



THE TRINITY

JONATHAN EDWARDS (1703-1758)

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THE TRINITY

1. God and the Idea of God

It is common when speaking of the divine happiness to say that God is infinitely happy in the enjoyment of Himself: in perfectly beholding, and infinitely loving and rejoicing in, His own essence and perfections. Accordingly, it must be supposed that God perpetually and eternally has a most perfect idea of Himself—as it were, an exact image and representation of Himself—ever before Him and in actual view. From hence arises a most pure and perfect act or energy in the Godhead, which is the divine love, complacence,¹ and joy.

The knowledge or view that God has of Himself must necessarily be conceived to be something distinct from His mere direct existence. There must be something that is like our “reflecting.” Reflection, as we reflect in our own minds, carries something of imperfection in it. However, if God beholds Himself so as thence to have delight and joy in Himself, He must become His own object. There must be a duplicity:² God and the idea of God (if it be proper to call a conception of that which is purely spiritual an idea).

If a man could have an absolutely perfect idea of all that passed in his mind—all the series of ideas and exercises, in every respect perfect as to order, degree, circumstance, and for any particular space of time past; suppose for the last hour—he would really to all intents and purpose be over again what he was that last hour. And

- if it were possible for a man by reflection perfectly to contemplate all that is in his own mind in an hour, both as it is and at the same time as it is there in its first and direct existence;
- if a man, that is, had a perfect reflex or contemplative idea of every thought at the same moment or moments that that thought was, and of every exercise at and during the same time that that exercise was, and so through a whole hour

—a man would really be two during that time. He would be indeed double; he would be twice at once. The idea he has of himself would be himself again.

Note, by having a reflex or contemplative idea of what passes in our own minds, I do not mean consciousness only. There is a great difference between a man’s having a) a view of himself, a reflex or contemplative idea of himself so as to delight in his own beauty or excellency, and b) a mere direct consciousness. Or if we mean by “consciousness of what is in our own minds” anything besides the mere simple existence in our

¹ **complacence** – self-satisfaction.

² **duplicity** – quality or state of being twofold or double.

minds of what is there, it is nothing but a power by reflection to view or contemplate what passes.

Therefore, as God with perfect clearness, fullness, and strength, understands Himself *and* views His own essence (in which there is no distinction of substance and act, but which is wholly substance and wholly act), then that idea which God has of Himself is absolutely Himself. This representation of the divine nature and essence is the divine nature and essence again: so that by God's thinking of it, the Deity must certainly be generated. Hereby there is another Person begotten; there is another infinite eternal Almighty—most holy, and the same God, the very same divine nature.

2. God the Son

And this Person is the second person in the Trinity, the only begotten and dearly beloved Son of God. He is the eternal, necessary, perfect, substantial, and personal idea that God has of Himself—and that it is so seems to me to be abundantly confirmed by the Word of God.

Nothing can more agree with the account the Scripture gives us of the Son of God, of His being in the form of God, and of His express and perfect image and representation:

- Lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, Who is the image of God, should shine unto them (2Co 4:4).
- Who being in the form of God (Phi 2:6).
- Who is the image of the invisible God (Col 1:15).
- Who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person (Heb 1:3).

Christ is called the “presence” of God (Exo 33:14): the word in the original signifies face, looks, form, or appearance. Now, what can be so properly and fitly called so with respect to God, as God's own perfect idea of Himself whereby He has every moment a view of His own essence. This idea is that “face of God” which God sees, as a man sees his own face in a looking glass. It is of such form or appearance whereby God eternally appears to Himself.

The root that the original word comes from signifies “to look upon or behold.” Now, what is that which God looks upon or beholds in so outstanding a manner as He does on His own idea, or that perfect image of Himself which He has in view. This is what is eminently in God's presence, and is therefore called “the angel of his [God's] presence” or face (Isa 63:9).

But that the Son of God is God's own eternal and perfect idea is a thing we have yet much more expressly revealed in God's Word. First, Christ is called “the wisdom of God” (1Co 1:24; Luk 11:49; *cf.* Mat 23:34). If we are taught in the Scripture that Christ is the same with God's wisdom or knowledge, then it teaches us that He is the same with God's perfect and eternal idea. They *are* the same, as we have already observed and

I suppose none will deny. But Christ is said to be the wisdom of God; and how much does Christ speak in Proverbs under the name of Wisdom, especially in the eighth chapter.

