

# A Declaration Of The Glorious Mystery Of The Person Of Christ

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## Chapter VI.

The Person of Christ the great Repository of Sacred Truth.  
— Its Relation thereunto.

Divine Supernatural Truth is called by the Apostle, the *Truth which is according to Godliness*, Titus 1:1 Whereas therefore the Person of Christ is the great *Mystery of Godliness*, we must in the next place enquire what is the Relation of spiritual supernatural Truth thereunto. That he is the great *Representative* unto the Church, of God, his holy Properties, and the Counsels of his Will.

All *Divine Truth* may be referred unto two Heads. First, that which is *essentially* so, and then that which is so *declaratively*. The first is God himself, the other are the Counsels of his Will.

God himself is the first and only *essential Truth*, in whose Being and Nature the Springs of all Truth do lie. Whatever is *Truth*, so far as it is so, derives from him; is an emanation from that eternal Fountain of it. *Being, Truth, and Goodness*, is the Principal Notion of God, and in him they are all the same. How this is represented in Christ, as he is in himself the essential Image of the Father, and as Incarnate the Representative Image of him unto us, hath been declared.

The *Counsels of God* are the next Spring and cause, as also the subject matter or substance, of all Truth, that is so *declaratively*. *Divine Truth is the Declaration of the Counsels of God*, Acts 20:27. Of them all, the Person of Christ is the sacred Repository and Treasury; In him are they to be learned. All their efficacy and use depends on their Relation unto him. He is the Center and Circumference of all the lines of Truth, that is, which is Divine, Spiritual, and Supernatural. And the beauty of it, is presented unto us only in his *face or Person*. We see it not, we know it not but as God shines into our Hearts to give us the knowledge of it therein, 2 Corinthians 4:6.

So he testifieth of himself, *I am the Truth*, John 14:6. He is so *Essentially* as he is one with the Father, the God of Truth, Deuteronomy 32:4. He is so *efficiently*; as by him alone it is fully and effectually declared. For *no man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him*, John 1:18. He is so *substantially* in opposition unto the *Types and Shadows* of the Old Testament; for in him *dwelt the fulness of the Godhead bodily*, Colossians 2:9. The Body is of Christ, verse 17. He is so *Subjectively*; For all Divine Truth relating to the saving Knowledge of God, is treasured up in him.

In him *are hid all the treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge*, Colossians 2:3. That is the Wisdom and Knowledge of God in his Counsels concerning the Vocation,

Sanctification, and Salvation of the Church; concerning which the Apostle falls into that holy Admiration; *O the depths of the Riches both of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God*, Romans 11:33. And they are called *Treasures* in a twofold account both mentioned together by the *Psalmist*. *How precious are thy thoughts unto me O Lord, how great is the sum of them?* They are *Treasures* because *precious* and unvaluable, and are therefore usually preferred above all earthly treasures which men most highly esteem, Proverbs 3:14, 15. And they are so because of the *greatness* of the sum of them; and therefore also called *unsearchable Riches*, Ephesians 3:8. These precious unsearchable *Treasures* of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God, that is, all Divine supernatural Truths, are *hid*, or safely deposited in Christ, in and from whom alone they are to be learned and received.

So are we said to *learn the Truth as it is in Jesus*, Ephesians 4:21. And the knowledge of all Evangelical Sacred Truth, is in the Scripture most frequently expressed by the Knowledge of him, John 8:19; 17:3; 2 Corinthians 2:14; 4:5, 6; Ephesians 1:17; Philippians 3:8, 10; 1 John 1:1, 2, 2:4, 13, 14, 5:20; 2 Peter 2:20.

Setting aside what we have discoursed and proved before concerning the *laying of the Foundation of all the Counsels of God in the Person of Christ*, and the Representation of them in the ineffable Constitution thereof, I shall give some few Instances of this *Relation* of all supernatural Truth unto him; manifesting that we cannot learn them, nor know them, but with a due respect thereunto.

1. There are two things wherein the *Glory of Truth* doth consist; First, *its Light*. Secondly, *its Efficacy* or power. And both these do all supernatural Truths derive from this *Relation* unto Christ.

