

# A Trinity Debate

## Is the Doctrine of The Trinity as Taught by the Church of England Scriptural?

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**Affirmer: Rev. J.O.West, M.A.** - Rector of St. Philips and St. Jacob.

**Denier: J.Todd** – A Christadelphian.

### Chairman's Introduction:

Ladies and Gentlemen. You will permit me the very great pleasure of congratulating you upon this evening's event. To all men and women who love the truth and who desire to get at it to the best of their ability, I know of no process so well adapted to that end than for men of thought and sober feeling, strong in their convictions and firm in their opinion, for those men both in public and in private to be willing to compare notes to bring the best they know to the bar of judgment and to ask their fellow men and women to consider their opinions and to bring their judgement to bear upon the question at issue. That is what we purpose to do tonight. We have with us two gentlemen, I believe, strong in their convictions and they are going to bring you the best they can in proof of the views they represent. It is for you (the public) to be the great court of justice; in all questions of this sort ultimately you decide the issue and the religious life and thought of the people must be determined by the decisions you come to upon the questions of character. Ever since the Christian religion came to man this question has been debated. The debate is not ended yet. We shall continue to discuss it. Therefore, it is a living issue, and being such the intelligence of man is demanded, at any rate towards the best settlement that can be reached.

It is my duty simply to introduce to you tonight the two debaters and to tell you the rules which will govern our procedure, Mr. West (a well known name in Bristol now), will defend those views of the Trinity which are upheld by the Church of England and who is so earnest a member of that Church. He will speak to us for thirty minutes. Then Mr. Todd, the representative of the Christadelphian line of thought, will speak to us for thirty minutes. At the conclusion of this, we shall have a collection and let me remind you, ladies and gentlemen, that we are hoping, strongly hoping, that a considerable surplus of money will be placed at the disposal of the friends who have taken the trouble of this meeting. They desire to hand over that surplus to the Bristol General Hospital; so that now, ladies and gentlemen, you have a double interest, not only an interest of intellectual value, but of supporting one of the greatest and most useful institutions. After the collection, Mr. West will have the opportunity of questioning Mr. Todd; Mr. West will ask questions and Mr. Todd will reply. Following that, Mr. Todd will have the opportunity of asking Mr. West questions and Mr. West will reply - fifteen minutes each in both cases for the questions - and finally there will be a concluding speech by each of the debaters of fifteen minutes in length, with this condition, that in the concluding speech no fresh matter must be introduced. The speakers must confine themselves in both cases to matter already touched upon. The principle of the whole thing being that the matter laid before you must be based upon the Scriptures and

defended from that point of view. If you, the audience, choose to express your opinions too strongly and take up any time of the speakers, that time must be allowed them as considered to belong to them. Now I have much pleasure in asking Mr. West to open the debate of this evening.

### **Reverend J.O.West's Opening Speech:-**

Mr Chairman, Dear Friends, Let me make a brief statement as to how it is that I occupy this exceptional position tonight. I belong to the Christian Endeavour Society, which is a large Society embracing Christians of all denominations. Last Whitsuntide we held a great convention in the Colston Hall. After one of the meetings - that upon Sunday morning - as I was coming away from the meeting, a paper was put in my hand and upon it there was an attack virtually upon the faith that I hold to be the faith of God and duty led me on the following Sunday night to preach in my church on a question that is a matter of deepest moment to men and women, on points of difference which were upon that paper, with what is called Orthodox Christian faith. To this sermon I found, apart from my knowledge, a meeting arranged for, the speaker, announced and that he replied to my sermon. I do not think it was in my power to be at the meeting but when I heard of it, in order to show my perfect fairness and willingness to meet those who differ from me, I at once wrote to the Christadelphians saying I was willing, if arrangements were made, to state publicly my reasons and to hear the opposite side; so that is the reason why I am here tonight and I will at once begin by proceeding to state that the doctrine of the Trinity, that is a Trinity of Unity, is the doctrine of the Church of England. Mark, not simply the doctrine of the Church of England but we may consider that the Catholic Church throughout the world embraces this as the truth, what we believe to be the nature of God that is held by what is usually termed Orthodox Christianity.

Now why should we object to the term Trinity'? I at once admit the word is not to be found in Holy Scriptures but because the word is not found there, is therefore the doctrine implied in the Trinity - is the doctrine therefore false? Certainly not, because we have it in our power to coin fresh words. Ten to twelve years ago, how many of you knew there was such an article in the world as radium"? I did not, and yet the name had to be found to describe the most wonderful material that has yet been discovered. So as time went on, after the Holy Scriptures were written it seemed to be an advisable thing to express the faith held by Orthodox Christians as being Three in One - Trinity - and therefore I hope no quarrel will be made upon the use of the word.

The question is, "Is the doctrine in Holy Scripture?" If it is, let us find out where it is and be prepared to accept it, believing that it is a possible thing for the Being of God to transcend our finite capacity, He being eternal unchangeable, all wise and perfect in every way - we being mortal, we being weak, we being finite and therefore unable to cope with the great and wondrous idea of the Most High and Almighty God.

Here let me express my conviction, that the Christadelphians hold a measure of truth; they honour Christ, they hold that He has been raised from the dead, and that He is coming in His Kingdom; and in that faith I thoroughly agree. He is to my soul King of Kings and Lord of Lords and I believe that He will be King over all the earth, supreme in God's good time. But the question, after all, is the nature of Christ, and the nature of the Spirit of God; because we agree in worshipping and honouring the Unity; we believe in One supreme God Almighty Who is allwise; and therefore it is a good thing for us to have a common stand-point in which we can hold fellowship and agree.

