

**Demonstration of Errors in the New Teaching
as affording opportunity for presenting the Truth.**

17.—HERESY AS TO THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

Enough has been brought forward to prove how numerous the errors really are for which this System is responsible, and how scarcely a truth of Christianity, whether individual, collective, or corporate, but has, in one way or another, been spoiled, taught away, or turned upside down. Strange to say, much of this has been actually corroborated by the present recognised leader of the followers of the late F.E.R., who, on the last page of a small tract, avowedly "written" for the purpose, says: "There is *need* to recall the saints to the truth of Christ's *body*." The "recall" admits the departure, and there is confession of the "need" to return. But why were the "saints" led away so as to render "re-calling" necessary? In thus building again the things he destroyed, he must be aware, he has made himself a "transgressor." Is there to be no recognition of his own sin in slipping away from the truth and leading others astray? It is no good pretending nothing was given up. You have only to remember his previous utterances at Readings, etc., and compare these with what is now stated to see the change of front and turning right round which this tract represents. On the three pages, 11, 12, and 16, many things are re-owned that have been denied for ten years. Would one ever think T.H.R. had denied

(1) "One body as the ground of gathering," who reads:—

"There is a tendency to use the necessity for *separation* from vessels of dishonour in the present ruined state of things, apart from its connection with the truth which *unites*, in the fact of there being *one body* in Christ." (p. 16).

(2) Was it not taught that Christ is Head of the body only in the sense of *Chief*?

(3) Was "Christ's body" not made out to be simply a company of individuals, who had *derived* from Christ, with certain Christ-like qualities?

(4) Was it not denied that the body is *united* to the Head?

(5) Was *union* not denied in connection with the *body*?

(6) Was not *unity*, as the *result* of true *union*, denied since 1895?

(7) Was unity not just *non-plurality*—"Where there had been *two bodies*—Jew and Gentile—now there is *one body*?" Behold *now* how all these discarded truths are re-acknowledged as if they had never been denied!

"The supply of grace from the Head to His members." "The Spirit has formed the unity of the body." The saints are one body in Christ and *united together* by one Spirit." (p. 11).

"Christ's body united to Him by one Spirit." (p. 12).

"From the Head to His members" is not Head in the sense of Chief. "Christ's body united to Him by the one Spirit," is something *united to Him*, not merely *derived from Him*. It is also the re-admission of the union of the *body* to the Head—"united to Him," and that *union* is connected with the *body* if it is "united." Again, *unity* is

re-confessed to be the result of *union*, since "The Spirit has *formed* the unity of the *body*," and *this* by the "saints *united together*;" nay, further, that unity is not merely *one* not *two*, but formed of those "united" to Christ, the Head, and to *one another*.

(8) The *ruin* was made an excuse for not acting on the truth positively. Now

"It may be but two or three who gather to the Lord and seek to maintain that which is due to His name, but if they acknowledge the *fact* of there being one body they would *act* accordingly . . . in view of the whole body." (p. 13).

Are these not the very things that have caused all the trouble here for the last ten years on account of their persistent explaining away and rejection of them? Is it not for the holding fast of these, that those who have *done so*, were subjected to so much ill-will and persecution? What led to the Reply of S.J.B.C., of Ballarat? Just the denial of these truths. There would have been no need for it otherwise. Think what those have suffered at the hands of the supporters of the late F.E.R., whose right-hand man T.H.R. has been, *because* they sought to *preserve* these things when they were being set aside, and could not give up what they had learned from God! What do they suppose led to the groanings and the agonizings of hearts in secret before the Lord such as none but He knows? It was the sapping and destroying of these Divine realities by this New Teaching, and the way in which the mass of the saints were carried away by the strength of its downward current.

