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## The Kenosis of the Son

“Kenosis” is a Greek term found in Philippians 2:6-8 and refers to the self-emptying of God the Son in becoming incarnate – “Christ who despite being from the beginning in the form of God; did not seize equality with God, but emptied/nullified (*ekenosen*) himself, assuming the form of a slave. Bearing the human likeness, sharing the human lot, he humbled himself and was obedient, even to the point of death, death on a cross!”

### “He assumes the poverty of my flesh, that I may assume the richness of His Godhead”

The Word of God Himself – Who is before all worlds, the Invisible, the Incomprehensible, the Bodiless, Beginning of Beginning, the Light of Light, the Source of Life and Immortality, the Image of the Archetypal Beauty, the immovable Seal, the unchangeable Image, the Father’s Definition and Word, came to His own Image, and took on Him flesh for the sake of our flesh, and mingled Himself with an intelligent soul for my soul’s sake, purifying like by like; and in all points except sin was made man.

Conceived by the Virgin, who first in body and soul was purified by the Holy Spirit (for it was needful both that Childbearing should be honoured, and that Virginitly should receive a higher honour), He came forth then as God with that which He had assumed, One Person in two Natures, Flesh and Spirit, of which the latter deified the former.

O new commingling; O strange conjunction; the Self-Existent comes into being, the Uncreate is created, That which cannot be contained is contained, by the intervention of an intellectual soul, mediating between the Deity and the corporeity of the flesh. And He Who gives riches becomes poor, for He assumes the poverty of my flesh, that I may assume the richness of His Godhead. He that is full empties Himself, for He empties Himself of His glory for a short while, that I may have a share in His Fulness.

What is the riches of His Goodness? What is this mystery that is around me? I had a share in the image; I did not keep it; He partakes of my flesh that He may both save the image and make the flesh immortal. He communicates a second Communion far more marvellous than the first, inasmuch as then He imparted the better Nature, whereas now Himself partakes of the worse. This is more godlike than the former action, this is loftier in the eyes of all men of understanding.<sup>1</sup>

### His kenotic descent is for our purification

As the “form of a slave” he comes down to the same level as his fellow-slaves; receiving an alien “form” he bears the whole of me, along with all that is mine, in himself, so that he may consume within himself the meaner element, as fire consumes wax or the Sun ground-mist, and so that I may share in what is his through the intermingling.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Or. 38.13, (NPNF<sup>2</sup>, Vol.7, p.349a-b)

<sup>2</sup> Or. 30.6 (*On God and Christ*, p.97)

## Our offering of ourselves is a response to Christ's self-offering

Let us offer ourselves to God as a gift, His most precious possession and most proper to Himself; let us give back to the Image what is made after the Image. Let us recognise the principle of our being, let us honour our archetype; let us recognise the power of the mystery and for whom Christ died.

Let us become like Christ, since Christ became like us. Let us become gods through Him, since He became man through us.

He assumed the worse that He might give us the better; He became poor that we through His poverty might be rich; He took upon Him the form of a servant that we might receive back our liberty;

He came down that we might be exalted; He was tempted that we might conquer; He was dishonoured that He might glorify us; He died that He might save us; He ascended that He might draw to Himself us, who were lying low in the Fall of sin.

Let us give all, offer all, to Him Who gave Himself a Ransom and a Reconciliation for us.<sup>3</sup>

## Kenosis & Christology

Seeing as Christ had set in the human body a piece of heaven, when he saw it blasted with heart-gnawing evil, and the twisted dragon lording it over men, he did not, to raise again his portion, send yet other aids to treat the disease (for a little cure is inadequate against great illnesses);

But, emptying himself of his heavenly glory as the unchangeable Image of the heavenly One, both humanly and not after human custom, in the hallowed womb of a maid inviolate he took flesh (amazing! To washed-out minds incredible!) and came, both God and man, two natures gathered into one: one hidden, the other open to mankind;

