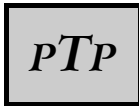


*Divine Attributes
and
The Second Man*

&

*The truth of Christ's Person:
Is It Taught by Mr. F. E. Raven?*

W. T. Whybrow



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Divine Attributes and The Second Man

by W. T. Whybrow

I would point out the real object of attack in all the system of error now so prevalent. The endeavor is to separate divine attributes, such as having life in Himself, omnipotence, omniscience, &c., from the Second Man, the Son of Man. This, moreover, is not merely deduced or inferred from the general drift of certain teachings, but Mr. Raven has actually stated it word after word, more than once, in letters published with his consent. He says:

What characterizes the Second Man could not include all that is true of a divine person, such as self-existence (having life in Himself), omnipotence, omniscience, and many other attributes of a divine person.

(Again he says) I cannot imagine how anyone can think that the Second Man covers all that is true of the Son.

As the Second Man, he practically limits Him to what is true in us as well as in Him -- what "we have in common with him." (See *Some Letters of F.E.R.*, pp. 4, 5, 6), and in connection with this negation of divine attributes, he brings in "the position of mediation, which belongs to the Man Christ Jesus" (p. 7). Why is this? Have we forgotten the touchstone given by the apostle John (1 John 4:1-3), "every spirit which does not confess Jesus Christ come in flesh is not of God"? Moreover, Paul tells us concerning spiritual manifestations, that "no one can say *Lord Jesus* unless in the power of the Holy Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:3). Again, Peter speaks of false teachers "who shall bring in by the bye destructive heresies, and deny the *Master* that bought them" (2 Pet. 2:1-10). These are they that despise lordship, and speak injuriously of dignities. Jude characterizes them as turning the grace of God into dissoluteness, and denying the only *Master* and our Lord Jesus Christ. These Scriptures clearly show that it is the lordship of Jesus in His mediatorial position -- the Second Man, the Man Christ Jesus -- that is so resisted by the spirit of evil, seeking as he does place and power in the Church itself (1 Tim. 4:1-3; 2 Tim. 3:1-9).

If the truth of Christ's humanity or of His person as "Second Man," "Son of Man," can be separated in the minds of Christians from divine attributes,

such as omnipotence, omniscience, &c. (not to speak of self-existence), then Satan could boldly assume lordship, for, if this were true, he would have to meet One who was not all-powerful nor all-wise. But what does Scripture say? The One who ascends up where He was before is none other than the "Son of Man." It is the "Son of Man" who is in heaven {John 3:13}, though the lowly Man on earth. He it was who "knew all men," who "Himself knew what was in man," and could say, "I say unto thee, we speak that which we know, "and we bear witness of that which we have seen." Does not this bespeak omniscience? Authority is given Him to execute judgment also, "because He is the Son of Man," {John 5} even as the Son of Man had power on earth to forgive sins -- omnipotence, surely, yet it is the Son of Man. It is by believing on the Son of Man that we have eternal life, and the rejected Son of Man, lifted up, is the gathering point and center of all (compare John 8:28; 12:31-36), and test of everything for God. How dare anyone say that the Second Man has not omnipotence, omniscience, and other divine attributes! What divine attribute is lacking to the Son of Man when He comes as the "Ancient of Days"? (compare Dan. 7:13, 22). And who is this Man, King of Kings and Lord of Lords, who comes, but the blessed and only Potentate, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light unapproachable, whom no man has seen, nor is able to see? to whom be honor and eternal might. Amen. (Compare 1 Tim. 6:15-16; Rev. 19:11-16).

But one may oppose that this is not His character for the Christian. Who, then, is it but the Son of Man who is seen among the seven golden lamps? {Rev. 1}. And is He not characterized by omnipotence, omniscience, self-existence, and many other attributes of a divine Person? Surely so! Divine righteousness girds Him about; He bears conspicuously the proof of eternity of existence; omnipotence speaks in His voice, and all the ministry of light by the Holy Ghost is wielded by His right hand. He stands in the consuming power of God's judgment which tests everything -- a judgment which the word of His mouth exercises.

As to His Person, first of all deity is His and self-existence (that which Mr. Raven specially denies); He is the Living One! True, He become dead; but He lives to eternity, and has the keys of death and the grave -- than which there can be no fuller expression of omnipotence. All this is specifically what characterizes Him as Son of Man. In the house of God, as in the kingdom, it is the Son of Man who is seen to be a divine Person -- a Man to whom deity and all divine attributes belong (compare Heb. 2:8-9, 3:3-4, with Psa. 8:1).

If anyone object that Mr. Raven would perhaps allow the Son of Man to possess divine attributes, but insists that the Second Man *does not* possess omnipotence, &c., I would first ask what warrant is there in Scripture for such an evil dissection of the truth of Christ's Person? And secondly, I would point out that he distinctly classes the Second Man and the Son of Man, together,

and that to do so is a part of his specific system of teaching. He says,

Now that the “Son of Man,” “the Second Man,” and “Eternal Life,” have, so to say, taken form, Scripture shows that they “are from heaven,”

and he quotes as proof John 3:13 and 6:62, which precisely refer to the Son of Man. Moreover, the living corn of wheat, who died and brought forth much fruit after His kind {John 12:24}, was none other than the Son of Man. Well might J. N. D., in the quotation given by Mr. A. {Anstey} (*Reply to the German Brethren*, p. 2), insist upon the distinction between the Person of the Son, and the believer as receiving life from Him; and that the Son of Man, who is in heaven, speaks of Christ as a divine Person, with whom the believer cannot be identified so as to possess omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence, which attach alone to Him! But what would J. N. D. say to Mr. Raven who actually denies these divines attributes to the Second Man Himself?