Is it for a moment imagined that all this could be reversed by the stroke of a pen, and truth be denied and re-affirmed at will, without so much as a repentant note, or a twinge of conscience about the previous erroneous course, or the evil of it in the sight of God? The coolness of the turn about, without the slightest recognition of what is due to the Lord, to whom they were unfaithful, or to those whom they so cruelly treated because they resisted this sad departure from truth, is beyond everything. It may deceive the unwary, but it will not deceive God. He will have reality. The utter hollowness of action like this He will unmask. Why not be honest and straight before the Lord? Is this worthy of Him? The whole thing betrays an utter absence of all true sense of where things have got to, and how terribly serious matters have become. The evil has been allowed to go much too far, and the corruption is too irremediably deep for mere patching up or mending to meet the case. The lump—the mass—has been leavened with error down to the very core. Nothing short of the absolute repudiation and thorough abandonment of the System of the late F.E.R. as a system, root, stem, and branch, would be of any avail. This attempt to cover over a few sores on the surface, in order to save appearances, will not do. The constitution as such is incurably bad. The Lord's voice to every heart true to Him *there*, is "Get thee out." "Come out from among them and be separate." Those obedient to His call, after having purged themselves, so as to be vessels meet for the Master's use, may, thus broken, humbled, and repentant, surely seek the face of Him whose mercy endureth for ever, and reach a spot where they may find others (whom deep exercise of soul, and strong crying and tears in His presence have brought to the same spiritual point) *before* them there, waiting on God, wanting no will but His, and apart from all party spirit, word, or

work. To such a feeble, emptied, lowly few, for whom to live is Christ, He would be found more than enough, and being attracted to Himself alone, would be led to act on His principles, and be guided into His path, no matter what the failure and ruin may be. But to remain in such a System, under any pretext, for every one who faces the gravity of the situation, is dishonouring to the Lord that bought him, and provoking Him to jealousy.

Much that God abhors has already been incontestably laid at the door of this Teaching, but the worst has now to be sheeted home. Faithfulness to Him, who is our all, and to whom we owe all, demands that special attention be drawn, however sad and regrettable the necessity for it, to the most serious matter of all—to more than *error*—to positive heresy, and heresy of the most horrible kind, namely, as to the Person of our adorable Lord, Jesus Christ. Apathy in such a case becomes traitorous, not to say, criminal. Loyalty to the Blessed One, who is dearer to every true Christian than life itself, forbids neutrality or compromise when that which touches Him is in question. He that is not *with* Christ is *against* Him when the integrity of His Person is attacked as to His personal humanity on the one hand and His eternal Worship on the other.

Let it be distinctly understood that we do not pretend to explain or define the inscrutable Person of the Christ. No finite mind can fathom or solve the great mystery of the *manner* in which both the Godhead and the manhood—the Divine nature and the human nature—are *united* in the One Person of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are content to abide by the Scriptural form of sound words, and adhere to what is revealed in the language of the Holy Spirit. But, while making no pretention to explain what, by the highest human intellect, is unexplainable, and transcends the creature's ken, it is, nevertheless, quite within our province to test the rightness or the wrongness of any attempted explanation by another, and compare it with Scripture. This, we feel, it our duty to do, as God enables us, conscious of our liability to unwittingly err, however careful, and, in consequence, our own need of constant dependence on Him.

I.—Heresy with Respect to Christ as Man.

You cannot read the "Quemerford Notes" for 1895, without coming face to face with what fundamentally destroys the truth of our Lord's proper humanity to the injury of His blessed Person. A statement correctly expressing the truth of Christ's Person is referred to on page 182, namely, "Christ is God and Christ is Man, one Christ." F.E.R. answered :

"Yes, but you must be careful how you take up an expression like that. In Person He is God, in condition He is Man."

Mark how this ascribes all the *personality* to His Godhead, but none to Him as man, nothing but *condition*, and what he understood by "condition" is plain from the following :

"But your person exists when you are not in human condition in flesh and blood." (p. 134).

Thus, you see, he owns *personality* of us as *men*, but not of the Lord as *man*. Moreover, note how all the rest of *us* (our constitution) except *personality* he calls "human condition in flesh and blood," and this is

just what he means when he says of Christ: "In Person He is God, in condition He is man." The "Person" is all in what He is as God, and what He is as man, is simply "condition," *i.e.*, "flesh and blood," which is what he defines "condition" to be. Do not suppose we are making an ado about nothing, or that there is any doubt of the fact that this heresy of the impersonal manhood was really taught. Those, who heard F.E.R. commit himself, knew perfectly well what he meant and what his words involved, which makes their acquiescence in it so strange. The following question is proof of this:

"Why is He not personally man?" (p. 132).

That was the doctrine taught, and they were aware of it. What did this amount to? In plain language, that Christ can say "I" as God, but He cannot say "I" as man. Is there such a thing as true manhood that is not personal? We appeal to every child of God, to every true Christian. Is that the Christ you know, love, and adore? Is that the Christ who was crucified for you? Did not a true man, though more than man, pour out His soul unto death for you? Is the man Christ Jesus condition only? Is He not true man as well as true God in one ever blessed Person, who said, "I thirst" as *man* as truly as He said "I am" as God?