Of these, the one is God, the latter was created later with us, at that time when, in the womb, God was mingled with things human. He is one God out of both, since the human is mixed with the Godhead, and, because of the Godhead, exists as Lord and Christ.<sup>4</sup>

## The kenosis of the Son as enabler of our Theosis

[The Son] was actually subject as a slave to flesh, to birth, and to our human experiences; for our liberation, held captive as we are by sin, he was subject to all that he saved. What does the lowliness of Man possess higher than involvement with God, than being *made* God as a result of this intermingling?<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Or. 1.4-5, (NPNF<sup>2</sup>, Vol.7, p.203b) (Modified)

<sup>4</sup> *In Praise of Virginity* (Poem 1.2.1, 139-154) in *On God and Man*, pp.93-4

<sup>5</sup> Or. 30.3 (*On God and Christ*, pp.94-5)

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## The Hallowing of Humanity

### Christ's death is not a ransom, but for the sanctification of humanity

To Whom was that Blood offered that was shed for us, and why was It shed? I mean the precious and famous Blood of our God and High priest and Sacrifice. We were detained in bondage by the Evil One, sold under sin, and receiving pleasure in exchange for wickedness. Now, since a ransom belongs only to him who holds in bondage, I ask to whom was this offered, and for what cause?

If to the Evil One, fie upon the outrage! If the robber receives ransom, not only from God, but a ransom which consists of God Himself, and has such an illustrious payment for his tyranny, a payment for whose sake it would have been right for him to have left us alone altogether.

But if to the Father, I ask first, how? For it was not by Him that we were being oppressed; and next, On what principle did the Blood of His Only begotten Son delight the Father, Who would not receive even Isaac, when he was being offered by his Father, but changed the sacrifice, putting a ram in the place of the human victim?

Is it not evident that the Father accepts Him, but neither asked for Him nor demanded Him; but on account of the Incarnation, and because Humanity must be sanctified by the Humanity of God, that He might deliver us Himself, and overcome the tyrant, and draw us to Himself by the mediation of His Son, Who also arranged this to the honour of the Father, Whom it is manifest that He obeys in all things?<sup>1</sup>

### Christ "the Being" came to restore our well-being

God was manifested to man by birth. On the one hand Being, and eternally Being, of the Eternal Being, above cause and word, for there was no word before The Word; and on the other hand for our sakes also Becoming, that He Who gives us our being might also give us our Well-being, or rather might restore us by His Incarnation, when we had by wickedness fallen from wellbeing.<sup>2</sup>

### Perhaps he goes to sleep...

Perhaps [Christ] goes to sleep, in order that He may bless sleep also; perhaps He is tired that He may hallow weariness also; perhaps He weeps that He may make tears blessed.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Or.* 45.22 (NPNF<sup>2</sup>, Vol.7, p.431a-b)

<sup>2</sup> *Or.* 38.3 (NPNF<sup>2</sup>, Vol.7, p.345b)

<sup>3</sup> *Or.* 37.2 (NPNF<sup>2</sup>, Vol.7, p.338b)

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## The Son is not a slave to the Father

### The advocacy of Christ

Gregory explains that the passage “Ever living to appeal (make petition) for us” (Heb 7:25) does not indicate that Christ is constantly making slavish petition for us, but rather refers to his mediating and advocating which he achieves by virtue of his incarnate nature.

Yes indeed - what deep significance and humanity it expresses! “Appealing” does not imply here, as it does in popular parlance, a desire for legal satisfaction - there is something humiliating in the idea. No, it means representing us in his role of mediator, in the way that the Spirit too is spoken of as “appealing” on our behalf. “For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man, Jesus Christ.”<sup>1</sup>

Even at this moment he is, as man, making representation for my salvation, until he makes me divine by the power of his incarnate manhood. “As man” I say, because he still has with him the body he assumed, though he is no longer “regarded as flesh”<sup>2</sup> - meaning the bodily experiences, which, sin aside, are ours and his.