3. God the Holy Spirit

The Godhead is thus begotten by God's having an idea of Himself. And spreading forth in a distinct subsistence or person in that idea, there proceeds a most pure act: an infinitely holy and sacred energy arises between the Father and Son in mutually loving and delighting in each other, for their love and joy is mutual. "I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him" (Pro 8:30). This is the eternal, most perfect, and essential act of the divine nature, wherein the Godhead acts to an infinite degree and in the most perfect manner possible. The Deity becomes all act, the divine essence itself flows out and is as it were breathed-forth in love and joy. So that the Godhead therein stands forth in yet another manner of subsistence; and there proceeds the third Person in the Trinity, the Holy Spirit—that is, the Deity *in act*, for there is no other act but the act of the will.

A. *Love of the Holy Spirit*

We may learn by the Word of God that the Godhead, or the divine nature and essence, does subsist in love: "He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love" (1Jo 4:8). In the context of this place, I think it is plainly declared to us that the Holy Spirit is that love:

If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us; hereby know we that we dwell in him...because he hath given us of his Spirit (4:12-13).

It is the same argument in both verses. In verse 12 the apostle argues that if we have love dwelling in us, we have God dwelling in us. And in verse 13, he clears the force of the argument by this: that love is God's Spirit. Seeing we have God's Spirit dwelling in us, we have God dwelling in us—supposing it as a thing granted and allowed that God's Spirit is God.

It is evident also by this that God's dwelling in us and His love—or the love that He has exercised, being in us—are the same thing. The same is implied in the same manner in the last verse of the foregoing chapter. The apostle was, in the foregoing verses, speaking of love as a sure sign of sincerity and our acceptance with God, beginning with verse 18. He sums up the argument thus in the last verse, "And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit that he hath given us" (3:24).

The Scripture seems in many places to speak of love in Christians as if it were the same with the Spirit of God in them, or at least as the prime and most natural breathing and acting of the Spirit in the soul.

If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, any comfort of love, any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfil ye my joy that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind (Phi 2:1).

By kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned (2Co 6:6).

Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit (Rom 15:30).

Who declared unto us your love in the Spirit (Col 1:8).

Having the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given to us (Rom 5:5).

Use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt *love* thy neighbour as thyself. But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh (Gal 5:13-16).

The Apostle argues that Christian liberty does not make way for fulfilling the lusts of the flesh, in biting and devouring one another and the like, because a principle of love that was the fulfilling of the Law would prevent it. And in verse 16, he asserts the same thing in other words: "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh."

B. The Comforter

The third and last office of the Holy Spirit is to comfort and delight the souls of God's people, and thus one of His names is the Comforter. Thus we have the phrase "joy in the Holy Ghost."

Having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost (1Th 1:6).

The kingdom of God is...righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost (Rom 14:17).

Walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost (Act 9:31).

But how well doth this agree with the Holy Ghost being God's joy and delight: "And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Ghost" (Act 13:52)—meaning, as I suppose, that they were filled with spiritual joy.

This is confirmed by the symbol of the Holy Ghost, a dove, which is the emblem of love or a lover. It is so used in Scripture, especially often so in Solomon's Song: "Behold thou art fair; my love, behold thou art fair; thou hast dove's eyes" (1:5): i.e. "eyes of love." And again in 4:1 the same words, and "his eyes are as the eyes of doves" (5:12), and "my love, my dove" (5:2), and "my dove" (2:14; 6:9). This I believe to be the reason that the dove alone of all birds (except the sparrow in the single case of leprosy) was appointed to be offered in sacrifice—because of its innocence and because it is the emblem of love, love being the most acceptable sacrifice to God.

It was under this figure that the Holy Ghost descended from the Father on Christ at His baptism (Mat 3:16), representing the infinite love of the Father to the Son—Who is the true David, or Beloved, as we said before. The same was signified by what was exhibited to the eye in the appearance there was of the Holy Ghost descending from the Father to the Son in the shape of a dove, as was signified by what was exhibited to the

eye in the voice there was at the same time, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (3:17).