In the Scriptures above quoted the Son of Man on earth is positively identified as an omnipresent and eternal Person, not an eternal humanity, but the same divine Person, though now Man, for He came down from heaven and is in heaven {John 3:13}, yet ascends up thither {John 20:17}, and was in heaven before ascending. Faith bows with joy and adoration, and presumes not to reason. Mr. Raven, however, believes that the “Son of Man, the Second Man (though not yet revealed) was ever essentially and in purpose in the Son. He

has become it . . . Now that the “Son of Man,” “the Second Man,” and Eternal life have, so to say, taken form, Scripture shows that they are from heaven.

For him the Son of Man is an “it,” and together with the Second Man and Eternal life, forms a “they,” essentially ever in the Son, which now, having taken form, are distinct from deity, and destitute of divine attributes though from heaven and of the Son; and, as to Eternal life, it is, he says, an “integral part” of His Person. Thus what is true in Him is true in us. He says:

Christ is the Second Man, and there is that which we have in common with Him. We are “all of one” (*Some Letters*, pp. 5-6).

And in order that this might be fitted in to Mr. Raven’s system, he declares that the Second Man does not cover all that is true of the Son, and that as such divine attributes do not attach to Him, viz., omnipotence, omniscience, self-existence, &c. That is to say, Mr. R. fears not to deny the attributes of a divine Person to this blessed One, as Second Man, because grace associates us with Him as “all of one”! Who, then, is this Son of Man that was lifted up that we might have eternal life? Deity and every divine attribute is His, else were the value of His deity eliminated from the atonement He made. This teaching dissolves, so to speak, the Person of Christ into parts, whether

integral or essential, destroys true propitiation, and introduces into Christianity an essence -- eternal, but not deity¹ -- ever the Second Man, but having taken form, not including divine attributes, nor covering all that is true of the Son! Scripture abhors such theorizing.

This, again, is the stepping-stone to a further statement by Mr. Raven (*Some Letters*, p. 13). He says:

What they saw was man after the flesh in divine perfectness before God. (Again), What came under the eye of God and before the eyes of man, apart from fruits and power of the anointing of the Holy Spirit for service and glimpses of divine glory, was the perfect setting forth of man . . . after the flesh.

What, may I ask, was there in Jesus apart from fruits of the Holy Spirit? Perfect Man, indeed, He was, and far more -- the Son of God, the Christ of God, God manifested in flesh, and never was He apart from this as under the eye of God, or indeed before the eyes of men, however blind they were to it. Those who saw Him were "eye-witnesses of and attendants upon the Word" (Luke 1:2). A miraculous star announces His birth to far off Gentiles. A babe unborn, His great forerunner, who was to make ready for Jehovah a prepared people, leapt in presence of such grace. The angelic hosts fill the heavens to gaze upon that lowly Babe, and own Him as the Lord. The Holy Spirit by Simeon gives testimony that He is God's Salvation -- Jehovah's Christ. The Magi do Him homage, and the Scriptures put in evidence the eternal ways of Him who is born in Bethlehem. He is the object of the Father's care, of the Angels' ministry, and even of Satanic hatred, while on every hand the hearts and consciences of men are aroused. Perfect Man He was, and called a Nazarene -- in the likeness, surely, of sinful flesh, come of a woman under the law -- a body prepared for Him, but what came under the eye of God was more than "perfect man according to the flesh." This Adam innocent was; but Christ was that "holy thing" {Luke 1:35} and Adam never was that.

But Mr. Raven separates what Scripture does not. He says:

What came under the eye of God, apart from fruits and power of the anointing of the Holy Ghost, was the perfect setting forth of man according to the flesh;

but Scripture, on the contrary, connects the perfect humanity of Christ with the "fruits and power of the anointing of the Holy Spirit." Never is the fine flour in the meal-offering "apart from" the mingling or the anointing with oil.²

1. {That is, FER held, as we may call it, a humanity-in-essence, and an eternal life-in-essence, ever in the Son eternally, though not part of deity.}

2. An apparent exception is found in Lev. 23, but notice the difference between v. 13 and v. 17. In the latter case the loaves were "baken with leaven."

May God preserve us from this evil doctrine, which is the negation of the truth of Christ!

A second edition of a letter, by Mr. J. A. Trench, has just been put into my hands, in which much truth is raked together and used to cover the evil of a doctrine of which he has to say:

You will understand that it is not that the expression of the truth in him (Mr. Raven) commends itself to me, nor that I have received or find any help on the subject so much before him in his sentences (p. 1). (Again), Raven is far too one-sided in the way he treats the subject, and . . . does not "preserve the balance of Scripture as to it" (p. 9). (Again), I distrust his systematizing, and do not go with all the details of the development of it, fearing narrowness (p. 13).

Who, then, is the teacher around whom such brethren are gathered to-day? And for whose sake have they rejected the solemn judgment of the two or three gathered to Christ's Name {at Bexhill, June 29, 1890}? Is it Mr. Trench or Mr. Raven? The former knows perfectly well that he himself is the disciple following and supporting Mr. Raven, and using truth to pander to and shelter the evil doctrine of the latter. For instance, Mr. Trench says:

there is the determination to construe all that Raven says in the worst sense even if it seem capable of another (p. 1).

But should a teacher use words bearing the worst construction, even if, as a possible alternative, they may seem capable of another sense? Thus, according to Mr. J. A. Trench, Raven's words have, or may have, a double sense, one the worst and the other good, or at least not so bad. Mr. J. C. Trench went even farther than this in his defense of Raven (*Reply to One in Difficulty*, p. 5) where he gives the senses of "involve" meaning "to result in," and "is essential to," and "has the capacity of" (three entirely different expressions), to the word "means," used by Mr. Raven in the sentence "eternal life *means* for a Christian a wholly new order of things." Such futile playing upon words exposes fully the spirit of partisanship at work, and causes Mr. J. A. Trench's animadversions to recoil with tenfold force upon himself.

In p. 4 of this recent letter of Mr. J. A. T.'s, in reply to Mr. Rule, he has a remarkably good statement as to the glory of the Second Man. He says:

The Second Man, last Adam, is the central subject of Scripture . . .

If He fills all in all, it is not as God, but as He who has been raised from the dead.