This is the “Advocate”<sup>3</sup> we have in Jesus - not a slave who falls prostrate before the Father on our behalf. Get rid of what is really a slavish suspicion, unworthy of the Spirit. It is not in God to make that demand nor in the Son to submit to it; the thought is unjust to God. No, it is by what he suffered as man that he persuades us, as Word and Encourager, to endure. That, for me, is the meaning of his “advocacy.”<sup>4</sup>

### “The Son can do nothing of himself but only what he sees the Father doing” (Jn 5:19)

In what sense does he see the Father doing something and does it himself? Is it the way people draw the shapes of letters, keeping their eyes on the copy-book and guided by it because otherwise they cannot get to the real thing? How could Wisdom possibly need a teacher or be incapable of doing something without instruction? ... He cleanses lepers, releases men from demons and diseases, he restores dead men to life, walks on the sea, does all the other things he did - how or when did the Father anticipate these actions of the Son?

Clearly the Father indicates the outline, whilst the Word makes a finished product, of the same realities. He acts not like an ignorant slave but with a master’s knowledge - to put it more appropriately, like the Father. This is how I take the statement that the Son does whatever is effected by the Father, in the same way. It is not a question of similarity between their creatures, but of having equal authority over their creation.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 1 Tim 2:5

<sup>2</sup> 2 Cor 5:16

<sup>3</sup> 1 Jn 2:1

<sup>4</sup> Or. 30.14 (*On God and Christ*, p.105)

<sup>5</sup> Or. 30.11 (*On God and Christ*, pp.101-2)

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## Balancing Biblical passages about Christ

### Paradoxical pairs of statements on Christ's humanity/divinity

He whom presently you scorn was once transcendent, over even you. He who is presently human was incomposite. He remained what he was; what he was not, he assumed. No "because" is required for his existence in the beginning, for what could account for the existence of God? But later he came into being because of something, namely your salvation, yours, who insult him and despise his Godhead for that very reason, because he took on your thick corporeality.

... He was begotten - yet he was already begotten - of a woman. And yet she was a virgin. That it was from a woman makes it human, that she was a virgin makes it divine. On earth he has no father, but in heaven no mother. All this is part of his Godhead. He was carried in the womb, but acknowledged by a prophet as yet unborn himself, who leaped for joy at the presence of the Word for whose sake he had been created. He was wrapped in swaddling bands, but at the Resurrection he unloosed the swaddling bands of the grave.

He was laid in a manger, but was extolled by angels, disclosed by a star and adored by Magi. Why do you take offence at what you see, instead of attending to its spiritual significance? He was exiled into Egypt, but he banished the Egyptian idols. He had "no form or beauty" for the Jews, but for David he was "fairer than the children of men" and on the mount he shines forth, becoming more luminous than the Sun, to reveal the future mystery.

As man he was baptized, but he absolved sins as God; he needed no purifying rites himself - his purpose was to hallow water. As man he was put to the test, but as God he came through victorious - yes, bids us be of good cheer, because he has conquered the world. He hungered - yet he fed thousands. He is indeed "living, heavenly bread." He thirsted - yet he exclaimed: "Whosoever thirsts, let him come to me and drink." Indeed he promised that believers would become fountains.

He was tired - yet he is the "rest" of the weary and the burdened. He was overcome by heavy sleep - yet he goes lightly over the sea, rebukes winds, and relieves the drowning Peter. He pays tax - yet he uses a fish to do it; indeed he is emperor over those who demand the tax. He is called a "Samaritan, demonically possessed" - but he rescues the man who came down from Jerusalem and fell among thieves. Yes, he is recognized by demons, drives out demons, drowns deep a legion of spirits and sees the prince of demons falling like lightning.