Therefore the points we have to discuss are these. I have not to refute the atheistical standpoint or the Higher Criticism tonight, but rather to prove if I can, from Holy Scripture, the Trinity in Unity. I submit to you that from Holy Scripture I have to prove the Godhead of Christ, and the Godhead of the Spirit of God. The Godhead of the Lord Jesus Christ in the first place. Had He a being before He was in this world? Not as Jesus Christ, He could not have a being as Jesus Christ because He was born of the blessed Virgin and therefore His humanity could only have a beginning as a child born, and the Son of God. But He states Himself in John 6:36, "I came down from heaven," therefore He of necessity was in Heaven before He came therefrom; what was He in Heaven? We are told that "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son." The gospel of Luke tells us in the fourth chapter where the genealogy is treated upon that Adam was the Son of God and therefore what are we to understand by Christ being "the only begotten Son of God"? I take it that it means that He was the only Son of God. You and I who are fathers here, have children practically of our own nature, they are in one sense the same essence of ourselves. So the Father has one Son, called in the Epistle to the Romans, "His own Son, the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." Twice that expression is used in the gospel of John concerning our holy and blessed Lord. What Christians (we who belong to the Church of England) say the Godhead of our Holy Saviour means is, He had a prior existence as God or Son of God before He came into this world. Was there a time when He was not? Was there a time when God in His Unity existed apart from all personality - that is, from the Persons being in the Godhead? I hold that it is an impossibility. I will give you the reasons in a few moments. He was in the bosom of the Father (John 1:18), "The only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father He hath declared Him." Further, that the expression used concerning Him, "the Word of God," implies the heart utterance of God. "In the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God, and the Word was God." And then we find in John 1:14, "The Word became flesh," which is the exact force of the Greek verb, "and we beheld His glory, the glory as the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

But it might be affirmed that there was a time when the Father begat the Son, if so, if He begat the Son of His own nature and His own essence, He must have been God, but looking at it from another point of view, He could not create God; God is uncreate; to be God was to have no beginning. God is eternal and therefore, if the Son began to be at any time, mark, I do not say when, at any period at all, He must of necessity not be God, the two ideas cannot be made to agree; so when we have His own words (John 17) in which we see how that Christ our Lord, as He is speaking to the Father (I do not know a more remarkable chapter of the outpouring of the heart of the Son of God to the Father than this), He says in the fifth verse, "Father, glorify Thou me with Thine own self with the glory I had with Thee before the world was." Scientists tell us this earth has been in existence for millions of years. Now millions of years is a stupendous portion of time; if in some form or other this earth has been in existence millions of years ago, here in these words the Lord Jesus Christ states definitely and clearly that He had glory with the Father before the world was.

We will pass on to His very own words in regard to Himself and you will find that the chief revelation from Himself to man of His nature is in John 5 and 10. In John 5:20 therefore you will see that Christ says, "The Father loveth the Son and sheweth Him all things that Himself doeth, He will show Him greater works that ye may marvel." Also in the 21st verse, "For as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom He will... all judgment is given unto the Son, that all may honour the Son as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father that sent Him. Verily, verily,

I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life."

We have learned thus far, Christ hath perfect knowledge, is the perfect Son of God, He hath perfect life in Himself, as Christ Himself says, "as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself." He hath perfect authority, for before Him all must appear, "for the Father hath committed all judgment to Him;" He hath perfect honour, that all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father; He has perfect power because He tells us in the last chapter of Matthew, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." Thus we find therefore, in those thoughts, perfect knowledge, perfect life, perfect authority, perfect power. We find these statements made by Christ when He was here amongst men, how that He had these attributes Himself, with what result? We find that when He made these statements which I have shown that He did make, I affirm they constitute the claim of Godhead. "The Jews took up stones again to stone Him. Why stone me," said Christ, "for a good work?" "We do not stone Thee for a good work, but we stone Thee that Thou being a man makest Thyself God." Did Christ deny it? He admitted it. His time to die had not arrived and He escaped out of their hands and vanished out of their view; they were powerless to take Him.

In Matthew 11:27,28 (here we have the earliest gospel, so far as we know), you will find Christ making use of the words "All things" (speaking of the Father), "have been delivered to Me of my Father, and no one knoweth the Son but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. Hark at that tremendous statement that Christ made in John 14:6, "No man can come to the Father except by me." Then He says, Matthew 11:28, "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Words so wonderful, words so magnificent as these, no religious teacher that has appeared has ever dared to use. Here we see the Christ of God declare that all that are heavy laden are to come to Him; and that He will give them rest. How can a finite being respond to infinite need?

Now I pass on again. Let us think of the circumstances when He was crucified between two thieves on the Cross. I ask you to turn to the gospel of Mark, 14:60-64, there we find Him appear before His judges, a prisoner at the bar. What do we find there? The High Priest stood up in the midst and asked Jesus saying, "Answerest thou nothing? What is it that these witness against thee? But he held his peace. Again the High Priest said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? And Jesus said unto him, Ye shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power, coming in the clouds of heaven. And the High Priest rent his clothes and said, Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death." Turn now to Luke 22:69,70, there you will find the same scene recorded with slightly different points; but these words are very important, "Hereafter shall the Son of Man sit on the right hand of the power of God. Then said they all, Art thou then, the Son of God? And he said unto them, Ye say that I am." The margin has (R.V.) "Because I am." The result to Him was the crucifixion. He is nailed upon that cross of wood because He had done no evil thing, no violence was found upon Him; simply upon the capital charge, the greatest charge that could be laid to any Jew, He "blasphemed" - hence His crucifixion. Well, it was either true or false. If the charge was a true charge, the Jews were right in inflicting capital punishment upon Him. If the Jews were wrong, they were guilty of the most awful murder that ever took place upon this earth. Peter in the Acts of the Apostles charges them with being "the betrayers and murderers" of the Christ of God and we note here from the word before us, that the Son of God that went before His judges said "I am the Son of God."

Let me pass on; I have other witnesses which I wish to dwell upon. You remember in the walk to Emmaus (Luke 24) that the two disciples who were leaving broken-hearted, thinking their cause was utterly hopeless and gone; you remember a third person joined them and that that third person was the resurrected Christ and that He explained - took them to the Bible, the Old Testament (the Old Testament was written hundreds of years - at least 250 years - before Christ came; therefore when He opened the Scriptures; it was not the gospel; it was the Old Testament Scriptures. Now in the Old Testament Scriptures there are four (there are more really, but I give four) chief passages in regard to the nature of the Lord Jesus Christ and the first is this - Isaiah 14:21-23, there we find the statement made by God Himself that salvation was in His hands; "a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me; look unto me and be ye saved all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else; by myself I have sworn, and the word is gone out of my mouth: unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear."

Will you turn to Philippians 2? There we find a most remarkable passage called "the emptying;" "He, being in the form of God" - Christ being in the form of God, "thought it not robbery to be equal with God" (and the Greek exactly translated is "thought it not a prize to be grasped, to be on an equality with God") and made himself of no reputation, but took upon Him the form of a servant," and therefore, because He humbled Himself, "God hath highly exalted Him, that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow; of things in heaven and things on earth, and things under the earth; that every tongue shall confess to the glory of God the Father."

