of suffering, but without its pain. Thus a dart passing through water, or piercing a flame, or wounding

the air, inflicts all that it is its nature to do: it passes through, it pierces, it wounds; but all this is without effect on the thing it strikes; since it is against the order of nature to make a hole in water, or pierce flame, or wound the air, though it is the nature of a dart to make holes, to pierce and to wound. So our Lord Jesus Christ suffered blows, hanging, crucifixion and death: but the suffering which attacked the body of the Lord, without ceasing to be suffering, had not the natural effect of suffering. It exercised its function of punishment with all its violence; but the body of Christ by its virtue suffered the violence of the punishment, without its consciousness.

True, the body of the Lord would have been capable of feeling pain like our natures, if our bodies possessed the power of treading on the waters, and walking over the waves without weighing them down by our tread or forcing them apart by the pressure of our steps, if we could pass through solid substances, and the barred doors were no obstacle to us. But, as only the body of our Lord could be borne up by the power of His soul in the waters, could walk upon the waves, and pass through walls, how can we judge of the flesh conceived of the Holy Ghost on the analogy of a human body? That flesh, that is, that Bread, is from Heaven; that humanity is from God. He had a body to suffer, and He suffered: but He had not a nature which could feel pain. For His body possessed a unique nature of its own; it was transformed into heavenly glory on the Mount, it put fevers to flight by its touch, it gave new eyesight by its spittle.

24. It may perhaps be said, 'We find Him giving way to weeping, to hunger and thirst: must we not suppose Him liable to all the other affections of human nature?' But if we do not understand the mystery of His tears, hunger, and thirst, let us remember that He Who wept also raised the dead to life: that He did not weep for the death of Lazarus, but rejoiced ; that He Who thirsted, gave from Himself rivers of living water . He could not be parched with thirst, if He was able to give the thirsty drink. Again, He Who hungered could condemn the tree which offered no fruit for His hunger : but how could His nature be overcome by hunger if He could strike the green tree barren by His word? And if, beside the mystery of weeping, hunger and thirst, the flesh He assumed, that is His entire manhood, was exposed to our weaknesses: even then it was not left to suffer from their indignities. His weeping was not for Himself; His thirst needed no water to quench it; His hunger no food to stay it. It is never said that the Lord ate or drank or wept when He was hungry, or thirsty, or sorrowful. He conformed to the habits of the body to prove the reality of His own body, to satisfy the custom of human bodies by doing as our nature does. When He ate and drank, it was a concession, not to His own necessities, but to our habits.

25. For Christ had indeed a body, but unique, as befitted His origin. He did not come into existence through the passions incident to human conception: He came into the form of our body by an act of His own power. He bore our collective humanity in the form of a servant, but He was free from the sins and imperfections of the human body: that we might be in Him, because He was born of the Virgin, and yet our faults might not be in Him, because He is the source of His own humanity, born as man but not born under the

defects of human conception. It is this mystery of His birth which the Apostle upholds and demonstrates, when he says, He humbled Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of a man and being formed in fashion as a man : that is, in that He took the form of a servant, He was born in the form of a man: in that He was made in the likeness of a man, and formed in fashion as a man, the appearance and reality of His body testified His humanity, yet, though He was formed in fashion as a man, He knew not what sin was. For His conception was in the likeness of our nature, not in the possession of our faults.

For lest the words, He took the form of a servant, might be understood of a natural birth, the Apostle adds, made in the likeness of a man, and formed in fashion as a man. The truth of His birth is thus prevented from suggesting the defects incident to our weak natures, since the form of a servant implies the reality of His birth, and found in fashion as a man, the likeness of our nature. He was of Himself born man through the Virgin, and found in the likeness of our degenerate body of sin: as the Apostle testifies in his letter to the Romans, For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His Son in the likeness of flesh of sin, condemned sin of sin . He was not found in the fashion of a man: but found in fashion as a man: nor was His flesh the flesh of sin, but the likeness of the flesh of sin. Thus the fashion of flesh implies the truth of His birth, and the likeness of the flesh of sin removes Him from the imperfections of human weakness. So the Man Jesus Christ as man was truly born, as Christ had no sin in His nature: for, on His human side, He was born, and could not but be a man; on His divine side, He could never cease to be Christ. Since then Jesus Christ was man, He submitted as man to a human birth:

yet as Christ He was free from the infirmity of our degenerate race.

26. The Apostles' belief prepares us for the understanding of this mystery; when it testifies that Jesus Christ was found in fashion as a man and was sent in the likeness of the flesh of sin. For being fashioned as a man, He is in the form of a servant, but not in the imperfections of a servant's nature; and being in the likeness of the flesh of sin, the Word is indeed flesh, but is in the likeness of the flesh of sin and not the flesh of sin itself. In like manner Jesus Christ being man is indeed human, but even thus cannot be aught else but Christ, born as man by the birth of His body, but not human in defects, as He was not human in origin. The Word made flesh could not but be the flesh that He was made; yet He remained always the Word, though He was made flesh. As the Word made flesh could not vacate the nature of His Source, so by virtue of the origin of His nature He could not but remain the Word: but at the same time we must believe that the Word is that flesh which He was made; always, however, with the reserve, that when He dwelt among us, the flesh was not the Word, but was the flesh of the Word dwelling in the flesh.

Though we have proved this, still we will see whether in the whole range of suffering, which He endured, we can anywhere detect in our Lord the weakness of bodily pain. We will put off for a time the discussion of the passages on the strength of which heresy has attributed fear to our Lord; now let us turn to the facts themselves: for His words cannot signify fear if His actions display confidence. 27. Do you suppose, heretic, that the Lord of glory

feared to suffer? Why, when Peter made this error through ignorance, did He not call him 'Satan' and a 'stumbling-block ?' Thus was Peter, who deprecated the mystery of the Passion, established in the faith by so sharp a rebuke from the lips of the gentle Christ, Whom not flesh and blood, but the Father in Heaven had revealed to him . What phantom hope are you chasing when you deny that Christ is God, and attribute to Him fear of suffering? He afraid, Who went forth to meet the armed bands of His captors? Weakness in His body, at Whose approach the pursuers reeled and broke their ranks and fell prone, unable to endure His Majesty as He offered Himself to their chains? What weakness could enthral His body, Whose nature had such power?

28. But perhaps He feared the pain of wounds. Say then, What terror had the thrust of the nail for Him Who merely by His touch restored the ear that was cut off? You who assert the weakness of the Lord, explain this work of power at the moment when His flesh was weak and suffering. Peter drew his sword and smote: the High Priest's servant stood there, lopped of his ear. How was the flesh of the ear restored from the bare wound by the touch of Christ? Amidst the flowing blood, and the wound left by the cleaving sword, when the body was so maimed, whence sprang forth an ear which was not there? Whence came that which did not exist before? Whence was restored that which was wanting? Did the hand, which created an ear, feel the pain of the nails? He prevented another from feeling the pain of a wound: did He feel it Himself? His touch could restore the flesh that was cut off; was He sorrowful because He feared the piercing of His own flesh? And if the body of Christ had this virtue, dare we allege infirmity in that nature, whose natural force could counteract all the natural infirmities of man?

29. But, perhaps, in their misguided and impious perversity, they infer His weakness from the fact that His soul was sorrowful unto death . It is not yet the time to blame you, heretic, for misunderstanding the passage. For the present I will only ask you, Why do you forget that when Judas went forth to betray Him, He said, Now is the Son of Man glorified ? If suffering was to glorify Him, how could the fear of it have made Him sorrowful? How, unless He was so void of reason, that He feared to suffer when suffering was to glorify Him? 30. But perhaps He may be thought to have feared to the extent that He prayed that the cup might be removed from Him: Abba, Father, all things are possible unto Thee: remove this cup from Me . To take the narrowest ground of argument, might you not have refuted for yourself this dull impiety by your own reading of the words, Put up thy sword into its sheath: the cup which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it ? Could fear induce Him to pray for the removal from Him of that which, in His zeal for the Divine Plan, He was hastening to fulfil? To say He shrank from the suffering He desired is not consistent. You allow that He suffered willingly: would it not be more reverent to confess that you had misunderstood this passage, than to rush with blasphemous and headlong folly to the assertion that He prayed to escape suffering. though you allow that He suffered willingly?

31. Yet, I suppose, you will arm yourself also for your godless contention with these words of the Lord, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me ? Perhaps you think that after the

disgrace of the cross, the favour of His Father's help departed from Him, and hence His cry that He was left alone in His weakness. But if you regard the contempt, the weakness, the cross of Christ as a disgrace, you should remember His words, Verily I say unto you, From henceforth ye shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming with the clouds of Heaven . 32. Where, pray, can you see fear in His Passion? Where weakness? Or pain? Or dishonour? Do the godless say He feared? But He proclaimed with His own lips His willingness to suffer. Do they maintain that He was weak? He revealed His power, when His pursuers were stricken with panic and dared not face Him. Do they contend that He felt the pain of the wounds in His flesh? But He shewed, when He restored the wounded flesh of the ear, that, though He was flesh, He did not feel the pain of fleshly wounds. The hand which touched the wounded ear belonged to His body: yet that hand created an ear out of a wound: how then can that be the hand of a body which was subject to weakness?

33. But, they say, the cross was a dishonour to Him; yet it is because of the cross that we can now see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, that He Who was born man of the womb of the Virgin has returned in His Majesty with the clouds of heaven. Your irreverence blinds you to the natural relations of cause and event: not only does the spirit of godlessness and error, with which you are filled, hide from your understanding the mystery of faith, but the obtuseness of heresy drags you below the level of ordinary human intelligence. For it stands to reason that whatever we fear, we avoid: that a weak nature is a prey to terror by its very feebleness: that whatever feels pain possesses a nature always liable to pain: that whatever dishonours is always a degradation. On what reasonable principle, then, do you hold that our Lord Jesus Christ feared that towards which He pressed: or awed the brave, yet trembled Himself with weakness: or stopped the pain of wounds, yet felt the pain of His own: or was dishonoured by the degradation of the cross, yet through the cross sat down by God on high, and returned to His Kingdom?

34. But perhaps you think your impiety has still an opportunity left to see in the words, Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirits , a proof that He feared the descent into the lower world, and even the necessity of death. But when you read these words and could not understand them, would it not have been better to say nothing, or to pray devoutly to be shewn their meaning, than to go astray with such barefaced assertions, too mad with your own folly to perceive the truth? Could you believe that He feared the depths of the abyss, the scorching flames, or the pit of avenging punishment, when you listen to His words to the thief on the cross, Verily, I say unto thee, To-day shall thou be with Me in Paradise ? Such a nature with such power could not be shut up within the confines of the nether world, nor even subjected to fear of it. When He descended to Hades, He was never absent from Paradise (just as He was always in Heaven when He was preaching on earth as the Son of Man), but promised His martyr a home there, and held out to him the transports of perfect happiness. Bodily fear cannot touch Him Who reaches indeed down as far as Hades, but by the power of His nature is present in all things everywhere.

As little can the abyss of Hell and the terrors of death lay hold upon the nature which rules the world, boundless in the freedom of its spiritual power, confident of the raptures of Paradise; for the Lord Who was to descend to Hades, was also to dwell in Paradise. Separate, if you can, from His indivisible nature a part which could fear punishment: send the one part of Christ to Hades to suffer pain, the other, you must leave in Paradise to reign: for the thief says, Remember me when Thou comest in Thy Kingdom. It was the groan he heard, I suppose, when the nails pierced the hands of our Lord, which provoked in him this blessed confession of faith: he learnt the Kingdom of Christ from His weakened and stricken body! He begs that Christ will remember him when He comes in His Kingdom: you say that Christ feared as He hung dying upon the cross. The Lord promises him, To-day, shalt thou be with Me in Paradise; you would subject Christ to Hades and fear of punishment. Your faith has the opposite expectation. The thief confessed Christ in His Kingdom as He hung on the cross, and was rewarded with Paradise from the cross: you who impute to Christ the pain of punishment and the fear of death, will fail of Paradise and His Kingdom.

35. We have now seen the power that lay in the acts and words of Christ. We have incontestably proved that His body did not share the infirmity of a natural body, because its power could expel the infirmities of the body that when He suffered, suffering laid hold of His body, but did not inflict upon it the nature of pain: and this because, though the form of our body was in the Lord, yet He by virtue of His origin was not in the body of our weakness and imperfection. He was conceived of the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin, who performed the office of her sex, but did not receive the seed of His conception from man . She brought forth a body, but one conceived of the Holy Ghost; a body possessing inherent reality, but with no infirmity in its nature. That body was truly and indeed body, because it was born of the Virgin: but it was above the weakness of our body, because it had its beginning in a spiritual conception.

36. But even now that we have proved what was the faith of the Apostle, the heretics think to meet it by the text, My soul is sorrowful even. unto death . These words, they say, prove the consciousness of natural infirmity which made Christ begin to be sorrowful. Now, first, I appeal to common intelligence: what do we mean by sorrowful unto death? It cannot signify the same as 'to be sorrowful because of death:' for where there is sorrow because of death, it is the death that is the cause of the sadness. But a sadness even to death implies that death is the finish, not the cause, of the sadness. If then He was sorrowful even to death, not because of death, we must enquire, whence came His sadness? He was sorrowful, not for a certain time, or for a period which human ignorance could not determine, but even unto death. So far from His sadness being caused by His death, it was removed by it.

37. That we may understand what was the cause of His sadness, let us see what precedes and follows this confession of sadness: for in the Passover supper our Lord completely signified the whole mystery of His Passion and our faith. After He had said that they should all be offended in Him , but promised that He would go before them into Galilee , Peter protested that though all the rest should be offended, he would remain faithful and not be

offended . But the Lord knowing by His Divine Nature what should come to pass, answered that Peter would deny Him thrice: that we might know from Peter how the others were offended, since even he lapsed into so great peril to his faith by the triple denial. After that, He took Peter, James and John, chosen, the first two to be His martyrs, John to be strengthened for the proclamation of the Gospel, and declared that He was sorrowful unto death. Then He went before, and prayed, saying, My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet, not as I will, but as Thou wilt . He prays that the cup may pass from Him, when it was certainly already before Him: for even then was being fulfilled that pouting forth of His blood of the New Testament for the sins of many. He does not pray that it may not be with Him; but that it may pass away from Him.

Then He prays that His wilt may not be done, and wills that what He wishes to be effected, may not be granted Him. For He says, Yet not as I will, but as Thou wilt: signifying by His spontaneous prayer for the cup's removal His fellowship with human anxiety, yet associating Himself with the decree of the Will which He shares inseparably with the Father. To shew, moreover, that He does not pray for Himself, and that He seeks only a conditional fulfilment of what He desires and prays for, He prefaces the whole of this request with the words, My Father, if it is possible. Is there anything for the Father the possibility of which is uncertain? But if nothing is impossible to the Father, we can see on what depends this condition, if it is possible : for this prayer is immediately followed by the words, And He came to His disciples and findeth sleeping, and saith to Peter, Could ye not watch one hour with Me? Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation: for the spirit indeed is willing, but the fresh is weak . Is the cause of this sadness and this prayer any longer doubtful? He bids them watch and pray with Him for this purpose, that they may not enter into temptation; for the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

They were under the promise made in the constancy of faithful souls not to be offended, yet, through weakness of the flesh, they were to be offended It is not, therefore, for Himself that He is sorrowful and prays: it is for those whom He exhorts to watchfulness and prayer, lest He cup of suffering should be their lot: lest that cup which He prays may pass away from Him, should abide with them.

38. And the reason He prayed that the cup might be removed from Him, if that were possible, was that, though with God nothing is impossible, as Christ Himself says, Father, all things are possible to Thee , yet for man it is. impossible to withstand the fear of suffering, and only by trial can faith be proved. Wherefore, as Man He prays for men that the cup may pass away, but as God from God, His will is in unison with the Father's effectual will. He teaches what He meant by If it is possible, in His words to Peter, Lo, Satan hath sought you that He might sift you as wheat: but f have prayed for thee that thy faith may not fail . The cup of the Lord's Passion was to be a trial for there all, and He prays the Father for Peter that his faith may not fail: that when he denied through weakness, at least he might not fail t of penitential sorrow, for repentance would mean that faith survived.

39. The Lord was sorrowful then unto death because in presence of the death, the earthquake, the darkened day, the rent veil, the opened graves, and the resurrection of the dead, the faith of the disciples would need to be established which had been so shaken by the terror of tile night arrest, the scourging, the striking, the spitting upon, the crown of thorns, the bearing of the cross, and all the insults of the Passion, but most of all by the condemnation to the accursed cross. Knowing that all this would be at an end after His Passion, He was sad unto death. He knew, too, that the cup could not pass away unless He drank it, for He said, My Father, this cup cannot pass from Me unless I drink it: Thy will be done : that is, with the completion of His Passion, the fear of the cup would pass away which could not pass away unless He drank it: the end of that fear would follow only when His Passion was completed and terror destroyed , because after His death, the stumbling-block of the disciples' weakness would be removed by the glory of His power.

40. Although by His words, Thy will be done, He surrendered the Apostles to the decision of His Father's will, in regard to the offence of the cup, that is, of His Passion, still He repeated His prayer a second and a third time. After that He said, Sleep on now, and take your rest . It is not without the consciousness of some secret reason that He Who had reproached them for their sleep, now bade them sleep on, add take their rest. Luke is thought to have given us the meaning of this command. After He had told us how Satan had sought to sift the Apostles as it were wheat, and how the Lord had been entreated that the faith of Peter might not fail , he adds that the Lord prayed earnestly, and then that an angel stood by Him comforting Him, and as the angel stood by Him, He prayed the more earnestly, so that the sweat poured from His hotly in drops of blood . The Angel was sent, then, to watch over the Apostles, and when the Lord was comforted by him, so that He no longer sorrowed for them, He said, without fear of sadness, Sleep on now, and take your rest. Matthew and Mark are silent about the angel, and the request of the devil: but after the sorrowfulness of His soul, the reproach of the sleepers, and the prayer that the cup may be taken away, there must be some good reason for the command to the sleepers which follows; unless we assume that He Who was about to leave them, and Himself had received comfort from the Angel sent to Him, meant to abandon them to their sleep, soon to be arrested and kept in durance.

41. We must not indeed pass over the fact hat in many manuscripts, both Latin and Greek, nothing is said of the angel's coming or the Bloody Sweat. But while we suspend judgment, whether this is an omission, where it is wanting, or an interpolation, where it is found (for the discordance of the copies leaves the question uncertain), let not the heretics encourage themselves that herein lies a confirmation of His weakness, that He needed the help and comfort of an angel. Let them remember the Creator of the angels needs not the support of His creatures. Moreover His comforting must be explained in the same way as His sorrow. He was sorrowful for us, that is, on our account; He must also have been comforted for us, that is, on our account. If He sorrowed concerning us, He was comforted concerning us. The object of His comfort is the saint as that of His sadness. Nor let any one dare to impute the Sweat to a weakness, for it is contrary to nature to sweat blood . It was no infirmity, for His power reversed the law of nature. The bloody sweat does not for one moment support

the heresy of weakness, while it establishes against the heresy which invents an apparent body , the reality all His body. Since, then, His fear was concerning us, and His prayer on our behalf, we are forced to the conclusion that all this happened on our account, for whom He feared, and for whom He prayed.

42. Again the Gospels fill up what is lacking in one another: we learn some things from one, some from another, and so on, because all are the proclamation of the same spirit. Thus John, who especially brings out the working of spiritual causes in the Gospel, preserves this prayer of the Lord for the Apostles, which all the others passed over: how He prayed, namely, Holy Father, keep them in Thy Name . . . . while I was them I kept them in Thy Name: those whom Thou gavest Me I have kept . That prayer was not for Himself but for His Apostles; nor was He sorrowful for Himself, since He bids them pray that they be not tempted; nor is the angel sent to Him, for He could summon down from Heaven, if He would, twelve thousand angels ; nor did He fear because of death when He was troubled unto death. Again, He does not pray that the cup may pass over Himself, but that it may pass away from Himself, though before it could pass away He must have drunk it. But, further, 'to pass away' does not mean merely 'to leave the place,' but 'not to exist any more at all:' which is shewn in the language of the Gospels and Epistles: for example, Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My word shall not perish : also the Apostle says, Behold the old things are passed away; they are become new .

And again, The fashion of this world shall pass away . The cup, therefore, of which He prays to the Father, cannot pass away unless it be drunk; and when He prays, He prays for those whom He preserved, so long as He was with them, whom He now hands over to the Father to preserve. Now that He is about to accomplish the mystery of death He begs the Father to guard them. The presence of the angel who was sent to Him (if this explanation be true) is not of doubtful significance. Jesus shewed His certainty that the prayer was answered when, at its close, He bade the disciples sleep on. The effect of this prayer and the security which prompted the command, 'sleep on,' is noticed by the Evangelist in the course of the Passion, when he says of the Apostles just before they escaped from the hands of the pursuers, That the word might be fulfilled which He had spoken, Of those whom Thou hast given Me I lost not one of them . He fulfils Himself the petition of His prayer, and they are all safe; but He asks that those whom He has preserved the Father will now preserve in His own Name. And they are preserved: the faith of Peter does not fail: it cowered, but repentance followed immediately.