He is stoned, yet not hit; he prays, yet he hears prayer. He weeps, yet he puts an end to weeping. He asks where Lazarus is laid - he was man; yet he raises Lazarus - he was God. He is sold, and cheap was the price - thirty pieces of silver; yet he buys back the world at the mighty cost of his own blood. A sheep, he is led to the slaughter - yet he shepherds Israel and now the whole world as well. A lamb, he is dumb - yet he is "Word," proclaimed by "the voice of one crying in the wilderness." He is weakened, wounded - yet he cures every disease and every weakness.

He is brought up to the tree and nailed to it - yet by the tree of life he restores us. Yes, he saves even a thief crucified with him; he wraps all the visible world in darkness. He is given vinegar to drink, gall to eat - and who is he? Why, one who turned water into wine, who took away the taste of bitterness, who is all sweetness and desire. He surrenders his life, yet he has power to take it again. Yes, the veil is rent, for things of heaven are being revealed, rocks split, and dead men have an earlier awakening.

He dies, but he vivifies and by death destroys death. He is buried, yet he rises again. He goes down to Hades, yet he leads souls up, ascends to heaven, and will come to judge quick and dead, and to probe discussions like these. If the first set of expressions starts you going astray, the second set takes your error away.<sup>1</sup>

### **Both the exaltation and humiliation of the Son must be emphasised**

[The Son] was *sent*, but as man, for He was of a twofold Nature; for He was wearied, and hungered, and was thirsty, and was in an agony, and shed tears, according to the nature of a corporeal being. And if the expression be also used of Him as God, the meaning is that the Father's good pleasure is to be considered a Mission, for to this He refers all that concerns Himself; both that He may honour the Eternal Principle, and because He will not be taken to be an antagonistic God.

And whereas it is written both that He was betrayed, and also that He gave Himself up and that He was raised up by the Father, and taken up into heaven; and on the other hand that He raised Himself and *went* up; the former statement of each pair refers to the good pleasure of the Father, the latter to His own Power.

Are you then to be allowed to dwell upon all that humiliates Him, while passing over all that exalts Him, and to count on your side the fact that He suffered, but to leave out of the account the fact that it was of His own will? See what even now the Word has to suffer.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Or.* 29.19-20 (*On God and Christ*, pp.86-88)

<sup>2</sup> *Or.* 38.15, (NPNF<sup>2</sup>, Vol.7, p.350a)

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## Theology and the “Knowledge” of God

### Discussion of theology is not for “anytime anywhere” nor everyone

Discussion of theology is not for everyone, I tell you, not for everyone - it is no such inexpensive or effortless pursuit. Nor, I would add, is it for every occasion, or every audience; neither are all its aspects open to inquiry. It must be reserved for certain occasions, for certain audiences, and certain limits must be observed. It is not for all people, but only for those who have been tested and have found a sound footing in study, and, more importantly, have undergone, or at the very least are undergoing, purification of body and soul. For one who is not pure to lay hold of pure things is dangerous, just as it is for weak eyes to look at the sun’s brightness.<sup>1</sup>

### Theologians don’t know everything!

No man has yet breathed all the air; no mind has yet contained or language embraced God’s substance in its fullness. No, we use facts connected with him to outline qualities that correspond with him, collecting a faint and feeble mental image from various quarters.

Our noblest theologian is not one who has discovered the whole - our earthly shackles do not permit us the whole - but one whose mental image is by comparison fuller, who has gathered in his mind a richer picture, outline, or whatever we call it, of the truth.<sup>2</sup>

### The “relative” knowledge of God attributed to people in the Bible

No one has yet discovered or ever shall discover what God is in his nature and essence. As for a discovery some time in the future, let those who have a mind to it research and speculate. The discovery will take place, so my reason tells me, when this God-like, divine thing, I mean our mind and reason, mingles with its kin, when the copy returns to the pattern it now longs after. This seems to me to be the meaning of the great dictum that we shall, in time to come, “know even as we are known.”<sup>3</sup>