To show that we are not exaggerating the momentousness of the issue, we reproduce what is said in J.N.D.'s "Christological Pantheism" concerning the same impersonal-manhood-heresy, when taught elsewhere, so that its gravity may be weighed dispassionately:

"But, as I am on this point, I add, they have no true Christ at all. I read, '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.' Where? 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 is no ego, no human personality?' Why does Hebrews quote, 'Will I sing praise,' and 'I will put My trust in Him;' 'Behold I and the children whom God hath given Me,' if there was no I (ego)? Why does He say 'My God and your God, My Father and your Father' (not our) if there was no personality? . . . This last statement that Christ had no human personality, no ego, is really heresy (though God and man were united in one person) and the mere folly of man attempting to fathom the mystery of His Person, when He has said, 'No man knoweth the Son but the Father' . . . 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 man."

This is explicit enough, and, observe what the false doctrine of the impersonality of Christ's manhood actually implies! It is to have "*no true Christ at all.*" It is "*really heresy.*" In short, it is a *false* Christ. It is useless to shut their eyes to this, and F.E.R.'s doctrine, remember, on this point alone, was still worse, because he did not even believe in the humanity of Christ being "held in personal union with the Divine," while the other did. Behold where this system has got to! Heresy

that amounts to giving us a false Christ, and taking the true One from us, has been made light of, not to say palliated, nay, even sought to be justified. Nor is this all. It is not only the impersonal humanity (and we have seen how bad that is), but F.E.R.'s answer to "Why He is not personally man?" involves another heresy.

"He is personally the Son. You cannot have two personalities in One."

To own Christ to be personally man necessitated for him "two personalities," because he obtruded his own mentality into what was too high for him. Being "personally the Son," shut out for him the truth of what Christ is as *man*, so exclusively did the whole personality of the blessed Lord consist in his mind of His *Godhead*. This led him not only to deny that He was personally man, which was one heresy, but also to deny that God and man were united in the One Person of Christ, which is another heresy, equally grave. He could not be ignorant that two *natures* in one *Person*—the Divine and the human—not two *personalities*, is the truth of the Christ as held by Christians according to the Scriptures. Now, to call the unity of God and man in the One Person of the Lord Jesus Christ "nonsense" is as much heresy as to deny that He is personally man. We do not pretend to *know* in that sense, but the Father knows the *Son*, and the Spirit knows the *manner* in which the manhood is in union with the Godhead,—the human nature with the Divine—and *how* they are *so* united in the *one* Person of Christ, that He could speak and act personally as *God*, and speak and act personally as *man*, without, though two *natures*, there being two personalities, or, as we have been taught, "two natures in one person for ever." Abide by Scripture, and there is no difficulty. The Spirit in the Written Word shows Christ *saying*: "*I and My Father are one*," as *God*, and "*I am among you as one that serveth*" as *man*, yet the One Person, not two personalities. The same is true when a question of what He *does*. Take Him in the boat. He is *asleep* as *man*, and calms the raging waves as *God*—still not *two* personalities. The very Jesus who slept was the One who quelled the tempest, or God and Man in One Person in that boat. No human mind can tell *how*, but there is the *fact*. The same is as evident at the grave of Lazarus. "Jesus wept" as *man*, and raised Lazarus as *God*. Were there two personalities? No. Christ man and Christ God, not two Christs, but one.

Then F.E.R. had to make the Deity of Christ take the place of what the spirit and the soul do in you or me. Consequently, Godhead enshrined in an impersonal body of flesh and blood constituted his Christ! This involved a third heresy as to the humanity of Christ, the reproduction of the very old one of Apollinaris, the Younger, Bishop of Laodicea, as far back as 362. He maintained that the Logos, or Divine nature, in Christ took the place of the rational human soul or mind. This was condemned as heresy at the Council of Constantinople (381) on the ground that it denied the true human nature of Christ, and its author was regarded as an anti-Christ, though he had his followers, and became the founder of a sect. If this was heresy in Apollinaris, it was heresy in F.E.R. When it was said:

"We say of man, he is a tripartite creature, body, soul, and spirit. The Lord was . . . You do not contend against His manhood?"