That God’s love or His loving kindness is the same with the Holy Ghost seems to be plain by Psalm 36:7-9,

How excellent [or “how precious,” as it is in the Hebrew] is thy lovingkindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings. They shall be abundantly satisfied [in the Hebrew “watered”] with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the *river of thy pleasures*. For with thee is the *fountain of life*: in thy light shall we see light.

Doubtless the precious loving kindness, fatness of God’s house, river of His pleasures, water of the fountain of life, and God’s light here spoken of are the same thing. By this we learn that the holy anointing oil that was kept in the House of God, which was a type of the Holy Ghost, represented God’s love. We also learn that the “river of water of life” spoken of in chapter 22 of Revelation is God’s loving-kindness. This river proceeds out of the throne of God and the Lamb, which is the same with Ezekiel’s vision of living and life-giving water—which is here in Psalm 36 called the “fountain of life” and “river of God’s pleasures.”

But Christ Himself expressly teaches us that by spiritual “fountains” and “rivers of water of life” is meant the Holy Ghost (Joh 4:14; 7:38-39). By the “river of God’s pleasures” here is meant the same thing with the pure river of water of life spoken of in Revelation 22:1; this will be much confirmed if we compare those verses with Revelation 21:23-24; 22:1, 5. I think if we compare these places and weigh them, we cannot doubt but that it is the same happiness that is meant in this psalm which is spoken of there.

This well agrees with the figures that are used about the Holy Ghost in Scripture, such as water, fire, breath, wind, oil, wine, a spring, a river, a being poured out and shed forth, and a being breathed forth. Can there be any spiritual thing thought, or anything belonging to any spiritual being to which such kind of word-pictures so naturally agree, as to the affection of a spirit? The affection, love, or joy may be said to flow out as water, or to be breathed forth as breath or wind. But it would not sound so well to say that an idea or judgment “flows out” or is “breathed forth.”

It is in no way different to say of the affection that it is warm, or to compare love to fire, but it would not seem natural to say the same of perception or reason. It seems natural enough to say that the soul is poured out in affection, or that love or delight are shed abroad, “The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts” (Rom 5:5); but it suits with nothing else belonging to a spiritual being.

This is that “river of water of life” spoken of in Revelation, which proceeds from the throne of the Father and the Son, for the rivers of living water or water of life are the Holy Ghost, by the same apostle’s own interpretation (Joh 7:38-39). The Holy Ghost being the infinite delight and pleasure of God, the river is called the “river of his [i.e., God’s] pleasures” (Psa 36:8)—not God’s river of pleasures. I suppose that would signify

the same as the fatness of God's house, which they that trust in God shall be watered with—by which fatness of God's house I suppose signifies the same thing as oil.

C. Communion

This is a confirmation that the Holy Ghost is God's love and delight, because the saints' communion with God consists in their partaking of the Holy Ghost. The communion of saints is twofold: their communion with God and communion with one another, "That ye also may have fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ" (1Jo 1:3). Communion is a common partaking of good, either of excellency or happiness, so that when it is said the saints have communion or fellowship with the Father and with the Son, the meaning of it is that they partake with the Father and the Son of Their good, which is either a) Their excellency and glory:

Ye are made partakers of the divine nature (2Pe 1:4);

That we might be partakers of his holiness (Heb 12:10)

And the glory which thou hast given me I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one, I in them and thou in me (Joh 17:22-23);

or b) Their joy and happiness: "That they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves" (Joh 17:3).

But the Holy Ghost "being the love and joy of God" is His beauty and happiness, and it is in our partaking of the same Holy Spirit that our communion with God consists: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all, Amen" (2Co 13:14). They are not different benefits that the apostle here wishes, but the same—namely, the Holy Ghost. In partaking of the Holy Ghost, we possess and enjoy the love and grace of the Father and the Son, for the Holy Ghost *is* that love and grace, and therefore I suppose it is that in the fore-mentioned place (1Jo 1:3). There we are said to have fellowship with the Son and not with the Holy Ghost, because therein consists our fellowship with the Father and the Son, even in partaking with them of the Holy Ghost.

In this also eminently consists our communion with the Son: that we drink into the same Spirit. This is the common excellence, joy, and happiness in which they all are united. It is the bond of perfectness by which they are one in the Father and the Son, as the Father is in the Son (Joh 17:21).