43. Combine the Lord's prayer in John, the request of the devil in Luke, the sorrowfulness unto death, and the protest against sleep, followed by the command, Sleep on, in Matthew and Mark, and all difficulty disappears. The prayer in John, in which He commends the Apostles to His Father, explains the cause of His sorrowfulness, and the prayer that the cup may pass away. It is not from Himself that the Lord prays the suffering may be taken away. He beseeches the Father to preserve the disciples during His coming passion. In the same way, the prayer against Satan in St. Luke explains the confidence with which

He permitted the sleep He had just forbidden. 44. There was, then, no place for human anxiety and trepidation in that nature, which was more than human. It was superior to the ills of earthly flesh; a body not sprung from earthly elements, although His origin as Son of Man was due to the mystery of the conception by the Holy Ghost. The power of the Most High imparted its power to the booty which the Virgin bare from the conception of the Holy Ghost. The animated body derives its conscious existence from association with a soul, which is diffused throughout it, and quickens it to perceive pains inflicted from without. Thus the soul, warned by the happy glow of its own heavenly faith and hope, soars above its own origin in the beginnings of an earthly body, and raises that body to union with itself in thought and spirit, so that it ceases to feel the suffering of that which, all the while, it suffers. Why need we then say more about the nature of the Lord's body, that of the Son of Man Who came down from heaven? Even earthly bodies can sometimes be made indifferent to the natural necessities of pain and fear.

45. Did the Jewish children fear the flames blazing up with the fuel cast upon them in the fiery furnace at Babylon? Did the terror of that terrible fire prevail over their nature, conceived though it was like ours ? Did they feel pain, when the flames surrounded them? Perhaps, however, you may say they felt no pain, because they were not burnt: the flames were deprived of their burning nature. To be sure it is natural to the body to fear burning, and to be burnt by fire. But through the spirit of faith their earthly bodies (that is, bodies which had their origin according to the principles of natural birth) could neither be burnt nor made afraid. What, therefore, in the case of men was a violation of the order of nature, produced by faith in God, cannot be judged in God's case natural, but as an activity of the Spirit commencing with His earthly origin. The children were bound in the midst of the fire; they had no fear as they mounted the blazing pile: they felt not the flame as they prayed: though in the midst of the furnace, they could not be burnt. Both the fire and their bodies lost their proper natures; the one did not burn, the others were not burnt. Yet in all other respects, both fire and bodies retained their natures: for the bystanders were consumed, and the ministers of punishment were themselves punished.

Impious heretic you will have it that Christ suffered pain from the piercing of the nails, that He felt the bitterness of the wound, when they were driven through His hands: why, pray, did not the children fear the flames? Why did they suffer no pain? What was the nature in their bodies, which overcame that of fire? In the zeal of their faith and the glory of a blessed martyrdora they forgot to fear the terrible; should Christ be sorrowful from fear of the cross, Christ, Who even if He had been conceived with our sinful origin, would have been still God upon the cross, Who was to judge the world and reign for ever and ever? Could He forget such a reward, and tremble with the anxiety of dishonourable fear?

46. Daniel, whose meat was the scanty portion of a prophet , did not fear the lions' den. The Apostles rejoiced in suffering and death for the Name of Christ. To Paul his sacrifice was the crown of righteousness . The Martyrs sang hymns as they offered their necks to the executioner, and climbed with psalms the blazing logs piled for them. The consciousness of

faith takes away the weakness of nature, transforms the bodily senses that they feel no pain, and so the body is strengthened by the fixed purpose of the soul, and feels nothing except the impulse of its enthusiasm. The suffering which the mind despises in its desire of glory, the body does not feel, so long as the soul invigorates it. It is, then, a natural effect in man, that the zeal of the soul glowing for glory should make him unconscious of suffering, heedless of wounds, and regardless of death. But Jesus Christ the Lord of glory, the hem of Whose garment can heal, Whose spittle and word can create; for the than with the withered hand at His command stretched it forth whole, he who was born blind felt no more the defect of his birth, and the smitten ear was made sound as the other; dare we think of His pierced body in that pain and weakness, from which the spirit of faith in Him rescued the glorious and blessed Martyrs?

47. The Only-begotten God, then, suffered in His person the attacks of all the infirmities to which we are subject; but He suffered them in the power of His own nature, just as He was born in the power of His own nature, for at His birth He did not lose His omnipotent nature by being born. Though born under human conditions, He was not so conceived: His birth was surrounded by human circumstances, but His origin went beyond them. He suffered then in His body alter the manner of our infirm body, yet bore the sufferings of our body in the power of His own body. To this article of our faith the prophet bears witness when he says, He beareth our sins and grieveth for us: and we esteemed Him stricken, smitten, and afflicted: He was wounded for our transgressions and made weak for our sins . It is then a mistaken opinion of human judgment, which thinks He felt pain because He suffered. He bore our sins, that is, He assumed our body of sin, but was Himself sinless. He was sent in the likeness of the flesh of sin, bearing sin indeed in His flesh but our sin. So too He felt pain for us, but not with our senses; He was found in fashion as a man, with a body which could feel pain, but His nature could not feel pain; for, though His fashion was that of a man, His origin was not human, but He was born by conception of the Holy Ghost.

For the reasons mentioned, He was esteemed 'stricken, smitten and afflicted.' He took the form of a servant: and 'man born of a Virgin' conveys to us the idea of One Whose nature felt pain when He suffered. But though He was wounded it was 'for our transgressions.' The wound was not the wound of His own trangressions: the suffering not a suffering for Himself. He was not born man for His own sake, nor did He transgress in His own action. The Apostle explains the principle of the Divine Plan when he says, We beseech you through Christ to be reconciled to God. Him, Who knew no sin, He made to be sin on our behalf . To condemn sin through sin in the flesh, He Who knew no sin was Himself made sin; that is, by means of the flesh to condemn sin in the flesh, He became flesh on our behalf but knew not flesh : and therefore was wounded because of our transgressions.

48. Again, the Apostle knows nothing in Christ about fear of pain. When He wishes to speak of the dispensation of the Passion, He includes it in the mystery of Christ's Divinity. Forgiving us all our trespasses, blotting out the band written in ordinances, that was against us, which was contrary to us: taking it away, and nailing it to the cross; stripping off from Him-

self His flesh, He made a shew of principalities and towers openly triumphing over them in Himself . Was that the power, think you, to yield to the wound of the nail, to wince under the piercing blow, to convert itself into a nature that can feel pain? Yet the Apostle, who speaks as the mouthpiece of Christ , relating the work of our salvation through the Lord, describes the death of Christ as 'stripping off from Himself His flesh, boldly putting to shame the powers and triumphing over them in Himself.' If His passion was a necessity of nature and not the free gift of your salvation: if the cross was merely the suffering of wounds, and not the fixing upon Himself of the decree of death made out against you: if His dying was a violence done by death, and not the stripping off of the flesh by the power of God: lastly, if His death itself was anything but a dishonouring of powers, an act of boldness, a triumph: then ascribe to Him infirmity, because He was therein subject to necessity and nature, to force, to If ear and disgrace.

But if it is the exact opposite in the mystery of the Passion, as it was preached to us, who, pray, can be so senseless as to repudiate the faith taught by the Apostles, to reverse all feelings of religion, to distort into the dishonourable charge of natural weakness, what was an act of free-will, a mystery, a display of power and boldness, a triumph? And what a triumph it was, when He offered Himself to those who sought to crucify Him, and they could not endure His presence: when He stood under sentence of death, Who shortly was to sit on the right hand of power: when He prayed for His persecutors while the nails were driven through Him: when He completed the mystery as He drained the draught of vinegar; when He was numbered among the transgressors and meanwhile granted Paradise: that when He was lifted on the tree, the earth quaked: when He hung on the cross, sun and day were put to flight: that He left His own body, yet cubed life back to the bodies of others : was buffed a corpse and rose again God: as man suffered all weaknesses for our sakes, as God triumphed in them all.

49. There is still, the heretics say, another serious and far reaching confession of weakness, all the more so because it is in the mouth of the Lord Himself, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me ? They construe this into the expression of a bitter complaint, that He was deserted and given over to weakness. But what a violent interpretation of an irreligious mind! how repugnant to the whole tenor of our Lord's words! He hastened to the death, which was to glorify Him, and after which He was to sit on the right hand of power; with all those blessed expectations could He fear death, and therefore complain that His God had betrayed Him to its necessity, when it was the entrance to eternal blessedness? 50. Further their heretical ingenuity presses on in the path prepared by their own godlessness, even to the entire absorption of God the Word into the human soul, and consequent denial that Jesus Christ, the Son of Man, was the same as the Son of God. So either God the Word ceased to be Himself while He performed the function of a soul in giving life to a body , or the man who was born was not the Christ at all, but the Word dwelt in him, as the Spirit dwelt in the prophets . These absurd and perverse errors have grown in boldness and godlessness till they assert that Jesus Christ was not Christ until He was born of Mary. He Who was born was not a pre-existent Being, but began at that moment to exist .

Hence follows also the error that God the Word, as it were some part of the Divine power extending itself in unbroken continuation, dwelt within that man who received from Mary the beginning of his being, and endowed him with the power of Divine working: though that man lived and moved by the nature of his own soul .

51. Through this subtle and mischievous doctrine they are drawn into the error that God the Word became soul to the body, His nature by self-humiliation working the change upon itself, and thus the Word ceased to be God; or else, that the Man Jesus, in the poverty and remoteness from God of His nature, was animated only by the life and motion of His own human soul, wherein the Word of God, that is, as it were, the might of His uttered voice, resided. Thus the way is opened for all manner of irreverent theorising: the sum of which is, either that God the Word was merged in the soul and ceased to be God: or that Christ had no existence before His birth from Mary, since Jesus Christ, a mere man of ordinary body and soul, began to exist only at His human birth anti was raised to the level of the Power, which worked within Him, by the extraneous force of the Divine Word extending itself into Him. Then when God the Word, after this extension, was withdrawn, He cried, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? or at least when the divine nature of the Word once more gave place within Him to a human soul, He Who had hitherto relied on His Father's help, now separated from it, and abandoned to death, bemoaned His solitude and chid His deserter. Thus in every way arises a deadly danger of error in belief, whether it be thought that the cry of complaint denotes a weakness of nature in God the Word, or that God the Word was not pre-existent because the birth of Jesus Christ from Mary was the beginning of His being.

52. Amid these irreverent and ill-grounded theories the faith of the Church, inspired by the teaching of the Apostles, has recognised a birth of Christ, but no beginning. It knows of the dispensation, but of no division : it refuses to make a separation in Jesus Christ ; whereby Jesus is one and Christ another; nor does it distinguish the Son of Man from the Son of God, lest perhaps the Son of God be not regarded as Son of Man also. It does not absorb the Son of God in the Son of Man; nor does it by a tripartite belief tear asunder Christ, Whose coat woven from the top throughout was not parted, dividing Jesus Christ into the Word, a body and a soul; nor, on the other hand, does it absorb the Word in body and soul. To it He is perfectly God the Word, and perfectly Christ the Man. To this alone we hold fast in the mystery of our confession, namely, the faith that Christ is none other than Jesus, and the doctrine that Jesus is none other than Christ.

53. I am not ignorant how much the grandeur of the divine mystery baffles our weak understanding, so that language can scarcely express it, or reason define it, or thought even embrace it. The Apostle, knowing that the most difficult task for an earthly nature is to apprehend, unaided, God's mode of action (for then our judgment were keener to discern than God is mighty to effect), writes to his true son according to the faith, who had received the Holy Scripture from his childhood, As I exhorted thee to tarry at Ephesus, when I was going into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge certain men not to teach a different doctrine, nei-

ther to give heed to fables and endless genealogies, the which minister questionings, rattler than the edification of God which is in faith . He bids him forbear to handle wordy genealogies and fables, which minister endless questionings. The edification of God, he says, is in faith: he limits human reverence to the faithful worship of the Almighty, and does not suffer our weakness to strain itself in the attempt to see what only dazzles the eye. If we look at the brightness of the sun, the sight is strained and weakened: and sometimes when we scrutinise with too curious gaze the source of the shining light, the eyes lose their natural power, and the sense of sight is even destroyed. Thus it happens that through trying to see too much we see nothing at all.

What must we then expect in the case of God, the Sun of Righteousness? Will not foolishness be their reward, who would be over wise? Will not dull and brainless stupor usurp the place of the burning light of intelligence? A lower nature cannot understand the principle of a higher: nor can Heaven's mode of thought be revealed to human conception, for whatever is within the range of a limited con sciousness, is itself limited. The divine power exceeds therefore the capacity of the human mind. If the limited strains itself to reach so far, it becomes even feebler than before. It loses what certainty it had: instead of seeing heavenly things it is only blinded by them. No mind can fully comprehend the divine: it punishes the obstinacy of the curious by depriving them of their power. Would we look at the sun we must remove as much of his brilliancy as we need, in order to see him: if not, by expecting too much, we fall short of the possible. In the same way we can only hope to understand the purposes of Heaven, so far as is permitted. We must expect only what He grants to our apprehension: if we attempt to go beyond the limit of His indulgence, it is withdrawn altogether. There is that in God which we can perceive: it is visible to all if we are content with the possible.

Just as with the sun we can see something, if we are content to see what can be seen, but if we strain beyond the possible we lose all: so is it with the nature of God. There is that which we can understand if we are content with understanding what we can: but aim beyond your powers and you will lose even the power of attaining what was within your reach.

54. The mystery of that other timeless birth I will not yet touch upon: its treatment demands an ampler space than this. For the present I will speak of the Incarnation only. Tell me, I pray, ye who pry intosecrets of Heaven, the mystery of Christ born of a Virgin and His nature; whence will you explain that He was conceived and born of a Virgin? What was the physical cause of His origin according to your disputations? How was He formed within His mother's womb? Whence His body and His humanity?And lastly, what does it mean that the Son of Man descended from heaven Who remained in heaven ? It is not possible by the laws of bodies for the same object to remain and to descend: the one is the change of downward motion; the other the stillness of being at rest. The Infant wails but is in Heaven: the Boy grows but remains ever the immeasurable God. By what perception of human understanding can we comprehend that He ascended where He was before, and He descended Who remained in heaven? The Lord says, What if ye should behold the Son

of Man ascending thither where He was before ? The Son of Man ascends where He was before: can sense apprehend this? The Son of Man descends from heaven, Who is in heaven: can reason cope with this? The Word was made flesh: can words express this? The Word becomes flesh, that is, God becomes Man: the Man is in heaven: the God is from heaven.

He ascends Who descended: but He descends and yet does not descend. He is as He ever was, yet He was not ever what He is. We pass in review the causes, but we cannot explain the manner: we perceive the manner, and we cannot understand the causes. Yet if we understand Christ Jesus even thus, we shall know Him: if we seek to understand Him further we shall not know Him at all.

55. Again, how great a mystery of word and act it is that Christ wept, that His eyes filled with tears from the anguish of His mind . Whence came this defect in His soul that sorrow should wring tears from His body? What bitter fate, what unendurable pain, could move to a flood of tears the Son of Man Who descended from heaven? Again, what was it in Him which wept? God the Word? or His human soul? For though weeping is a bodily function, the body is but a servant; tears are, as it were, the sweat of the agonised soul. Again, what was the cause of His weeping? Did He owe to Jerusalem the debt of His tears, Jerusalem, the godless parricide, whom no suffering could requite for the slaughter of Apostles and Prophets, and the murder of her Lord Himself? He might weep for the disasters and death which befall mankind: but could He grieve for the fall of that doomed and desperate race? What, I ask, was this mystery of weeping? His soul wept for sorrow; was not it the soul which sent forth the Prophets? Which would so often have gathered the chickens together under the shadow of His wings ? But God the Word cannot grieve, nor can the Spirit weep: nor could His soul possibly do anything before the body existed. Yet we cannot doubt that Jesus Christ truly wept .

56. No less real were the tears He shed for Lazarus . The first question here is, What was there to weep for in the case of Lazarus? Not his death, for that was not unto death, but for the glory of God: for the Lord says, That sickness is not unto death, but far the glory of God, that the Son of God may be honoured through him . The death which was the cause of God's being glorified could not bring sorrow and tears. Nor was there any occasion for tears in His absence from Lazarus at the time of his death. He says plainly, Lazarus is dead, and I rejoice for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent that ye may believe . His absence then, which aided the Apostles' belief, was not the cause of His sorrow: for with the knowledge of Divine omniscience, He declared the death of the sick man from afar. We can find, then, no necessity for tears, yet He wept. And again I ask, To whom must we ascribe the weeping? To God, or the soul, or the body? The body, of itself, has no tears except those it sheds at the command of the sorrowing soul. Far less can God have wept, for He was to be glorified in Lazarus. Nor is it reason to say His soul recalled Lazarus from the tomb: can a soul linked to a body, by the power of its command, call another soul back to the dead hotly from which it has departed? Can He grieve Who is about to be glorified? Can He weep Who is about to restore the dead to life? Tears are not for Him Who is about to give life, or grief

for Him Who is about to receive glory. Yet He Who wept and grieved was also the Giver of life.

57. If there are many points which we treat scantily it is not because we have nothing to say, or do not know what has already been said; our purpose is, by abstaining from too laborious a process of argument, to render the results as attractive as possible to the reader. We know the deeds and words of our Lord, yet we know them not: we are not ignorant of them, yet they cannot be understood. The facts are real, but the power behind them is a mystery. We will prove this from His own words, For this reason doth the Father love Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it up again. No one taketh it from Me, but l lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it up again. This commandment received I from the Father . He lays down His life of Himself, but I ask who lays it down? We confess without hesitation, that Christ is God the Word: but on the other hand, we know that the Son of Man was composed of a soul and a body: compare the angel's words to Joseph, Arise and take the child and His mother, and go into the land of Israel; for they are dead who sought the soul of the child . Whose soul is it? His body's, or God's?

If His body's, what power has the body to lay down the soul, when it is only by the working of the soul that it is quickened into life? Again, how could the body, which apart from the soul is inert and dead, receive a command from the Father? But if, on the other hand, any man suppose that God the Word laid aside His soul, that He might take it up again, he must prove that God the Word died, that is, remained without life and feeling like a dead body, and took up His soul again to be quickened once more into life by it.

58. But, further, no one who is endued with reason can impute to God a soul; though it is written in many places that the soul of God hates sabbaths and new moons: and also that it delights in certain things . But this is merely a conventional expression to be understood in the same way as when God is spoken of as possessing body, with hands, and eyes, and fingers, and arms, and heart. As the Lord said, A Spirit hath not flesh and bones : He then Who is, and changeth not , cannot have the limbs and parts of a tangible body. He is a simple and blessed nature, a single, complete, all-embracing Whole. God is therefore not quickened into life, like bodies, by the action of an indwelling soul, but is Himself His own life.

59. How does He then lay down His soul, or take it up again? What is the meaning of this command He received? God could not lay it down that is, die, or take it up again, that is, come to life. But neither did the body receive the command to take it up again; it could not do so of itself, for He said of the Temple of His body, Destroy this temple and after three days I will raise it up . Thus it is God Who raises up the temple of His body. And Who lays down His soul to take it again? The body does not take it up again of itself: it is raised up by God. That which is raised up again must have been dead, and that which is living does not lay down its soul. God then was neither dead nor buried: and yet He said, In that she has poured this ointment upon My body she did it for My burial . In that it was poured upon His body it was done for His burial: but the His is not the same as Him. It is quite another

use of the pronoun when we say, 'it was done for the burial of Him,' and when we say, 'His body was anointed:' nor is the sense the same in 'His body was buried,' and 'He was buried.'

60. To grasp this divine mystery we must see the God in Him without ignoring the Man; and the Man without ignoring the God. We must not divide Jesus Christ, for the Word was made flesh: yet we must not call Him buried, though we know He raised Himself again: must not doubt His resurrection, though we dare not deny He was buried . Jesus Christ was buried, for He died: He died, and even cried out at the moment of death, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? Yet He, Who uttered these words, said also: Verily I say unto thee, This day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise , and He Who promised Paradise to the thief cried aloud, Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit; and having said this He gave up the Ghost .

61. Ye who trisect Christ into the Word, the soul and the body, or degrade the whole Christ, even God the Word, into a single member of our race, unfold to us this mystery of great godliness which was manifested in the flesh . What Spirit did Christ give up? Who commended His Spirit into the hands of His Father? Who was to be in Paradise that same day? Who complained that He was deserted of God? The cry of the deserted betokens the weakness of the dying: the promise of Paradise the sovereign power of the living God. To commend His Spirit denoted confidence: to give up His Spirit implied His departure by death. Who then, I demand, was it Who died? Surely He Who gave up His Spirit? but Who gave up His Spirit? Certainly He Who commended it to His Father. And if He Who commended His Spirit is the same as He Who gave it up and died, was it the body which commended its soul, or God Who commended the body's soul? I say 'soul,' because there is no doubt it is frequently synonymous with 'spirit,' as might be gathered merely from the language here: Jesus gave up His 'Spirit' when He was on the point of death. If, therefore, you hold the conviction that the body commended the soul, that the perishable commended the living, the corruptible the eternal, that which was to be raised again, that which abides unchanged, then, since He Who commended His Spirit to the Father was also to be in Paradise with the thief that same day, I would fain know if, while the sepulchre received Him, He was abiding in heaven, or if He was abiding in heaven, when He cried out that God had deserted Him.