Then I ask your thoughts to another Scripture, Isaiah 6:1-5, there we find before Isaiah the astonishing manifestation of the glory of God sitting upon the throne and then we have the cry raised by the Seraphim, one crying unto another, "Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory. Then said 1, Woe is me, for I am undone; I dwell among the people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts." Now what do we find in the latter part of the gospel of John (12:37-41)? We have had the appearance of the glory of God to Isaiah, and John, in his interpretation of that passage tells us in this "that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report, and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? He hath blinded their eyes, lest they should see with their eyes, and I should heal them." Those words are taken from the very chapter of the prophet, "These things said Isaiah, when he saw His glory. Isaiah saw the glory of Christ when he saw the vision hundreds of years before Christ came.

We will turn to Psalm 14. David was a prophet as well as a king. He is in that remarkable Psalm saying, "My heart is inditing a good matter. I speak of the things which I have made touching the King." The verses I want to refer to are the sixth and seventh, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; the sceptre of Thy kingdom is a right sceptre." Turn now to the 1st of Hebrews; there we find the statement distinctly made - Christ as the Son of God referred to, "Again when he bringeth the first begotten into the world, He saith, Let all the angels of God worship him, who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire. And to the Son he said, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever."

I have not touched upon the personality of the Godhead of the Holy Ghost. I will give these statements. The names of God are given to the Lord Jesus Christ. He is called "Our great God and Saviour." For instance, the attributes of God are given to the Lord Jesus Christ. Eternity; "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last." "Jehovah of hosts, the first and the last." Omnipotence (John 1:3), "All things were made by the Word." Hebrews 1:3, upholding all things by the word of his power. Omnipresence, "Where two or three are gathered

together in my Name, there I am in the midst of them.” Matthew 28, “Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age.”

Then the acts of God are ascribed to the Lord Jesus Christ - Creation and preservation. The epistle to the Colossians (I have not time to dwell upon the remarkable testimony contained in this epistle), but in Colossians 1 Christ is described as the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation, by him were all things created in heaven, upon earth, things visible, and things invisible. Power is ascribed unto him, for all things have been created through Him and unto Him, and He is before all things; in Him all things consist. So we notice therefore, that the apostle in writing thus concerning the glory of Christ has exalted Christ unto such an height that, unless He is God, I cannot by any possible means understand who Christ is, for it says, “In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.” Therefore when I look at the Lord Jesus Christ and find the works of creation ascribed to Him, I appeal to creation as being actual evidence that He is God, He proves that He was sent from God and therefore the Son, having power over all creation - for there was nothing that was needed in the way of power over nature, over disease, over suffering or over death, that Christ did not exert - and as we look at His character, as we look at His ways, as we look at His death, as we look at His resurrection, and as we look at His works, I see the truth embodied in the expression “I believe in Jesus Christ that He is very God of very God.”

### **Mr Todd's Opening Speech:-**

Mr Chairman, Mr West, Ladies and Gentlemen, The subject for discussion is “Is the doctrine of the Trinity as believed in by the Church of England a scriptural one?” Now I submit to you that Mr West has not defined what the doctrine is as believed by the Church; so we propose to read from what is called the Book of Common Prayer, in order that you may see for yourselves what the doctrine is as held by the Church. It reads (page 49):-

“Whosoever will be saved: before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholic Faith, which faith except everyone do keep whole and undefiled; without doubt he shall perish everlastingly. And the Catholic Faith is this: that we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity; neither confounding the Persons: nor dividing the substance. For there is one Person of the Father, another of the Son: and another of the Holy Ghost. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is all one, the Glory equal, the Majesty co-eternal. Such as the Father is, such is the Son: and such is the Holy Ghost. The Father uncreate, the Son uncreate: and the Holy Ghost uncreate. The Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible; and the Holy Ghost incomprehensible. The Father eternal, the Son eternal, and the Holy Ghost eternal. And yet they are not three eternals; but one eternal. As also there are not three incomprehensibles, nor three uncreated; but one uncreated, and one incomprehensible. So likewise the Father is Almighty, the Son Almighty, and the Holy Ghost Almighty. And yet they are not three Almighties: but one Almighty. So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God. And yet they are not three Gods, but one God. So likewise the Father is Lord, the Son is Lord, and the Holy Ghost is Lord. And yet not three Lords but one Lord. For like as we are compelled by the Christian verity to acknowledge every person by himself to be God and Lord; so we are forbidden by the Catholic religion to say there be three Gods or three Lords. The Father is made of none; neither created nor begotten. The Son is of the Father alone: not

made, nor created, but begotten. The Holy Ghost is of the Father and of the Son; neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding. So there is one Father, not three Fathers, one Son, not three Sons, one Holy Ghost, not three Holy Ghosts. And in this Trinity none is afore, or after other; none is greater, or less than another: but the whole three Persons are co-eternal together; and co-equal. So that in all things, as is aforesaid; the Unity in Trinity, and the Trinity in Unity is to be worshipped. He therefore that will be saved must thus think of the Trinity,”

Now in the first of the thirty-nine articles it says “There is but one living true God, without body, parts or passions.” My friend, Mr West, this is a fair definition of the doctrine of the Trinity as believed by the Church - it is from the Church's own Prayer Book.

Just briefly we will refer to one or two of the arguments that Mr West has thrown out, before we elaborate our own argument upon the negative side of the question. He has introduced to your notice Radium. He said when discovered we had to find a name for it. The point he seemed to have in view was as though Christ left new truth to be discovered after He left the earth. Surely Christ revealed all the light there was to be revealed. There has been no new divine truth revealed since Christ left the earth. Therefore his argument concerning Radium will not hold good. We say there has been nothing discovered in the shape of divine truth since the Lord Jesus Christ left this earth.