Now, the apostle Paul wishes grace and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ in the beginning of his epistles, without ever mentioning the Holy Ghost (as we find it thirteen times in his salutations in the beginnings of his epistles). I can think of no other good account that can be given of this, except that the Holy Ghost is Himself love and grace of God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. In his blessing at the end of his Second Epistle to the Corinthians, where all three Persons are mentioned, Paul wishes grace and love *from* the Son and the Father—except that in the communion or the partaking of the Holy Ghost, the blessing is from the Father and the Son *in*

the Holy Ghost. But the blessing *from* the Holy Ghost is Himself the communication of Himself. Christ promises that He and the Father will love believers (Joh 14:21, 23), but no mention is made of the Holy Ghost. The love of Christ and the love of the Father are often distinctly mentioned, but never any mention of the Holy Ghost's love.

This I suppose to be the reason why we have never any account of the Holy Ghost's loving either the Father or the Son, or of the Son's or the Father's loving the Holy Ghost, or of the Holy Ghost's loving the saints—though these things are so often stated of both the other Persons.

4. The Trinity

And this is that blessed Trinity that we read of in the Holy Scriptures. The Father is the Deity subsisting in the prime, unoriginated, and most absolute manner, or the Deity in its direct existence. The Son is the Deity generated by God's understanding, or having an idea of Himself and subsisting in that idea. The Holy Ghost is the Deity subsisting in act, or the divine essence flowing out and breathed forth in God's infinite love to and delight in Himself. And I believe the whole divine essence does truly and distinctly subsist both in the divine idea and divine love, and that each of Them are properly distinct Persons.

It is a truth stated among theologians that everything which is in God *is* God, which must be understood of real attributes and not of mere forms. If a man should tell me that the immutability of God is God, or that the omnipresence of God and authority of God is God, I should not be able to think of any rational meaning of what he said. It hardly sounds to me proper to say that "God's being without change" is God, or that "God's being everywhere" is God, or that "God's having a right of government over creatures" is God. But if it be meant that the real attributes of God, namely "His understanding and love," are God, then what we have said may in some measure explain how it is so—for deity subsists in Them distinctly, so they are distinct divine Persons.

5. Personality of the Holy Ghost

A. Understanding

One of the principal objections that I can think of against what has been supposed is concerning the personality of the Holy Ghost—that this scheme of things does not seem well to consist with the fact that a person is that which has understanding and will. If the Three in the Godhead are persons, they doubtless each of them have understanding. But this [i.e., my observations about the Trinity] makes the understanding to be one distinct person, and love to be another. How therefore can this love be said to have understanding? (Here I would observe that theologians have not supposed that these three had three distinct understandings, but all one and the same understanding.)

In order to clear up this matter, let it be considered that the whole divine office is supposed truly and properly to subsist in each of these three, namely, God, His under-

standing, and His love. Let it be considered that there is such a wonderful union between them that they are, in an indescribable and inconceivable manner, One in Another—so that One has Another and They have communion in One Another...

As Christ said of Himself and the Father: “I am in my Father, and the Father in me” (Joh 14:11), so may it be said concerning all the Persons in the Trinity: the Father is in the Son and the Son in the Father, the Holy Ghost is in the Father and the Father in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Ghost is in the Son and the Son in the Holy Ghost. And the Father understands because the Son, Who is the divine understanding, is in Him. The Father loves because the Holy Ghost is in Him. So the Son loves because the Holy Ghost is in Him and proceeds from Him. So the Holy Ghost (or the divine essence subsisting) is divine, but understands because the Son, the divine Idea, is in Him.

Understanding may be declared to be of this love because it is the love of the understanding both objectively and subjectively. God loves the understanding, and that understanding also flows out in love, so that the divine understanding is in the Deity subsisting in love. It is not a blind love. Even in creatures there is consciousness included in the very nature of the will or act of the soul. Although perhaps it cannot properly be said that it is a seeing or understanding will, yet it may truly and properly be said so in God by reason of God’s infinitely more perfect manner of acting. Thus the whole divine essence flows out and subsists in this act. The Son is in the Holy Spirit, although the Spirit does not proceed from Him by reason of the fact that the understanding must be considered as prior in the order of nature to the will, love, or act, both in creatures and in the Creator. The understanding is so in the Spirit that the Spirit may be said to “know,” as the Spirit of God is truly and perfectly said to know and to search all things, even “the deep things of God” (1Co 2:10).