62. It is one and the same Lord Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh, Who expresses Himself in all these utterances, Who is man when He says He is abandoned to death: yet while man still rules in Paradise as God, and though reigning in Paradise, as Son of God commends His Spirit to His Father, as Son of Man gives up to death the Spirit He commended to the Father. Why do we then view as a disgrace that which is a mystery? We see Him complaining that He is left to die, because He is Man: we see Him, as He dies, declaring that He reigned in Paradise, because He is God. Why should we harp, to support our irreverence, on what He said to make us understand His death, and keep back what He proclaimed to demonstrate His immortality? The words and the voice are equally His, when He complains of desertion, and when He declares His rule: by what method of heretical logic do we split up our belief and deny that He Who died was at the same time He Who rules? Did He not testify both

equally of Himself, when He commended His Spirit, and when He gave it up? But if He is the same, Who commended His Spirit, and gave it up, if He dies when ruling and rides when dead: then the mystery of the Son of God and Son of Man means that He is One, Who dying reigns, and reigning dies.

63. Stand aside then, all godless unbelievers, for whom the divine mystery is too great, who do not know that Christ wept not for Himself but for us, to prove the reality of His assumed manhood by yielding to the emotion common to humanity: who do not perceive that Christ died not for Himself, but for our life, to renew human life by the death of the deathless God: who cannot reconcile the complaint of the deserted with the confidence of the Ruler: who would teach us that because He reigns as God and complains that He is dying, we have here a dead man and the reigning God. For He Who dies is none other than He Who reigns, He Who commends His spirit than He Who gives it up: He Who was buried, rose again: ascending or descending He is altogether one.

64. Listen to the teaching of the Apostle and see in it a faith instructed not by the understanding of the flesh but by the gift of the Spirit. The Greeks seek after wisdom, he says, and the Jews ask for a sign; but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block, and unto Gentiles foolishness; but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ Jesus, the power of God, and the wisdom of God . Is Christ divided here so that Jesus the crucified is one, and Christ, the power and wisdom of God, another? This is to the Jews a stumbling-block and unto the Gentiles foolishness; but to us Christ Jesus is the power of God, and the wisdom of God: wisdom, how ever, not known of the world, nor understood by a secular philosophy. Hear the same blessed Apostle when he declares that it has not been understood, We speak the wisdom of God, which hath been hidden in a mystery, which God foreordained before the world for our glory: which none of the rulers of this world has known: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory . Does not the Apostle know that this wisdom of God is hidden in a mystery, and cannot be known of the rulers of this world? Does he divide Christ into a Lord of Glory and a crucified Jesus? Nay, rather, he contradicts this most foolish and impious idea with the words, For I determined to know nothing among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified .

65. The Apostle knew nothing else, and he determined to know nothing else: we men of feebler wit, and feebler faith, split up, divide and double Jesus Christ, constituting ourselves judges of the unknown, and blaspheming the hidden mystery. For us Christ crucified is one, Christ the wisdom of God another: Christ Who was buried different from Christ Who descended from Heaven: the Son of Man not at the same time also Son of God. We teach that which we do not understand: we seek to refute that which we cannot grasp. We men improve upon the revelation of God: we are not content to say with the Apostle, Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth? It is Christ Jesus, that died, yea, rather, that was raised front the dead, Who is at the right hand of God, Who also maketh intercession far us . Is He Who intercedes for us other than He Who is at the right hand of God? Is not He Who is at the right hand of God the very same

Who rose again? Is He Who rose again other than He Who died? He Who died than He Who condemns us? Lastly, is not He Who condemns us also God Who justifies us? Distinguish, if you can, Christ our accuser from God our defender, Christ Who died from Christ Who condemns, Christ sitting at the right hand of God and praying for us from Christ Who died.

Whether, therefore, dead or buried, descended into Hades or ascended into Heaven, all is one and the same Christ: as the Apostle says, Now this 'He ascended' what is it, but that He also descended to the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended far above all heavens, that He may fill all things . How far then shall we push our babbling ignorance and blasphemy, professing to explain what is hidden in the mystery of God? He that descended is the same also that ascended. Can we longer doubt that the Man Christ Jesus rose from the dead, ascended above the heavens and is at the right hand of God? We cannot say His body descended into Hades, which lay in the grave. If then He Who descended is one with Him, Who ascended; if His body did not go down into Hades, yet really arose from the dead, and ascended into heaven, what remains, except to believe in the secret mystery, which is hidden from the world and the rulers of this age, and to confess that, ascending or descending, He is but One, one Jesus Christ for us, Son of God and Son of Man, God the Word and Man in the flesh, Who suffered, died, was buried, rose again, was received into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God:

Who possesses in His one single self, according to the Divine Plan and nature, in the form of God and in the form of a servant, the Human and Divine without separation or division.

66. So the Apostle moulding our ignorant and haphazard ideas into conformity with truth says of this mystery of the faith, For He was crucified through weakness but He liveth through the power of God . Preaching the Son of Man and Son of God, Man through the Divine Plan, God through His eternal nature, he says, that He Who was crucified through weakness is He Who lives through the power of God. His weakness arises from the form of a servant, His nature remains because of the form of God. He took the form of a servant, though He was in form of God: therefore there can be no doubt as to the mystery according to which He both suffered and lived. There existed in Him both weakness to suffer, and power of God to give life: and hence He Who suffered and lived cannot be more than One, or other than Himself.

67. The Only-begotten God suffered indeed all that men can suffer: but let us express ourselves in the words anti faith of the Apostle. He says, For I delivered unto you first of all how that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures . This is no unsupported statement of his own, which might lead to error, but a warning to us to confess that Christ died and rose after a real manner, not a nominal, since the tact is certified by the full weight of Scripture authority; and that we must understand His death in that exact sense in which Scripture declares it. In his regard for the perplexities and scruples of the weak and sensitive believer, he adds these solemn concluding words, according to the Scriptures, to his proclamation of the death and the resurrection. He would not have us grow weaker,

driven about by every wind of vain doctrine, or vexed by empty subtleties and false doubts: he would summon faith to return, before it were shipwrecked, to the haven of piety, believing and confessing the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, Son of Man and Son of God, according to the Scriptures, this being the safeguard of reverence against the attack of the adversary, so to understand the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, as it was written of Him. There is no danger in faith:

the reverent confession of the hidden mystery of God is always safe. Christ was born of the Virgin, but conceived of the Holy Ghost according to the Scriptures. Christ wept, but according to the Scriptures: that which made Him weep was also a cause of joy. Christ hungered; but according to the Scriptures, He used His power as God against the tree which bore no fruit, when He had no loath Christ suffered: but according to the Scriptures, He was about to sit at the right hand of Power. He complained that He was abandoned to die: but according to the Scriptures, at the same moment He received in His kingdom in Paradise the thief who confessed Him. He died: but according to the Scriptures, He rose again and sits at the right hand of God. In the belief of this mystery there is life: this confession resists all attack.

68. The Apostle is careful to leave no room for doubt: we cannot say, "Christ was born, suffered, was dead and buried, and rose again but how, by what power, by what division of parts of Himself? Who wept? Who rejoiced? Who complained? Who descended? and Who ascended?" He rests the merits of faith entirely on the confession of unquestioning reverence. The righteousness, he says, which is of faith saith thus, Say not in thy heart, Who hath ascended into heaven, that is, to bring Christ down: or Who hath descended into the abyss: that is, to bring Christ up from the dead? But what saith the Scripture? Thy word is nigh, in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith which we preach: because if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart, that God hath raised Him up from the dead, thou shalt be saved . Faith perfects the righteous man: as it is written, Abraham believed God and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness . Did Abraham impugn the word of God, when he was promised the inheritance of the Gentiles, and an abiding posterity as many as the sand or the stars for multitude? To the reverent faith, which trusts implicitly on the omnipotence of God, the limits of human weakness are no barrier. Despising all that is feeble and earthly in itself, it believes the divine promise, even though it exceeds the possibilities of human nature. It knows that the laws which govern man are no hindrance to the power of God, Who is as bountiful in the performance as He is gracious in the promise. Nothing is more righteous than Faith. For as in human conduct it iS equity and self-restraint that receive our approval, so in the case of God, what is more righteous for man than to ascribe omnipotence to Him, Whose Power He perceives to be without limits?

69. The Apostle then looking in us for the righteousness which is of Faith, cuts at the root of incredulous doubt and godless unbelief. He forbids us to admit into our hearts the cares of anxious thought, and points to the authority of the Prophet's words, Say not in thy heart,

Who hath ascended into heaven ? Then He completes the thought of the Prophet's words with the addition, That is to bring Christ down. The perception of the human mind cannot attain to the knowledge of the divine: but neither can a reverent faith doubt the works of God. Christ needed no human help, that any one should ascend into heaven to bring Him down from His blessed Home to His earthly body. It was no external force which drove Him down to the earth. We must believe that He came, even as He did come: it is true religion to confess Jesus Christ not brought down, but descending. The mystery both of the time and the method of His coming, belongs to Him alone. We may not think because He came but recently, that therefore He must have been brought down, nor that His coming in time depended upon another, who brought Him down.

Nor does the Apostle give room for unbelief in the other direction. He quotes at once the words of the Prophet, Or Who hath descended into the abyss , and adds immediately the explanation, That is to bring Christ back from the dead. He is free to return into heaven, Who was free to descend to the earth. All hesitation and doubt is then removed. Faith reveals what omnipotence plans: his tory relates the effect, God Almighty was the cause.

70. But there is demanded from us an unwavering certainty. The Apostle expounding the whole secret of the Scripture passes on, Thy word is nigh, in thy mouth and in thy heart . The words of our confession must not be tardy or deliberately vague: there must be no interval between heart and lips, lest what ought to be the confession of true reverence become a subterfuge of infidelity. The word must be near us, and within us; no delay between the heart and the lips; a faith of conviction as well as of words. Heart and lips must be in harmony, and reveal in thought and utterance a religion which does not waver. Here too, as before, the Apostle adds the explanation of the Prophet's words, That is the word of Faith, which we preach; because if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God hath raised Him up from the dead, thou shalt be saved. Piety consists in rejecting doubt, righteousness in believing, salvation in confessing. Trifle not with ambiguities, be not stirred up to vain babblings, do not debate in any way the powers of God, or impose limits upon His might, cease searching again and again for the causes of unsearchable mysteries: confess rather that Jesus is the Lord, and believe that God raised Him from the dead; herein is salvation. What folly is it to depreciate the nature and character of Christ, when this alone is salvation, to know that He is the Lord.

Again, what an error of human vanity to quarrel about His resurrection, when it is enough for eternal life to believe that God raised Him up. In simplicity then is faith, in faith righteousness, and in confession true godliness. For God does not call us to the blessed life through arduous investigations. He does not tempt us with the varied arts of rhetoric. The way to eternally is plain and easy; believe that Jesus was raised from the dead by God and confess that He is the Lord. Let no one therefore wrest into an occasion for impiety, what was said because of our ignorance. It had to be proved to us, that Jesus Christ died, that we might live in Him.

71. If then He said, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me , and Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit , that we might be sure that He did die, was not this, in His care for our faith, rather a scattering of our doubts, than a confession of His weakness? When He was about to restore Lazarus, He prayed to the Father: but what need had He of prayer, Who said, Father, I thank Thee, that Thou hast heard Me; and I know that Thou hearest Me always, but because of the multitude I said it, that they may believe that Thou didst send Me ? He prayed then for us, that we may know Him to be the Son; the words of prayer availed Him nothing, but He said them for the advancement of our faith. He was not in want of help, but we of teaching. Again He prayed to be glorified; and immediately was heard from heaven the voice of God the Father glorifying Him: but when they wondered at the voice, He said, This voice hath not come for My sake, but for your sakes . The Father is besought for us, He speaks for us: may all this lead us to believe and confess! The answer of the Glorifier is granted not to the prayer for glory, but to the ignorance of the bystanders: must we not then regard the complaint of suffering, when He found His greatest joy in suffering, as intended for the building up of our faith?

Christ prayed for His persecutors, because they knew not what they did. He promised Paradise from the cross, because He is God the King. He rejoiced upon the cross, that all was finished when He drank the vinegar, because He had fulfilled all prophecy before He died. He was born for us, suffered for us, died for us, rose again for us. This alone is necessary for our salvation, to confess the Son of God risen from the dead: why then should we die in this state of godless unbelief? If Christ, ever secure of His divinity, made clear to us His death, Himself indifferent to death, yet dying to assure that it was true humanity that He had assumed: why should we use this very confession of the Son of God that for us He became Son of Man and died as the chief weapon to deny His divinity?

Book 11

1. The Apostle in his letter to the Ephesians, reviewing in its manifold aspects the full and perfect mystery of the Gospel, mingles with other instructions in the knowledge of God the following: As ye also were called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, and through all, and in us all . He does not leave us in the vague and misleading paths of an indefinite teaching, or abandon us to the shifting fancies of imagination, but limits the unimpeded license of intellect and desire by the appointment of restraining barriers. He gives us no opportunity to be wise beyond what he preached, but defines in exact and precise language the faith fixed for all time, that there may be no excuse for instability of belief. He declares one faith, as he preaches one Lord, and pronounces one baptism, as he declares one faith of one Lord, that as there is one faith of one Lord, so there may be one baptism of one faith in one Lord. And since the whole mystery of the baptism and the faith is not only in one Lord, but also in one God, he completes the consummation of our hope by the confession of one God. The one baptism and the one faith are of one God, as they are of one Lord. Lord and God are each one, not by union of person but by distinction of properties:

for, on the one hand, it is the property of Each to be one, whether of the Father in His Fatherhood, or of the Son in His Sonship, and on the other hand, that property of individuality, which Each possesses, constitutes for Each the mystery of His union with the Other. Thus the one Lord Christ cannot take away from God the Father His Lordship, or the one God the Father deny to the one Lord Christ His Godhead. If, because God is one, Christ is not also by nature divine, then we cannot allow that the one God is Lord, because there is one Lord Christ: that is, on the supposition that by their 'oneness' is signified not the mystery, but an exclusive unity. So there is one baptism and one faith of one Lord, as of one God.

2. But how can it be any longer one faith, if it does not steadfastly and sincerely confess one Lord and one God the Father: and how can the faith which is not one faith confess one Lord and one God the Father? Further, how can the faith be one, when its preachers are so at variance? One comes teaching that the Lord Jesus Christ, being in the weakness of our nature, groaned with anguish when the nails pierced His hands, that He lost the virtue of His own power and nature, and shrank shuddering from the death which threatened Him. Another even denies the cardinal doctrine of the Generation and pronounces Him a

creature. Another will call Him, but not think Him, God on the ground that religion allows us to speak of more Gods than One, but He, Whom we recognise as God, must be conscious of sharing the divine nature . Again, how can Christ the Lord be one, when some say that as God He feels no pain, others make Him weak and fearful: to some He is God in name, to others God in nature: to some the Son by Generation, to others the Son by appellation? And if this is so, how can God the Father be one in the faith, when to some He is Father by His authority, to others Father by generation, in the sense that God is Father of the universe?

And yet, who will deny that whatever is not the one faith, is not faith at all? For in the one faith there is one Lord Christ, and God the Father is one. But the one Lord Jesus Christ is not one in the truth of the confession, as well as in name, unless He is Son, unless He is God , unless He is unchangeable, unless His Sonship and His Godhead have been eternally present in Him. He who preaches Christ other than He is, that is, other than Son and God, preaches another Christ. Nor is he in the one faith of the one baptism, for in the teaching of the Apostle the one faith is the faith of that one baptism, in which the one Lord is Christ, the Son of God Who is also God. 3. Yet it cannot be denied that Christ was Christ. It cannot be that He was incognisable to mankind. The books of the prophets have set their seal upon Him: the ful ness of the times, which waxes daily, witnesses of Him: by the working of wonders the tombs of Apostles and Martyrs proclaim Him: the power of His name reveals Him: the unclean spirits confess Him, and the devils howling in their torment call aloud His name. In all we see the dispensation of His power. But our faith must preach Him as He is, namely, one Lord not in name but in confession, in one faith of one baptism: for on our faith in one Lord Christ depends our confession of one God the Father.

4. But these teachers of a new Christ, who deny to Him all that is His, preach another Lord Christ as well as another God the Father. The One is not the Begetter but the Creator, the Other not begotten, but created. Christ is therefore not very God, because He is not God by birth, and faith cannot recognise a Father in God, because there is no generation to constitute Him Father. They glorify God the Father indeed, as is His right and due, when they predicate of Him a nature unapproachable, invisible, inviolable, ineffable, and infinite, endued with omniscience and omnipotence, instinct with love, moving in all and permeating all, immanent and transcendent, sentient in all sentient existence. But when they proceed to ascribe to Him the unique glory of being alone good, alone omnipotent, alone immortal, who does not feel that this pious praise aims to exclude the Lord Jesus Christ from the blessedness, which by the reservation 'alone' is restricted to the glory of God? Does it not leave Christ in sinfulness and weakness and death, while the Father reigns in solitary perfection? Does it not deny in Christ a natural origin from God the Father, in the fear lest He should be thought to inherit by a birth, which bestows upon the Begotten the same virtue of nature as the Begetter, a blessedness natural to God the Father alone?

5. Unlearned in the teaching of the Gospels and Apostles, they extol the glory of God the Father, not, however, with the sincerity of a devout believer, but with the cunning of impiety, to wrest from it an argument for their wicked heresy. Nothing, they say, can be compared

with His nature: therefore the Only-begotten God is excluded from the comparison, because He possesses a lower and weaker nature. And this they say of God, the living image of the living God, the perfect form of His blessed nature, the only-begotten offspring of His unbegotten substance; Who is not truly the image of God unless He possesses the perfect glory of the Father's blessedness: and reproduces in its exactitude the likeness of His whole nature. But if the Only-begotten God is the image of the Unbegotten God, the verity of that perfect and supreme nature resides in Him and makes Him the image of the very God. Is the Father omnipotent? The weak Son is not the image of omnipotence. Is He good? The Son, Whose divinity is of a lower stamp, does not reflect in His sinful nature the image of goodness. Is He incorporeal? The Son, Whose very spirit is confined to the limits of a body, is not in the forth of the Incorporeal. Is He ineffable? The Son, Whom language can define, Whose nature the tongue can describe, is not the image of the Ineffable. Is He the true God?

The Son possesses only a fictitious divinity, and the false cannot be the image of the True. The Apostle, however, does not ascribe to Christ a portion of the image, or a part of the form, but pronounces Him unreservedly the image of the invisible God and the form of God . And how could He declare more expressly the divine nature of the Son of God, than by saying that Christ is the image of the invisible God even in respect of His invisibility: for if the substance of Christ were discernible how could He be the image of an invisible nature?

6. But, as we pointed out in the former books, they seize the Dispensation of the assumed manhood as a pretext to dishonour His divinity, and distort the Mystery of our salvation into an occasion of blasphemy. Had they held fast the faith of the Apostle, they would neither have forgotten that He, Who was in the form of God, took the form of a servant, nor made use of the servant's forth to dishonour the form of God (for the form of God includes the fulness of divinity), but they would have noted, reasonably and reverently, the distinction of occasions and mysteries, without dishonouring the divinity, or being misled by the Incarnation of Christ. But now, when we have, I am convinced, proved everything to the utmost, and pointed out the power of the divine nature underlying the birth of the assumed body, there is no longer room for doubt. He Who was at once man and the Only-begotten God performed all things by the power of God, and in the power of God accomplished all things through a true human nature. As begotten of God He possessed the nature of divine omnipotence, as born of the Virgin He had a perfect and entire humanity. Though He had a real body, He subsisted in the nature of God, and though He subsisted in the nature of God, He abode in a real body.

7. In our reply we have followed Him to the moment of His glorious death, and taking one by one the statements of their unhallowed doctrine, we have refuted them from the teaching of the Gospels and the Apostle. But even after His glorious resurrection there are certain things which they have made bold to construe as proofs of the weakness of a lower nature, and to these we must now reply. Let us adopt once more our usual method of drawing out from the words themselves their true signification, that so we may discover the truth precisely where they think to overthrow it. For the Lord spoke in simple words for

our instruction in the faith, and His words cannot need support or comment from foreign and irrelevant sayings.