*First*, No truth whatever brings any *Spiritual Light* unto the mind but by virtue thereof. *In him is Life, and the Life is the Light of men*, John 1:4. He is the *true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world*, verse 9. Wherefore as Truth is the only means of Illumination, so it cannot communicate any light unto the mind, but only as it is a *beam from him*, as it is an Organ to convey it from that Fountain. Separated from him and its *Relation* unto him, it will not retain, it cannot communicate any real spiritual Light or Understanding to the souls of men. How should it, if all Light be originally in him, as the Scripture testifieth? Then alone is the mind irradiated with heavenly Truth, when it is received as proceeding from, and leading unto the *Sun of Righteousness*, the blessed spring of all spiritual Light which is Christ himself. Whatever *notional Knowledge* men may have of Divine Truths, as they are doctrinally proposed in the Scripture, yet if they know them not in their respect unto the *Person of Christ* as the Foundation of the Counsels of God; if they discern not how they proceed from him, and center in him, they will bring no spiritual saving Light unto their Understanding. For all spiritual Life and Light is in him, and from him alone. An Instance hereof we have in the *Jews*. They have the Scriptures of the Old Testament, wherein the substance of all Divine Truth is revealed and expressed. And they are diligent in the study of them. Howbeit their minds are not at all *illuminated*, nor irradiated by the Truths contained in them, but they live and walk in horrible darkness. And the only Reason hereof is, because they know

not, because they reject the *Relation* of them unto Christ, without which they are deprived of all enlightening Power.

*Secondly, Efficacy* or Power is the second Property of Divine Truth. And the End of this Efficacy is to make us like unto God, Ephesians 4:20-24. The Mortification of sin, the Renovation of our Natures, the Sanctification of our minds, hearts and affections, the Consolation of our souls with their Edification in all the Parts of the Life of God, and the like, are the things that God hath designed to effect by his Truth, John 17:17. Whence it is able to *build us up and give us an Inheritance among all them that are Sanctified*, Acts 20:32. But it is from their Relation unto the Person of Christ, that they have any thing of this Power and Efficacy. For they have it no otherwise but as they are conveyances of his Grace unto the souls of men, So 1 John 1:1, 2.

Wherefore as *Professors of the Truth*, if separated from Christ as unto real Union, are *withering branches*; so *Truths professed* if doctrinally separated from him, or their respect unto him, have no living Power or Efficacy in the souls of men. When Christ is formed in the Heart by them, when he *dwelleth plentifully* in the soul through their Operation, then and not else do they put forth their proper Power and Efficacy. Otherwise they are as waters separated from the Fountain, they quickly dry up or become a noisome puddle; or as a beam interrupted from its continuity unto the Sun, is immediately deprived of light.

2. All Divine Spiritual Truths are *declarative* either of the *Grace* and Love of God *unto us*, or of *our Duty*, Obedience, and Gratitude *unto him*. But as unto these things *Christ is All and in All*. We can have no due apprehensions of the Love and Grace of God, no understanding of the Divine Truths of the Word wherein they are revealed, and whereby they are exhibited unto them that believe, but in the Exercise of Faith on Christ himself. For in, by and from him alone it is, that they are proposed unto us, that we are made partakers of them. It is from *his fulness* that all Grace is received. No Truth concerning them can by any Imagination be separated from him. He is the *life and soul* of all *such Truths* without which as they are written in the Word, they are but a dead Letter, and that of such a *Character* as is *illegible* unto us as unto any real discovery of the Grace and Love of God. And as unto those of the other sort, which are *instructive* unto us in our Duty, Obedience and Gratitude, we cannot come unto a practical compliance with any one of them but by the Aids of Grace received from him. For *without him we can do nothing*, John 15:5. And he alone *understands* Divine Truth who *doth it*, John 7:17. There is not therefore any one Text of Scripture which presseth our Duty unto God that we can so understand as to perform that Duty in an acceptable manner, without an actual regard unto Christ, from whom alone we receive Ability for the performance of it, and in or through whom alone it is accepted with God.

3. All the *Evidence of Divine Spiritual Truth*, and all the Foundation of our real Interest in the things whereof it is a declaration, as to benefit, advantage and comfort, depends on their Relation unto Christ. We may take an Instance in one Article of Divine Truth, which seems to be most disengaged from any such Relation, namely, *the Resurrection of*

*the dead*. But there is no man who rightly believes or comprehends this Truth, who doth it not upon the Evidence given unto it, and Example of it in the Person of Christ *rising from the dead*. Nor can any man have a comfortable expectation or Faith of an especial Interest in a *blessed Resurrection* (which is our whole concern in that Truth, Philippians 3:11.) but by virtue of a Mystical Union unto him as the Head of the Church that shall be raised unto Glory. Both these the Apostle insists upon at large, 1 Corinthians 15. So is it with all other Truths whatever.

Wherefore all Divine Supernatural Truths, revealed in the Scripture, being nothing but the Declaration of these Counsels of God, whose Foundation was laid in the Person of Christ; and whereas they are all of them *expressive* of the Love, Wisdom, Goodness and Grace of God unto us, or *instructive* in our Obedience and Duty to him, all the actings of God towards us, and all ours towards him, being in and through him alone. And whereas all the Life and Power of these truths, all their Beauty, Symmetry, and Harmony in their Union and Conjunction which is expressive of Divine Wisdom, is all from him who as a living Spirit diffused through the whole System both acts and animates it, all the Treasures of Truth, Wisdom and Knowledge may be well said to be *hid in him*.

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Chapter 6.

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