All the Three are persons because they all have understanding and will. There is understanding and will in the Father, because the Son and the Holy Ghost are in Him and proceed from Him. There is understanding and will in the Son, because He *is* understanding, and because the Holy Ghost is in Him and proceeds from Him. There is understanding and will in the Holy Ghost, because He is the divine will and as the Son is in Him.

Nor is it to be looked upon as a strange and unreasonable idea that the Persons should be said to have an understanding or love by another Person’s being in Them. For we have scriptural ground to conclude so concerning the Father’s having wisdom and understanding (or reason): it is by the Son’s being in Him. This is because we are there informed that He is the wisdom, reason, and truth of God, and hereby God is wise by His own wisdom being in Him. Understanding and wisdom is in the Father as the Son is in Him and proceeds from Him. Understanding is in the Holy Ghost because the Son is in Him, not as proceeding from Him but as flowing out in Him.

But I don’t pretend fully to explain how these things are; and I am sensible a hundred other objections may be made and puzzling doubts and questions raised that I cannot solve. I am far from pretending to explain the Trinity so as to render it no long-

er a mystery. I think it to be the highest and deepest of all divine mysteries still, notwithstanding anything that I have said or conceived about it. I don't intend to explain the Trinity. But Scripture with reason may lead to say something further of it than has been wont³ to be said, though there are still left many things pertaining to it incomprehensible.

It seems to me that what I have here supposed concerning the Trinity is exceeding analogous to the gospel scheme, agreeable to the tenor of the whole New Testament, and abundantly illustrative of gospel doctrines. This I might have shown particularly, would it not exceedingly lengthen out this discourse.

B. Equality

I shall only now briefly observe that many things which have been said about the Trinity by orthodox theologians are hereby illustrated. Hereby we see a) how the Father is the fountain of the Godhead, and b) why, when He is spoken of in Scripture, He is so often, without any addition or distinction, called God. This has led some to think that only the Father is truly and properly God. Hereby we may see why, in the economy of the Persons of the Trinity, the Father should sustain the dignity of the Deity, that the Father should have it as His office to uphold and maintain the rights of the Godhead, and that He should be God not only by essence, but as it were, by His economical office.

Hereby is illustrated the doctrine of the Holy Ghost, Who proceeds from both the Father and the Son. Hereby we see how it is possible for the Son to be begotten by the Father, and the Holy Ghost to proceed from the Father and Son, and yet that all the Persons should be *co-eternal*.⁴ Hereby we may more clearly understand the equality of the Persons among themselves, and that they are in every way equal in the society, or family, of the Three.

They are equal in *honour*. Besides the honour that is common to them all—namely, that they are all God—each has His peculiar honour in the society or family. They are equal not only in essence, but the Father's honour is that He is, as it were, the Author of perfect and infinite *wisdom*. The Son's honour is that He is that perfect and divine wisdom itself, the excellency of which is that from whence arises the honour of being the author or generator of it. The honour of the Father and the Son is that they are infinitely excellent, or that from them infinite excellency proceeds. But the honour of the Holy Ghost is equal, for He *is* that divine excellency and beauty itself.

It is the honour of the Father and the Son that they are infinitely *holy* and are the fountain of holiness, but the honour of the Holy Ghost *is* that holiness itself.

The honour of the Father and the Son is that they are infinitely *happy* and are the original and fountain of happiness. And the honour of the Holy Ghost is equal, for He *is* infinite happiness and joy itself.

³ **wont** – customary practice.

⁴ **co-eternal** – each existing from eternity, not pre-existing another.

The honour of the Father is that He is the *fountain* of the Deity, as He from Whom proceed both the divine wisdom and also excellency and happiness. The honour of the Son is equal, for He is Himself the divine wisdom and is He from Whom proceed the divine excellency and happiness. And the honour of the Holy Ghost is equal, for He is the beauty and happiness of both the other Persons.

