mere fact of the triplicity of testimony:  
for there is not the remotest analogy between   
the terms in the one case and those  
in the other: the very order of them, differing   
as it does in the two cases, shews  
this. Is this triplicity a fact worthy of  
such a comparison? And then, what is  
the testimony in heaven? Is it borne to  
men? Certainly not: for God hath no  
man seen, as He is there: His only-begotten   
Son hath declared Hiin to us on  
earth, where all testimony affecting us  
must be borne. Is it a testimony to  
angels? Possibly: but what has this to  
do with the matter in hand? And then,  
again, what but an unworthy play on  
words can it be called, to adduce the  
fact of **oneness** on the one side, the essential   
unity of the ever blessed Godhead, and  
on the other the concurrence in testifying  
to one fact,—as correspondent, to one another?   
Does not this betray itself as the  
fancy of a patristic gloss, in the days when  
such analogies and comparisons were the  
sport of every theological writer? And  
2) the very’ words betray themselves.  
*“The Father”* and *“the Word”* are  
never combined by St. John, but always  
*the Father* and *the Son*. The very apology   
of Bengel, “the appellative, *the  
Word*, is most appropriate to *testimony*,”  
may serve to shew how utterly weak he  
must have felt the cause to be.

The best conclusion to the whole subject  
is found in the remark of Bengel himself  
on another occasion of the practice reprobated,   
of which he himself furnishes here  
so striking an instance: “They exhibit a  
mischievous zeal in the Lord’s quarrels,  
who bring themselves to reason thus,  
‘This text is convenient for my doctrine  
and argument; therefore I will constrain  
myself to believe it genuine, and will obstinately   
defend it, and all that can be  
scraped together on its behalf.’ But the  
Truth needs not false supports, resting  
much better on itself alone.” As the results   
of critical enquiry now stand, we  
may safely affirm, that no reasonable man,  
acquainted with the facts, can again defend,  
the genuineness of these words. If any  
do defend them, it is the charitable conclusion   
that he speaks in ignorance. The  
real mischief is, that the ignorant in high  
places allow themselves to use the strong  
language of authority, and thus become  
the chief enemies of truth. A sketch of  
the principal particulars of the dispute  
and of the books relating to it is given in  
Horne’s Introduction, vol. iv. pp. 355–388.

**9.**] An argument *from the less to the  
greater*, grounded on the practice of mankind,   
by which it is shewn that God’s testimony   
must be by all means believed by  
us. **If we** (mankind in general; all  
reasonable men) **receive** (as we *do*: receive  
with approval; *accept*) **the testimony of  
men** (generic; **the** testimony, i.e. in any  
given ease. No special testimony need be  
thought of, as touching this present case:  
the proposition is general), **the testimony  
of God is greater** (supply in the argument,  
“and therefore much more ought we to  
receive that.” The testimony of God here  
spoken of is not any particular testimony,  
as the prophecies concerning Christ, or the  
testimony of the Baptist and other eye-witnesses   
to Him, or the Prophets, the  
Baptist, Martyrs, and Apostles: it is  
general, as is the testimony of men with  
which it is compared. The particular testimony   
pointed at by the general proposition   
is introduced in the following words):  
**for** (see above at the beginning of ver. 7.  
Here there is an ellipsis: “and this maxim  
applies in the case before us, because”)  
**the testimony of God is this, that He  
hath borne testimony concerning His  
Son** (i.e. the testimony of God to which  
the argument applies is this, the fact. that  
He hath borne testimony to His Son).

**10–12.**] The perfect tense, *“hath  
Borne witness,”* in ver. 9, shewed that the  
testimony spoken of is not merely an historical one,   
such for instance as Matt. iii.