Mr West then spoke to you about some men in Christ's day condemning Him (see John 10:32-36). Jesus answered them “Many good works have I shown you; for which of these works do ye stone me?” The Jews answered Him saying, “For a good work we stone thee not, but for blasphemy, and because thou, being a man, makest thyself God.” How did He make Himself God? Listen to the text and we shall see. “Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If He called them gods unto whom the Word of God came (and the scriptures cannot be broken), say ye of Him whom the Father has sanctified and sent into the world, thou blasphemest, because I said I am the Son of God?” Note, not God the Son; not the second person of the Trinity; not one of the Trinity beings; but “because I said I am the Son of God.” It was among the Jews considered to be an equality when a person claimed to be the only son of a certain man, and as Christ claimed to be the Son of the Lord God Almighty, they considered He had blasphemed.

Mr West quoted John 5:26, “As the Father hath life in himself, even so hath He given to the Son to have life in himself.” If Christ were God, ought not He to have had it? Then before He gave it to the Son, the Son had it not. Then again, “All power in heaven and in earth is given unto me.” Then, before it was given unto Christ He did not possess it; showing that Christ could not have been equal with the Father. If He had been equal, He would have had the power apart from the bestowal. Mr West has quoted from the Hebrews where it says “Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.” Now in the first chapter of Hebrews and the sixth verse, the Authorized Version reads like this, “And again, when He bringeth the first begotten into the world, He saith, and let all the angels of God worship him.” The Revised Version alters that a little and it reads, “When He again bringeth in the first begotten into the world.” So the Lord is coming, as is shown by the wording, “When He again bringeth in the first begotten, let all the angels of God worship Him.” That is when that hymn

“All hail the power of Jesus' name,  
Let angels prostrate fall;  
Bring forth the royal diadem,  
And crown Him Lord of all.”

will be sung.

Well, now trace the things further down to the 10th verse of the same chapter and we read, "And Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thine hands: they shall perish, but thou remainest." Now the word 'Lord' does not refer to Christ or Jesus. We affirm that the creation spoken of here are not the literal heaven and earth, for there must be no contradiction in Scripture. Concerning the literal heavens and earth, it is written, "One generation passeth away and another cometh: but the earth abideth for ever" (Ecclesiastes 1:4). Now if the passage means that the literal heaven and earth are to pass away, there is a confliction, and concerning the sun, the moon and the stars, it is written, "they shall continue for ever before me." (Psalm 72:17) and in addition to this Christ said, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth" (Matthew 5:5). But if you believe the earth is to be blotted out, there is no point in Jehovah's declarations. What heavens and earth are they? In short we say they were the Jewish heavens and earth, which were ready to vanish away in the days of the apostles, as Peter said that the heavens were about to be on fire; they were to melt with fervent heat and be dissolved. But he says, "Nevertheless, we, according to His promise (God's promise) look for a new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Peter 3:10-13). Now if you were to apply that to the literal heavens and earth, would you be prepared to admit that in heaven where God dwells, sin exists? It is not the heaven where God dwells, but the promise is "Behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy" (Isaiah 65:18). Then he quoted from Colossians where we have Christ styled "the image of the invisible God." We wish to point out that Christ was the image of God, and not God Himself. How could He be the image of Himself? Utterly an impossibility. With regard to the creation referred to: Christ is the Creator in the question, but mark the things that are to be created. They are called things in heaven, and things in earth, thrones, dominions, principalities and powers, etc. (Colossians 1:16). Please note neither heaven nor earth, but things in heaven and things in earth; they are social things. Can we conceive for one moment that Christ created the literal, natural heavens and earth? No indeed we cannot. Did He make the hills, the mountains, the seas and the rocks? No! He did not. The things that He is said to create are here, namely powers, principalities, dominions and thrones, which are all social things. And how did He do it? Let the Word speak. The question is to be decided by the Word of God; it is not what we think. Here is the verse: "And having made peace through the blood of His Cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself; by Him I say, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven." (1 Colossians 1:20). So the reconciliation, the creation of this new order, was brought about by the death on the Cross, that is when Christ was crucified He brake down the middle wall of partition and united Jew and Gentile; the creation is a spiritual creation and not a literal one. Christ is styled "First-born"; "He is the first born of every creature" (Colossians 1:15). Was Christ born before Adam? Adam was created 4000 years before Christ and yet He is styled here in the fifteenth verse as being the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature. Adam is the first of the Adamic stock, the federal head of the human family; whereas Christ is the firstborn from the dead, the first of a new order, the first to put on immortality. What Christ is, the saints hope to be. We will not spend any more time referring to Mr West's speech or else we will have no time to elaborate our own argument. So first of all we should like to read from a little pamphlet which we wrote ourselves, so we shall be allowed to quote from it.

"We do not understand the Athanasian Creed; we do not think anyone else does; it is not the mystery of godliness, but the mystery of foolishness. The most fitting name we can apply to it is "confusion confounded." From such let us earnestly

pray "Good Lord deliver us." We are pleased to say the Good Lord has delivered quite a number of us. Let us keep free from such a blighting influence."

Now the doctrine of the Trinity as believed by the Church - that is the doctrine I have read - is most confusing, most confounding. There is no man that can explain what three Persons in one God means. We were reading a book today in which there were two friends speaking. The one said to the other, "I cannot believe in the doctrine of the Trinity." "Why?" said the other. "It is so contradictory." The Trinitarian answered "It is only like a thing I saw today." "What did you see today?" "I saw three men in one cart." But the man answered, "It would have been nearer the purpose if you had seen one man in three carts."

Now the doctrine of the Trinity carries its own refutation with it. The plain statement of Scripture is "This is life eternal, to know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent" (John 17:3). But concerning the Trinity it is admitted to be incomprehensible, an absolute mystery. Therefore in the eyes of the doctrine of the Trinity as believed in by the Church of England, the whole world is damned.

(Cries of "No! No!").

The words just quoted are the words used by Christ and we do not know why you should have shown your rejection of the same (Mark 16:16).

In Deuteronomy 6:4 the children of Israel met at the foot of Mount Sinai. They had just been brought out of Egypt where they had been for hundreds of years. They were about to receive a code of laws which should govern them for all time. The first great and grand law or commandment given to them was (4th verse), "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord" (not three). When the young man came to Jesus as reported in Mark 12:29, one of the Scribes came and having heard them reasoning together and perceived that He had answered them well, asked Him, Which is the first commandment of all? Jesus answered "The first of all the commandments is, Hear O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord." So that Christ confirmed Moses, the Scribe who well understood the Holy Scriptures confirmed Him also, for the Scribe said, verse 32, "Well, Master. Thou hast said the truth; for there is one God, and none other but He." Again, 1 Corinthians 8:5. we read, "though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth (as there be gods many, and lords many), but to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him." In Ephesians 4:6 it is written "There is one body, and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling: one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all."