F.E.R. replied:

"No, but you might be near error there. You get on dangerous ground in applying such things to the Lord. He is a Divine Person in manhood." (p. 135).

This ought to have opened all eyes. He had no hesitation in applying "body" to the Lord, why did he call it "near error" and "dangerous ground" to apply "soul" and "spirit" to Him as well? Does not the "error" consist in the refusal to do it? Is the "danger" not in shrinking from the application? There was something awfully wrong when a professed Christian and reputed teacher could not say of his Lord, that, as to His manhood, He had a soul and spirit as truly as he had a body. This should not have been allowed to pass. The error so obviously at the bottom of thus so distinctly declining to own the full truth of Christ's real humanity ought to have been unmasked, brought home, and dealt with. Without discussing this point further, we refer to page 135 as to the "spirit," and page 144 as to the "soul," as clearly showing that *Deity* took the place of both these with respect to the "man Christ Jesus," as far as the Christ F.E.R. owned was concerned.

True, F.E.R. is no longer here; he has gone where he knows the truth of all now. But his System remains, his followers cling to what he taught, and the present leaders were as much involved in these heresies as F.E.R. himself. Their utterances in that very Reading abundantly testify to that fact. For example:

"T.H.R.—'A body hast Thou prepared Me.' Who is 'Me?' Who was it who became man? Did He, the Son, become as to Person anything different from what He was before?" (p. 133).

"A.H.—But He became what He was not before."

"T.H.R.—Yes, but *who* became it? Let anyone ask that question. Who was *He*? Who humbled Himself?" (p. 134).

"F.H.B.—'As the children were partakers of flesh and blood He also Himself likewise took part of the same.' 'He!' Who was 'He?'"

Observe, there is not a whisper about a "soul" or a "spirit" as man. A "body prepared" or "flesh and blood," but nought else except the "Son," the "Me," and the "He," as a Divine Person! Perfectly true He partook of "flesh and blood," and that He assumed the "body prepared for Him," but was that a complete man? Had He not soul and spirit as well as body? Could Christ say "My spirit" unless He had one? or, "Now is My soul troubled," unless He had a soul? Or, "not My will," unless He had a will? All these the Lord had as man, irrespective of what He was as the *Divine* Son. For these aiders and abettors of F.E.R.'s false doctrine, it is clear they do not hold the complete Christ of God's inspired Word. Their Christ is the *Divine* Son incased, so to speak, in an impersonal casket of "flesh and blood," or "body prepared," everything that would imply personality as *man*, such as soul and spirit, being left out, and His Godhead alone made to constitute the *Person*. That the full truth of what Christ *became* is absent from these men's conception of the Lord is very evident from their own language. T.H.R. asked, "Did He, the Son, become as to Person anything different to what He was before?" This is the denial of His *personal* manhood. As to what He *was*, that is the truth; as to what He *became*, it is heresy. As to His Person as

God, He was as much God after incarnation as before it. He could not become anything as to that. It is what He *was* and ever *will be*. But He *became* a human Person, in addition to what He *was*, in union with the *Divine* Person. When brought face to face with this, by some one saying, "But He became what He was not before," T.H.E. was obliged to say "Yes," but qualified it out of existence by the words, "But *who* became it?"—a total begging of the question, and just no answer at all. It was not the "Who," but *what* that "Who" *became*, and he will not face it. His false doctrine will not allow him. Now, what does the *denial* that He "*became*, as to Person, anything *different*" amount to? As to what He *was* is one thing; as to what He *became* is another. To deny that He *became* personally anything but what He *was*, the *Divine* Son, is to make the Blessed Lord just *God in an impersonal body*, and to say that He did not become *Son of Man*, which is just (1) the heresy of the impersonal manhood, (2) that of the denial of God and *Man* in one *Person*, and (3) that of *Godhead* supplying the place of all that implies *personality* in Christ's *humanity*. Now any one of these is sufficient to brand the person, who holds it, as an anti-Christ. The Son of Man He never was before He *became* flesh, and the term "Son" from that time is as applicable to Him as "Son of Man" as to Him as "Son of God," while "personality" is as true of the "Son" in one case as the other, yet not two Persons, but God and Man in the One Person. The truth of the *complex* Person is what these men do not believe in, and evade. The revealed facts are plain enough in Scripture for faith to bow to. (a) Christ came out as a *Divine* Person simply, or God, and nothing else; (b) At the incarnation, He *became* what He was not before, a *complex* Person—God and *Man* in one and the same Person; and (c) He went back to glory a *complex* Person—*God* as much as ever, but *Man* besides, yet one *complex* Person, the Christ, and to continue so for ever. Did not the angels recognise the difference when they saw a true glorified *Man* take His place on the throne of God in addition to the *Divine* Son only, that left the glory to become a babe in Bethlehem's manger? Have they ever cleared themselves of these horrors? No, and they are eating like a canker all the time they are vainly trying to cover them up. God is not mocked, and the sooner there is repentance in dust and ashes, and a complete expulsion of the evil, the better. How could the Spirit of God go on with that which has such deplorable heresies, unpurged out, in their midst? This as to the manhood, but there is