But for the present what reaches us is a scant emanation, as it were a small beam from a great light<sup>4</sup> which means that anyone who “knew” God or whose “knowledge” of him has been attested in the Bible, had a manifestly more brilliant knowledge than others not equally illuminated. This superiority was reckoned knowledge in the full sense, not because it really was so, but by the contrast of relative strengths.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Or. 27.3 (*On God and Christ*, pp.26-7)

<sup>2</sup> Or. 30.17 (*On God and Christ*, pp.106-7)

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor 13:12

<sup>4</sup> Wis 7:26

<sup>5</sup> Or. 28.17 (*On God and Christ*, pp.49-50)

## How is the Son “begotten”?

His begetting would be a triviality if it could be understood by you, who have no knowledge of your own genesis and are ashamed to explain in full the limited understanding you have. Do you really think you know it all?

... How has he been begotten? I re-utter the question with loathing. God’s begetting ought to have the tribute of our reverent silence. The important point is for you to learn that he has been begotten. As to the way it happens, we shall not concede that even angels, much less you, know that. Shall I tell you the way? It is a way known only to the begetting Father and the begotten Son. Anything beyond this fact is hidden by a cloud and escapes your dull vision.<sup>6</sup>

## Gregory’s “explanation” of the procession of the Holy Spirit

What, then, is “proceeding”? You explain the ingeneracy of the Father and I will give you a biological account of the Son’s begetting and the Spirit’s proceeding - and let us go mad the pair of us for prying into God’s secrets. What competence have we here? We cannot understand what lies under our feet, cannot count the sand in the sea, “the drops of rain or the days of this world,” much less enter into the “depths of God” and render a verbal account of a nature so mysterious, so much beyond words.<sup>7</sup>

## All analogies for the Trinity ultimately fail

There is nothing to satisfy my mind when I try to illustrate the mental picture I have [of the Trinity], except gratefully taking part of the image and discarding the rest. So, in the end, I resolved that it was best to say “goodbye” to images and shadows, deceptive and utterly inadequate as they are to express the reality. I resolved to keep close to the more truly religious view and rest content with some few words, taking the Spirit as my guide and, in his company and in partnership with him, safeguarding to the end the genuine illumination I had received from him, as I strike out a path through this world. To the best of my powers I will persuade all men to worship Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as the single Godhead and power, because to him belong all glory, honour, and might for ever and ever. Amen.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Or. 29.8 (*On God and Christ*, pp.75-6)

<sup>7</sup> Or. 31.8 (*On God and Christ*, p.122)

<sup>8</sup> Or. 31.33 (*On God and Christ*, p.143)

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## The Trinity

### Trinitarian belief is the “mean” between Sabellianism and Arianism

Let us then bid farewell to all contentious shiftings and balancings of the truth on either side, neither, like the Sabellians, assailing the Trinity in the interest of the Unity, and so destroying the distinction by a wicked confusion; nor, like the Arians, assailing the Unity in the interest of the Trinity, and by an impious distinction overthrowing the Oneness ... But we, walking along the royal road which lies between the two extremes, which is the seat of the virtues, as the authorities say, believe in the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, of one Substance and glory.<sup>1</sup>

### Trinitarian belief is the “mean” between Judaism and heathenism

When I say God, I mean Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. For Godhead is neither diffused beyond these, so as to bring in a mob of gods; nor yet is it bounded by a smaller compass than these, so as to condemn us for a poverty-stricken conception of Deity; either Judaizing<sup>2</sup> to save the Monarchia,<sup>3</sup> or failing into heathenism by the multitude of our gods.<sup>4</sup>

### The unity & equality of the Trinity

This I give you to share, and to defend all your life, the One Godhead and Power, found in the Three in Unity, and comprising the Three separately, not unequal, in substances or natures, neither increased nor diminished by superiorities or inferiorities; in every respect equal, in every respect the same;

Just as the beauty and the greatness of the heavens is one; the infinite conjunction of Three Infinite Ones, Each God when considered in Himself; as the Father so the Son, as the Son so the Holy Ghost; the Three One God when contemplated together; Each God because Consubstantial; One God because of the Monarchia.