8. Among their other sins the heretics often employ as an argument the words of the Lord, I ascend unto My Father and your Father, and My God and your God . His Father is also their Father, His God their God; therefore He is not in the nature of God, for He pronounces God the Father of others as of Himself, and His unique Sonship ceases when He shares with others the nature and the origin which make Him Son and God. But let them add further the words of the Apostle, But when He saith All things are put in subjection, He is excepted Who did subject all things unto Him. And when all things have been subjected unto Him, then shall He Himself be subjected unto Him that did subject all things unto Himself, that God may be all in all , whereby, since they regard that subjection as a proof of weakness, they may dispossess Him of the virtue of His Father's nature, because His natural infirmity subjected Him to the dominion of a stronger nature. And after that, let them adopt their very strongest position and their impregnable defence, before which the truth of the Divine birth is to he demolished; namely, that if He is subjected, He is not God; if His God and Father is ours also, He shares all in common with creatures, and therefore is Himself also a creature: created of God and not begotten, since the creature has its substance out of nothing, but the begotten possesses the nature of its author.

9. Falsehood is always infamous, for the liar throwing off the bridle of shame dares to gainsay the truth, or else at times he hides behind some veil of pretext, that he may appear to defend with modesty what is shameless in intention. But in this case, when they sacrilegiously use the Scriptures to degrade the dignity of our Lord, there is no room for the blush or the false excuse; for there are occasions when even pardon accorded to ignorance is refused, and wilful misconstruction is exposed in its naked profanity. Let us postpone for a moment the exposition of this passage in the Gospel, and ask them first whether they have forgotten the preaching of the Apostle, who said, Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness, which was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached among the nations, believed on in the world, received up in glory . Who is so dull that he cannot comprehend that the mystery of godliness is simply the Dispensation of the flesh assumed by the Lord? At the outset then, he who does not agree in this confession is not in the faith of God. For the Apostle leaves no doubt that all must confess that the hidden secret of our salvation is not the dishonour of God, but the mystery of great godliness, and a mystery no longer kept from our eyes, but manifested in the flesh; no longer weak through the nature of flesh, but justified in the Spirit.

And so by the justification of the Spirit is removed from our faith the idea of fleshly weakness; through the manifestation of the flesh is revealed that which was secret, and in the unknown cause of that which was secret is contained the only confession, the confession of the mystery of great godliness. This is the whole system of the faith set forth by the Apostle in its proper order. From godliness proceeds the mystery, from the mystery the manifestation in the flesh, from the manifestation in the flesh the justification in the Spirit: for the mystery

of godliness which was manifested in the flesh, to be truly a mystery, was manifested in the flesh through the justification of the Spirit. Again, we must not forget what manner of justification in the Spirit is this manifestation in the flesh: for the mystery which was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached among the nations, and believed on in this world, this same mystery was received up in glory. Thus is it in every way a mystery of great godliness, when it is manifested in the flesh, when it is justified in the Spirit, when it is seen of angels, when it is preached among the nations, when it is believed on in the world, and when it is received up in glory. The preaching follows the seeing, and the believing the preaching, and the consummation of all is the receiving up in glory:

for the assumption into glory is the mystery of great godliness, and by faith in the Dispensation we are prepared to be received up, and to be conformed to the glory of the Lord. The assumption of flesh is there fore also the mystery of great godliness, for through the assumption of flesh the mystery was manifested in the flesh. But we mast believe that the manifestation in the flesh also is this same mystery of great godliness, for His manifestation in the flesh is His justification in the Spirit, and His assumption into glory. And now what room does our faith leave for any to think that the secret of the Dispensation of godliness is the enfeebling of the divinity, when through the assumption of glory is to be confessed the mystery of great godliness? What was 'infirmity' is now the 'mystery:' what was 'necessity' becomes 'godliness .' And now let us turn to the meaning of the Evangelist's words, that the secret of our salvation and our glory may not be converted into an occasion of blasphemy.

10. You credit with the weight of irresistible authority, heretic, that saying of the Lord, I ascend to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God . The same Father, you say, is His Father and ours, the same God His God and ours. He partakes, therefore, of our weakness, for in the possession of the same Father we are not inferior as sons, and in the service of the same God we are equal as servants. Since, then, we are of created origin and a servant's nature, but have a common Father and God with Him, He is in common with our nature a creature and a servant. So runs this infatuated and unhallowed teaching. It produces also the words of the Prophet, Thy God hath anointed Thee, O God, to prove that Christ does not partake of that glorious nature which belongs to God, since the God Who anoints Him is preferred before Him as His God .

11. We do not know Christ the God unless we know God the Begotten. But to be born God is to belong to the nature of God, for the name Begotten signifies indeed the manner of His origin, but does not make Him different in kind from the Begetter. And if so, the Begotten owes indeed to His Author the source of His being, but is not dispossessed of the nature of that Author, for the birth of God can arise but from one origin, and have but one nature. If its origin is not from God, it is not a birth; if it is anything but a birth, Christ is not God. But He is God of God, and therefore God the Father stands to God the Son as God of His birth and Father of His nature, for the birth of God is from God, and in the specific nature of God.

12. See in all that He said, how carefully the Lord tempers the pious acknowledgment of His debt, so that neither the confession of the birth could be held to reflect upon His divinity, nor His reverent obedience to infringe upon His sovereign nature. He does not withhold the homage due from Him as the Begotten, Who owed to His Author His very existence, but He manifests by His confident bearing the consciousness of participation in that nature, which belongs to Him by virtue of the origin whereby He was born as God. Take, for instance, the words, He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father also , and, The words that I say, I speak not from Myself . He does not speak from Himself: therefore He receives from His Author that which He says. But if any have seen Him, they have seen the Father also: they are conscious, by this evidence, given to shew that God is in Him, that a nature, one in kind with that of God, was born from God to subsist as God. Take again the words, That which the Father hath given unto Me, is greater than all , and, I and the Father are one . To say that the Father gave, is a confession that He received His origin: but the unity of Himself with the Father is a property of His nature derived from that origin.

Take another instance, He hath given all judgment unto the Son, that all may honour the Son even as they honour the Father . He acknowledges that the judgment is given to Him, and therefore He does not put His birth in the background: but He claims equal honour with the Father, and therefore He does not resign His nature. Yet another example, I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me , and, The Father is greater than I . The One is in the Other: recognise, then, the divinity of God, the Begotten of God: the Father is greater than He: perceive, then, His acknowledgment of the Father's authority. In the same way He says, The Son can do nothing of Himself but what He hath seen the Father doing: for what things soever He doeth, these the Son also doeth in like manner . He doeth nothing of Himself: that is, in accordance with His birth the Father prompts His actions: yet what things soever the Father doeth, these the Son also doeth in like manner; that is, He subsists as nothing less than God, and by the Father's omnipotent nature residing in Him, can do all that God the Father does. All is uttered in agreement with His unity of Spirit with the Father, and the properties of that nature, which He possesses by virtue of His birth. That birth, which brought Him into being, constituted Him divine, and His being reveals the consciousness of that divine nature.

God the Son confesses God His Father, because He was born of Him; but also, because He was barn, He inherits the whole nature of God.

13. So the Dispensation of the great and godly mystery makes Him, Who was already Father of the divine Son, also His Lord in the created form which He assumed, for He, Who was in the form of God, was found also in the form of a servant. Yet He was not a servant, for according to the Spirit He was God the Son of God. Every one will agree also that there is no servant where there is no lord. God is indeed Father in the Generation of the Only-begotten God, but only in the case that the Other is a servant can we call Him Lord as well as Father. The Son was not at the first a servant by nature, but afterwards began to be by nature something which He was not before. Thus the Father is Lord on the same grounds

as the Son is servant. By the Dispensation of His nature the Son had a Lord, when He made Himself a servant by the assumption of manhood.

14. Being, then, in the form of a servant, Jesus Christ, Who before was in the form of God, said as a man, I ascend to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God. He was speaking as a servant to servants: how can we then dissociate the words from Christ the servant, and transfer them to that nature, which had nothing of the servant in it? For He Who abode in the form of God took upon Him the form of a servant, this form being the indispensable condition of His fellowship as a servant with servants. It is in this sense that God is His Father and the Father of men, His God and the God of servants. Jesus Christ was speaking as a man in the form of a servant to men anti servants; what difficulty is there then in the idea, that in His human aspect the Father is His Father as ours, in His servant's nature God is His God as all men's?

15. These, then, are the words with which He prefaces the message, Go unto My brethren, and say to them, I ascend unto My Father and your Father, and My God and your God. I ask, Are they to be understood as His brethren with reference to the form of God or to the form of a servant? And has our flesh kinship with Him in regard to the fulness of the Godhead dwelling in Him, that we should be reckoned His brothers in respect of His divinity? No, for the Spirit of prophecy recognises clearly in what respect we are the brethren of the Only-begotten God. It is as a worm and no man that He says, I will declare Thy name unto My brethren . As a worm, which is born without the ordinary process of conception, or else comes up into the world, already living, from the depths of the earth, He speaks here in manifestation of the fact that He had assumed flesh and also brought it up, living, from Hades. Throughout the Psalm He is foretelling by the Spirit of prophecy the mysteries of His Passion: it is therefore in respect of the Dispensation, in which He suffered, that He has brethren. The Apostle also recognises the mystery of this brotherhood, for he calls Him not only the firstborn from the dead , but also the firstborn among many brethren . Christ is the Firstborn among many brethren in the same sense in which He is Firstborn from the dead: and as the mystery of death concerns His body, so the mystery of brotherhood also refers to His flesh. Thus God has brethren according to His flesh, for the Word became flesh and dwelt amongst us : but the Only-begotten Son, unique as the Only-begotten, has no brethren.

16. By assuming flesh, however, He acquired our nature in our totality, and became all that we are, but did not lose that which He was before. Both before by His heavenly origin, and now by His earthly constitution, God is His Father. By His earthly constitution God is His Father, since all things are from God the Father, and God is Father to all things, since from Him and in Him are all things. But to the Only-begotten God, God is Father, not only because the Word became flesh; His Fatherhood extends also to Him Who was, as God the Word, with God in the beginning. Thus, when the Word became flesh, God was His Father both by the birth of God the Word, and by the constitution of His flesh: for God is the Father of all flesh, though not in the same way that He is Father to God the Word. But God the

Word, though He did not cease to be God, really did become flesh: and while He thus dwelt He was still truly the Word, just as when the Word became flesh He was still truly God as well as man. For to 'dwell' can only be said of one who abides in something: and to become flesh of one who is born. He dwelt among us; that is, He assumed our flesh. The Word became flesh and dwelt among us; that is, He was God in the reality of our body.

If Christ Jesus, the man according to the flesh, robbed God the Word of the divine nature, or was not according to the mystery of godliness also God the Word, then it reduces His nature to our level that God is His Father, and our Father, His God and our God. But if God the Word, when He became the man Christ Jesus, did not cease to be God the Word, then God is at the same time His Father and ours, His God and ours, only in respect of that nature, by which the Word is our brother, and the message to His brethren, I ascend unto My Father and your Father, and My God and your God, is not that of the Only-begotten God the Word, but of the Word made flesh.

17. The Apostle here speaks in carefully guarded words, which by their definiteness can give no occasion to the ungodly. We have seen that the Evangelist makes the Lord use the word 'Brethren' in the preface to the message, thus signifying that the whole message, being addressed to His brethren, refers to His fellowship in that nature which makes Him their brother. Thus he makes manifest that the mystery of godliness, which is here proclaimed, is no degradation of His divinity. The community with Him, by which God is our Father and His, our God and His, exists in regard to the Dispensation of the flesh: we are counted His brethren, because He was born into the body. No one disputes that God the Father is also the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, but this reverent confession offers no occasion for irreverence. God is His God but not as possessing a different order of divinity from His. He was begotten God of the Father, and born a servant by the Dispensation: and so God is His Father because He is God of God, and God is His God, because He is flesh of the Virgin. All this the Apostle confirms in one short and decisive sentence, Making mention of you in my prayers that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you a spirit of wisdom and revelation . When he speaks of Him as Jesus Christ, he mentions His God:

when his theme is the glory of Christ, he calls God His Father. To Christ, as having glory, God is Father: to Christ, as being Jesus, God is God. For the angel, when speaking of Christ the Lord, Who should be born of Mary, calls Him by the name 'Jesus :' but to the prophets Christ the Lord is 'Spirit .' The Apostle's words in this passage seem to many, on account of the Latin, somewhat obscure, for Latin has no articles, which the beautiful and logical usage of Greek employs. The Greek runs, o0 Qeo\j tou=Kuri/ou h0mw=n 'Ihsou= Xristou= o0 path\r th=j do/chj, which we might translate into Latin, if the usage of the article were permitted, 'Ille Deus illius Domini nostri Jesu Christi, ille pater illius claritatis'(The God of the Lord [of us] Jesus Christ, the Father of the glory). In this form 'The God of the Jesus Christ,' and 'the Father of the glory,' the sentence expresses, so far as we can comprehend them, certain truths of His nature. Where the glory of Christ is concerned, God is His

Father; where Christ is Jesus, there the Father is His God. In the Dispensation by which He is a servant, He has as God Him Whom, in the glory by which He is God, He has as Father.

18. Time and the lapse of ages make no difference to a Spirit . Christ is one and the same Christ, whether in the body, or abiding by the Spirit in the prophets. Speaking through the mouth of the holy Patriarch David, He says, Thy God, O God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows , which refers to no less a mystery than the Dispensation of His assumption of flesh. He, Who now sends the message to His brethren that their Father is His Father, and their God His God, announced Himself then as anointed by His God above His fellows. No one is fellow to the Only-begotten Christ, God the Word: but we know that we are His fellows by the assumption which made Him flesh. That anointing did not exalt the blessed and incorruptible Begotten Who abides in the nature of God, but it established the mystery of His body, and sanctified the manhood which He assumed. To this the Apostle Peter witnesses, Of a truth in this city were they gathered together against Thy holy Son Jesus, Whom Thou didst anoint : and on another occasion, Ye know that the saying was published through all Judaea, beginning from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached: even Jesus of Nazareth, how that God anointed Him with the Holy Ghost and with power . Jesus was anointed, therefore, that the mystery of the regeneration of flesh might be accomplished. Nor are we left in doubt how He was thus anointed with the Spirit of God and with power, when we listen to the Father's voice, as it spoke when He came up out of the Jordan, Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee . Thus is testified the sanctification of His flesh, and in this testimony we must recognise His anointing with the power of the Spirit.

19. But the Word was God, and with God in the beginning, and therefore the anointing could neither be related nor explained, if it referred to that nature, of which we are told nothing, except that it was in the beginning. And in fact He Who was God had no need to anoint Himself with the Spirit and power of God, when He was Himself the Spirit and power of God. So He, being God, was anointed by His God above His fellows. And, although there were many Christs (i.e. anointed persons) according to the Law before the Dispensation of the flesh, yet Christ, Who was anointed above His fellows, came after them, for He was preferred above His anointed fellows. Accordingly, the words of the prophecy bring out the fact that the anointing took place in time, and comparatively late in time. Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity: therefore Thy God, O God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows. Now, a fact which follows later upon other facts, cannot be dated before them. That a reward be deserved postulates as a prior condition the existence of one who can deserve it, for merit earned implies that there has been one capable of acquiring it. If, therefore, we attribute the birth of the Only-begotten God to this anointing, which is His reward for loving righteousness and hating iniquity, we shall be regarding Him not as born, but as promoted by unction, to be the Only-begotten God.

But then we imply that He advanced with gradual progress and promotion to perfect divinity, and that He was not born God, but afterwards for His merit anointed God. Thus we shall make Christ as God Himself conditioned, whereas He is the final cause of all conditions; and what becomes then of the Apostle's words, All things are through Him and in Him, and He is before all, and in Him all things consist ? The Lord Jesus Christ was not deified because of anything, or by means of anything, but was born God: God by origin, not promoted to divinity for any cause after His birth, but as the Son; and one in kind with God because begotten of Him. His anointing then, though it is the result of a cause, did not enhance that in Him, which could not be made more perfect. It concerned that part of Him which was to be made perfect through the perfection of the Mystery: that is, our manhood was sanctified in Christ by unction. If then the prophet here also teaches us the dispensation of the servant, for which Christ is anointed by His God above His fellows, and that because He loved righteousness and hated iniquity, then surely the words of the prophet must refer to that nature in Christ, by which He has fellows through His assumption of flesh. Can we doubt this when we note how carefully the Spirit of prophecy chooses His words? God is anointed by His God;

that is, in His own nature He is God, but in the dispensation of the anointing God is His God. God is anointed: but tell me, is that Word anointed, Who was God in the beginning? Manifestly not, for the anointing comes after His divine birth. It was then not the begotten Word, God with God in the beginning, Who was anointed, but that nature in God which came to Him through the dispensation later than His divinity : and when His God anointed Him, He anointed in Him the whole nature of the servant, which He assumed in the mystery of His flesh.

20. Let no one then defile with his godless interpretations the mystery of great godliness which was manifested in the flesh, or reckon himself equal to the Only-begotten in respect of His divine substance. Let Him be our brother and our fellow, inasmuch as the Word made flesh dwelt among us, inasmuch as the man Jesus Christ is Mediator between God and man. Let Him, after the manner of servants, have a common Father and a common God with us, and as anointed above His fellows, let Him be of the same nature as His anointed fellows, though His be an unction of special privilege. In the mystery of the Mediatorship let Him be at once very man and very God, Himself God of God, but having a common Father and God with us in that community by which He is our brother. 21. But perhaps that subjection, that delivering of the kingdom, and lastly that end betoken the dissolution of His nature, or the loss of His power, or the enfeebling of His divinity. Many argue thus: Christ is included in the common subjection of all to God, and by the condition of subjection loses His divinity: He surrenders His Kingdom, therefore He is no longer King: the end which overtakes Him entails as its consequence the loss of His power.

22. It will not be out of place here if we review the full meaning of the Apostle's teaching upon this subject. Let us take, then, each single sentence and expound it, that we may grasp the entire Mystery by comprehending it in its fulness. The words of the Apostle

are, For since by man came death by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ are all made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then they that are Christ's at His coming. Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered the Kingdom to God, even the Father, when He shall have emptied all authority and all power. For He must reign until He put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be conquered is death. But when He saith, All things are put in subjection, He is excepted Who did subject all things unto Him. But when all things have been subjected to Him, then shall He also Himself be subjected to Him, that did subject all things unto Him, that God may be all in all .

23. The Apostle who was chosen not of then nor through man, but through Jesus Christ, to be the teacher of the Gentiles , expounds in language as express as he can command the secrets of the heavenly Dispensations. He who had been caught up into the third heaven and had heard unspeakable words , reveals to the perception of human understanding as much as human nature can receive. But he does not forget that there are things which cannot be understood in the moment of hearing. The infirmity of man needs time to review before the true and perfect tribunal of the mind, that which is poured indiscriminately into the ears. Comprehension follows the spoken words more slowly than hearing, for it is the ear which hears, but the reason which understands, though it is God Who reveals the inner meaning to those who seek it. We learn this from the words written among many other exhortations to Timothy, the disciple instructed from a babe in the Holy Scriptures by the glorious faith of his grandmother and mother : Understand what I say, for the Lord shall give thee understanding in all things . The exhortation to understand is prompted by the difficulty of understanding. But God's gift of understanding is the reward of faith, for through faith the infirmity of sense is recompensed with the gift of revelation. Timothy, that 'man of God' as the Apostle witnesses of him , Paul's true child in the faith , is exhorted to understand because the Lord will give him understanding in all things: let us, therefore, knowing that the Lord will grant us understanding in all things, remember that the Apostle exhorts us also to understand.

24. And if, by an error incident to human nature, we be clinging to some preconception of our own, let us not reject the advance in knowledge through the gift of revelation. If we have hitherto used only our own judgment, let that not make us ashamed to change its decisions for the better. Guiding this advance wisely and carefully, the same blessed Apostle writes to the Philippians, Let us therefore as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in anything ye are otherwise minded, this also shall Gad reveal unto you. Only, wherein we have hastened, in that same let us walk . Reason cannot anticipate with preconceptions the revelation of God. For the Apostle has here shewn us wherein consists the wisdom of those who have the perfect wisdom, and for those who are otherwise minded, he awaits the revelation of God, that they may obtain the perfect wisdom. If any, then, have otherwise conceived this profound dispensation of the hidden knowledge, anti if that which we offer them is in any respect more right or better approved, let them not be ashamed to receive

the perfect wisdom, as the Apostle advises, through the revelation of God, and if they hate to abide in untruth let them not love ignorance more.

If to them, who had another wisdom, God has revealed this also, the Apostle exhorts them to hasten on the road in which they have started, to cast aside the notions of their former ignorance, and obtain the revelation of perfect understanding by the path into which they have eagerly entered. Let us, therefore, keep on in the path along which we have hastened: or, if the error of our wandering steps has delayed our eager haste, let us, notwithstanding, start again through the revelation of God towards the goal of our desire, and not turn our feet from the path. We have hastened towards Christ Jesus the Lord of Glory, the King of the eternal ages, in Whom are restored all things in Heaven and in earth, by Whom all things consist, in Whom and with Whom we shall abide for ever. So long as we walk in this path we have the perfect wisdom: and if we have another wisdom, God will reveal to us what is the perfect wisdom. Let us, then, examine in the light of the Apostle's faith the mystery of the words before us: and let our treatment be, as it always has been, a refutation from the actual truth of the Apostle's confession of every interpretation, which they would profanely foist upon his words.