II.—Heresy as to His Divine Person.

Not much need be said on this, because it is so clearly and incontrovertibly demonstrated by reference to "Weston Notes," 1897:

"Becoming a Man, He becomes the Logos" (p. 127).

This is blasphemy, pure and simple, quite as much as if he said "Becoming a man, He *becomes* God." The Logos is a title of Christ as *God*—a *Divine* title—something He could not *become*, but *was* essentially and eternally. "In the beginning *was* the Word" (John i. 1) There never was a time when He was not the Word. This is the *eternity* of the Word, and as true as the eternity of the Son. Hence, to talk of *becoming* the Word in time is heresy—deadly heresy—

as to His blessed Person, and affects His *Divine* glory, as the other did His true humanity. There is no such thought or expression in Scri^{NO}pture as "becoming the Logos." It is, "And the Logos became flesh" (John i. 14). He who was already the Logos from all eternity became *flesh* in time, not *became* the "Word." That is false doctrine, and the flattest contradiction of the truth of His Person. This has often been drawn attention to. Has there ever been repentance or confession? No. On the contrary; it was sought to be defended and justified, which only aggravated the case. It has never been repented of, nor purged out to this day, and the co-defenders are in the same condemnation as F.E.R. himself. Not all the false reasoning in the world, nor all the cunningly-devised fables about *standpoints*, that have been invented, can make "was" mean "become." The simplest soul can see that. From no point of view, Apostolic or otherwise, can "becoming the Logos" be made anything but *heresy*. It is no good citing orthodox statements by F.E.R. on other points, such as Christ's Deity or Eternal Sonship, &c. The heresy in this case consists in saying "He *becomes* the Logos." Then, to refer to "attendants on the Word" (Luke i.), or "handling the Word of Life" (1 John i.) only shows how hard pressed they are for an excuse of what is inexcusable. That is, the Word *after* He *became* flesh just the opposite of "*becoming* the Word." A favourite illustration made to do service here, by some who had got beyond their depth, is to represent someone saying, "I knew Mrs. So-and-so when she was a child." The reply is, "No, she was *Miss* somebody then, and only became *Mrs.* when she was married." The irreverence of using this to explain the mystery of Christ's complex Person in the "Word made flesh" is plain on the face of it, but how it makes F.E.R.'s heterodox expression, "Becoming a man, He becomes the Logos," any less heresy than it is, is difficult to conceive, for, interpreted according to that formula, it would be "Becoming *Mrs.* So-and-so, she becomes *Miss* somebody," the folly of which is manifest to all. God forbid we should apply it to the Christ we love and worship!

Thus the threefold heresy as to our Lord's true *manhood* on the one hand, and the blasphemy as to His *Divine* glory on the other, have been taught, defended, and are now covered up in the midst of this System, evil beyond remedy, and demanding no fellowship with, but a purging from it, on the part of all who would walk with God and please the Lord. Those involved in it may abuse the one who exposes and brings it into the light. They are welcome. The evil speaking we are used to, but the false doctrine we will denounce and call on every godly soul to denounce it with us, to separate from those who propagate and sanction it, and refuse to allow themselves to be contaminated with it. Are these deplorable heresies to be covered up that others may be infected by them and the piety of their propagators vaunted to make them acceptable? Far be the thought. The Christ of this system is not the true Christ of Scripture, but a false Christ, and the whole thing is false from centre to circumference. The subtleties, fallacies, and perverse ingenuity which are had resource to in order to lull awakened consciences into contentedness with evil are fearful to contemplate. May God deliver from it. He alone can.

W.S.F.