No sooner do I conceive of the One than I am illumined by the Splendour of the Three; no sooner do I distinguish Them than I am carried back to the One.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Or.* 42.16 (NPNF<sup>2</sup>, Vol.7, p.390b-391a)

<sup>2</sup> i.e. becoming “Jewish” by affirming only the divinity of the Father (and not the Son and Spirit)

<sup>3</sup> “Monarchia” = sole rule

<sup>4</sup> *Or.* 38.8 (NPNF<sup>2</sup>, Vol.7, p.347a)

<sup>5</sup> *Or.* 40.41 (NPNF<sup>2</sup>, Vol.7, p.375a-b)

## The delicate balance required when preaching the Trinity

It is necessary neither to be so devoted to the Father, as to rob Him of His Fatherhood, for whose Father would He be, if the Son were separated and estranged from Him, by being ranked with the creation, (for an alien being, or one which is combined and confounded with his father, and, for the sense is the same, throws him into confusion, is not a son);

Nor to be so devoted to Christ, as to neglect to preserve both His Sonship, (for whose son would He be, if His origin were not referred to the Father?) and the rank of the Father as origin, inasmuch as He is the Father and Generator; for He would be the origin of petty and unworthy beings, or rather the term would be used in a petty and unworthy sense, if He were not the origin of Godhead and goodness, which are contemplated in the Son and the Spirit: the former being the Son and the Word, the latter the proceeding and indissoluble Spirit.

For both the Unity of the Godhead must be preserved, and the Trinity of Persons confessed, each with His own property.<sup>6</sup>

## The gradual revelation of the Trinity

In this way, the old covenant made clear proclamation of the Father, a less definite one of the Son. The new covenant made the Son manifest and gave us a glimpse of the Spirit's Godhead. At the present time, the Spirit resides amongst us, giving us a clearer manifestation of himself than before.

It was dangerous for the Son to be preached openly when the Godhead of the Father was still unacknowledged. It was dangerous, too, for the Holy Spirit to be made (and here I use a rather rash expression) an extra burden, when the Son had not been received. It could mean men jeopardizing what did lie within their powers, as happens to those encumbered with a diet too strong for them or who gaze at sunlight with eyes as yet too feeble for it.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Or. 2.38, (NPNF<sup>2</sup>, Vol.7, pp.212b-213a)

<sup>7</sup> Or. 31.26 (*On God and Christ*, p.137)

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## The Deity of the Holy Spirit

### The Holy Spirit must be an intrinsic part of the deity

Something is missing if [the deity] does not have Holiness, and how could it have Holiness without having the Holy Spirit? Either God's Holiness is independent of the Holy Spirit (and in that case I should like to be told what it is supposed to be) or if it is identical with the Holy Spirit, how, I ask, could it fail to be from the beginning - as if it had at one time been to God's advantage to be incomplete and without his Spirit.

If he did not exist from the beginning, he has the same rank as I have, though with a slight priority - we are both separated from God by time. If he has the same rank as I have, how can he make me God, how can he link me with deity?<sup>1</sup>

### The deity of the Holy Spirit is shown by his activity as the one who deifies

Were the Spirit not to be worshipped, how could he deify me through baptism? If he is to be worshipped, why not adored? And if to be adored, how can he fail to be God? One links with the other, a truly golden chain of salvation. From the Spirit comes our rebirth, from rebirth comes a new creating, from new creating a recognition of the worth of him who effected it.<sup>2</sup>