. . . Not to angels, but to man -- the Second Man, I need hardly say -- Thou hast put all things in subjection under His feet . . . every ray of the glory of God concentrated upon the face for ever, once more marred then that of any man.

Here evidently the Second Man is a divine Person, with divine attributes, and

divine glory; but suppose Mr. Raven's bad doctrine were tacked on to this extract, viz., that "What characterizes the Second Man could not include all that is true of a divine Person, such as self-existence (having life in Himself), omnipotence, omniscience, and many other attributes of a divine Person"! It would deny and stultify all that J. A. Trench previously said. His tract indeed is but daubing the evil with the good -- the wall with untempered mortar. Forms of piety are thus used to set aside the glory of Christ as Man.

Mr. J. A. Trench writes much that is good, and speaks well of the supremacy, and deity, and divine glory, and attributes of the Second Man, but why does he speak so? It is in effect to force upon the saints a doctrine that absolutely denies divine attributes, such as omniscience, self-existence, omnipotence, and "many other attributes of a divine Person" to the Second Man -- a doctrine that asserts that "the Second Man does not cover all that is true of the Son."

Such doctrines may indeed suit Mr. R., and his followers, but Scripture contradicts this statement in both its parts, for the blessed Savior adjured by the living God to say if He was the Christ, the Son of God, replied "Thou hast said. Moreover, I say to you, from henceforth ye shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming on the clouds of heaven" (Matt. 26:63-64). Thus He identifies the Son of God, and Son of Man, and predicates omnipotence, precisely of the latter. Scripture is everywhere consistent in its testimony to this. In reply to His enquiry, "Who do men say that I the Son of Man am?" Peter, by the revelation of *the Father*, could say, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." True He was to go away to Jerusalem and suffer, but raised from the dead, the Son of Man would "come in the glory of His Father with His angels" (Matt. 16:13-28). The Son of Man was Son of the Father. Grace had brought Him into the world the first time, and His second advent would be characterized by glory, but His Person was the same unchangeably. For if the Son of Man takes the kingdom, it is He the Christ, who gives up the kingdom to Him who is *God and Father*, and then shall *the Son* also Himself be placed in subjection to Him who put all things in subjection to Him (1 Cor. 15:20-28). Here it is "the Son Himself" who is placed in subjection, and it is also "the Son" that can do nothing of Himself, but does this deny His omnipotence? Surely not. Nor is omniscience denied to "the Son" by the Scripture that states "of that day or of that hour (of the coming of the Son of Man) no one knows, neither the angels who are in heaven, *nor the Son*, but the Father only" {Mark 13:32}. On the other hand it is "the Son of Man" whom the angels serve (John 1:51), and to whom every knee shall bow.

I fearlessly assert that there is no Scripture, and no Scriptural warrant, for denying divine attributes to the Second Man; if there is, let them produce it. The statement as it stands, rests merely upon the "I cannot imagine" of a man.

But more, all Scripture is consistent in its testimony to the positive deity and divine attributes of the Son of Man. Nor could it be otherwise. Scripture reveals the objects of faith, and faith receives and knows them as they really are before God. It does not systematize Scripture, which is in fact subjecting the truth to the mind of man, and thus is infidel in its tendency, and leaves God out. Into this error these teachers have fallen. On the contrary faith, however instructed and intelligent -- for there is such a thing as unintelligent faith -- ever sees as God sees, and for Him, Christ, the last Adam, the Second Man, the Son of Man, the Son of David though David's Lord, Son of God, Son of the Father, is ever the same blessed Person to whom deity and divine attributes absolutely belong, whatever the character and position He may assume, and however He may in grace empty Himself to become Man, and indeed humble Himself, even unto death, and that the death of the cross.

The Truth of Christ's Person: Is It Taught by Mr. F. E. Raven?

by W. T. Whybrow

To one who loves the Lord Jesus Christ no apology will be needed for drawing attention to Mr. Raven's last paper, entitled *The Person of the Christ*, to which may now be added *Notes of Readings, etc., at Quemerford*.¹ Months have passed since the publication of the former pamphlet; and now, instead of rebuke or protest from those associated with him, and who are involved in the responsibility of his erroneous teaching, a company of them gathered at Quemerford are found sitting at his feet and drinking it in, if not striving to enforce it. The few objectors are practically crushed.

Humanity a Part of Christ's Person

The principle he has now adopted, namely, that humanity forms no part of the Person of the Lord, fatally compromises the truth of Christ. He says it is derogatory to the truth of the Son to think that, in becoming man,

He is *in person* something which He was not before.

It is a Person in a condition in which He was not previously.²

Christ, he says,

is not man in the sense that He is God.³

In Person He is God, in condition He is Man.⁴

Therefore he would not allow that He is *personally* man;⁵ He is a divine Person who came into human form and condition.⁶

1. *Truth For the Time* (Part 8), Morrish.

2. *The Person, &c.*, p. 3.

3. *Truth*, p. 145.

4. *Truth*, pp. 132, 146.

5. *Truth*, p. 132.

6. *Truth*, p. 134.

a divine Person assuming human condition.⁷

Christ's humanity is thus, according to Mr. Raven, a condition. He does not believe in Christ's individuality as a man. He denies personality in the man Christ Jesus. Christ's humanity is for him impersonal. He may, perhaps, allow that it consisted of body, soul, and spirit;⁸ but his reply on the point leaves it very doubtful whether he holds even to Christ's human spirit.⁹ But it is clear he refuses Christ's human personality. For him the Lord's humanity is "actual condition," as opposed to the Gnostic idea.¹⁰

If Not, No True Christ

Well would he be able to say with those Puseyite theologians who have preceded him in these profane reveries,

How such human nature as body, soul, and spirit, including a human will, could be held in personal union with the divine, so that this humanity was complete without a human personality or ego, we cannot understand, but we believe it is a mystery revealed for faith.

