

The Doctrine of the Athanasian Creed agrees with the Truth, Provided that by the

Trinity of persons be understood the trinity of Person which is in the Lord.

55. That Christians have acknowledged three Divine persons, and thus as it were three Gods, was because there is a trine in the Lord; and one [constituent] is termed the Father, another the Son, and the third the Holy Spirit; and this trine has separate names [for its elements] in the Word, as also the soul and the body and what proceeds from them are named separately, which nevertheless are one. The Word in the sense of the letter is also such that it distinguishes things which are one, as if they were not one. Hence it is that Jehovah, Who is the Lord from eternity, it sometimes names Jehovah, sometimes Jehovah Zebaoth, sometimes God, sometimes Lord, and at the same time Creator, Savior, Redeemer, and Former, yea, Shaddai: and His Human which He assumed in the world, it names Jesus, Christ, Messiah, Son of God, Son of Man; and, in the Word of the Old Testament, God, the Holy One of Israel, the Anointed of Jehovah, King, Prince, Counselor, Angel, David. Now, as the Word in the sense of the letter is such that it names several, which yet are one, therefore Christians (such in the beginning were simple, and understood all things according to the words of the sense of the letter) distinguished the Divinity into three persons; and this was also permitted on account of their simplicity; but this, nevertheless, so as to believe also concerning The Son, that He was Infinite, Uncreated, Almighty, God, and Lord, altogether equal to the Father; and to believe, moreover, that they are not two or three, but one in essence, majesty, and glory, thus in Divinity. Those who simply believe these things according to the doctrine, and do not confirm themselves in three Gods, but of the three make one, are after death informed by the Lord, through the angels, that He is that One and that Trine: and this is also accepted by all who come into heaven; for no one can be admitted into heaven who thinks of three Gods, however he says one with his mouth. For the life of the whole heaven, and the wisdom of all the angels, is founded upon the acknowledgment and thence the confession of one God, and upon the faith that on God is also Man, and that He is the Lord, who is at the same time God and Man. From this it is manifest, that it was of Divine permission that Christians in the beginning should receive the doctrine concerning three Divine persons, provided they also received at the same time that the Lord is God, Infinite, Almighty, and Jehovah: for, unless they had also received this, it would have been all over with the

Church, since the Church is a Church from the Lord; and the eternal life of all is from the Lord, and not from any other. That the Church is a Church from the Lord may be evident from this alone, that the whole Word, from beginning to end, treats of the Lord alone, as has been shown above; and that He is to be believed in; and that those who do not believe in Him have not eternal life, - yea, that *the anger of God abideth* upon them (John 3:36). Now, as every one sees in himself, that, if God is One, He is One Both in Person and Essence, - for no one thinks otherwise, nor can think otherwise, when he thinks that God is One, - I will now present the entire doctrine which has its name from Athanasius, and afterwards demonstrate that all that is there said is true, provided that, instead of a trinity of persons, the trinity of person be understood.

56. The Doctrine is this: "Whoever wishes to be saved, it is necessary for him to keep this catholic (or Christian) faith. Unless one keep that faith whole and entire, without doubt he will perish for ever. This catholic (or Christian) faith is, that we worship one God in trinity, and the Trinity in unity, neither confounding the persons nor separating the substance (or essence); since there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Spirit; but the divinity of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit is one and the same, the glory equal, and the majesty co-eternal. Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Spirit. The Father is uncreated, the Son is uncreated, and the Holy Spirit is uncreated. The Father is infinite, the Son is infinite, and the Holy Spirit is infinite. The Father is eternal, the Son is eternal, and the Holy Spirit is eternal. And yet there are not three Eternals, but one Eternal; and there are not three Infinities, nor three Uncreated, but one Infinite, and one Uncreated. In like manner, as the Father is almighty, so is the Son almighty, and the Holy Spirit almighty; and yet there are not three Almighty's, but one Almighty. As the Father is God, so the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God; and yet there are not three Gods, but one God. Although the Father is Lord, the Son is Lord, and the Holy Spirit is Lord, yet still there are not three Lords, but one Lord. For although, by the Christian verity, we are obliged to acknowledge each person by himself to be God and Lord, yet still, by the catholic religion, we are forbidden to say that there are three Gods or three Lords (or, yet still we cannot, according to Christian faith, name three Gods or three Lords). The Father is made of none, neither created nor born; the Son is of the Father alone, not made nor created, but born; the Holy Spirit is from the Father and from the Son, neither made nor created nor born, but proceeding. Thus there is one Father, not