Now, Mr West quoted from John 17:5, "Father, glorify Thou me with Thine own self with the glory I had with Thee before the world was." Now I have a passage to put by the side of that which is found in Revelation 12:8, which refers to Christ as the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. If Mr West will hold to the idea that the Lord Jesus Christ literally as a person had glory with the Father before the world was, it is quite as reasonable to hold that He was literally crucified and slain before the world began.

Again, Christ said, "The glory which Thou gavest me, I have given them" (the disciples). What for? "That they may be one, even as we are one." So if the passage Mr. West advances is to prove that the Lord Jesus Christ had this glory before the world was, we also prove that the Lord Jesus Christ was crucified before the world was. Again we are told (Titus 1:2) that God promised eternal life before the world began. Now how could God

promise us eternal life before the world began? It was in prospect, and in the same sense He had glory with the father, namely, in prospect and not in reality. Again Jesus said, "I came down from heaven: My Father sent me." Therefore Mr West says He must have been there to have been sent. The same style of testimony is written concerning John: "There was a man sent from God whose name was John." Did John pre-exist because this style of language was used? Not at all. And yet the same words are used. Again, it is written concerning Cyrus that God had called him by his name. "I have called thee, though thou hast not known me." (Isaiah 45:4). God selected Cyrus and had his name put down two hundred years before he was born. Did Cyrus pre-exist? No, only in the same sense as Christ, namely, in the purpose of God. Concerning Jesus Himself we are told in Galatians 4:4 "When the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law." How could a son be made that was made? It is impossible. But Christ, we are told, was made. We read in Luke 1:35 that He was born, therefore it says, "that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." Not God the Son; not the second person of the Trinity; not one of the Triune Beings; but His name shall be called the Son of God. Now Jesus did not know all things. His own words confirm this (Mark 13:32), "Of the day and the hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." Now if there were things not known by Christ and they were known to the Father, how could Christ be equal to God? Jesus could not do all things apart from the power of God, as His own words testify (John 5:30), "I can of mine own self do nothing." This was one of the Almighty referred to in the Athanasian Creed. Fancy one of the Almighty, one of the Trinity, could do nothing of Himself. This surely brings ridicule upon this creed. We are told that Christ was tempted in all points like unto His brethren (but God cannot be tempted) yet without sin. If He were Very God of Very God where would be the wisdom of those last words? Could a Very God sin? Of course He could not. Christ could but did not. All honour to His Name.

### **Reverend J.O.West questions Mr Todd:-**

There is just one thing I should like to say with regard to what has fallen from Mr Todd's lips. It is hardly courteous for any debater to condemn in language such as he has chosen. It may be he may think so; sometimes our thoughts are better kept to ourselves because they may give pain. When he described the Athanasian Creed as "mystery confounded" maybe he was carried away by the heat of the moment, therefore I can forgive such an expression. Whilst to a large extent I do not hold to the condemnatory clauses of the Athanasian Creed, I prefer The Judgment to deal with that, and with those who reject the gospel, and I am certain that I am not bound to acknowledge all that is said to be gospel for gospel; therefore I prefer leaving the judgment of those who do not hear the gospel in the hands of Him who cannot err. How could Mr Todd reconcile the fact that John, the first chapter states that Christ by the Word of God, Who is the Person Incarnate (we are told here He became flesh) that without Him was not anything made that was made? I notice that he referred to the epistle of the Ephesians 2:14 when he said it was breaking down of the barrier between Jew and Greek; that thus all this could be reconciled to God; but it appears to me that he has not dealt with the fact that in the gospel of John we have it clearly stated...

**Chairman:** Excuse me, Mr West, but this time must be devoted to questions and answers.

**Mr. West:** But cannot I make explanation?

**Chairman:** I think questions and answers is the more interesting.

1. How do you account for the meaning “all things were made by Him” (by the Word of God)?

A: That word “for” should be “on account of” Him, as you very well know sir.

2. The question of Hebrews 1:10 - how do you account for your statement as to the person spoken of, “Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundations of the earth”?

A: Because the word “Lord” represents Jehovah and not Christ.

3. In the sixth verse of this chapter, “When he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, let all the angels of God worship him, but unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God.” (“and thou Lord” applies to himself)?

A: There are two persons referred to, “Again, He (God) bringeth the Son into the world; then let all the angels of God worship him;” whereas you make that apply to God. The other applies to God Himself, namely, “Thou, Lord, in the beginning, hast laid the foundations of the earth.”

4. You referred to John the Baptist; you coupled John on an equality with Christ. John said that the one that cometh after me is mightier than I?

A: Messiah was higher than any apostles. He was greater than all the apostles. John acknowledged that “He that cometh after me is preferred before me” for He, Christ, was before him certainly.

5. Define the expression that “Christ was before me”

A: In God's purpose it must have been, because John was born first.

6. How do you account for the prophetic announcement with regard to Messiah and the very words used in the 45th chapter of Isaiah, “There is no God beside me; a just God and a Saviour; the word has gone out of my mouth in righteousness and shall not return; that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear”? The very words used by Jehovah in this 45th chapter are clearly applied to Christ (Philippians 2:10,11).

A: Christ must reign until He hath put down the last enemy; after which Christ shall deliver up the Kingdom to the Father, when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power, that God may be all in all. At the end of the 1000 years every knee shall bow and every tongue confess, as it is written.

7. The Hebrew, in the appearance of the glory of God as ascribed in the triangular “Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord God Almighty,” and the Hebrew in the first of Genesis, clearly speaks of a plurality of persons in the creation. How do you account for the plurality of persons in the creation and the use of the threefold benediction, when the High Priest of the Jewish economy came out to bless the people; threefold ascription, all holiness to God? And then we find that John states plainly that Isaiah asserts that he saw the glory of Christ. If Christ has no pre-existence, I am wondering a little, how do you account that His glory was seen by Isaiah and that it was Elohim (plural) that created the world indicated in Genesis?

A: Here the prophet foretold the sufferings of Christ and the glory which should follow.

8. I have asked for a plain answer to the question as to the personality of the Creator in Genesis 1. It is a plurality distinctly, “Let us make man in our own image”?