Mr. Darby asks, Where? and adds, "They have no true Christ at all."¹¹

How strange and solemn the fact that this should be no less true of Mr. Raven and his followers to-day!

A Christ without human personality, but merely a divine Person in the condition of human life¹² is not a true Christ at all.

Jesus, God and Man in One Person

It is well that in his pamphlet he has come to Scripture. The attacks he therein speaks of, "based on isolated statements culled from letters he has written," were but demands for Scripture proof of the doctrines he now reproduces and develops. To speak of these as attacks does not mark a consciousness of having Scripture for his ideas on the Person of Christ. He must remember that our Lord Jesus Christ is the Object of faith and love to every believer. It is therefore quite out of place for Mr. R. to adopt an injured tone when

7. *The Person, &c.*, p. 2.

8. {In using the words soul and spirit in another paper, *The Person of Christ*, for example, he was attaching new meanings to these old terms, as such heretics do. That paper is not to be confused with the title that W. T. Whybrow is reviewing here.}

9. *Truth*, p. 135.

10. *Truth*, p. 125.

11. *Bible Witness and Review* 1:206 (1877).

12. *Truth*, p. 129.

introducing thoughts about Him which are acknowledged to be in opposition to those entertained by Christians generally, as well as hitherto accepted by brethren as true. He repudiates the statement quoted from the Liturgy of the Anglican Establishment, “God and man, one Christ.”¹³ Not that this, or any other creed, is of the least authority for faith, but the phrase quoted fairly expresses, in a human way, the revealed truth of the Person of Christ. Mr. R. would substitute for it a formula of his own, namely:

a divine Person assuming human condition,
a Person in a condition in which He was not previously,

denying at the same time

the union in Him of God and man;¹⁴

and in reply to the question “Why is He not *personally* man?” saying:

He is the Son, but in the condition of a man.¹⁵

Thus he as plainly falsifies the truth of the Person of Christ as Athanasius fairly expresses it; and flatly contradicts the teaching of Mr. Darby, who says as to the Person of Christ:

The simple faith that Jesus was God and man in one person, can be easily accepted as plain and vital truth; but the moment you *deny* personality in the man Christ Jesus, you run into a thousand difficulties and errors.¹⁶

13. A friend communicates the following:

The Athanasian Creed runs as follows -- “We believe and confess, that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and Man . . . who, although He be *God and Man*, yet He is not two, but *one Christ*.” And again, lower down, “So *God and Man* is *one Christ*,” where the Greek has *ἕστι* (ὡσπερ γὰρ ψυχὴ λογικὴ καὶ σὰρξ εἰς ἕστιν ἄνθρωπος, οὕτως θεὸς καὶ ἄνθρωπος εἰς ἕστι Χριστός).

Athanasius himself says (*De Trin.* Dialog. 5): Χριστὸς ἐν πρόσωπόν ἕστι συντεθεὲν ἐκ θεοῦ καὶ ἀνθρωπότητος, ὡς πᾶς ἄνθρωπος ὁ κοινὸς ἐκ ζώου καὶ λογικοῦ.

Augustine says (in *Joh.* Tract. 783: Utruncque autem simul non duo, sed unus est Christus. Ne sit quaternitas non trinitas Deus. Sicut enim unus est homo anima rationalis et caro, sic unus est Christus Deus et Homo.

These, out of innumerable passages from early Christian writers, show clearly that Mr. Raven introduces thoughts which are in opposition to those entertained by Christians representative of the faith of Christians in all ages and places.

14. *The Person*, &c., p. 3.

15. *Truth*, &c., p. 133.

16. *Bible Witness and Review* 1:205 (1877).

Mr. R.'s Teaching Systematized

The two points taken up in Mr. Raven's pamphlet are by no means new, nor have those who reject his doctrines shifted the ground of conflict. From the first, the Person of Christ was, more or less, distinctly in question. He writes, under date of August 25, 1890:

What characterized the second man could not include all that was true of a divine Person;

and, again,

I cannot imagine how any one could think that the second man covers all that is true of the Son; yet the second man was out of heaven, as eternal life was with the Father.

November 25, 1890, three months later than the above, the same thing is repeated in almost identical terms,¹⁷ yet three days afterwards, in a letter published by himself,¹⁸ he says:

I had no system of doctrine, nor the faintest idea of propounding any.

In the same letter he says:

I think that I have, through grace, received light on these subjects, though four months previously he had disclaimed having "found new light."

The climax of irreverence is reached in a letter of his, printed in a tract form, and circulated widely in Canada and the States, but without publisher's name, under date of October 30, 1891, which says:

It is perfectly certain that Scripture can, and does, constantly view Christ as man, apart and distinct from what He is as divine.

The year following (May, 1892), and again after the lapse of some fifteen months, in a letter dated August 29, 1893, he repeats: "Christ is viewed as man, distinct and apart from what He is as God" in many passages of the Word.

Finally, in 1895, the same formula appears in a published form in the present tract.

It is, therefore, plain matter of fact that we have here a regularly formulated doctrine, and not mere "isolated statements culled from letters." Forms of words, reiterated at intervals during a period of at least three or four years, reveal a well-defined system existing, though one would fain believe unconsciously in Mr. Raven's mind. It is this that has to be met.

17. *Some Letters of F. E. R.*, pp. 4, 5, 6.