three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons; one Holy Spirit, not three Holy Spirits: and in this trinity there is no first and last, and there is no greatest and least, but all the three persons are together eternal, and are altogether equal; so that it is just as was said above, that the Unity in trinity and the Trinity in unity is to be worshipped (or, that three persons in one Godhead, or one God in three persons, is to be worshipped). Wherefore, whoever wishes to be saved must think thus concerning the Trinity.

“Moreover, it is also necessary to salvation that one should rightly believe the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ (or, that one should firmly believe that our Lord is very Man) : since that true faith is, that we believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and Man, - God of the substance (essence or nature) of the Father, born before the world; and Man of the substance (or nature) of the mother, born in the world; perfect God and perfect Man, consisting of a rational soul and a human body; equal to the Father as to the Divine, and inferior to (or less than) the Father as to the Human; Who, although He is God and Man, yet is not two, but one Christ; on, not by conversion of the Divine essence into a body, but by the assumption of the Human into God (or, He is one, yet not so that the Divine was transmuted into the Human, but the Divine took on the Human to itself); one altogether, not by confusion (or commission) or substance, but by unity of person (or He is altogether one, yet not so that the two natures are mixed together, but He is one Person); since, as the rational soul and the body is one man, so God and Man is one Christ; Who suffered for our salvation, descended into hell, and rose again from the death on the third day; and He ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of the Father Almighty, whence He is to come to judge the living and the dead; at Whose coming, all men will rise again with their bodies. And those who have done good will enter into eternal live; and those who have done evil, into eternal fire.”

57. That all of this doctrine, as to every word of it, is true, provided that for the trinity of persons the trinity of person be understood, may be seen from the same written out anew, where the latter trinity is substituted. The trinity of person is this: That the Divine of the Lord is the Father, the Divine Human the Son, and the Divine Proceeding the Holy Spirit. When this trinity is understood, then a man can think of one God, and can also say one God. That otherwise he cannot but think of three Gods, who does not see? And Athanasius also saw; and therefore in his doctrine these additional words are inserted. “Although, by the Christian verity, we are obliged

to acknowledge each by himself to be God and Lord, yet still we cannot, according to the catholic religion (or, according to the Christian faith), say or name three Gods or three Lords.” Which amounts to this: Although, according to the Christian verity, it is lawful to acknowledge or think of three Gods and one Lord; - and this, though the acknowledgement and the thought are what conjoin man with the Lord and with heaven, but not speech alone. Besides, no one comprehends how the Divine, which is one, can be divided into three persons, of whom each one is God; for the Divine is not divisible: and to make three on by essence or substance, does not take away the idea of three Gods, but it only gives an idea of their being of one mind.

58. That all of that doctrine, as to every word of it, is true, provided that for the trinity of persons there be understood the trinity of person, may be evident from the same written out anew, as now follows: “Whoever wishes to be saved, it is necessary for him to keep the Christian faith. The Christian faith is that we worship one God in trinity, and the Trinity in unity; not confounding the trine of the one Person, nor separating the essence. The trine of the one Person is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The Divinity of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, is one and the same, the glory and majesty equal. Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Spirit. The Father is uncreated, the Son is uncreated, and the Holy Spirit is uncreated; the Father is infinite, the Son is infinite, and the Holy Spirit is infinite: and yet there are not three Infinities nor three Uncreated, but one Uncreated and one Infinite. Likewise, as the Father is almighty, so the Son is almighty, and the Holy Spirit is almighty; and yet there are not three Almightyies, but one Almighty. As the Father is God, so the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God; and yet three are not three Gods, but one God. Although the Father is Lord, the son is Lord, and the Holy Spirit is Lord, yet still there are not three Lords, but one Lord. Now, as according to the Christian verity we acknowledge a trine in one Person Who is “God and Lord, so according to the Christian faith we can say one God and one Lord. The Father is made of none, neither created nor born; the Son is of the Father alone, not made nor created, but born; the Holy Spirit is from the Father and from the Son, neither made nor created nor born, but proceeding. Thus there is one Father, not three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons; one Holy Spirit, not three Holy Spirits: and in this trinity there is not greatest and least, but they are altogether equal. So that it is altogether as was said above, that the Unity in trinity, and the Trinity in unity, is to be worshiped.”