A: I shall question my friend upon that presently, but will say in the meantime “Lord God,” the “Lord” represents Jehovah and “God” is Elohim and is plural, therefore we account for the plurality.

**9.** If you return to Zechariah 13:7 you will find there a statement I should like you to answer as to how it was fulfilled. “Awake, O sword, against my shepherd and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts. Smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered,”

**A:** Who was the fellow of Jehovah? The Lord Jesus Christ and the saints are likewise. We are fellow-workers with God.

**10.** In Zechariah 12:10, “I will pour upon the house of David” (Jehovah is the speaker) and He says “They shall look upon me whom they have pierced.” When was the piercing of Jehovah?

**A:** I have not that in the passage. The passage refers to Jesus.

**11.** I admit the passage refers to Jesus. “I will pour upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem.” Who was the pourer?

**A:** Christ was pierced by the Roman soldier when He hung upon the Cross and it says in the age to come, they shall behold him. It was Christ that was wounded.

**12.** “I will pour upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and supplications and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced.”

**A:** That is a prophecy. It is not yet fulfilled. It is a prophecy concerning Christ who was pierced by the spear of the Roman soldier when they came to brake the legs of those crucified. They said concerning Him “This man is dead,” but the Roman soldier pierced His side with a spear, thereby fulfilling the prophecy, and in the age to come if He had never been pierced they could not look upon Him.

**13.** Then who do you admit that the speaker, the pourer is, who says, “I will pour”? Whose words are they?

**A:** God's words through Christ.

**14.** If the actions of God, as I have said, the works of creation were ascribed to Christ: if life, if judgment, if creation, if preservation, all that we own to be divine as applying to duty exclusively, do you say that Jesus Christ, when He was born had these things given to Him?

**A:** No, I do not. Decidedly not. Some of the things have not been given to Him yet – the throne of His father David, for instance. “He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever.”

**15.** Can you give a definite time when perfect knowledge, perfect authority, perfect honour were given to Christ, because in the fifth chapter of John He stated plainly He had them?

**A:** Could I give a time when they were given to Christ? If ever there was a time when they were given to Christ it shows Christ was not equal to God to have been the recipient of those things.

### **Mr Todd questions Reverend J.O.West:-**

There is just one remark I should like to make. Be it far from me to hurt the feelings of my opponent. Be it far from my mind; but I spoke as I believed to be true concerning the Athanasian Creed and I quoted Christ's words “Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” I repeat it, that in the eyes of the Athanasian Creed the whole world must be damned.

**Chairman:** It is a great temptation to enter into explanation of subject. The audience will excuse Mr. Todd in yielding to it. Mr. Todd will now keep strictly to question and answer.

**16.** Mr. West, do you believe God is a Spirit?

**A:** I do.

**17.** Is God substance?

**A:** He is not.

**18.** Then I say my friend is not bound by the Church's Creed which says we are not to confound the Persons. Is God a Person?

**A:** A Trinity of Persons in One person.

**19.** Now Mr West admits God is a Spirit and God is a Person. Now can you have a Spiritual Person without body, parts, passions?

**A:** Certainly. I believe there are spiritual forces in this room which we cannot see.

**20.** Is the word "Trinity" in the Bible?

**A:** I have told you that already.

**21.** Is the expression "God the Son" found in the Bible?

**A:** The expression "God the Son" is not found in the Bible.

**22.** Is the expression "God the Holy Ghost" found in the Bible?

**A:** No.

**23.** Are any of the following phrases found in the Bible? "Trinity in Unity," "Unity in Trinity," "The Triune God," and "The Eternal Son," etc.?

**A:** The first three are not found in the Bible but in regard to the Eternal Son I have an idea there is a passage but cannot fix it at the moment. Christ became the Author of Eternal Salvation.

**24.** If none of these phrases are found in the Bible does not that prove the doctrine a believed by the Church is unscriptural?

**A:** No.

**25.** How do you prove there are three persons in one God?

**A:** (Holding up decanter) I cannot prove there are two glasses in this water, but I am certain there are.

**26.** In Genesis 1:26 it is written "Let us make man..." How do you decide that this refers to three Persons?

**A:** I cannot decide that it refers to three Persons; but there must have been more than one or the words would not have been "Let us make man..."

**27.** May there have been 300, or 3,000, or 3,000,000?

**A:** We have no light in the Word of God in regard to that. The forming refers to the Son and the Spirit.

**28.** What did Christ mean when He said "If I pray to my Father He will give me twelve legions of angels"?

**A:** Christ was perfect man; He was perfect humanity; our humanity. As a man He hungered, as a man He was weary, as a man He wept; as a man He suffered. If He needed twelve legions

of angels, the perfect humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ does not arrogate - or does not affect - the perfect glory He had as God.

**29.** But seeing you say there were only Christ and the Spirit in heaven, how could there have been the number of angles?

**A:** I have never said the angels were not there.

**30.** Then may there not have been more than three, seeing the word is plural?

**A:** I say there may have been more than three if we have the light to show; but in heaven there are orders, seraphim, principalities and powers, of which we know nothing.

**31.** Are we not told that the sons of God shouted for joy when God laid the foundations of the earth?

**A:** I believe it because He created intelligences. Originally there must have been sons of God - only sons; but we affirm Christ was in the bosom of the Father, He was the Word of the Father of whom John tells us that He was God and infinitely superior to all the sons of God spoken of.

**32.** Does Jesus say His Father was the only true God?

**A:** Yes He did.

**33.** Could Jesus be God if His Father was the only true God?

**A:** He could be God manifested in the flesh.

**34.** Could He be God?

**A:** I hold He could be.

**35.** Did Jesus ever claim to be God?

**A:** I say He was crucified because He claimed to be God.

**36.** Did they not crucify Him because He claimed to be the Son of God?

**A:** The Son of God is equal to His Father as touching His Godhead.

**37.** Did Jesus Christ exist as a Person before He was born of the Virgin Mary?

**A:** The Son of God existed as a Person before He was born.

**38.** Can a son be as old as his father?

**A:** I reply to that, that when we have the Most High and the Eternal Son, our conception of Sonship cannot be in line with the conception of what an Eternal Son is.

**39.** What is it to be born?

**A:** To begin a fresh state of existence. We are born first of our mothers and we are born again when the Holy Spirit regenerates.