18. Letters dated Nov. 28, 1890; July 3, 1890.

19. Letters dated Nov. 28, 1890; July 3, 1890.

Christ not Viewed in Scripture Apart from What He is as Divine

The question is a plain one, and fairly put -- whether Christ is ever viewed in Scripture as man, distinct and apart from what He has as divine, or as God? Scripture alone must, therefore, settle the question for us. In the first place remark, it is not whether Scripture views Christ as man "apart from God." It constantly does. For example, "God is one, and the mediator of God and men one -- the man Christ Jesus," but this does not view Christ apart from what *He is* as divine, nor question the union of the divine and human nature in Christ,²⁰ as Mr. Raven does. The difference between his statement and that of Scripture is immense. His view abstracts Deity, so that Christ is seen apart from what He Himself is -- an absurdity which is its own refutation. It falsifies the truth, for if the Deity of His Person be eliminated, where is the value and efficacy of His mediation? Were it true, such passages would present a manhood without any Divine Person, or, indeed, a true personality at all. On the other hand, Scripture does view Christ as man necessarily so, and thus apart, one may say, from God as in the passage quoted, but not "*apart from what He is*" in His own Person as God or divine. He, and He alone, is God manifested in flesh, and to view Him "apart from what He is," is impossible in faith or fact. Mr. Raven tells us that Christ's Person is divine -- true; and he says the truth of it is "a divine Person assuming human condition." If, then, as he also says, Scripture views Him "apart from what He is as divine," or as God, then in such scriptures only a human condition would be presented to us!

Here it is no question of a title or condition, such as the term "the Christ" supposes, but of Christ Himself. Mr. R. makes "No man knows the Son save the Father" {Matt. 18:27}, equivalent to grasping what Christ is; firstly, as being "the Word become flesh," and secondly, as filling "a place as man toward God." The *unknowableness* of the Person of the Son is with him the impossibility of a "finite mind" grasping these two thoughts "at one and the same time." He thinks, however, to do so separately, and thus, perhaps, to know this unsearchable mystery.²¹ It is impossible. Can a finite mind grasp the thought of the Word become flesh -- whether separately or not? Nay, faith receives the revelation and worships. But the error of his theory is evident from a simple consideration. He says Christ is viewed as man "apart from what He is as God." If so, it must equally be allowed that Christ can be

20. See *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 17:26 {17}. It seems as if Mr. R. had appropriated Mr. Darby's words, without understanding them, and now reproduces them unintentionally perverted.

21. {This is the conclusion I had reached before I saw WTW's paper. FER was bringing this into the area of scrutability by the human mind. See references to "inscrutability" in the subject index.}

viewed as God apart from what He is as man. But this would be utterly false, for once come in flesh you can have no personal Christ at all as an object of faith apart from His manhood.

Christ in Manhood Ever Recognized to be Divine

No one questions that “the reality of Christ’s manhood, in its aspect Godward, is amply presented in the New Testament.” This is fundamental to the Christian faith, but the point with Mr. Raven is that in this respect He is “viewed apart and distinct from *what He is* as divine.” In proof of this he quotes Rom. 6., but in no wise does the passage separate Christ as man from *what He is* as divine. It is “by the glory of the *Father*” He is raised from the dead. He is, therefore, the divine *Son*. It is not only “to sin,” but “for sin,” he has died. Will Mr. R. exclude what He is as divine from the sacrifice?²² True, He died in manhood, but will Mr. R. deny the value of His Deity to that death? If so, there would be no propitiation. He is of the seed of David according to the flesh, but the same person is marked out Son of God, with power according to the Spirit of holiness by the resurrection of the dead {Rom. 1:4}.

He quotes also Eph. 4:21, “As is truth in Jesus.” Does he mean thereby so to eliminate the divine from the person of Jesus as to place Him on our level as set forth in that passage? Far be such a thought. He had not to put off the old man corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, nor had He to put on the new man. We needed to be created according to God. He was the creator Himself -- God, according to whom we are created.

The scriptures chosen by himself to support his theory, especially that from 1 Tim. 6:13, most emphatically deny it. Who is this Christ Jesus who witnessed before Pontius Pilate the good confession? Is He viewed apart from what He is as divine? Nay, He is linked with absolute Deity, as having divine claim upon the faithfulness and obedience of the servant. “I enjoin thee,” Paul says, “before God . . . and Christ Jesus,” and then immediately presents the inaccessible majesty of the unseen and sovereign Ruler. But our Lord Jesus Christ alone appears as the divine source and repository of this glory. Will He, then, be seen apart from what He is as divine? Will the Deity in Him be unrecognized, albeit that He is the faithful man? There is no such thought in Scripture, which, when speaking of that time, ascribes to Him the titles and attributes of Deity. (Cf. Dan. 7; Rev. 19). Here Christ is seen “in His place as man Godward,” but not “apart and distinct from what He is as divine.”

22. {It is the glory and value of His Person that imparts its infinite value to the work on the cross.}

The Testimony to Christ's Deity Involves His Manhood

Again Mr. R. quotes Heb. 2, 6, 9, and says, "the Apostle" presents God; "the High Priest," man. The latter is presented in the above scriptures, and he says:

It is utterly impossible to introduce the idea of Deity in its proper character and attributes.

This last clause is a new and somewhat vague limitation. What does he mean by the proper character and attributes of Deity? Well, we will suppose those already spoken of in 1 Tim. 6:15, 16, "Who only has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light; whom no man has seen, nor is able to see." Here we have a general statement given by the Holy Ghost of the attributes proper to Deity, essential and incommunicable. Can he say, then, that these are found in "the Apostle," who, he says, presents God? Certainly not. If we view Christ as "the Apostle," He is not inaccessible, not unseen. Viewing Him as God, you cannot leave out what He is as man. Nor does Scripture do so. Of whom is it said, "Thou art my Son: I have to-day begotten thee" {Psa. 2}? Of Messiah born in time -- a Man. Again, "I will be to him for father, and he shall be to me for son." Was not this said of the Son of David's Seed? Is He seen here apart from what He is as Man? Yet all this is said of Him precisely in His divine character. The address to the Son is, "Thy throne, O God," and in the same Psalm, "Thy God hath anointed Thee." Here we have His positive Deity and reality of Manhood spoken of as it were in the same breath. The divine Firstborn, whom all the angels shall worship, is clearly not the "idea of Deity" simply, but Messiah, Son of God and King of Israel, Son of David. You cannot abstract what He is as Man from these passages, though presented as testimonies to His positive Deity (Heb. 1:1, 2). To attempt to do so in that solemn and wonderful Psa. 102 (or, indeed, anywhere), would deserve the reprobation of every Christian heart. Who is this person whose heart is smitten and withered like grass; who has eaten ashes like bread, and mingled his drink with weeping; whose strength is weakened in the way, and his days shortened? Surely a Man. Yes, but He whose years are from generation to generation, the Creator eternally the Same, whose years have no end.