59. This is the Doctrine concerning the Trinity and the Unity of God; afterwards there follows what relates to the assumption of the Human by the Lord in the world, which is called the Incarnation. Everything in the doctrine concerning this subject also is true, provided that the human from the mother (in which the Lord was when in the state of humiliation or exinanition, and in which He suffered temptations and the cross), and the Human from the Father (in which He was in the state of glorification or union), be understood distinctly: for the Lord assumed a human in the world, conceived of Jehovah, Who is the Lord from eternity, and born of the Virgin Mary; thence He had a Divine and a Human, - the Divine from His Divine from eternity, and the human from the mother Mary in time; but this human He put off, and put on the Human Divine. This is the Human which is called the Divine Human, and which is meant in the Word by the Son of God. When, therefore, the things which come first in the doctrine concerning the Incarnation are understood as relating to the maternal human, in which He was when in the state of humiliation, and those which follow there are understood as relating to the Divine Human, in which He was when in the state of glorification, then also all things there in coincide. With the maternal human, in which He was in the state of humiliation, three things which stand first in the doctrine coincide: "That Jesus Christ was God and man, -God from the substance of the Father, and man from the substance of the mother, born in the world; perfect God and perfect man, consisting of a rational soul and a human body; equal to the Father as to the Divine, less than the Father as to the human." Also this: "Although our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and Man, still there are not two, but there is one Christ: yea, He is altogether one, for He is one Person; since, as the soul and body make one man, so God and Man is one Christ."

60. That God and Man in the Lord, according to the doctrine, are not two, but one Person, and altogether one, as the soul and the body are one, is clearly manifest from many things which He said: as that the Father and He are one; that all things of the Father are His, and all His the Father's; that He is in the Father; and the Father in Him; that all things are given into His hand; that He has all power; that He is the God of heaven and earth; that he who believes in Him has eternal life: and, further, that both the Divine and the Human were taken up into heaven; and that, as to both, He sits at the right hand of God; that is, that He is Almighty: and many more things which were adduced above in great abundance from the Word, concerning His Divine Human, which all testify

that God is One as Well in Person as Essence, in Whom is a Trinity, and that that God is the Lord.

61. The reason why these things concerning the Lord are now for the first time published, is because it is foretold in the Apocalypse, 21 & 22, that a new Church should be instituted by the Lord at the end of the former, in which this subject will be primary. It is this Church which is there meant by the New Jerusalem, into which none can enter but those who acknowledge the Lord alone as the God of heaven and earth. And this I can proclaim that the universal heaven acknowledges the Lord alone, and that he who does not acknowledge Him is not admitted into heaven; for heaven is heaven from the Lord. This acknowledgment itself, from love and faith, causes those there to be in the Lord, and the Lord in them, as the Lord Himself teaches in John: “In that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you (14:20). And again: Abide in Me, and I in you. I am the Vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without Me ye can do nothing. If a man abides not in Me, he is cast out.” (15:4-6; 17:22& 23). That this was not seen from the Word before, is because, if it had been before seen, still it would not have been received; for the Last Judgment had not yet been accomplished; and, before that, the power of hell prevailed over the power of heaven; and man is in the midst between heaven and hell: wherefore, if this had been seen before, the Devil, that is, hell, would have wrested it out of the hearts of men, and would, moreover, have profaned it. This state of the power of hell was altogether broken by the Last Judgment, which has now been accomplished. Since that Judgment, and thus at the present time, every man who wishes to be enlightened and to be wise can be. On this subject, see the things that are written in the work concerning “Heaven and Hell” (n. 589-596, and n. 597-603); also in the small treatise concerning the “Last Judgment” (n. 65-72, and n. 73, 74).