25. Three assertions are here disputed, which, in the order in which the Apostle makes them, are first the end, then the delivering, and lastly the subjection. The object is to prove that Christ ceases to exist at the end, that He loses His kingdom, when He delivers it up, that He strips Himself of the divine nature, when He is subjected to God. 26. At the outset take note that this is not the order of the Apostle's teaching, for in that order the surrender of the Kingdom is first, then the subjection, and lastly the end. But every cause is itself the result of its particular cause, so that, in every chain of causation, each cause, itself producing a result, has inevitably its underlying antecedent. Thus the end will come, but when He has delivered the Kingdom to God. He will deliver the Kingdom, but when He has abolished all authority and power. He will abolish all authority and power, because He must reign. He will reign until He has put all enemies under His feet. He will put all enemies under His feet, because God has subjected everything under His feet. God has so subjected them as to make death the last enemy to be conquered by Him. Then, when all things are subjected unto God. except Him Who subjected all things unto Him, He too will be subjected unto Him, Who subjects all to Himself. But the cause of the subjection is none other than that God may be all in all; and therefore the end is that God is all in all.

27. Before going any further we must now enquire whether the end is a dissolution, or the delivering a forfeiture, or the subjection an enfeebling of Christ. And if we find that these are contraries, which cannot be connected as causes and effects, we shall be able to understand the words in the true sense in which they were spoken.

28. Christ is the end of the law ; but, tell me, is He come to destroy it or to fulfil it? And if Christ, the end of the law, does not destroy it, but fulfils it (as He says, I am come not to destroy the law but fulfil it), is not the end of the law, so far from being its dissolution, the very opposite, namely its final perfection? All things are advancing towards an end,

but that end is a condition of rest in the perfection, which is the goal of their advance, and not their abolition. Further, all things exist for the sake of the end, but the end itself is not the means to anything beyond: it is an ultimate, all-embracing whole, which rests in itself. And because it is self-contained, and works for no other time or object than itself, the goal is always that to which our hopes are directed. Therefore the Lord exhorts us to wait with patient and reverent faith until the end comes: Blessed is He that endureth to the end . It is not a blessed dissolution, which awaits us, nor is non-existence the fruit, and annihilation the appointed reward of faith: but the end is the final attainment of the promised blessedness, and they are blessed who endure until the goal of perfect happiness is reached, when the expectation of faithful hope has no object beyond. Their end is to abide with unbroken rest in that condition, towards which they are pressing.

Similarly, as a deterrent, the Apostle warns us of the end of the wicked, Whose end is perdition, ... but our expectation is in heaven . Suppose then we interpret the end as a dissolution, we are forced to acknowledge that, since there is an end for the blessed and for the wicked, the issue levels the godly with the ungodly, for the appointed end of both is a common annihilation. What of our expectation in heaven, if for us as well as for the wicked the end is a cessation of being? But even if there remains for the saints an expectation. whereas for the wicked there waits the end they have deserved, we cannot conceive that end as a final dissolution. What punishment would it be for the wicked to be beyond the feeling of avenging torments, because the capability of suffering has been removed by dissolution? The end is, therefore, a culminating and irrevocable condition which awaits us, reserved for the blessed and prepared for the wicked.

29. We can therefore no longer doubt that by the end is meant an ultimate and final condition and not a dissolution. We shall have something more to say upon this subject, when we come to the explanation of this passage, but for the present this is enough to make our meaning clear. Let us, therefore, turn now to the delivering of the Kingdom, and see whether it means a surrender of rule, whether the Son by delivering ceases to possess that which He delivers to the Father. If this is what the wicked contend in their unreasoning infatuation, they must allow that the Father, by delivering, lost all, when He delivered all to the Son, if delivery implies the surrender of that which is delivered. For the Lord said, All things have been delivered unto Me of My Father , and again, All authority hath been given unto Me in heaven and earth . If, therefore, to deliver is to yield possession, the Father no longer possessed that which He delivered. But if the Father did not cease to possess that which He delivered, neither does the Son surrender that which He delivers. Therefore, if He did not lose by the delivering that which He delivered, we must recognise that only the Dispensation explains how the Father still possesses what He delivered, and the Son does not forfeit what He gave.

30. As to the subjection, there are other facts which come to the help of our faith, and prevent us from putting an indignity on Christ upon this score, but above all this passage contains its own defence. First, however, I appeal to common reason: is the subjection still to

be understood as the subordination of servitude to lordship, weakness to power, meanness to honour, qualities the opposite of one another? Is the Son in this manner subjected to the Father by the distinction of a different nature? If, indeed, we would think so, we shall find in the Apostle's words a preventive for such errors of the imagination. When all things are subjected to Him, says He, then must He be subjected to Him, Who subjects all things to Himself; and by this 'then' he means to denote the temporal Dispensation. For if we put any other construction on the subjection, Christ, though then to be subjected, is not subjected now, and thus we make Him an insolent and impious rebel, whom the necessity of time, breaking as it were and subduing His profane and overweening pride, will reduce to a tardy obedience. But what does He Himself say? I am not come to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me : and again, Therefore hath the Father loved Me because I do all things that are pleasing unto Him : and, Father, Thy will be done . Or hear the Apostle, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient even unto death .

Although He humbled Himself, His nature knew no humiliation: though He was obedient, it was a voluntary obedience, for He became obedient by humbling Himself. The Only-begotten God humbled Himself, and obeyed His Father even to the death of the Cross: but as what, as man or as God, is He to be subjected to the Father, when all things have been subjected to Him? Of a truth this subjection is no sign of a fresh obedience, but the Dispensation of the Mystery, for the allegiance is eternal, the subjection an event within time. The subjection is then in its signification simply a demonstration of the Mystery.

31. What that is must be understood in view of this same hope of our faith. We cannot be ignorant that the Lord Jesus Christ rose again from the dead, and sits at the right hand of God, for we have also the witness of the Apostle, According to the working of the strength of His might, which He wrought in Christ, when tie raised Him from the dead, and made Him to sit at tits right hand in the heavenly places above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named not only in this world but also in that which is to came, and put all things in subjection under His feet . The language of the Apostle, as befits the power of God, speaks of the future as already past: for that which is to be wrought by the completion of time already exists in Christ, in Whom is all fulness, and 'future' refers only to the temporal order of the Dispensation, not to a new development. Thus, God has put all things under His feet, though they are still to be subjected. By their subjection, conceived as already past, is expressed the immutable power of Christ: by their subjection, as future, is signified their consummation at the end of the ages as the result of the fulness of time.

32. The meaning of the abolishing of every power which is against Him is not obscure The prince of the air, the power of spiritual wickedness, shall be delivered to eternal destruction, as Christ says, Depart from Me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire which My Father hath prepared far the devil and his angels . The abolishing is not the same as the subjecting. To abolish the power of the enemy is to sweep away for ever his prerogative of power, so that by the abolition of his power is brought to an end the rule of his kingdom. Of this the Lord testifies when He says, My kingdom is not of this world : as He had once before testified

that the ruler of that kingdom is the prince of the world, whose power shall be destroyed by the abolition of the rule of His kingdom . A subjection, on the other hand, which implies obedience and allegiance, is a proof of submission and mutability.

33. So when their authority is abolished, His enemies shall be subjected: and so subjected, that He shall subject them to Himself. Moreover He shall so subject them to Himself, that God shall subject them to Him. Was the Apostle ignorant, think you, of the force of these words in the Gospel, No one cometh to Me, except the Father draw Him to Me which stand side by side with those other words, No one cometh unto the Father but by Me : just as in this Epistle Christ subjects His enemies to Himself, yet God subjects them to Him, and He witnesses throughout this, his work of subjection, that God is working in Him? Except through Him there is no approach to the Father, but there is also no approach to Him, unless the Father draw us. Understanding Him to be the Son of God, we recognise in Him the true nature of the Father. Hence, when we learn to know the Son, God the Father calls us: when we believe the Son, God the Father receives us; for our recognition and knowledge of the Father is in the Son, Who shews us in Himself God the Father, Who draws us, if we be devout, by His fatherly love into a mutual bond with His Son. So then the Father draws us, when, as the first condition, He is acknowledged Father:

but no one comes to the Father except through the Son, because we cannot know the Father, unless faith in the Son is active in us, since we cannot approach the Father in worship, unless we first adore the Son, while if we know the Son, the Father draws us to eternal life and receives us. But each result is the work of the Son, for by the preaching of the Father, Whom the Son preaches, the Father brings us to the Son, and the Son leads us to the Father. The statement of this Mystery was necessary for the more perfect understanding of the present passage, to shew that through the Son the Father draws us and receives us; that we might understand the two aspects, the Son subjecting all to Himself, and the Father subjecting all to Him. Through the birth the nature of God is abiding in the Son, and does that which He Himself does. What He does God does, but what God does in Him, He Himself does: in the sense that where He acts Himself we must believe the Son of God acts; and where God acts, we must perceive the properties of the Father's nature existing in Him as the Son.

34. When authorities and powers are abolished, His enemies shall be subjected under His feet. The same Apostle tells who are these enemies, As touching the Gospel they are enemies for your sakes, but as touching the election they are beloved far the fathers' sake . We remember that they are enemies of the cross of Christ; let us remember also that, because they are beloved for the fathers' sake, they are reserved for the subjection, as the Apostle says, I would not, brethren, have you ignorant of this mystery, lest ye be wise in your own conceits, that a hardening in part hath befallen Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, and so all Israel shall be saved, even as it is written, There shall come out of Sion a Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: and this is the covenant firm Me

to them, when I have taken away their sins . So His enemies shall be subjected under His feet.

35. But we must not forget what follows the subjection, namely, Last of all is death conquered by Him . This victory over death is nothing else than the resurrection from the dead: for when the corruption of death is stayed, the quickened and now heavenly nature is made eternal, as it is written, For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. But when this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in strife. O death, where is thy sting? O death, where is thy strife ? In the subjection of His enemies death is Conquered; and, death conquered, life immortal follows. The Apostle tells us also of the special reward attained by this subjection which is made perfect by the subjection of belief: Who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of His glory, according to the works of His power, whereby He is able to subject all things to Himself . There is then another subjection, which consists in a transition from one nature to another, for our nature ceases, so far as its present character is concerned, and is subjected to Him, into Whose form it passes. But by 'ceasing' is implied not an end of being, but a promotion into something higher. Thus our nature by being merged into the image of the other nature which it receives, becomes subjected through the imposition of a new form.

36. Hence the Apostle, to make his explanation of this Mystery complete, after saying that death is the last enemy to be conquered, adds: But when He saith, rill things are put in subjection except Him, Who did subject all things to Him, then must He be subjected to Him, that did subject all things to Him, that God may be all in all . The first step of the Mystery is that all things are subjected to Him: then He is subjected to Him, Who subjects all things to Himself. As we are subjected to the glory of the rule of His body, so He also, reigning in the glory of His body, is by the same Mystery in turn subjected to Him, Who subjects all things to Himself. And we are subjected to the glory of His body, that we may share that splendour with which He reigns in the body, since we shall be conformed to His body.

37. Nor are the Gospels silent concerning the glory of His present reigning body. It is written that the Lord said, Verily, I say unto you, there be same of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death till they see the Son of Man coming in His Kingdom. And it came to pass, after six days Jesus taketh with Him Peter and James and John His brother, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart. And Jesus was transfigured before them, and His face did shine as the sun, and His garments became as snow Thus was shewn to the Apostles the glory of the body of Christ coming into His Kingdom: for in the fashion of His glorious Transfiguration, the Lord stood revealed in the splendour of His reigning body.

38. He promised also to the Apostles the participation in this His glory. So shall it be in the end of the world. The Son of Man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather together out of His Kingdom all things that cause stumbling, and them that do iniquity, and He shall send them into the furnace of fire: there shall be the weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then

shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear . Were their natural and bodily ears closed to the hearing of the words, that the Lord should need to admonish them to hear? Yet the Lord, hinting at the knowledge of the Mystery, commands them to listen to the doctrine of the faith. In the end of the world all things that cause stumbling shall be removed from His Kingdom. We see the Lord then reigning in the splendour of His body, until the things that cause stumbling are removed. And we see ourselves, in consequence, conformed to the glory of His body in the Kingdom of the Father, shining as with the splendour of the sun, the splendour in which He shewed the fashion of His Kingdom to the Apostles, when He was transfigured on the mountain.

39. He shall deliver the Kingdom to God the Father, not in the sense that He resigns His power by the delivering, but that we, being conformed to the glory of His body, shall form the Kingdom of God. It is not said, He shall deliver up His Kingdom, but, He shall deliver up the Kingdom , that is, deliver up to God us who have been made the Kingdom by the glorifying of His body. He shall deliver us into the Kingdom, as it is said in the Gospel, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world . The just shall shine like the sun in the Kingdom of their Father, and the Son shall deliver to the Father, as His Kingdom, those whom He has called into His Kingdom, to whom also He has promised the blessedness of this Mystery, Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God . While He reigns, He shall remove all things that cause stumbling, and then the just shall shine as the sun in the Kingdom of the Father. Afterwards He shall deliver the Kingdom to the Father, and those whom He has handed to the Father, as the Kingdom, shall see God. He Himself witnesses to the Apostles what manner of Kingdom this is: The Kingdom of God is within you .

Thus it is as King that He shall deliver up the Kingdom, and if any ask Who it is that delivers up the Kingdom, let him hear, Christ is risen from the dead, the firstfruits of them that sleep; since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead . All that is said on the point before us concerns the Mystery of the body, since Christ is the firstfruits of the dead. Let us gather also from the words of the Apostle by what Mystery Christ rose from the dead: Remember that Christ hath risen from the dead, of the seed of David . Here he teaches that the death and resurrection are due only to the Dispensation by which Christ was flesh.

40. In His body, the game body though now made glorious, He reigns until the authorities are abolished, death conquered, and His enemies subdued. This distinction is carefully preserved by the Apostle: the authorities and powers are abolished, the enemies are subjected . Then, when they are subjected, He, that is the Lord, shall be subjected to Him that subjecteth all things to Himself, that God may be all in all , the nature of the Father's divinity imposing itself upon the nature of our body which was assumed. It is thus that God shall be all in all: according to the Dispensation He becomes by His Godhead and His manhood the Mediator between men and God, and so by the Dispensation He acquires the nature

of flesh, and by the subjection shall obtain the nature of God in all things, so as to be God not in part, but wholly and entirely. The end of the subjection is then simply that God may be all in all, that no trace of the nature of His earthly body may remain in Him. Although before this time the two were combined within Him, He must now become God only; not, however, by casting off the body, but by translating it through subjection; not by losing it through dissolutions, but by transfiguring it in glory: adding humanity to His divinity, not divesting Himself of divinity by His humanity. And He is subjected, not that He may cease to be, but that God may be all in all, having, in the mystery of the subjection, to continue to be that which He no longer is , not having by dissolution to be robbed of Himself, that is, to be deprived of His being.

41. We have a sufficient and sacred guarantee for this belief in the authority of the Apostle. Through the Dispensation, and within time, the Lord Jesus Christ, the firstfruits of them that sleep, is to be subjected, that God may be all in all, and this subjection is not the debasement of His divinity, but the promotion of His assumed nature, for He Who is God and Man is now altogether God. But some may think that, when we say He was both glorified in the body whilst reigning in the body, and is hereafter to be subjected that God may be all in all, our belief finds no support for itself in the Gospels nor yet in the Epistles. We will, therefore, produce testimony of our faith, not only from the words of the Apostle, but also from our Lord's mouth. We will shew that Christ said first with His own lips what He afterwards said by the mouth of Paul.

42. Does He not reveal to His Apostles the Dispensation of this glory by the express signification of the words, Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in Him. If God hath been glorified in Him, Gad hath glorified Him in Himself, and straightway hath He glorified Him . In the words, Now is the Son of Man honoured, and God is honoured in Him, we have first the glory of the Son of Man, then the glory of God in the Son of Man. So there is first signified the glory of the body, which it borrows from its association with the divine nature: and then follows the promotion to a fuller glory derived from an addition to the glory of the body. If God hath been honoured in Him, God hath honoured Him in Himself, and straightway hath God honoured Him. God has glorified Him in Himself, because He has already been glorified in Him. God was glorified in Him: this refers to the glory of the body, for by this glory is expressed in a human body the glory of God, in the glory of the Son of Man is seen the divine glory. God was glorified in Him, and therefore hath God glorified Him in Himself: that is, by His promotion to the Godhead, whose glory was increased in Him, God has glorified Him in Himself. Already before this He was reigning in the glory which springs from the divine glory:

from henceforth, however, He is Himself to pass into the divine glory. God hath glorified Him in Himself: that is, in that nature by which God is what He is. That God may be all in all: that His whole being, leaving behind the Dispensation by which He is man, may be eternally transformed into divinity. Nor is the time of this hidden from us: And God hath glorified Him in Himself, and straightway hath He glorified Him. At the moment

when Judas arose to betray Him, He signified as present the glory which He would obtain after His Passion through the Resurrection, but assigned to the future the glory with which God would glorify Him with Himself. The glory of God is seen in Him in the power of the Resurrection, but He Himself, out of the Dispensation of subjection, will be taken eternally into the glory of God, that is, into God, the all in all.

43. But what absurd folly is it of the heretics to regard as unattainable for God that goal to which man hopes to attain, to imply that He is powerless to effect in Himself that which He is mighty to effect in us. It is not the language of reason or common sense to say that God is bound by some necessity of His nature to consult our happiness, but cannot bestow the like blessings upon Himself. God does not, indeed, need any further blessedness, for His nature and power stand fast in their eternal perfection. But although in the Dispensation, that mystery of great godliness, He Who is God became man, He is not powerless to make Himself again entirely God, for without doubt He will transform us also into that which as yet we are not. The final sequel of man's life and death is the resurrection: the assured reward of our warfare is immortality and incorruption, not the ceaseless persistence of everlasting punishment, but the unbroken enjoyment anti happiness of eternal glory. These bodies of earthly origin shall be exalted to the fashion of a higher nature, and conformed to the glory of the Lord's body. But what then of God found in the form of a servant? Though already, while still in the form of a servant, glorified in the body, shall He not be also conformed to God?

Shall He bestow upon us the form of His glorified body, and yet be able to do for His own body nothing more than He does for Himself in common with us? For the most part the heretics interpret the words, Then shall He be subjected to Him that did subject all things to Himself, that God may be all in all, as if they meant that the Son is to be subjected to God the Father, in order that by the subjection of the Son, God the Father may be all in all. But is there still lacking in God some perfection which He is to obtain by the subjection of the Son? Can they believe that God does not already possess that final accession of blessed divinity, because it is said that by the coming of the fulness of time He shall be made all in all?

44. To me, who hold that God cannot be known except by devotion, even to answer such objections seems no less unholy than to support them. What presumption to suppose that words can adequately describe His nature, when thought is often too deep for words, and His nature transcends even the conceptions of thought! What blasphemy even to discuss whether anything is lacking in God, whether He is Himself full, or it remains for Him to be fuller than His fulness! If God, Who is Himself the source of His own eternal divinity, were capable of progress, that He should be greater to-day than yesterday, He could never reach the time when nothing would be wanting to Him, for the nature to which advance is still possible must always in its progress leave some ground ahead still untrodden: if it be subject to the law of progress, though always progressing it must always be susceptible of further progress. But to Him, Who abides in perfect fulness, Who for ever is, there is no fulness

left by which He can be made more full, for perfect fulness cannot receive an accession of further fulness. And this is the attitude of thought in which reverence contemplates God, namely, that nothing is wanting to Him, that He is full.

45. But the Apostle does not neglect to say with what manner of confession we should bear witness of God. O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past tracing out! Far who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been His counsellor? Or who hath first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed unto him? For of Him, and through Him, and in Him are all things. To Him be the glory for ever and ever . No earthly mind can define God, no understanding can penetrate with its perception to sound the depth of His wisdom. His judgments defy the searching scrutiny of His creatures: the trackless paths of His knowledge baffle the zeal of all pursuers. His ways are plunged in the depths of incomprehensibility: nothing can be fathomed or traced to the end in the things of God. No one has ever been taught to know His mind, no one besides Himself ever permitted to share His counsel. But all this applies to us men only, and not to Him, through Whom are all things, the Angel of mighty Counsel , Who said, No one knoweth the Son save the Father: neither doth arty one know the Father save the Son, and him to whom the Son hath willed to reveal Him . It is to curb our own feeble intellect, when it strains itself to fathom the depth of the divine nature with its descriptions and definitions, that we must re-echo the language of the Apostle's exclamation, lest we should attempt by rash conjecture to snatch from God more than He has been pleased to reveal to us.