The High Priest a Divine Person

But to turn to the other side of the question: When viewed as man is He seen apart from what He is as God? The great example given by Mr. Raven is that of the High Priest. Here He is seen, he says, apart from what He is as God. The whole drift of the Epistle to the Hebrews is the studious denial of this. In order to establish the wavering minds of the Hebrew Christians, the Apostle insists most diligently that they have "a great high priest . . . *Jesus the Son of God*" (Heb. 4:14). Again, he links the testimony to His divine Sonship with

His call to the everlasting priesthood in Heb. 5:5-8. It is the Son who fills this office according to all the glory of His Person. Jesus is entered as forerunner for us, and is presented surely as man Godward. This is not the point in debate, but whether, if so, He is viewed apart from what He is as divine. To suppose so would deny the whole scope of the Apostle's argument in Heb. 7; that is, would be destructive of Christianity. He sets forth most powerfully the spiritual force of the term "order of Melchizedek," used to describe the Priesthood of Christ. Being Son of God, He answers divinely to that of which Melchizedek was a figure -- king of righteousness, king of peace, without genealogy -- contrasted with human descent, He abides as *Son of God*, a priest continually.

In this character He is our forerunner, but so far from being viewed apart from what He is as divine, or as God, He, in contrast with human high priests, is a *Son* perfected forever. The importance of the use of "Son" here is seen by comparison with the first chapter, where it is quoted in testimony to His essential Deity.

The theory in question is thus disproved in every particular. "We have such a one high priest who has sat down on the right hand of the throne of the greatness in the heavens" (Heb. 8:1). Is there nothing divine here? Is it "utterly impossible to introduce the idea of Deity in its proper character and attributes"? On the contrary, the object of the apostle is to bring in the idea of His Deity, and to show forth the divine excellence of this glorious man. Moreover, who is He that appears in the presence of God for us? The answer is supplied in Heb. 10. It is He who, according to His own eternal competency, could say, "Lo, I come (in the roll of the book it is written of me) to do, O God, Thy will." Is this viewing Him apart from what He is as divine? As in Psa. 45 He says, "O God," but it is the divine and eternal One, in the eternal scene, who says it. The fact, then, is clear that the disassociation of the divine and human in the Person of Christ is destructive of faith and of Christianity.

Moreover, Mr. Raven's interpretation of the Epistle to the Hebrews is largely leavened with a misapprehension of the force of the rending of the veil. It does not represent "God coming out."²³ This was true in Christ in the days of His flesh. The veil was rent for man to go in. If Christ presents man to God Scripture views Him therein as Jehovah's Fellow (Zech. 13:7), not as Mr. Raven says, "Apart and distinct from what He is as divine"; and if God to man, it is a man who is God manifested in flesh. If I think of Him as God it is the man I see, and seeing Him the eye rests upon God. "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father."

23. *Truth, &c.*, pp. 166, 172, 178, 179.

To Say that Christ had No Human Personality Is Heresy

The second portion of Mr. Raven's tract insists that "the truth of Christ's Person" does not consist "in the union in Him of God and man" (p. 3). This idea is, that in becoming man Christ is not "in Person something which He was not before," that in Him is no human personality or individuality at all, but His humanity only relates to form or human condition, which could be taken and given up and taken again (p. 3), and the Person, the Son, remain without any difference. Mr. R. considers that to reject his teaching on this subject approaches very near to heresy, and infers a dual personality. But he may remember Nestorius was anathematized because he taught that there was a *separate* basis of personality in the human nature of our Lord, that He was, in fact, a double being. It is Mr. R. who now would view Christ as man, *distinct and apart* from what He is as God or divine. And in avoiding the Scylla of Nestorianism he has fallen into the Charybdis of an impersonal humanity, for he denies the union in Christ of God and man, and

that in becoming man . . . He is in *person* something which He was not before.

For Mr. R. it is simply "the same Person unchanged and unchangeable" -- "a divine Person assuming a human condition" -- "a condition in which He was not previously." "In Person Christ is God," he says, "in condition He is man." There is no human personality, but only human condition. This is the High-church doctrine of the incarnation. It is strange that Mr. R. should have imbibed it, coupled, indeed, with other thoughts, which they and most other Christians would repudiate with abhorrence. It is this, too, that Mr. Darby so strongly condemned in his article on "Christological Pantheism."²⁴ J. N. D. writes:

That Christ had no human personality . . . is really heresy (though God and man were united in one person) (again), Why does the blessed Lord say, "Not my will, but Thine"? Why does He say, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me"? if there was no ego, no human personality? (And in a note he adds) It shows the danger of those early discussions, for the simple faith that Jesus was God and man in one person can be easily accepted as plain and vital truth, but the moment you *deny* personality in the man Christ Jesus you run into a thousand difficulties and errors. What is really denied is Christ's individuality as a man.

This is precisely what is now in question. Unconsciously, or, at least, inconsiderately, Mr. Raven has followed the doctrine of the Bampton Lectures

24. *Bible Witness and Review* 1:206.

of Dr. Liddon²⁵ which teach the impersonal humanity of Christ, a figment invented in conformity with their doctrinal and sacramental theory of union with Christ in incarnation. As Dr. Liddon writes,

Our eternal Lord has thus taken upon Him our fallen nature in its integrity, (and consequently we are) sanctified by a real union with the Most Holy." (p.65).

If Christ's personality or individuality as a Man is denied, then there would be no "Person" to raise up out of death. It is death and resurrection that exposes the futility of Mr. Raven's teaching, identical as it is with the system in this respect.