6. Redemption

A. *Equality in Glory*

By this also we may fully understand the equality of each Person's concern in the work of redemption,⁵ and the equality of the redeemed's concern with them and dependence upon them, and the equality and honour and praise due to each of them. Glory belongs to the Father and the Son that they so greatly loved the world: to the Father that He so loved that He gave His only begotten Son, and to the Son that He so loved the world as to give up Himself.

But there is equal glory due to the Holy Ghost, for He is that love of the Father and the Son to the world. Just so much as the two first Persons glorify Themselves by showing the astonishing greatness of their love and grace, just so much is that wonderful love and grace glorified Who is the Holy Ghost. It shows the infinite dignity and excellency of the Father that the Son so delighted and prized His honour and glory that He stooped infinitely low, rather than that men's salvation should be to the injury of that honour and glory.

It showed the infinite excellency and worth of the Son that the Father so delighted in Him that for His sake He was ready to quit His anger and receive into favour those that had deserved infinite ill at His hands. What was done shows how great is the excellency and worth of the Holy Ghost, Who is that delight which the Father and the Son have in each other: it shows it to be infinite. So great as the worth of a thing delighted-in is to any one, so great is the worth of that delight and joy itself which he has in it.

B. *Our Dependence*

Our dependence is equally upon each in this office. The Father appoints and provides the Redeemer, and Himself accepts the price and grants the thing purchased. The Son is the Redeemer by offering Himself, and He is the redemption price. And the Holy Ghost immediately communicates to us the thing purchased by communicating Himself, and He is the thing purchased. The sum of all that Christ purchased for men was the Holy Ghost, He was "made a curse for us...that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith" (Gal 3:13-14).

What Christ purchased for us was that we have *communion with God*, which is His good, which consists in partaking of the Holy Ghost. As we have shown, all the blessedness of the Redeemed consists in their partaking of Christ's fullness, which consists

⁵ **redemption** – deliverance of God's children from sin through the ransom paid on their behalf by Christ at the cross.

in partaking of that Spirit which is given not by measure unto Him (Joh 3:34). The oil that is poured on the head of the Church runs down to the members of His body and to the skirts of His garment (Psa 133:2). Christ purchased this for us so that we should have the favour of God and might enjoy His love, but this love is the Holy Ghost.

Christ purchased for us true *spiritual excellency*, grace and holiness, the sum of which is love to God, which is nothing but the indwelling of the Holy Ghost in the heart.

Christ purchased for us *spiritual joy* and comfort, which is in a participation of God's joy and happiness, which joy and happiness is the Holy Ghost as we have shown.

The Holy Ghost is the sum of all *good things*. Good things and the Holy Spirit are synonymous expressions in Scripture, "How much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things [i.e., the Holy Spirit] to them that ask him" (Mat 7:11). The sum of all spiritual good which the finite have in this world is that spring of living water within them (Joh 4:10), and those rivers of living water flowing out of them (Joh 7:38-39), which we are there told means the Holy Ghost. And the sum of all happiness in the other world is that river of water of life which proceeds out of the throne of God and the Lamb (Rev 22:1). This is the river of God's pleasures and is the Holy Ghost. Therefore, this is the sum of the gospel invitation to come and take the water of life (22:17).

The Holy Ghost is the *purchased possession* and inheritance of the saints, as appears because that little of it which the saints have in this world is said to be the earnest⁶ of that purchased inheritance (Eph 1:14). It is an earnest of that which we are to have a fulness of hereafter (2Co 1:22; 5:5).

The Holy Ghost is the great subject of all *gospel promises* and therefore is called the Spirit of promise (Eph 1:13). This is called the promise of the Father (Luk 24:49) and the like in other places.⁷ So that it is God of Whom our good is purchased, and it is God that purchases it, and it is God also that is the thing purchased.

Thus all our good things are of God, through God, and in God, as we read in Romans 11:36: "For of him, and through him, and to him [or *in Him*], are all things: to whom be glory for ever." All our good is *of* God the Father, it is all *through* God the Son, and all is *in* the Holy Ghost, as He is Himself all our good. God is Himself the portion and purchased inheritance of His people. Thus God is the Alpha and the Omega in this affair of redemption.

C. *Equality in Redemption*

If we suppose no more than used to be supposed about the Holy Ghost, the concern of the Holy Ghost in the work of redemption would not be equal with the Father's and

⁶ **earnest** – pledge of anything afterwards to be received in greater abundance.