46. It is a recognised axiom of natural philosophy, that nothing falls within the scope of the senses unless it is subjected to their observation, as for instance an object placed before the eyes, or an event posterior to the birth of human sense and intelligence. The former we can see and handle, and therefore the mind is qualified to pass a verdict upon it, since it can be examined by the senses of touch and sight. The latter, which is an event in time, produced or constituted since the origin of man, falls within the limits in which the discerning sense may claim to pass judgment, since it is not prior in time to our perception and reason. For our sight cannot perceive the invisible, since it only distinguishes, the seen; our reason cannot project itself into the time when it was not, because it can only judge of that, to which it is prior in time. And even within these limits, the infirmity which is bound up with its nature robs it of absolutely certain knowledge of the sequence of cause and effect. How much less then can it go back behind the time when it had its origin, and comprehend with its perception things which existed before it in the realms of eternity?

47. The Apostle then recognised that nothing can fall within our knowledge, except it be posterior in time to the faculty of sense. Accordingly when he had asserted the depth of the wisdom of God, the infinity of His inscrutable judgments, the secret of His un-searchable ways, the mystery of His unfathomable mind, the incomprehensibility of His uncommunicated counsel, he continued, For who hath first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of Him, and through Him, and in Him are all things. The eternal

God is neither subject to limitation, nor did human reason and intelligence exercise their functions before He had His being. His whole being is therefore a depth, which we can neither examine nor penetrate. We say His whole being, not to define it as limited, but to understand it in its unlimited boundlessness: because of no one has He received His being, no antecedent giver can claim service from Him in return for a gift bestowed: for of Him and through Him and in Him are all things. He does not lack things that are of Him and through Him and in Him. The Source and Maker of all, Who contains all, Who is beyond all, does not need that which is within Him, the Creator His creatures, the Possessor His possessions. Nothing is prior to Him, nothing derived from any other than Him, nothing beyond Him. What element of fulness is still lacking in God, which time will supply to make Him all in all?

Whence can He receive it, if outside Him is nothing, and while nothing is outside Him, He is eternally Himself? And if He is eternally Himself, and there is nothing outside Him, with what increase shall He be made full, by what addition shall He be made other than He is? Did He not say, I am and I change not ? What possibility is there of change in Him? What scope for progress? What is prior to eternity? What more divine than God? The subjection of the Son will not therefore make God to be all in all, nor will any cause perfect Him, from Whom and through Whom and in Whom are all causes. He remains God as He ever was, and He needs nothing further, for what He is, He is eternally of Himself and for Himself.

48. But neither is it necessary for the Only-begotten God that He should change. He is God, and that is the name of full and perfect divinity. For, as we said before, the meaning of the repeated glorifying, and the cause of the subjection is that God may be all in all: but it is a Mystery, not a necessity, that God is to be all in all. Christ abode in the form of God when He assumed the form of a servant, not being subjected to change, but emptying Himself; hiding within Himself, and remaining master of Himself though He was emptied. He constrained Himself even to the form and fashion of a man, lest the weakness of the assumed humility should not be able to endure the immeasurable power of His nature. His unbounded might contracted itself, until it could fulfil the duty of obedience even to the endurance of the bodyto which it was yoked. But since He was self-contained even when He emptied Himself, His authority suffered no diminution, for in the humiliation of the emptying He exercised within Himself the power of that authority which was emptied.

49. It is therefore for the promotion of us, the assumed humanity, that God shall be all in all. He Who was found in the form of a servant, though He was in the form of God, is now again to be confessed in the glory of God the Father: that is, without doubt He dwells in the form of God, in Whose glory He is to be confessed. All is therefore a dispensation only, and not a change of His nature; for He abides still in Him, in Whom He ever was. But there intervenes a new nature, which began in Him with His human birth, and so all that He obtains is on behalf of that nature which before was not God, since after the Mystery of the Dispensation God is all in all. It is, therefore, we who are the gainers, we who are promoted, for we shall be conformed to the glory of the body of God. Further the Only-begotten God,

despite His human birth, is nothing less than God, Who is all in all. That subjection of the body, by which all that is fleshly in Him, is swallowed up into the spiritual nature, will make Him to be God and all in all, since He is Man also as well as God; and His humanity which advances towards this goal is ours also.

We shall be promoted to a glory conformable to that of Him Who became Man for us, being renewed unto the knowledge of God, and created again in the image of the Creator, as the Apostle says, Having put off the old man with his doings, and put on the new man, which is being renewed unto the knowledge of God, after the image of Him that created him . Thus is man made the perfect image of God. For, being conformed to the glory of the body of God, he is exalted to the image of the Creator, after the pattern assigned to the first man. Leaving sin and the old man behind, he is made a new man unto the knowledge of God, and arrives at the perfection of his constitution, since through the knowledge of his God he becomes the perfect image of God. Through godliness he is promoted to immortality, through immortality he shall live for ever as the image of his Creator.

Book 12

1. At length, with the Holy Ghost speeding our way, we are approaching the safe, calm harbour of a firm faith. We are in the position of men, long tossed about by sea and wind, to whom it very often happens, that while great heaped-up waves delay them for a time around the coasts near the ports, at last that very surge of the vast and dreadful billows drives them on into a trusty, well-known anchorage. And this, I hope, will befall us, as we struggle in this twelfth book against the storm of heresy; so that while we venture out trusty bark therein upon the wave of this grievous impiety, this very wave may bring us to the haven of rest for which we long. For while all are driven about by the uncertain wind of doctrine, there is panic here and danger there, and then again there often is even shipwreck, because it is maintained on prophetic authority that God Only-begotten is a creature-so that to Him there belongs not birth but creation, because it has been said in the character of Wisdom, The Lord created Me as the beginning of His ways . This is the greatest billow in the storm they raise, this is the big wave of the whirling tempest: yet when we have faced it, and it has broken without damage to our ship, it will speed us forward even to the all-safe harbour of the shore for which we long.

2. Yet we do not rest, like sailors, on uncertain or on idle hopes: whom, as they shape their course to their wish, and not by assured knowledge, at times the shifting, fickle winds forsake or drive from their course. But we have by our side the unfailing Spirit of faith, abiding with us by the gift of the Only-begotten God, and leading us to smooth waters in an unwavering course. For we recognise the Lord Christ as no creature, for indeed He is none such; nor as something that has been made, since He is Himself the Lord of all things that are made; but we know Him to be God, God the true generation of God the Father. All we indeed, as His goodness has thought fit, have been named and adopted as sons of God: but He is to God the Father the one, true Son, and the true and perfect birth, which abides only in the knowledge of the Father and the Son. But this only, and this alone, is our religion, to confess Him as the Son not adopted but born, not chosen but begotten. For we do not speak of Him either as made, or as not born; since we neither compare the Creator to His creatures, nor falsely speak of birth without begetting. He does not exist of Himself, Who exists through birth; nor is He not born, Who is the Son; nor can He, Who is the Son, come to exist otherwise than by being born, because He is the Son.

3. Moreover no one doubts that the assertions of impiety always contradict and resist the assertions of religious faith; and that that cannot be piously held now which is already condemned as impiously conceived; as, for instance, the discrepancy and variance which these new correctors of the apostolic faith maintain between the Spirit of the Evangelists and that of Prophets; or their assertion that the Prophets prophesied one thing and the Evangelists preached another, since Solomon calls upon us to adore a creature, while Paul convicts those who serve a creature. And certainly these two texts do not seem to agree together, according to the blasphemous theory, whereby the Apostle, who was trained by the law, and separated by divine appointment, and spoke through Christ speaking in him, either was ignorant of the prophecy, or was not ignorant but contradicted it; and thus did not know Christ to be a creature when he named Him the Creator; and forbade the worship of a creature, warning us that the Creator alone is to be served, and saying, Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and served the creature, passing by the Creator Who is blessed far ever and ever .

4. Does Christ, Who is God, speaking in Paul, fail to refute this impiety of falsehood? Does He fail to condemn this lying perversion of truth? For through the Lord Christ all things were created; and therefore it is His proper name that He should be the Creator. Does not both the reality and the title of His creative power belong to Him? Melchisedec is our witness, thus declaring God to be Creator of heaven and earth: Blessed be Abraham of God most high, Who created heaven and earth . The prophet Hosea also is witness, saying, I am the Lord thy God, that establish the heavens and create the earth, Whose hands have created all the host of heaven . Peter too is witness, writing thus, Committing your souls as to a faithful Creator . Why do we apply the name of the work to the Maker of that work? Why do we give the same name to God and to our fellowmen? He is our Creator, He is the Creator of all the heavenly host.

5. Since by the faith of the Apostles and Evangelists these statements are referred in their meaning to the Son, through Whom all things were made, how shall He be made equal to the very works of His hands and be in the same category of nature as all other things? In the first place our human intelligence repudiates this statement that the Creator is a creature; since creation comes to exist by means of the Creator. But if He is a creature, He is both subject to corruption and exposed to the suspense of waiting, and is subjected to bondage. For the same blessed Apostle Paul says: For the long expectation of the creature waiteth for the revelation of the sons of God. For the creature was subject to vanity, not of its own will, but on account of Him Who has made it subject in hope. Because also the creature itself shall be freed from the slavery of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God . If, therefore, Christ is a creature, it must needs be that He is in uncertainty, hoping always with a tedious expectation, and that His long expectation, rather than ours, is waiting, and that while He waits He is subjected to vanity, and is subjected through a subjection due to necessity, not of His own will. But since He is subjected not of His own will, He must needs be also a bondservant;

moreover since tie is a bondservant He must needs also be dwelling in a corruptible nature. For the Apostle teaches that all these things belong to the creature, and that, when it shall be freed from these through a long expectation, it will shine with a glory proper to man. But what a thoughtless and impious assertion about God is this, to imagine Him exposed, through the insults which the creature bears, to such mockeries as that He should hope and serve, and be under compulsion and receive recognition, and be freed hereafter into a condition which is ours, not His; while really it is of His gift that we make our little progress.

6. But our impiety, by the licence of this forbidden language, waxes apace with yet deeper faithlessness; asserting that since the Son is a creature it is bound to maintain that the Father also does not differ from a creature. For Christ, remaining in the form of God, took the form of a servant; and if He is a creature Who is in the form of God, God can never be separate from the creature, because there is a creature in the form of God. But to be in the form of God can only be understood to mean, remaining in the nature of God ú whence also God is a creature, because there is a creature with His nature. But He Who was in the form of God, did not grasp at being equal with God, because from equality with God, that is, from the form of God, He descended into the form of a servant. But He could not descend from God into man, except by emptying Himself, as God, of the form of God. But when He emptied Himself, He was not effaced, so as not to be; since then He would have become other in kind than He had been. For neither did He, Who emptied Himself within Himself, cease to be Himself; since the power of His might remains even in the power of emptying Himself; and the transition into the form of a servant does not mean the loss of the nature of God, since to have put off the form of God is nothing less than a mighty act of divine power.

7. But to be in this way in the form of God is nothing else than to be equal with God: so that equality of honour is owed to the Lord Jesus Christ, Who is in the form of God, as He Himself says, That all men may honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father Who sent Him . There is never a difference between things which does not also imply a different degree of honour. The same objects deserve the same reverence; for otherwise the highest honour will be unworthily bestowed on those which are inferior, or with insult to the superior the inferior will be made equal to them in honour. But if the Son, regarded as a creation rather than a birth, be treated with a reverence equal to that paid the Father, then we grant no special meed of honour to the Father, since we charge ourselves with only such reverence towards Him as is shewn to a creature. But since He is equal to God the Father, inasmuch as He is born as God from Him, He is also equal to Him in honour, for He is a Son and not a creature.

8. This again is a notable utterance of the Father concerning Him: From the womb, before the morning star I begat Thee . Here, as we have often said already, nothing derogatory to God is implied in the concession to our weakness of understanding; as though, because He said that He begot Him from the womb, He were therefore composed of inner and outer parts, which unite to form His members, and owed Ills being to the same causes within time to which earthly bodies owe theirs; when in fact He Whose existence is due to no natural

necessities, free and perfect, and eternal Lord of all nature, in explanation of the true character of the birth of His Only-begotten, points to power of His own unchangeable nature. For though Spirit be born of Spirit (consistently, be it remembered, with the true character of Spirit, through which itself is also Spirit), nevertheless its only cause for being born lies within those perfect and unchangeable causes. And though it is from a perfect and unchangeable cause that it is born, it must needs be born from that cause, in accordance with the true character of that cause. Now the necessary process of human birth is conditioned by the causes which operate upon the womb. But as God is not made up of parts, but is unchangeable as being Spirit, for God is Spirit, He is subject to no natural necessity working within Him.

But since He was telling us of the birth of Spirit from Spirit, He instructed our understanding by an example from causes which work among us: not to give an example of the manner of birth, but to declare the fact of generation; not that the example might prove Him subject to necessity, but that it might enlighten our mind. If, therefore, God Only-begotten is a created being, what meaning is there in a revelation which uses the common facts of human birth to indicate that He was divinely generated?

9. For often by means of these members of our bodies, God illustrates for us the method of His own operations, enlightening our intelligence by using terms commonly understood: as when He says, Whose hands created all the host of heaven ; or again, The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous ; or again, I have found David, the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart . Now by the heart is denoted the desire, to which David was well-pleasing through the uprightness of his character; and knowledge of the whole universe, whereby nothing is beyond God's ken, is expressed under the term 'eyes;' and His creative activity, whereby nothing exists which is not of God, is understood by the name of 'hands.' Therefore as God wills and foresees and does everything, and even in the use of terms denoting bodily action must be understood to have no need of the assistance of a body; surely, now, in the statement that He begat from the womb, the idea is brought forward not of a human origin produced by a bodily act, but of a birth which must be understood as spiritual, since in the other cases where members are spoken of, this is done to represent to us other active powers in God.

10. Therefore since heart is put for desire, and eyes for sight, and hands for work achieved,-and yet, without in any way being made up of parts, God desires and foresees and acts, these same operations being expressed by the words heart, and eyes, and hand,-is not the meaning of the phrase that He begat from the womb an assertion of the reality of the birth? Not that He begat the Son from His womb, just as neither does He act by means of a hand, nor see by means of eyes, nor desire by means of a heart. But since by the employment of these terms it is made clear that He really acts and sees and wills everything, so from the word 'womb' it is clear that He really begot from Himself Him Whom He begat; not that he made use of a womb, but that He purposed to express reality. Just in the same way He does not trill or see or act through bodily faculties, but uses the names of these members in order

that through the services performed by corporeal forces we may understand the power of forces which are not corporeal.

11. Now the constitution of human society does not allow, nor indeed do the words of our Lord's teaching permit, that the disciple should be above his master, or the slave rule over his lord; because, in these contrasted positions, subordination to knowledge is the fitting state of ignorance, and unconditional submission the appointed lot of servitude. And since it is the common judgment of all that this is so, whose rashness now shall induce us to say or think that God is a creature, or that the Son has been made? For nowhere do we find that our Master and Lord spoke thus of Himself to His servants and disciples, or that He taught that His birth was a creation or a making. Moreover, the Father never bore witness to Him as being aught else but a Son, nor did the Son profess that God was aught else than His own true Father, assuredly affirming that He was born, not made nor created, as He says, Every one that loveth the Father, loveth also the Son Who is born of Him .

12. On the other hand His works in creation are acts of making and not a birth through generation. For the heaven is not a son, neither is the earth a son, nor is the world a birth; for of these it is said, All things were made through Him ; and by the prophet, The heavens are the works of Thy hands ; and by the same prophet, Neglect not the works of Thy hands . Is the picture a son of the painter, or the sword a son of the smith or the house a son of the architect? These are the works of their making: but He alone is the Son of the Father Who is born of the Father. 13. And we indeed are sons of God, but sons because the Son has made us such. For we were once sons of wrath, but have been made sons of God through the Spirit of adoption, and have earned that title by favour, not by right of birth. And since everything that is made, before it was made, was not, so we, although we were not sons, have been made what we are. For formerly we were not sons: but after we have earned the name we are such. Moreover, we have not been born, but made; not begotten, but purchased. For God purchased a people for Himself, and by this act begot them. But we never learn that God begot sons in the strict sense of the term. For He does not say, "I have begotten and brought up My sons," but only, I have begotten and brought up sons .

14. Yet perchance inasmuch as He says, My firstborn Son Israel , some one will interpret the fact that He said, My firstborn, so as to deprive the Son of the characteristic property of birth; as though, because God also applied to Israel the epithet Mine, the adoption of those who have been made sons was misrepresented as though it were an actual birth, and therefore the phrase used of Him, This is My beloved Son , is not solely applicable to the birth of God, since the epithet My is (so it is asserted) shared with those who clearly were not born sons. But that they were not really born, although they are said to have been born, is shewn even from that passage where it is said, A people which shall be born, whom the Lord hath made .

15. Therefore the people of Israel is born, in such wise that it is made; nor do we take the assertion that it is born as contradictory to the fact that it is made. For it is a son by adoption, not by generation; nor is this its true character, but its title. For although the

words. My firstborn are written of it; there is yet a great and wide difference between My beloved Son, and My firstborn son. For where there is birth, there we see, My beloved Son; but where there is a choice from among the nations, and adoption through an act of will, there is My firstborn son. Here the people is God's, in regard to its character as firstborn; in the former ease the fact that He is God's, relates to His character as a Son. Again, in a case of birth the father's ownership comes first, and then his love; in a case of adoption the primary fact is that the son is made a firstborn, and then comes the ownership. Thus to Israel, adopted for a son out of all the peoples of the earth, properly belonged the character of a firstborn; but to Him alone, Who is born God, properly belongs the character of a Son. Accordingly there is no true and complete birth where sonship is imputed rather than real: since it is not doubtful that that people, which is born into a state of sonship, is also made.

But since it would not have been what it is now become, and inasmuch as its birth is but a name for its being made, it has no true birth, since it was something else before it was born. And for this reason it was not before it was born, that is, before it was made, because that which is a son from among the nations was a nation before it was a son: and accordingly it is not truly a son, because it was not always a son. But God Only-begotten was neither at any time not a Son, nor was He anything before He was a Son, nor is He Himself anything except a Son. And so He Who is always a Son, has rendered it impossible for us to think of Him that there was a time when He was not.

16. For indeed human births involve a previous non-existence, because, as a first reason, all are born from those, all of whom formerly were not. For although each one who is born has his origin from one who has been, nevertheless that very parent, from whom he is born, was not before he was born. Again, as a second reason, he who is born, is born after that he was not, for time existed before he was born. For if he is born to-day, in the time which was yesterday, he was not; and he has come into a state of being from a state of not being; and our reason enforces that that which is born to-day did not exist yesterday. And so it remains that his birth, by virtue of which he is, took place after a state of non-existence; since necessarily today implies the previous existence of yesterday, so that it is true of it that there was a time when it was not. And these facts hold good of the origin of everything relating to man: all receive a beginning, previously to which they had not been: firstly, as we have explained, in respect of time, and then in respect of cause And in respect of time indeed there is no doubt that things which now begin to be, formerly were not; and this is true also in respect of cause, since it is certain that their existence is not derived from a cause within themselves.

For think over all the causes of beginnings, and direct your understanding to their antecedents: you will find that nothing began by self-causation, since nothing is born by the free act of the parent, but all things are created what they are through the power of God. Whence also it is a natural property of each class of things by virtue of actual heredity, that it once was not and then began to be, beginning after time began, and existing within time. And while all existing things have an origin later than that of time, their causes also,

in their turn, were once nonexistent, being born from things which once were not. Even Adam, the first parent of the human race, was formed from the earth, which was made out of nothing, and after time, that is to say, after the heaven and earth, and the day and the sun, moon and stars, and he had no first beginning in being born, and began to be when he once had not been.

17. But for God Only-begotten, Who is preceded by no antecedent time, the possibility is excluded that at some time He was not, since that "some time" thus becomes prior to Him; and again, the assertion that He was not involves the potion of time: whence time will not begin to be after Him, but He Himself will begin to be after time, and, inasmuch as He was not before He was born, the very period when He was not will take precedence of Him. Further, He Who is born from Him Who really is, cannot be understood to have been born from that which was not: since He Who really is, is the cause of His existing, and His birth cannot have its origin in that which is not. And therefore since in His case it is not true either in regard of time that He ever was not, or in regard of the Father, that is, the Author of His being, that He has come into existence out of nothing, He has left no possibility with regard to Himself either of His having been born out of nothing, or of His not having existed before He was born.

18. Now I am not ignorant that most of those, whose mind being dulled by impiety does not accept the mystery of God, or who through the strong influence of a hostile spirit are ready to manifest, under the cover of reverence, a marl passion for disparaging God, are wont to make strange assertions in the ears of simple-minded men. They assert that since we say that the Son always has been, and that He never has been anything which He has not always been, we are therefore declaring that He is without birth, inasmuch as He always has been; since, according to the workings of human reason, that which always has existed cannot possibly have been born: since (so they urge) the cause of a thing being born, is that something, which was not, may come into existence, while the coming into existence of something which was not, means nothing else, according to the judgment of common sense, than its being born. They may add those arguments, subtle enough and pleasant to hear;- "If He was born, He began to be; at the time when He began to be, He was not: and when He was not, it cannot be that He was." By such proofs let them maintain that it is the language of reasonable piety to say, "He was not before He was born: because in order that He might come to be, One Who was not, not One Who was, was born. Nor did He Who was, require a birth, although He Who was not was born, to the end that He might come to be."