The Human Personality of Christ not lost by Death

Mr. Raven's reasoning is fallacious and unscriptural, for the contrast presented in Phil. 2, which he quotes, is between "the form of God" and "a bondman's form," "the likeness of men." When, being in the form of God, He emptied Himself, did He cease to be God? Certainly not. When He laid down His life ("human condition," Mr. R says), did He cease to be Man? Indeed, no! Resurrection was surely needed, but death was no relapse into abstract Deity. He was still Man. Having become Man, He abides Man uninterruptedly in death as well as out of it (Psa. 16:10). It is, therefore, vain to insist that Mr. R.'s term "human condition" is equivalent to the scriptural expression "likeness of men."

The drift of Mr. Raven's teaching is that manhood in Christ is "human condition" in contrast with His Person -- a condition which can be wholly laid down. If this were so, then it would be equally true of our manhood. But we have no "person" at all apart from manhood, and never shall have. If, therefore, manhood be merely "human condition" and brought into death, then all personality for us would be gone for ever. On Mr. R.'s principle, death for Christ would mean relapse into abstract Deity, and for us annihilation. But our manhood consists of "soul" with "spirit" and body. In 1 Pet. 3:19, 20, personality is connected with the "soul" in this world, and with the "spirit" in the intermediate state. Personality is, therefore, not gone with the body. Mr. R.'s doctrine has a distinctly Sadducean tendency.

His error consists in conceiving of Christ's humanity as "condition" or "form," distinct from Person; whereas Scripture presents the form and His Person both as God and as Man. Ever remaining God, He emptied Himself, and now ever remaining Man He, having humbled Himself to death, received Lordship, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, and every

25. *The Divinity of Our Lord*, pp. 259-269.

tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to God the Father's glory.

The Person of Christ not Limited to the Deity in Him

It is not true that Scripture confines the Person of Christ to that which was simple Deity in Him, "unchanged and unchangeable" (p. 3), and apart from His becoming Man, which is "something which He was not before" (p. 3). A passage quoted by Mr. R. (p. 1) itself disproves any such thought. In Col. 1:10, we read, "In Him all the fulness was pleased to dwell." This is clearly essential Deity and of His Person, yet it is spoken of in distinction with "Him." It reconciles all things to Itself by "*Him*," and makes peace by the blood of His Cross. The Divine "unchanged and unchangeable" does not, therefore, cover all the Personality which is expressly attributed here to Him, in whom the fulness dwelt, and whose blood was shed upon the Cross. There is no dual personality; but Christ's Person now covers His Manhood equally with His Godhead. In seeking to grasp what is beyond a finite mind, Mr. R. has fatally erred in denying that humanity forms part of the Person of Christ.

It is scarcely possible to acquit him of subtlety in his teaching on page 3. He says that to hold "the union in Him of God and man . . . involves a thought very derogatory to the truth of the Son, namely, that, in becoming man, a change has taken place as to His Person." So far one would agree that becoming Man has not, in any degree whatever, changed, or caused any change, in the essential Deity of His Person. But immediately Mr. R. adds, as if it were the same thought, something entirely different, namely, that He is not "in person something which He was not before" (p. 3). Now though His divine Person is "unchanged and unchangeable," yet, in becoming Man, Scripture shows us, as we have seen in Col. 1, that Personality is expressly predicated of Him, whose blood was shed, by Whom the fulness which dwelt in Him, reconciles all things to itself. It is not a dual-Personality, but a divine and human Person, who, in becoming Man, is *something which He was not before* --that is, a Man. He is, moreover, not viewed in Scripture distinct and apart from what He is as God or divine. Were He not Man He would not be the image of the invisible God; yet, in being this, the attributes of Deity are necessarily included. He was not, like Adam, made in the image of God; but, being Man, He was, and is, the image of the invisible God, because He was, and is, Himself God. So also, were He not God, the Creator, He would not be the First-born of every creature; yet Manhood is of necessity involved in being it.

Mr. Raven would view Christ apart from what He is as God or as divine, and thus having conceived a mere humanity, he declares this is "condition," not "Person." Thus, instead of a living Christ, there would be but a "human condition"! The wonder is how any Christian can allow the truth of Christ to

be so frittered away in abstractions.

The Christ and Son of Man

The last question, taken up in page 4 of the tract, is thoroughly misapprehended. He states it thus: whether

every title, or name, inherited by the Son, or applied to Him in Scripture, embraces or covers, if it does not describe, the whole truth of His Person.

Undoubtedly, each title has to be understood within its own appropriate limits. But this is not the question, but whether, when “applied to Him, it embraces the whole truth of His Person.” Emphatically, yes! Mr. Raven does not distinguish between a title or office, abstractedly considered, and the application of it to a person. The title, “anointed,” is applied to the Patriarchs, to Saul, to David, to the Son Himself, and to the Saints, as joined to Christ. In each case the title has a different force, according to the person to whom it is applied. Saul’s anointing was that of a king given in anger; David’s, that of a man after God’s own heart; Christ’s, that of the divine Son; of the saints as united to Him, it is said, “So also is the Christ” {1 Cor. 12:12}. In each case the term has no unvarying abstract force, but extends to the truth of the person to whom it is applied.

“Jesus is the anointed of God”; but immediately it can be said that *Jesus* is that, then the how and why declare, at once, what the term covers in His case. Anointed by the Holy Ghost, on the ground of His own personal worthiness and relationship as Son of the Father -- a divine Person, though truly Man, yet Son of God; this and more is what “the Christ” covers, as applied to Him.

“Christ”²⁶ is a name applicable to the Person only. “The Christ,” the Messiah or Anointed, designates a condition into which He has entered, and which, as now applied to Him, so covers the truth of His Person that, as “the Christ,” all that He is is embraced.

“Son of Man” is a character found in Scripture (Dan. 7:13); but immediately it is taken by the Lord Himself it becomes personal, and covers the truth of what He is. Thus the Lord uses it to embrace or cover, as Son of Man, the whole truth of His Person, so that no divine attribute can be denied to Him; as for example, “The Son of Man, who is in heaven”; “If then ye see the Son of Man ascending up where He was before” {John 6:62}.