⁷ If the Holy Ghost be a comprehension of all good things promised in the gospel, we may easily see the force of the apostle's arguing, "This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" (Gal 3:2).—*Edwards*

the Son's. Nor would there be an equal part of the glory of this work belonging to Him. Merely to apply to us (or immediately to give or hand to us) the blessing purchased—after it was purchased, as subservient to the other two Persons—is but a little thing compared to the purchasing of it by the paying an infinite price by Christ offering up Himself in sacrifice to procure it. And it is as but a little thing when compared to God the Father's giving His infinitely dear Son to be a sacrifice for us, and upon His purchase to afford to us all the blessings of His purchased.

But according to this more full understanding, there is an equality. To *be* the love of God to the world is as much as for the Father and the Son to do so much from love to the world, and to be the thing purchased is as much as to be the price. The price and the thing bought with that price are equal. And it is as much as to afford the thing purchased, for the glory that belongs to Him Who affords the thing purchased arises from the worth of that thing which He affords.

Therefore it is the same glory and an equal glory. The glory of the thing itself is its worth, and that is also the glory of Him that affords it.

7. Creature Images of the Trinity

There are two more eminent and remarkable images of the Trinity among the creatures. The one is in the spiritual creation, the soul of man. There is the mind, and the understanding or idea, and the spirit of the mind (as it is called in Scripture), i.e., the disposition, the will, or affection. The other is in the visible creation, namely, the sun. The Father is as the substance of the sun (by *substance* I don't mean in a philosophical sense, but the "sun" as to its internal constitution). The Son is as the brightness and glory of the disk of the sun, or that bright and glorious form under which it appears to our eyes. The Holy Ghost is the action of the sun, which is within the sun in its internal heat. It being diffusive, the sun enlightens, warms, enlivens, and comforts the world. The Spirit, as it is God's infinite love to Himself and happiness in Himself, is as the internal heat of the sun. But as it is that by which God communicates Himself, it is as the emanation of the sun's action, or the emitted beams of the sun.

The various sorts of rays of the sun and their beautiful colours do well represent the Spirit. They well represent the love and grace of God. They were made use of for this purpose in the rainbow after the Flood (Gen 9:13-16), and I suppose also in that rainbow that was seen round about the throne by Ezekiel (Eze 1:28; Rev 4:3), and seen round the head of Christ by John (Rev 10:1). The rays of the sun also well represent the amiable excellency of God and the various beautiful graces and virtues of the Spirit. These beautiful colours of the sunbeams, we find made use of in Scripture for this purpose, namely, to represent the graces of the Spirit: "Though ye have lien⁸ among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with

⁸ **lien** – rest; laying down.

yellow gold” (Psa 68:13)—i.e., like the light reflected in various beautiful colours from the feathers of a dove, which colours represent the graces of the heavenly Dove.

The same I suppose is signified by the various beautiful colours reflected from the precious stones of the breastplate. And the spiritual gifts (from the Holy Spirit, Gal 5:22-23) to the Church are what are represented by the various colours of the foundation and gates of the new Jerusalem (Rev 21; Isa 54:11, etc.) and the stones of the Temple (1Ch 29:2).

I believe the variety that there is in the rays of the sun and their beautiful colours was designed by the Creator for this very purpose; and indeed that the whole visible creation, which is but the shadow of being, is so made and ordered by God as to typify⁹ and represent spiritual things, for which I could give many reasons. (I do not propose this merely as an hypothesis, but as a part of divine truth sufficiently and fully ascertained by the revelation God has made in the Holy Scriptures.)

8. Mysteries

I am sensible of what kind of objections many will be ready to make against what has been said, of what difficulties will be immediately found: “How can this be? And how can that be?”

I am far from affording this as any explanation of the mystery that unfolds and renews the incomprehensibleness of it, for I am sensible that however some difficulties are lessened by what has been said, others that are new appear—the number of those things that appear mysterious, incredible, and incomprehensible is increased by it. I offer it only as a further manifestation of the divine truth that the Word of God exhibits to the view of our minds concerning this great mystery.