**40.** We are speaking of a literal birth. Could Christ come into life if He was already in life?

**A:** Yes. He could in His human nature. God could not die, but Christ could die.

**41.** It is written in Hebrews that Jesus was tempted. Do you believe that?

**A:** Yes.

**42.** Could God be tempted?

**A:** He cannot be tempted.

**43.** Does not that prove that Jesus was not God?

**A:** It appears to me that Jesus was tempted as a man.

**44.** Did Jesus die?

**A:** Jesus did die.

**45.** Was Jesus God?

**A:** Jesus Himself, the humanity, died.

**46.** Was Jesus God?

**A:** Jesus Christ was God manifested in the flesh.

**47.** Did God die?

**A:** He could not.

**48.** On your own admission that God could not die and Jesus did die, does not that prove that Jesus was not God?

**A:** I said that the humanity of Jesus could die but the divine of Jesus could not die.

**49.** Which was Jesus, the humanity or divine?

**A:** Humanity.

**50.** The humanity was Jesus?

**A:** Human form that clothed the Son of God was Jesus. Jesus was crucified. Jesus Christ died.

**51.** Then you admit that the humanity was Jesus and so Jesus died. Did not Jesus deny that He was God when He said, "Why callest thou me good; there is none good but One, that is God?"

**A:** He did say that; but the question is, did He deny that He was God? He did not deny that He was God; He wanted to bring home a teaching.

**52.** I never denied Jesus was good. Did He not disclaim that He was God?

**A:** Not necessarily by those words.

**53.** Do you believe He was made in all points like unto His brethren?

**A:** I do.

**54.** How could He be if He already existed?

**A:** He could be made in regard to human nature.

**55.** You have admitted His human nature was Jesus; the divine nature clothed itself with Jesus?

**A:** As Jesus He was human nature. He had to be born of His mother, the Virgin Mary.

**56.** My friend admits that as Jesus He could not have existed before He was born?

**A:** I answered the question as well as I was able.

**57.** You simply said that there were two parts of Christ?

**A:** The human part could be separate from the divine.

**58.** Which was Christ, the human or the divine?

**A:** Both

**59.** Which was crucified, the human or the divine?

**A:** Both.

**60.** Can the divine be crucified?

**A:** The divine could be crucified but could not die.

**61.** I thought to be crucified was to die.

**A:** (no answer)

**62.** If there were two parts belonging to Jesus, the divine and the human, and only the human part could die, did Jesus die at all?

**A:** He handed His spirit over to God and said, "Into Thy hand I commend my spirit." Therefore when He was forsaken by God He was forsaken as a Son, offering the death of the soul of Jesus. His soul was poured out unto death, which had to take place as an offering acceptable to God. We agree upon this point that God Himself could not die. If He clothed Himself for the purpose of our salvation with human form and human soul and body, He could suffer death.

**63.** If Christ died, does it not prove that He was neither immortal nor omnipotent?

**A:** No; because Jesus as man was clothed as God and became the Son of God as a triumpher over the world, the flesh and the devil.

**64.** If Christ died does it not show that He was neither immortal nor omnipotent?

**A:** The act of death could be in the mind of God and be carried out on the Cross for God's own purpose; and He Himself accept the sacrifice of the death of Christ for our salvation and His Godhead was completely laid aside.

**65.** If Christ died could He be immortal or omnipotent?

**A:** Both

**66.** Can immortality die?

**A:** (No answer)

**67.** Seeing that Christ possessed at this time neither of these divine attributes, was He equal to God?

**A:** He could lay aside His immortality and He could lay aside His omnipotence.

### **Reverend J.O. West's Closing Speech:-**

I am rather sorry in one sense having to defend as I have. Why have I contended for the honour of the Lord Jesus Christ in the way that I have? Shall I tell you why? Look at the sun in the heavens and as you see that sun in the heavens, supposing we have a hundred parts of heat and light coming from that sun, should I be content to have one part and not the other ninety-nine out of the hundred? Ought not I, if I can, to enjoy the full light and heat of the glorious orb when I have an opportunity? Now look at the question of my salvation: I am a traveller here on earth; I am a sinful man; I need a friend that can warm my heart and can gladden my soul in this needy and suffering world and if I have a good Friend to rejoice over

and can bask in that Friend's love and sympathy when I put my head upon my dying pillow and look ahead, I am very thankful and grateful.

Now I hold our friends the Christadelphians have sufficient Light to save in Christ. I remember asking one of them in Birmingham (Christadelphians are stronger there than here), I remember asking one who belonged to that body whether his sins were pardoned and he told me they were. We agree there is salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ; there is pardon for sin through His atoning death; and that He will be God's vicegerent here on earth as the man Christ Jesus. But when I look at the glory of Christ and think of the amazing power there is in Him, according to my interpretation of what the gospel teaches, the gospel teaches me that Christ is to have the honour of salvation and this world entirely at His feet in order that it may be His for ever.

I won't quarrel about using such terms as "God the Holy Ghost," etc. If He is God, He is God, whether you call Him the Son of God or God the Son, and therefore when I think of the honour of Christ, I don't want to look upon my Saviour as being a perfect man only, for He had an existence before He came into this world, according to the statement I have made. The names of God were given to Him, take for instance Isaiah speaking of Him, and John when he said that he himself was simply a voice declaring, "There cometh one after me mightier than I," and such a contrast between Him and me "that I am not worthy to stoop down to loose his shoe latchet." And then we find directly afterwards John saying, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." So that when I hear the names of God being ascribed to Him, actions of God being ascribed to Christ, I say that St. Paul's words (1 Timothy 3:16) are perfectly acceptable to our hearts. "Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness." Mr Todd has asked one of the most difficult questions. We shall have to leave such until the perfect Lord is in the world, when knowledge will be full; for now we know in part; now we see through a glass darkly. We declare that we cannot understand the doctrine of the Trinity but is it false because I cannot understand it? Mr Todd will bear with me (I don't speak this in any unkind spirit).