### The work of the Spirit is mentioned in tandem with that of Christ

Look at the facts: Christ is born, the Spirit is his forerunner; Christ is baptized, the Spirit bears him witness; Christ is tempted, the Spirit leads him up; Christ performs miracles, the Spirit accompanies him; Christ ascends, the Spirit fills his place. Is there any significant function belonging to God, which the Spirit does not perform? Is there any title belonging to God, which cannot apply to him, except "ingenerate" and "begotten"?<sup>3</sup>

### The "less exalted" expressions of the Spirit refer to his relation to the Father (as prime cause)

The less exalted expressions which talk of [the Spirit's] being given, sent, divided, or his being a grace, gift, an inspiration, a promise, a means of intercession or anything else of the same character - all these are to be referred back to the Primal Cause, as indicating the Spirit's source and preventing a polytheistic belief in three separate causes. It is equally irreligious to make them a combined persona, like Sabellius, as disconnected natures like the Arians.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Or. 31.4 (*On God and Christ*, p.119)

<sup>2</sup> Or. 31.28 (*On God and Christ*, p.139)

<sup>3</sup> Or. 31.29 (*On God and Christ*, p.139)

<sup>4</sup> Or. 31.30 (*On God and Christ*, p.141)

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## The Cure of Souls

### “The art of arts and the science of sciences”

The guiding of man, the most variable and manifold of creatures, seems to me in very deed to be the art of arts and science of sciences. Any one may recognize this, by comparing the work of the physician of souls with the treatment of the body; and noticing that, laborious as the latter is, ours is more laborious, and of more consequence, from the nature of its subject matter, the power of its science, and the object of its exercise. The one labours about bodies, and perishable failing matter, which absolutely must be dissolved and undergo its fate ... The other is concerned with the soul, which comes from God and is divine, and partakes of the heavenly nobility, and presses on to it, even if it be bound to an inferior nature.<sup>1</sup>

### The scope of “the art”

The scope of our art is to provide the soul with wings, to rescue it from the world and give it to God, and to watch over that which is in His image, if it abides. To take it by the hand, if it is in danger, or restore it, if ruined, to make Christ to dwell in the heart by the Spirit: and, in short, to deify, and bestow heavenly bliss upon, one who belongs to the heavenly host

This is the wish of our schoolmaster the law, of the prophets who intervened between Christ and the law, of Christ who is the fulfiller and end of the spiritual law; of the emptied Godhead, of the assumed flesh, of the novel union between God and man, one consisting of two, and both in one.<sup>2</sup>

### The struggle, skill and variety of treatments required

We, upon whose efforts is staked the salvation of a soul, a being blessed and immortal, and destined for undying chastisement or praise, for its vice or virtue, - what a struggle ought ours to be, and how great skill do we require to treat, or get men treated properly, and to change their life, and give up the clay to the spirit.<sup>3</sup>

As then the same medicine and the same food are not in every case administered to men’s bodies, but a difference is made according to their degree of health or infirmity; so also are souls treated with varying instruction and guidance. To this treatment witness is borne by those who have had experience of it. Some are led by doctrine, others trained by example; some need the spur, others the curb; some are sluggish and hard to rouse to the good, and must be stirred up by being smitten with the word; others are immoderately fervent in spirit, with impulses difficult to restrain, like thoroughbred colts, who run wide of the turning post, and to improve them the word must have a restraining and checking influence.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Or.* 2.16-7, (NPNF<sup>2</sup>, Vol.7, p.208a-b)

<sup>2</sup> *Or.* 2.22-3, (NPNF<sup>2</sup>, Vol.7, p.209b) (punctuation slightly modified)

<sup>3</sup> *Or.* 2.28, (NPNF<sup>2</sup>, Vol.7, pp.210b-211a)

<sup>4</sup> *Or.* 2.30, (NPNF<sup>2</sup>, Vol.7, p.211a)

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NPNF<sup>2</sup> = Philip Schaff & Henry Wace (editors), *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series* (1890 ff.)