19. Now, first of all, men professing a devout knowledge of divine things, in matters where the truth preached by Evangelists and Apostles shewed the way, ought to have laid aside the intricate questions of a crafty philosophy, and rather to have followed after the faith which rests in God: because the sophistry of a syllogistical question easily disarms a weak understanding of the protection of its faith, since treacherous assertion lures on the guileless defender, who tries to support his case by enquiry into facts, till at last it robs him, by means of his own enquiry, of his certainty; so that the answerer no longer retains in his

consciousness a truth which by his admission he has surrendered. For what answer accommodates itself so well to the questioner's purpose, as the admission on our part, when we are asked, "Does anything exist before it is born?" that that which is born, did not previously exist? For it is contrary both to nature and to necessary reason that a thing which already exists should be born: since a thing must needs be born in order that it may come to be, and not because it already existed. But when we have made this concession, because it is rightly made, we lose the certainty of our faith, and being ensnared we fall in with their impious and unchristian designs.

20. But the blessed Apostle Paul, taking precaution against this, as we have often shewn, warned us to be on our guard, saying: Take heed lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the elements of the world, and not according to Christ, in Whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily . Therefore we must be on our guard against philosophy, and methods which rest upon traditions of men we must not so much avoid as refute. Any concession that we make must imply not that we are out-argued but that we are confused, for it is right that we, who declare that Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God, should not flee from the doctrines of men, but rather overthrow them; and we must restrain and instruct the simple-minded lest they be spoiled by these teachers. For since God can do all things, and in His wisdom can do all things wisely, for neither is His purpose unarmed with power nor His power unguided by purpose, it behoves those who proclaim Christ to the world, to face the irreverent and faulty doctrines of the world with the knowledge imparted by that wise Omnipotence, according to the saying of the blessed Apostle: For our weapons are not carnal but powerful for God, for the casting down of strongholds, casting down reasonings and every high thing which is exalted against the knowledge of God .

The Apostle did not leave us a faith which was bare and devoid of reason; for although a bare faith may be most mighty to salvation, nevertheless, unless it is trained by teaching, while it will have indeed a secure retreat to withdraw to in the midst of foes, it will yet be unable to maintain a safe and strong position for resistance. Its position will be like that which a camp affords to a weak force after a flight; not like the undismayed courage of men who have a camp to hold. Therefore we must beat down the insolent arguments which are raised against God, and destroy the fastnesses of fallacious reasoning, and crush cunning intellects which hit themselves up to impiety, with weapons not carnal but spiritual, not with earthly, learning but with heavenly wisdom; so that in proportion as divine things differ from human, so may the philosophy of heaven surpass the rivalry of earth.

21. Accordingly let misbelief abandon its efforts; let it not think, because it does not understand, that we deny a truth which, in fact, we alone rightly understand and believe. For while we declare in so many words that He was born, nevertheless we do not assert that He was ever not born . For it is not the same thing to be not born and to be born: since the latter term expresses origin derived from some other, the former origin derived from none. And it is one thing to exist always, as the Eternal, without any source of being, and another

to be co-eternal with a Father, having Him for the Source of being. For where a father is the source of being, there also is birth; and further, where the Source of being is eternal, the birth also is eternal: for since birth comes from the source of being, birth which comes from an eternal Source of being must be eternal. Now everything which always exists, is also eternal. But nevertheless, not everything which is eternal is also not born; since that which is born from eternity has eternally the character of having been born; but that which is not born is ingenerate as well as eternal. But if that which has been born from the Eternal is not born eternal, it will follow that the Father also is not an eternal Source of being.

Therefore if any measure of eternity is wanting to Him Who has been born of the eternal Father, clearly the very same measure is wanting to the Author of His being; since what belongs in an infinite degree to Him Who begets, belongs in an infinite degree to Him also Who is born. For neither reason nor intelligence allows of any interval between the birth of God the Son and the generation by God the Father; since the generation consists in the birth, and the birth in the generation. Thus each of these events coincides exactly with the other; neither took place unless both took place. Therefore that which owes its existence to both these events cannot be eternal unless they both are eternal; since neither of the two correlatives, apart from the other, has any reality, because it is impossible for one to exist without the other.

22. But some one, who cannot receive this divine mystery, will say, "Everything which has been born, once was not; since it was born in order that it might come into existence." 23. But does any one doubt that all human beings that have been born, at one time were not? It is, however, one thing to be born of some one who once was not, and another to be born of One Who always is. For every state of infancy, since previously it had no existence, began from some point of time. And tiffs again, growing up into childhood, still later urges on youth to fatherhood. Yet the man was not always a father, for he advanced to youth through boyhood, and to boyhood through original infancy. Therefore he who was not always a father, also did not always beget: but where the Father is eternal, the Son also is eternal. And so if you hold, whether by argument or by instinct, that God, in the mystery of our knowledge of Whom one property is that He is Father, was not always the Father of the begotten Son, you hold also, as a matter of understanding and of knowledge, that the Son, Who was begotten, did not always exist. But if the property of fatherhood be co-eternal with the Father, then necessarily also the property of sonship must be co-eternal with the Son. And how will it square with our language or our understanding to maintain that He was not before He was born, Whose property it is that He always was what He has been born.

24. And so God Only-begotten, containing in Himself the form and image of the invisible God, in all things which are properties of God the Father is equal to Him by virtue of the fulness of true Godhead in Himself. For, as we have shewn in the former books, in respect of power and veneration He is as mighty and as worthy of honour as the Father: so also, inasmuch as the Father is always Father, He too, inasmuch as He is the Son, possesses the like property of being always the Son. For according to the words spoken to Moses,

He Who is, hath sent Me unto you , we obtain the unambiguous conception that absolute being belongs to God; since that which is, cannot be thought of or spoken of as not being. For being and not being are contraries, nor can these mutually exclusive descriptions be simultaneously true of one and the same object: for while the one is present, the other must be absent. Therefore, where anything is, neither conception nor language will admit of its not being. When our thoughts are turned backwards, and are continually carried back further and further to understand the nature of Him Who is, this sole fact about Him, that He is, remains ever prior to our thoughts; since that quality, which is infinitely present in God, always withdraws itself from the backward gaze of our thoughts, though they reach back to an infinite distance.

The result is that the backward straining of our thoughts can never grasp anything prior to God's property of absolute existence; since nothing presents itself, to enable us to understand the nature of God, even though we go on seeking to eternity, save always the fact that God always is. That then which has both been declared about God by Moses, that of which our human intelligence can give no further explanation; that very quality the Gospels testify to be a property of God Only-begotten; since in the beginning was the Word, and since the Word was with God, and since He was the true Light, and since God Only-begotten is in the bosom of the Father , and since Jesus Christ is God over all .

25. Therefore He was, and He is, since He is from Him Who always is what He is. But to be from Him, that is to say, to be from the Father, is birth. Moreover, to be always from Him, Who always is, is eternity; but this eternity is derived not from Himself, but from the Eternal. And from the Eternal nothing can spring but what is eternal: for if the Offspring is not eternal, then neither is the Father, Who is the source of generation, eternal. Now since it is the special characteristic of His being that His Father always exists, and that He is always His Son, and since eternity is expressed in the name He that is, therefore, since He possesses absolute being, He possesses also eternal being. Moreover, no one doubts that generation implies birth, and that birth points to one existing from that time forth, and not to one who does not continue. Furthermore, there can be no doubt that no one who already was in existence could be born. For no cause of birth can accrue to Him, Who of Himself continues eternal. But God Only-begotten, Who is the Wisdom of God, and the Power and the Word of God, since He was born, bears witness to the Father as the source of His being. Since He was born of One, Who eternally exists, He was not born of nothing. Since He was born before times eternal, His birth must necessarily be prior to all thought.

There is no room for the verbal quibble, "He was not, before He was born. For if He is within the range of our thought, in the sense that He was not before He was born, then both our thought and time are prior to His birth; since everything which once was not, is within the compass of thought and time, by the very meaning of the assertion that it once was not, which separates off, within time, a period when it did not exist. But He is from the Eternal, and yet has always been; He is not ingenerate, yet never was non-existent; since to have always been transcends time, and to have been born is birth.

26. And so we confess that God Only-begotten was born, but born before times eternal: since we must make our confession within such limits as the express preaching of Apostles and Prophets assigns to us; though at the same time human thought cannot grasp any intelligible idea of birth out of time, since it is inconsistent with the nature of earthly beings that any of them should be born before all times. But when we make this assertion, how can we reconcile with it, as part of the same doctrine, the contradictory statement that before His birth He was not, when according to the Apostle He is God Only-begotten before times eternal? If, therefore, the belief that He was born before times eternal is not only the reasonable conclusion of human intelligence, but the confession of thoughtful faith, then, since birth implies some author of being, and what surpasses all time is eternal, and whatever is born before times eternal transcends earthly perception, we are certainly exalting by impious self-will a notion of human reason, if we maintain in a carnal sense that before He was born He was not, since He is born eternal, beyond human perception or carnal intelligence. And again, whatever transcends time is eternal.

27. For we can embrace all time in imagination or knowledge, since we know that what is now to-day, did not exist yesterday, because what was yesterday is not now; and on the other hand what is now, is only now and was not also yesterday. And by imagination we can so span the past that we have no doubt that before some city was founded, there existed a time in which that city had not been founded. Since, therefore, all time is the sphere of knowledge or imagination, we judge of it by the perceptions of human reason; hence we are considered to hare reasonably asserted about anything, "It was not, before it was born," since antecedent time is prior to the origin of every single thing. But on the other hand, since in things of God, that is to say, in regard to the birth of God, there is nothing that is not before time eternal: it is illogical to use of Him the phrase "before He was born," or to suppose that He Who possesses before times eternal the eternal promise, is merely (in the language of the blessed Apostle) in hope of eternal life, which God Who cannot lie has promised before times eternal, or to say that once He was not. For reason rejects the notion that He began to exist after anything, Who, so we must confess, existed before times eternal.

28. We may grant that for anything to be born before times eternal is not the way of human nature, nor a matter which we can understand; and yet in this we believe God's declarations about Himself. How then does the infidelity of our own day assert, according to the conceptions of human intelligence, that that had no existence before it was born, which the Apostolic faith tells us was, in some manner inconceivable to the human understanding, always born, or in other words existed before times eternal? For what is born before time is always born; since that which exists before time eternal, always exists. But what has always been born, cannot at any time have had no existence; since non-existence at a given time is directly contrary to eternity of existence. Moreover, existing always excludes the idea of not having existed always. And the idea of not having existed always being excluded by the postulate that He has always been born, we cannot conceive the supposition that He did not exist before He was born. For it is obvious that He Who was born before times eternal, has always been born, although we can forth no positive conception of anything

having been born before all time. For if we must confess (as is clearly necessary) that He has been born before every creature, whether invisible or corporeal, and before all ages and times eternal, and before all perception, Who always exists through the very fact that He has been so born;-then by no manner of thought can it be conceived that before He was born, He did not exist; since He Who has been born before times eternal, is prior to all thought, and we can never think that once He did not exist, when we have to confess that He always exists.

29. But our opponent cunningly anticipates us with this carping objection. "If," be urges, "it is inconceivable that He did not exist before He was born, it must be conceivable that One Who already existed was born." 30. I will ask this objector in reply, whether he remembers my calling Him anything else than born, and whether I did not say that existence before times eternal and birth have the same meaning in the case of Him that was, For the birth of One already existing is not really birth, but a self-wrought change through birth, and the eternal existence of One Who is born means that in His birth He is prior to any conception of time, and that there is no tooth for the mind to suppose that at any time He was unborn. And so an eternal birth before times eternal is not the same as existence before being born. But to have been born always before times eternal excludes the possibility of having had no existence be fore birth.

31. Again, this same fact excludes the possibility of saying that He existed before He was born; because He Who transcends perception transcends it in every respect. For if the notion of being born, though always existing, transcends thought, it is equally impossible that the notion that He did not exist before He was born should be a subject of thought. And so, since we must confess that to have been always born means for us nothing beyond the fact of birth, the question whether He did or did not exist before He was born cannot be determined under our conditions of thought; since this one fact that He was born before times eternal ever eludes the grasp of our thought. So He was born and yet has always existed; He Who does not allow anything else to be understood or said about Him than that He was born. For since He is prior to time itself within which thought exists (since time eternal is previous to thought), He debars thought from determining concerning Him, whether He was or was not before He was born; since existence before birth is incompatible with the idea of birth, and previous non-existence involves the idea of time. Therefore, while the infinity of times eternal is fatal to any explanation involving the idea of time-that is to say, to the notion that He did not exist; His birth equally forbids any that is inconsistent with it,-that is to say, the notion that He existed before He was born. For if the question of His existence or His non-existence can be determined under our conditions of thought, then the birth itself must be after time; for He Who does not always exist must, of necessity, have begun to be after some given point of time.

32. Therefore the conclusion reached by faith and argument and thought is that the Lord Jesus both was born and always existed: since if the mind survey the past in search of knowledge concerning the Son, this one fact and nothing else, will be constantly present to

the enquirer's perception, that He was born and always existed. As therefore it is a property of God the Father to exist without birth, so also it must belong to the Son to exist always through birth. But birth can declare nothing except that there is a Father and the title Father nothing else except that there is a birth. For neither those names nor the nature of the case, will allow of any intermediate position. For either He was not always a Father, unless there was always also a Son; or if He was always a Father, there was always also a Son; since whatever period of time is denied to the Son, to make His sonship non-eternal, just so much the Father lacks of having been always a Father: so that although He was always God, nevertheless He cannot have been also a Father for the same infinity during which He is God.

33. Now the declarations of impiety even go so far as not only to ascribe to the Son birth in time, but also generation in time to the Father; because the process of generation and the birth take place within one period.

34. But, heretic, do you consider it pious and devout to confess that God indeed always existed, yet was not always Father? For if it is pious for you to think so, you must then condemn Paul of impiety, when he says that the Son existed before times eternal : you must also accuse Wisdom itself, when it bears witness concerning itself that it was founded before the ages: for it was present with the Father when He was preparing the heaven. But in order that you may assign to God a beginning of His being a Father, first determine the starting-point at which the times must have begun. For if they had a beginning, the Apostle is a liar for declaring them to be eternal. For you all are accustomed to reckon the times from the creation of the sun and the moon, since it is written of them, And Let Them Be for Signs and for Times and for Years . But He Who is before the heaven, which in your view is even before time, is also before the ages. Nor is He merely before the ages, but also before the generations of generations which precede the ages. Why do you limit things divine and infinite by what is perishable and earthly and narrow? With regard to Christ, Paul knows of nothing except an eternity of times. Wisdom does not say that it is after anything, but before everything. In your judgment the times were established by the sun and the moon;

but David shews that Christ remains before the sun, saying, His is name is before the sun . And lest you should think that the things of God began with the formation of this universe, he says again, And for generations of generations before the moon . These great men counted worthy of prophetic inspiration look down upon time: every opening is barred whereby human perception might penetrate behind the birth, which transcends times eternal. Yet let the faith of a devout imagination accept this as limit of its speculations, remembering that the Lord Jesus Christ, God Only-begotten, is born in a manner to be acknowledged as a perfect birth, and in the reverence paid to His divinity, not forgetting that He is eternal.

35. But we are accused of lying, and together with us the doctrine preached by the Apostle is attacked, because while it confesses the birth, it asserts the eternity of that birth: the result being that, while the birth bears witness to an Author of being, the assertion of eternity in the mystery of the divine birth transgresses the limits of human thought. For

there is brought forward against us the declaration of Wisdom concerning itself, when it taught that it was created in these words The Lord created Me for the beginning of His ways .

36. And, O wretched heretic! you turn the weapons granted to the Church against the Synagogue, against belief in the Church's preaching, and distort against the common salvation of all the sure meaning of a saving doctrine. For you maintain by these words that Christ is a creature, instead of silencing the Jew, who denies that Christ was God before eternal ages, and that His power is active in all the working and teaching of God, by these words of the living Wisdom! For Wisdom has in this passage asserted that it had been created for the beginning of the ways of God and for His works from the commencement of the ages, lest perchance it might be supposed that it did not subsist before Mary; yet has not employed this word 'created' in order to signify that its birth was a creation, since it was created for the beginning of God's ways and for His works. Nay rather lest any one should suppose that this beginning of the ways, which is indeed the starting-point for the human knowledge of things divine, was meant to subordinate an infinite birth to conditions of time, Wisdom declared itself established before the ages. For, since it is one thing to be created for the beginning of the ways and for the works of God, and another to be established before the ages, the establishing was intended to be understood as prior to the creation; and the very fact of its being established for God's works before the ages was intended to point to the mystery of the creation; since the establishing is before the ages, but the creation for the beginning of the ways and for the works of God is after the commencement of the ages.

37. But now, test the terms 'creation' and 'establishing' should be an obstacle to belief in the divine birth, these words follow, Before He made the earth, before He made firm the mountains, before all the hills He begat Me . Thus He is begotten before the earth, Who is established before the ages; and not only before the earth, but also before the mountains and hills. And indeed in these expressions, since Wisdom speaks of itself, more is meant than is said. For all objects which are used to convey the idea of infinity must be of such a kind as to be subsequent in point of time to no single thing and to no class of things. But things existing in time cannot possibly be fitted to indicate eternity; because, from the very fact that they are posterior to other things, they are incapable of suggesting the thought of infinity as a beginning, themselves having their own beginning in time. For what wonder is it, that God should have begotten the Lord Christ before the earth, when the origin of the angels is found to be prior to the creation of the earth? Or why should He, Who was said to be begotten before the earth, be also declared to be born before the mountains, and not only before the mountains but also before the hills; the hills being mentioned, as an afterthought, after the mountains, and reason requiring that there should be a world before mountains could exist? For such reasons it cannot be supposed that these words were used merely in order that He might be understood to exist prior to hills and mountains and earth, Who surpasses by the eternity of His own infinity things which are themselves prior to earth and mountains and hills.

38. But this divine discourse has not left our understandings unenlightened, since it explains the reason of the phrase in what follows:-God made the regions, both the uninhabitable parts and the heights which are inhabited under the heaven. When He was preparing the heaven, I was with Him; and when He was setting apart His own seat. When above the winds He made the clouds huge in the upper air, and when He placed securely the springs under the heaven, and when He made firm the foundations of the earth, I was by Him, joining all things together . What period in time is here? Or how far are the conceptions of human intelligence allowed to reach beyond the infinite birth of God Only-begotten? By means of things whose creation we can conceive in our mind, it is not possible to understand the generation of Him, Who is prior to all these things; and hence we cannot maintain that He came, indeed, first in time, yet was not infinite, inasmuch as the only privilege bestowed upon Him was a birth prior to things temporal. For in that case, since they, by their constitution, are subject to the conditions of time, He, though prior to them all, would be equally subject to conditions of time, because their creation within time would define the time of His birth, namely that He was born before then; for that which is antecedent to temporal things stands in the same relation to time as they.

39. But the voice of God, our instruction in true wisdom, speaks what is perfect, and expresses the absolute truth, when it teaches that itself is prior not merely to things of time, but even to things infinite. For when the heaven was being prepared, it was present with God. Is the preparation of the heaven an act of God within time; so that an impulse of thought suddenly surprised His mind, as though it had been previously dull and inert. and after the fashion of men He sought for materials and instruments for fashioning the heaven? Nay, the prophet's conception of the working of God is far different, when He says, By the word of the Lord were the heavens established, and all their power by the breath of His mouth . Yet the heavens needed the command of God, that they might be established; for their arrangement and excellence in this firm unshaken constitution, which they display, did not arise from the blending and commingling of some kind of matter, but from the breath of the mouth of God. What then does it mean, that Wisdom begotten of God was present with Him, when He was preparing the heaven? For neither does the creation of heaven consist in a preparation of material, nor does it consist with the nature of God to linger over preliminary thoughts concerning His work. For everything, which there is in created things, was always with God:

for although these things in respect of their creation have a beginning, nevertheless they have no beginning in respect of the knowledge and power of God. And here the prophet is our witness, saying, O God, Who hast made all things which shall be . For although things future, in so far as they are to be created, are still to be made, yet to God, with Whom there is nothing new or sudden in creation they have already been made; since there is a dispensation of times for their creation, and in the prescient working of the divine power they have already been made. Here, therefore, Wisdom, in teaching that it was born before the ages, teaches that it is not merely prior to things which have been created, but is even co-eternal with what is eternal, to wit, with the preparation of the heaven, and the setting

apart of the abode of God. For this abode was not set apart at the time when it was actually made, for setting apart and fashioning an abode are different things. Nor again was the heaven formed at the time when it was (ideally) prepared, for Wisdom was with God both when He prepared and when He set apart the heaven. And afterwards it was fashioning the heaven by the side of God Who formed it: it proves its eternity by its presence with Him as He prepares; it reveals its functions, when it fashions by the side of God Who forms.

Therefore, in the passage before us it said that it was begotten even before the earth and mountains and hills, because it meant to teach that it was present at the preparation of the heaven; in order that it might shew that, even when the heaven was being prepared, this work was already finished in the counsel of God, for to Him there is nothing new.