On the Cross the Lord Jesus Christ veiled His Godhead; He hung there, the bleeding, dying man. Verily God did atone. When I look at the doctrine of the Atonement for the sin of the world, when I think of this sacrifice of a human being, perfect human body and a human soul, sinless and spotless and perfect God; when I think of that fountain of which Zechariah speaks, "In that day there shall be opened a fountain for uncleanness" and find the glory of God is one and the same with the glory of the Lamb, is joined with God, that every creature in heaven and earth bows down before the throne of God and the Lamb, I cannot apart from the Godhead of Jesus Christ understand that God would abrogate His right. There must have been a time when things were given, but when? The perfect knowledge, the perfect love, the perfect authority, the perfect power, that all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father, if I understand that aright, means the most wondrous person who ever trod this earth. Was there ever so remarkable a murder, so wonderful a victim that ever poured out His soul, His life, on behalf of others? He did pour out His soul unto death. The Godhead of our Lord Jesus Christ was the altar upon which the manhood was sacrificed, so that the dignity of the person of Christ renders His salvation open to the vilest, to the poorest, to the most needy, to all sorts the wide world over, because He is able to save to the uttermost. "Christ is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him."

There is also this thought; did the Father when He gave all power, all judgment, all knowledge, all life - did He abnegate? Did He hand it over to Christ and lose it Himself? He

could not do it. When He handed it to an equal; when He gave perfect knowledge, perfect power, perfect authority to His Son, He imparted that of which He lost nothing Himself.

There is another thought and it is this; I see throughout the whole of the Scriptures that salvation is a direct act of God, how that we are told “The Lord is my light, and my salvation; the Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?” (Psalm 27:1). In that day thou shalt say “I will praise Thee though Thou wast angry with me: thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortest me. Behold, God is my salvation.” Did the Lord Jesus Christ become the Saviour of men after His death upon the Cross? He was declared to be the Son of God with power by the rising from the dead. Has God then, handed over His sovereign power into the hands of an inferior? If the Son is inferior to the Father, the Father has handed Him the glory of His majesty.

As to The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world and “The glory which I had with Thee before the world was,” I cannot see how that the thought of the Lamb slain should affect the glory. We know that the Lamb was slain at a definite point of time. We haven't a definite point of time with reference to the glory, because it carries us back into the ages of eternity. It is because, to me, Christ has been these forty years the precious Saviour of my soul, I bow before Him, “All hail the power of Jesus' Name.” What power? God's power to save all those who look unto Him.

### **Mr. Todd's Closing Speech:-**

In the reply Mr West has just made, first of all he tried to evade the subject at issue and spoke to you about the glory that Christ is to have in the age to come. We, that is, I am in perfect agreement, Christ is coming; He will take unto Himself His great power and reign and subdue all things unto Himself and finally He will deliver over the Kingdom to God, that God may be all in all (1 Corinthians 15:25,28).

Mr West says that if Christ was a mere man, God has appointed one inferior to Himself. Did not Jesus confirm that when He said “My Father is greater than I”? Now we submit to your notice how is it possible to have two equals if the one said “My Father is greater than I”?

Mr West spoke to you about my referring to John and that Christ was a greater personage than John. Certainly Christ was greater than John, but they were both sent of God. Christ was greater than John because John was a mere Apostle but Christ was a Son and more than a Son, He was the only begotten Son (Matthew 17:15). God has thousands of sons and daughters but they are all sons and daughters by adoption; but Christ alone is Son by begetting, as it is written “Thou art my only begotten Son, in whom I am well pleased.” (Matthew 3:17, Acts 13:33). Therefore Christ was greater than John, decidedly, because Christ was God's Son and John was not.

We wish to point out that Christ was anointed of God, as it is written, “God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good.” (Acts 10:38). Jesus received all things from God when He said, “All power in heaven and earth is given unto me” (Matthew 28:18). Jesus was raised up of God; God raised Him from the dead; He was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father (Romans 6:4) and so throughout the Bible you will find that whatever Christ said, whatever He did, God was responsible (John 12:49), “The works that I do are not mine own, but the Father who sent me. He doeth the works.”

My friend seemed to prove, or tried to prove that because we have the personal pronoun “He” that Christ pre-existed, or that the Holy Spirit is a person. Now we say throughout the whole of the Bible there are many things personified which are not persons. There are mountains, wisdom, waters, riches and trees, all of which are not persons, but still personified and when Peter was cast into prison and he was liberated by the angel, when he had passed the first and second ward, he came to an iron gate which “opened unto him of his own accord” (Acts 12:10). Here is an iron gate personified. So that we see that because the personal pronoun is used there is no reason why the Holy Spirit should be a person. We read they laid their hands upon them and they received the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:17). I wonder if they received a person? In the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, it says, “when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place and suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind and it sat upon each of them.” I wonder if that was a person? If so, how could one person sit upon over 100 people at one time? Simon, when he saw that by the laying on of hands the Holy Spirit was given, he said, “Give me also of this power” (Acts 8:19). Mark you “this power” and not a person; but the apostle answered, “Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter; thine heart is not right in the sight of God.”

Now my friends, we have submitted to you some plain, simple, understandable statements from the whole of the Scriptures. They are plain statements that a child can understand, as unlike the mysterious, incomprehensible doctrine of the Trinity, as white is unlike black. God has never given us a creed like that; if so, we should all be damned. We cannot understand it, and yet it is plainly stated, “This is life eternal to know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent” (John 17:3). Can we know what we cannot comprehend? And can we comprehend that which we cannot know? Therefore, there is no man or woman who can comprehend or know the God of the Athanasian Creed; and in the light of it there is no hope for humanity. But when Jesus, as our Guide, says, “My Father is the only true God, and in Him there is life,” let us then my dear friends, turn away, turn our backs upon this mysterious, bewildering, confounding doctrine, for the plain, simple, childlike teaching of the Word of God.

Let us keep to the Scriptures. The Jews, to whom was given the oracles of God, they had the law of God with them over 3,000 years; the prophets for 2,000 years, and not a Jew ever believed in the Trinity. Would not the Jews, who were the custodians of the Holy Word, know more about the Holy Scriptures than St. Athanasius who lived about the fourth century? The Jews to a man did not believe in the Trinity for the simple reason that all through their history, the prophets - all the prophets - laboured to teach them there is one God and one alone. My earnest and sincere prayer for you, my friends, is this, that you will turn from vain tradition to the Holy Scriptures, and read therein for yourselves, for they are able to make you wise unto salvation.

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Mr Todd then proposed a vote of thanks of the meeting to be given to the Chairman. Mr West seconded it amid applause, and the proceedings terminated.