Jesus having become “the Christ” and “Son of Man,” they are filled according to the glory of His Person, and the reverent heart feels instinctively that it is ruinous to treat them as merely official titles. Can a title be lifted up,

26. See Note on Rev. 1:13; Cor. 1:5, N. Trans., {of J.D.}.

or an office suffer? Granted that the former is a condition, now that Christ is in it, it covers the truth of what He is as such.

Death Destroys The Christ of Ravenism

Bad as Mr. R.'s teaching is on this point, it is the making Christ's humanity to be "condition," with nothing of "Person," that is so fatal. A humanity of this sort, if laid down in death, would be gone for ever. Nor can we doubt that it is this kind of humanity he contemplates; for he denies, as to the blessed Lord, that in becoming Man "He is in person something which He was not before" (p. 3). Moreover, he identifies "His life," which He lays down, with His "human condition" (p. 3), and insists, as to "Person," that it is "unchanged and unchangeable." It is clear, then, that he excludes humanity from Christ's Person, denying "that the truth of Christ's Person consists in the union in Him of God and man,"²⁷ and denying that He is personally man.²⁸ He carefully distinguishes between Christ's "*person and condition*," and says He is "a divine Person assuming human condition" (p. 3). But he declares that Christ lays down "human condition." Then, if so, the divine Person alone remains -- humanity is gone. It is in vain for Mr. Raven to say that He takes it again -- not only resurrection, but re-incarnation would be needed. Man is body, soul, and spirit. If Christ had not all this in manhood -- if He had not a human personality or individuality as a man, then death was the end of His humanity. True, Mr. R. allows that He takes "human condition" again, but if this is without human personality, and is separated from His divine and unchangeable "Person" by death, it must be lost, and another and a different "condition" taken. The Man is not the same; the true character of His humanity would be gone for ever -- that which fitted Him to be a merciful and faithful High Priest would be utterly lost. The Man, who suffered and was tempted in all things in like manner as we, would have perished. Man is something that Christ was not before incarnation, but Mr. R. asserts this is untrue of Christ's Person. On this principle there is no humanity in Christ's Person, and if brought into death the "unchanged and unchangeable" divine Person alone remains, and the body raised, but the Man is lost. It is only in that case, just what Mr. Raven says, "a divine Person assuming human condition" (p. 3).

While pretending to put the truth of the High Priest in its place all this Raven system destroys it. The Man who offered up both supplications and

27. Mr. Darby asserts, "God and man were united in one person" (*Bible Witness and Review* 1:206 (1877)).

28. *Truth, &c.*, p. 132.

entreaties to Him who was able to save Him out of death, with strong crying and tears, is the same Man, though He were a Son, who, having been perfected, became to them that obey Him author of eternal salvation. Scripture does not present His humanity as a “condition” which He laid down and took up again, though this is true as to His life, but shows Him to be personally Man, divine also, who suffered in the days of His flesh, died and rose again, as really as any one of His saints, but the same blessed Man throughout, and now Man eternally -- God and man in one Person.

Deny the part that manhood has in the person of Christ, and you deny any true man in resurrection. Moreover, as to this, what is denied of Christ must be denied of His saints.

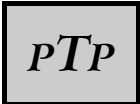
Ravenism and Unitarianism

Mr. Raven’s scoffing remark about Tritheism, at the close of his paper, is one that Christians are well accustomed to from the lips of Unitarians. The difference, however, between the two systems of teaching is simply this: the Unitarian would offer you a Christ in whose person there is no Deity. Mr. R. presents a Christ in whose “Person” there is no manhood. For him Christ’s humanity is no part of His “Person,” for he says His Person is “unchanged and unchangeable,” and is not “something which He was not before,” as is His manhood. The latter is, according to his theory, “a condition” assumed by a divine Person, but distinct from “Person.” Scripture teaches us that being in the form of God Christ was and is eternally and unchangeably God. Becoming in the likeness of men He was a man, not merely in a “human condition”; and there was naught of humanity in Him before. In death He laid down “human condition,” yet remained man, being ever God.²⁹ In resurrection He takes life again, and abides Man for ever -- a servant in grace, even if exalted Lord of all. It is death and resurrection that tests and exposes Mr. Raven’s teaching.

29. {The reader should appreciate the fact that when our Lord’s body lay in death, the human soul and spirit remained united to the Deity, and so the incarnation continued to subsist.}

*Recommended Reading Concerning
the Union of Deity and Humanity in Christ
Available from Present Truth Publishers*

- ❖ *The Collected Writings of A. C. Ord*, containing magisterial papers examining the doctrine of FER and setting forth the truth of Christ's Person. Those papers were highly recommended to me by A. C. Brown many years ago.
- ❖ "*The Man Christ Jesus*" 1 Timothy 2:5, *Remarks on a Tract Entitled "The Person of the Christ,"* by A. C. Ord, not found in the above book.
- ❖ *An Affirmation of: The Divine-Human Personality of the Person of Christ, His Human "I" and Human will, With a Note on His Impeccability*, RAH.
- ❖ *Human Personality of the Man Christ Jesus Denied by F.E. Raven and T. H. Reynolds* {including two papers:} *Heresy as to the Person of Christ*, by W. S. Flett, and *Heterodoxy Ancient and Modern on the Personality of the Lord Jesus Christ*, by J. Hennessy, edited by RAH.
- ❖ *An Answer to . . . What is Ravenism*, by J. Hennessy.
- ❖ *The Eternal Relations in the Godhead*, RAH, containing exposition of fundamental truths denied by FER, and also containing photostatic copies of numerous papers exposing FER, as well as being the most complete history of the Raven division.
- ❖ *Divine Attributes and the Second Man*, by W. T. Whybrow; and *The truth of Christ's Person: Is It Taught by Mr. F. E. Raven?* by W. T. Whybrow.



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