Concerning the Trinity, I think the Word of God teaches us more things to be believed by us than have been generally believed, and that it exhibits many things more glorious and wonderful than have been taken notice of. Yea, the Word reveals or exhibits many more wonderful mysteries than those which have been taken notice of. These mysteries that have been overvalued are incomprehensible things, and yet have been exhibited in the Word of God, though they are an addition to the number of mysteries that are in it. No wonder that the more things we are told concerning that which is so infinitely above our reach, the number of visible mysteries increases.

When we tell a child a *little* concerning God, he has not an hundredth part so many mysteries in view on the nature and attributes of God and His works of creation and Providence, as one that is told *much* concerning God in a divinity school. Yet he knows much more about God, has a much clearer understanding of things of Divinity, and is able more clearly to explain some things that were dark and very unintelligible to him. I humbly apprehend that the things which have been observed increase the number of

⁹ **typify** – represent something else as a symbol with similar characteristics.

visible mysteries in the Godhead—in no other manner than as by them we perceive that God has told us much more about it than was before generally observed.

Under the Old Testament, the Church of God¹⁰ was not told near so much about the Trinity as they are now. But what the New Testament has revealed, though it has more opened to our view the nature of God, yet it has increased the number of visible mysteries. They thus appear to us exceeding wonderful and incomprehensible. And so also it has come to pass that the churches are told more about the incarnation and the satisfaction of Christ and other gospel doctrines.

It is so not only in divine things but natural things. He that looks on a plant (or the parts of the bodies of animals, or any other works of nature) at a great distance where he has but an obscure sight of it, may see something in it wonderful and beyond his comprehension. But he that is near to it, and views them narrowly indeed, understands more about them, has a clearer and distinct sight of them. And yet the number of things that are wonderful and mysterious in them that appear to him are much more than before. And, if he views them with a microscope, the number of the wonders that he sees will be increased still, but yet the microscope gives him more a true knowledge concerning them.

9. Summary

God is never said to love the Holy Ghost, nor are any descriptive phrases that betoken love anywhere given to Him—though so many are ascribed to the Son: as God's Elect, The Beloved, He in Whom God's soul delighteth, He in Whom He is well pleased, etc. Yea, such descriptions seem to be ascribed to the Son as though He were the object of love exclusive of all other Persons, as though there were no Person whatsoever to share the love of the Father with the Son. To this purpose, evidently He is called God's "beloved Son," at the time that it is added, "In whom I am well pleased" (Mat 3:17). There is nothing in Scripture that speaks of any acceptance of the Holy Ghost, or any reward or any mutual friendship between the Holy Ghost and either of the other Persons. There is no command in Scripture to love the Holy Ghost or to delight in or have any complacency in the Holy Ghost, though such commands are so frequent with respect to the other Persons.

That knowledge or understanding in God which we must conceive of as first is His knowledge of everything possible. That love which must be this knowledge is what we must conceive of as belonging to the essence of the Godhead in its first subsistence. Then comes a reflex act of knowledge, and His viewing Himself and knowing Himself, and so knowing His own knowledge—and so the Son is begotten. There is such a thing in God as knowledge of knowledge, an idea of an idea—which can be nothing else than the idea or knowledge repeated.

¹⁰ **Church of God** – all true believers in God, who come to Him by faith, anticipating the once for all sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The world was made for the Son of God especially, for God made the world for Himself from love to Himself. But God loves Himself only in a reflex act; He views Himself and so loves Himself, so He makes the world for Himself to be viewed and reflected on. And that is the same with Himself repeated or begotten in His own idea, and that is His Son. When God considers of making anything for Himself, He presents Himself before Himself and views Himself as His end. That viewing Himself is the same as reflecting on Himself, or having an idea of Himself. To make the world for the Godhead thus viewed and understood is to make the world for the Godhead begotten—and that is to make the world for the Son of God.

The love of God as it flows forth is wholly determined and directed by divine wisdom, so that those only are the objects of it that divine wisdom chooses—so that the creation of the world is to gratify divine love as that is exercised by divine wisdom. But Christ *is* divine wisdom, so that the world is made to gratify divine love as exercised by Christ, or to gratify the love that is in Christ's heart, or to provide a spouse for Christ. These are those creatures that wisdom chooses for the object of divine love, as Christ's elect spouse—and especially those elect creatures that wisdom chiefly pitches upon and makes the end of the rest of creatures.