40. For the preparation for creation is perpetual and eternal: nor was the frame of this universe actually made by isolated acts of thought, in the sense that first the heaven was thought of, and afterwards there came into God's mind a thought anti plan concerning the earth; that He thought of each part singly, so that first the earth was spread out as a plain, and then through better counsels was made to rise up in mountains, and yet again was diversified with hills, and in the fourth place was also made habitable even in the heights; that so the heaven was prepared an I the abode of God set apart, and huge clouds in the upper air held the exhalations caught up by the winds; then afterwards sure springs began to run under the heaven, and, last of all, the earth was made firm with strong foundations. For Wisdom declares that it is prior to all these things. But since all things under the heaven were made through God, and Christ was present at the fashioning of the heaven, and preceded even the eternity of the heaven which was prepared, this fact does not allow us to think in respect to God of disconnected thoughts on details, since the whole preparation of these things is co-eternal with God. For although, as Moses teaches, each act of creation had its proper order;-the making the firmament solid, the laying bare of the dry land, the gathering together of the sea, the ordering of the stars, the generation by the waters and the earth when they brought forth living creatures out of themselves; yet the creation of the heaven and earth and other elements is not separated by the slightest interval in God's working, since their preparation had been completed in like infinity of eternity in the counsel of God.

41. Thus, though Christ was present in God with these infinite and eternal decrees, He has granted to us nothing more than a knowledge of the fact of His birth; in order that, just as an apprehension of the birth is the means which leads to faith in God, so also the knowledge of the eternity of His birth might avail to sustain piety; since neither reason nor experience allow us to speak of any but an eternal Son as proceeding from a Father Who is eternal.
42. But perhaps the word 'creation,' and its employment of Him, disturbs us. Certainly the word 'creation' would disturb us, if birth before the ages and creation for the beginning of the ways of God and for His works were not affirmed of Him. For birth cannot be understood to denote creation, since the birth precedes causation, but the creation takes place through causation. For before the preparation of the heaven and before the commencement of the

ages was He established, Who was created for the beginning of the ways of God and for His works. Is it possible that to be created for the beginning of the ways of God and for His works, means the same as to be born before all things? No: one of these ideas relates to time employed in action, but the other bears a sense which has no relation to time.

43. Or perhaps you wish the assertion that He was created for the works to be understood in the sense that He was created on account of the works; in other words that Christ was created for the sake of performing the works. In that case He exists as a servant and a builder of the universe, and was not born the Lord of Glory; He was created for the service of forming the ages, and was not always the beloved Son and the King of the ages. But, although the general understanding of Christians contradicts this impious thought of yours, recognising that it is one thing to be created for the beginning of the ways of God and for His works, and another to be born before the ages, yet this very same passage thwarts your purpose of falsely asserting that the Lord Christ was created, on account of the formation of the universe, since it shews that God the Father is the Maker and Former of the universe, and shews it convincingly, since Christ Himself was present fashioning by the side of Him Who was forming all things.

But, while all Scripture was designed to speak of the Lord Jesus Christ as the Creator of the universe, Wisdom, to destroy all occasion for impiety, has here declared that though God the Father was the Constructor of the universe, yet itself was not absent from Him while constructing it, since it was present with Him even when He was preparing it beforehand, and that when the Father formed the universe, Wisdom also was fashioning it by the side of Him Who formed it, and was present with Him even when He prepared it. Whence Wisdom would have us understand that it was not created on account of God's works , by the very fact that it had been present at the eternal preparation of works yet to be, and proves Scripture not to be false, by the fact that it fashioned the universe by the side of God when He formed it.

44. Learn at last, heretic, from the revelation of Catholic teaching, what is the meaning of the saying that Christ was created for the beginning of the ways of God and for His works; and be taught by the words of Wisdom itself the folly of your impious dulness. For thus it begins: If I shall declare unto you the things which are done every day, I will remember to recount those things which are from of old . For Wisdom had said before, You, O men, I entreat, and I utter my voice to the sons of men. O ye simple, understand subtilty, moreover ye unlearned, apply your heart ; and again, Through Me kings reign, and mighty men decree justice. Through Me princes are magnified, and through Me despots possess the earth ; and again, I walk in the ways of equity, and move in the midst of the paths of justice; that I may divide substance to those that love Me, and fill their treasures with good things . Wisdom is not silent about its daily work. And firstly entreating all men, it advises the simple to understand subtilty, and the unlearned to apply their heart, in order that a zealous and diligent reader may ponder the different and separate meanings of the words. And so it

teaches that by its methods and ordinances all success, all attainment of knowledge or fame or wealth, is achieved:

it shews that within itself are contained the reigns of kings and the prudence of the mighty, and the famous works of princes, and the justice of despots who possess the earth; that it moreover does not mingle with wicked deeds and has no part in acts of injustice; and that all this is done by Wisdom in order that, by taking part in every work of equity and justice, it may supply to those that love it, a wealth of eternal goods anti incorruptible treasures. Therefore Wisdom, after declaring that it will relate the things which are done every day, promises that it will also be mindful to recount the things which are from of old. And now what blindness is it, to think that things were performed before the beginning of the ages, which are expressly declared to date merely from the beginning of the ages! For every work among those which date from the beginning of the ages is itself posterior to that beginning: but on the contrary, things which are before the beginning of the ages, precede the ordering of the ages, which are later than they. And so Wisdom, after declaring that it is mindful to speak of the things which date from the beginning of the ages, says, The Lord created Me for the beginning of His ways for His works, by these words denoting things performed from the date of the beginning of the ages.

Thus Wisdom's teaching concerns not a generation declared to precede the ages, but a dispensation which began with the ages themselves.

45. We must also enquire what is the meaning of the saying that God, born before the ages, was again created for the beginning of the ways of God and for His works. This surely is said because where there is a birth before the commencement of the ages, there is the eternity of an endless generation: but where the same birth is represented as a creation from the commencement of the ages, for the ways of God and for His works, it is applied as the creative cause to the works and to the ways. And first, since Christ is Wisdom, we must see whether He is Himself the beginning of the way of the works of God. Of this, I think, there is no doubt; for He says, I am the way, and, No man cometh to the Father except through Me . A way is the guide of those who go, the course marked out for those who hasten, the safeguard of the ignorant, a teacher, so to speak, of things unknown and longed for. Therefore He is created for the beginning of the ways, for the works of God; because He is the Way and leads men to the Father. But we must seek for the purpose of this creation, which is from the commencement of the ages. For it is also the mystery of the last dispensation, wherein Christ was again created in bodily form, and declared that He was the way of the works of God. Again, He was created for the ways of God from the commencement of the ages, when, subjecting Himself to the visible form of a creature, He took the form of a created being.

46. And so let us see for what ways of God, and for what works of God, Wisdom was created from the commencement of the ages, though born of God before all ages. Adam heard the voice of One walking in Paradise. Do you think that His approach could have been heard, had He not assumed the guise of a created being? Is not the fact, that He was heard as He walked, proof that He was present in a created form? I do not ask in what guise He spoke

to Cain and Abel and Noah, and in what guise He was near to Enoch also, blessing him. An Angel speaks to Hagar, and certainly He is also God. Has He the same form, when He appears like an Angel, as He has in that nature, by virtue of which He is God? Certainly the form of an Angel is revealed, where afterwards mention is made of the nature of God. But why should I speak of an Angel? He comes as a man to Abraham. Under the guise of a man, in the shape of that created being, is not Christ present in that nature, which He possesses as being also God? A man speaks, and is present in the body, and is nourished by food; and yet God is adored. Surely He Who was an Angel is now also man, in order to save us from the assumption that any of these diverse aspects of one state, that of the creature, is His natural form as God.

Again, He comes to Jacob in human shape, and even grasps him for wrestling; and He takes hold with His hands, and struggles with His limbs, and bends His flanks, and adopts every movement and gesture of ours. But again He is revealed, this time to Moses, and as a fire; in order that you might learn to believe that this created nature was to provide Him with an outward guise, not to embody the reality of His nature. He possessed, at that moment, the power of burning, but He did not assume the destructive property which is inherent in the nature of fire, for the fire evidently burned and yet the bush was not injured.

47. Glance over the whole course of time, and realist in what guise He appeared to Joshua the son of Nun, a prophet bearing His name, or to Isaiah, who relates that he saw Him, as the Gospel also bears witness , or to Ezekiel, who was admitted even to knowledge of the Resurrection, or to Daniel, who confesses the Son of Man in the eternal kingdom of the ages, or to all the rest to whom He presented Himself in the form of various created beings, for the ways of God and for the works of God, that is to say, to teach us to know God, and to profit our eternal state. Why dues this method, expressly designed for human salvation, bring about at the present time such an impious attack upon His eternal birth? The creation, of which you speak, dates from the commencement of the ages; but His birth is without end, and before the ages. Maintain by all means that we are doing violence to words, if a Prophet, or the Lord, or an Apostle, or any oracle whatever has described by the name of creation the birth of His eternal divinity. In all these manifestations God, Who is a consuming fire, is present, as created, in such a manner that He could lay aside the created form by the same power by which He assumed it, being able to destroy again that which had come into existence merely that it might be looked upon.

48. But that blessed and true birth of the flesh conceived within the Virgin the Apostle has named both a creating and a making, for then there was born both the nature and form of our created being. And without doubt in his view this name belongs to Christ's true birth as a man, since he says, But when the fulness of the time came, God sent His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, in order that He might redeem those who are under the law, that we might obtain the adoption of sons . And so He is God's own Son, Who is made in human form and of human origin; nor is He only made but also created, as it is said: Even as the truth is in Jesus, that ye put away according to your former manner of life, that old

man, which becomes corrupt according to the lusts of deceit. However, be ye renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put ye on that new man, which is created according to God . So the new man is to be put on Who has been created according to God. For He Who was Son of God was born also Son Man. This was not the birth of the divinity, but the creating of the flesh; the new Man taking the title of the race, and being created according to God Who was born before the ages. And how the new man was created according to God, he explains in what follows, adding, in righteousness, and in holiness, and in truth . For there was no guile in Him; and He has been made unto us righteousness and sanctification, and is Himself the Truth. This, then, is the Christ, created a new man according to God, Whom we put on.

49. If, then, Wisdom, in saying that it was mindful of the things which have been performed since the beginning of the ages, said that it was created for the works of God and for the ways of God; and yet, while saying that it was created, taught that it was established before the ages, lest we should suppose that the mystery of that created form, so variously and frequently assumed, involved some change in its nature;-for although the firmness with which it was established would not allow of any disturbance that could overthrow it, yet, lest the establishment might seem to mean something less than birth, Wisdom declared itself to be begotten before all things:-if this is so, why is the term 'creation' now applied to the birth of that which was both begotten before all things, and also established before the ages? Because that which was established before the ages was created anew from the commencement of the ages for the beginning of the ways of God and for His works. In this sense must we understand the difference between creation from the commencement of the ages and that birth which precedes the ages and all things. Impiety at least has not this excuse, that it can plead error as the cause of its profanity.

50. For although the weakness of the understanding might hinder the perceptions of a man devoutly disposed, so that, even after this explanation, he might fail to grasp the meaning of "creation," nevertheless, even the letter of the Apostle's saying, when he applies the term "making" to a true birth, should have sufficed for a sincere, if not intelligent, belief, that the term "creation" was designed to conduce to a belief in generation. For when the Apostle was minded to assert the birth of One from one Parent, that is to say, the birth of the Lord from a virgin without a conception due to human passions, he clearly had a definite purpose in calling Him "made of a woman," Whom he knew and had frequently asserted to have been born. He desired that the 'birth' should point to the reality of the generation, and the 'making' should testify to the birth of One from one Parent; because the term 'making' excludes the idea of a conception by means of human intercourse, it being expressly stated that He was made of a virgin, though it is equally certain that He was born and not made. But see, heretic, how impious you are. No sentence of prophet, or evangelist, or apostle has said that Jesus Christ was created from God, rather than born from Him: yet you deny the birth.

and assert the creation, but not according to the Apostle's meaning, when he said that He was made, lest there should be any doubt that He was born as One from one Parent. You make your assertion in a most impious sense, implying that God did not derive His being by way of birth conveying nature; although a creature would rather have come into being out of nothing. This is the primary infection in your unhappy mind, not that you term birth a creating, but that you adapt your faith to the idea of creation instead of birth. And yet while it would mark a poor intellect, still it would not mark a man entirely undevout, if you had called Christ created, in order that men might recognise His impossible birth from God, as being that of One from One.

51. But none of these phrases does a firm apostolic faith permit. For it knows in what dispensation of time Christ was created, and in what eternity of times He was born. Moreover, He was born God of God, and the divinity of His true birth and perfect generation is not doubtful. For in relation to God we acknowledge only two modes of being, birth and eternity: birth, moreover, not after anything, but before all things, so that birth only bears witness to a Source of being, and does not predicate any incongruity between the offspring and the Source of being. Still, by common admission, this birth, because it is from God, implies a secondary position in respect to the Source of being, and yet cannot be separated from that Source, since any attempt of thought to pass beyond acceptance of the fact of birth, must also necessarily penetrate the mystery of the generation. And so this is the only pious language to use about God: to know Him as Father, and with Him to know also Him, Who is the Son born of Him. Nor assuredly are we taught anything concerning God, except that He is the Father of God the Only-begotten and the Creator. So let not human weakness overreach itself; and let it make this only confession, in which alone lies its salvation-that, before the mystery of the Incarnation, it is ever assured, concerning the Lord Jesus Christ, of this one fact that He had been born.

52. For my part, so long as I shall have the power by means of this Spirit Whom Thou hast granted me, Holy Father, Almighty God, I will confess Thee to be not only eternally God, but also eternally Father. Nor will I ever break out into such folly and impiety, as to make myself the judge of Thy omnipotence and Thy mysteries, nor shall this weak understanding arrogantly seek for more than that devout belief in Thy infinitude and faith in Thy eternity, which have been taught me. I will not assert that Thou wast ever without Thy Wisdom, and Thy Power, and Thy Word, without God Only-begotten, my Lord Jesus Christ. The weak and imperfect language, to which our nature is limited, does not dominate my thoughts concerning Thee, so that my poverty of utterance should choke faith into silence. For although we have a word and wisdom and power of our own, the product of our free inward activity, yet Thine is the absolute generation of perfect God, Who is Thy Word and Wisdom and Power; so that He can never be separated from Thee, Who in these names of Thy eternal properties is shewn to be born of Thee. Yet His birth is only so far shewn as to make manifest the fact that Thou art the Source of His being; yet sufficiently to confirm our belief in His infinity, inasmuch as it is related that He was born before times eternal.

53. For in human affairs Thou hast set before us many things of such a sort, that though we do not know their cause, yet the effect is not unknown; and reverence inculcates faith, where ignorance is inherent in our nature. Thus when I raised to Thy heaven these feeble eyes of mine, my certainty regarding it was limited to the fact that it is Thine. For seeing therein these orbits where the stars are fixed, and their annual revolutions, and the Pleiades and the Great Bear and the Morning Star, each having their varied duties in the service which is appointed them, I recognise Thy presence, O God, in these things whereof I cannot gain any clear understanding. And when I view the marvellous swellings of Thy sea, I know that I have failed to comprehend not merely the origin of the waters but even the movements of this changeful expanse; yet I grasp at faith in some reasonable cause, although it is one that I cannot see, and fail not to recognise Thee in these things also, which I do not know. Furthermore, when in thought I turn to the earth, which by the power of hidden agencies causes to decay all the seeds which it receives, quickens them when decayed, multiplies them when quickened, and makes them strong when multiplied;

in all these changes I find nothing which my mind can understand, yet my ignorance helps towards recognising Thee, for though I know nothing of the nature that waits on me, I recognise Thee by actual experience of the advantages I possess. Moreover, though I do not know myself, yet I perceive so much that I marvel at Thee the more because I am ignorant of myself. For without understanding it, I perceive a certain motion or order or life in my mind when it exercises its powers; and this very perception I owe to Thee, for though Thou deniest the power of understanding my natural first beginning, yet Thou givest that of perceiving nature with its charms. And since in what concerns myself I recognise Thee, ignorant as I am, so recognising Thee I will not in what concerns Thee cherish a feebler faith in Thy omnipotence, because I do not understand. My thoughts shall not attempt to grasp and master the origin of Thy Only-begotten Son, nor shall my faculties strain to reach beyond the truth that He is my Creator and my God.

54. His birth is before times eternal. If anything exist which precedes eternity, it will be something which, when eternity is comprehended, still eludes comprehension. And this something is Thine, and is Thy Only-begotten; no portion, nor extension, nor any empty name devised to suit some theory of Thy mode of action. He is the Son, a Son born of Thee, God the Father, Himself true God, begotten by Thee in the unity of Thy nature, and meet to be acknowledged after Thee, and yet with Thee, since Thou art the eternal Author of His eternal origin. For since He is from Thee, He is second to Thee; yet since He is Thine, Thou art not to be separated from Him. For we must never assert that Thou didst once exist without Thy Son, test we should be reproaching Thee either with imperfection, as then unable to generate, or with superfluousness after the generation. And so the exact meaning for us of the eternal generation is that we know Thee to be the eternal Father of Thy Only-begotten Son, Who was born of Thee before times eternal.

55. But, for my part, I cannot be content by the service of my faith and voice, to deny that my Lord and my God, Thy Only-begotten, Jesus Christ, is a creature; I must also deny that this

name of 'creature' belongs to Thy Holy Spirit, seeing that He proceeds from Thee and is sent through Him, so great is my reverence for everything that is Thine. Nor, because I know that Thou alone art unborn and that the Only-begotten is born of Thee, will I refuse to say that the Holy Spirit was begotten, or assert that He was ever created. I fear the blasphemies which would be insinuated against Thee by such use of this title 'creature,' which I share with the other beings brought into being by Thee. Thy Holy Spirit, as the Apostle says, searches and knows Thy deep things, and as Intercessor for me speaks to Thee words I could not utter; and shall I express or rather dishonour, by the title 'creature,' the power of His nature, which subsists eternally, derived from Thee through Thine Only-begotten? Nothing, except want belongs to Thee, penetrates into Thee; nor can the agency of a power foreign and strange to Thee measure the depth of Thy boundless majesty. To Thee belongs whatever enters into Thee; nor is anything strange to Thee, which dwells in Thee through its searching power.

56. But I cannot describe Him, Whose pleas for me I cannot describe. As in the revelation that Thy Only-begotten was born of Thee before times eternal, when we cease to struggle with ambiguities of language and difficulties of thought, the one certainty of His birth remains; so I hold fast in my consciousness the truth that Thy Holy Spirit is from Thee and through Him, although I cannot by my intellect comprehend it. For in Thy spiritual things I am dull, as Thy Only-begotten says, Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be barn anew. The Spirit breathes where it will, and thou hearest the voice of it; but dost not know whence it comes or whither it goes. So is every one who is barn of water and of the Holy Spirit . Though I hold a belief in my regeneration, I hold it in ignorance; I possess the reality, though I comprehend it not. For my own consciousness had no part in causing this new birth, which is manifest in its effects. Moreover the Spirit has no limits; He speaks when He will, and what He will, and where He will. Since, then, the cause of His coming and going is unknown, though the watcher is conscious of the fact, shall I count the nature of the Spirit among created things, and limit Him by fixing the time of His origin?

Thy servant John says, indeed, that all things were made through the Son , Who as God the Word was in the beginning, O God, with Thee. Again, Paul recounts all things as created in Him, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible . And, while he declared that everything was created in Christ and through Christ, he thought, with respect to the Holy Spirit, that the description was sufficient, when he called Him Thy Spirit. With these men, peculiarly Thine elect, I will think in these matters; just as, after their example, I will say nothing beyond my comprehension about Thy Only-begotten, but simply declare that He was born, so also after their example I will not trespass beyond that which human intellect can know about Thy Holy Spirit, but simply declare that He is Thy Spirit. May my lot be no useless strife of words, but the unwavering confession of an unhesitating faith!

57. Keep, I pray Thee, this my pious faith undefiled, and even till my spirit departs, grant that this may be the utterance of my convictions: so that I may ever hold fast that which I professed in the creed of my regeneration, when I was baptized in the Father, and the

Son, and the Holy Spirit. Let me, in short, adore Thee our Father, and Thy Son together with Thee; let me win the favour of Thy Holy Spirit, Who is from Thee, through Thy Only-begotten. For I have a convincing Witness to my faith, Who says, Father, all Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine , even my Lord Jesus Christ, abiding in Thee, and from Thee, and with Thee, for ever God: Who is blessed for ever and ever. Amen.

Source. English translation: an older public-domain translation as collected in the Writings-Database (HistoricalChristianFaith), mostly from the Ante-Nicene, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers and similar nineteenth-century editions. SermonIndex has only divided it into chapters and short sections; the wording is the translator's own. Square brackets, Greek or Latin words and footnote-free text are as the source file prints them, and a transcription error may remain. No Greek or Latin text is shown beside it yet, and no modern English version has been made.