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THE "TWO NATURES" AND RECENT CHRISTOLOGICAL SPECULATION

I. THE CHRISTOLOGY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT WRITINGS

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One of the most portentous symptoms of the decay of vital sympathy with historical Christianity which is observable in present-day academic circles is the widespread tendency in recent Christological discussion to revolt from the doctrine of the Two Natures in the Person of Christ. The significance of this revolt becomes at once apparent, when we reflect that the doctrine of the Two Natures is only another way of stating the doctrine of the Incarnation; and the doctrine of the Incarnation is the hinge on which the Christian system turns. No Two Natures, no Incarnation; no Incarnation, no Christianity in any distinctive sense. Nevertheless, voices are raised all about us declaring the conception of two natures in Christ no longer admissible; and that very often with full appreciation of the significance of the declaration.

Thus, for example, Johannes Weiss tells us that it is unthinkable that Godhood and manhood should be united in a single person walking upon the earth; that, while no doubt men of ancient time could conceive "that a man might really be an incarnate deity," modern men feel much too strongly the impassable barrier which separates the divine and the human to entertain such a

notion.¹ And Paul Wilhelm Schmiedel pronounces it "simply impossible," now that they have awakened to inquire "what is psychologically possible and impossible," for men to submit any longer to a demand that does such violence at once to their intelligence and to their religious experience as the demand "that they should embrace the idea of a perfect God and a perfect Man as united in the one and indivisible Person of a Savior whom they are longing to revere." Accordingly, since the divine and human nature cannot be united in Jesus, and since "Jesus was undoubtedly man," he continues, we have simply to regard him as man and nothing more.² Coming nearer home, William Adams Brown declares that men are no longer to be satisfied with "the old conception of Christ as a being of two natures, one divine and one human, dwelling in a mysterious union, incapable of description, within the confines of a single personality." Such a conception, he thinks, fails to "do justice to the genuine humanity of Jesus," who "shares our limitations"; and supposes "an impassable gulf between God and man" which requires "a miracle" to bridge it. The only "incarnation" which is real, he asserts, concerns not "a single instance," but the eternal entrance of God "into humanity."³ These are but examples of numerous deliverances which may differ from one another in the clearness with which they announce the consequences, but do not differ in the decisiveness with which they reject the doctrine of the Two Natures.⁴

The violence of the revolution which is thus attempted is somewhat obscured by the bad habit, which is becoming common, of speaking of the doctrine of the Two Natures as in some sense the creation of the Chalcedonian fathers. Even Albert Schweitzer permits himself to write:

When at Chalcedon the West overcame the East, its doctrine of the two Natures dissolved the unity of the Person and thereby cast off the last possibility of a return to the historical Jesus. The self-contradiction was elevated

¹ *Christus: Die Anfänge des Dogmas* (1909), 88.

² *Jesus or Christ?* Being the *Hibbert Journal* Supplement for 1909, p. 66.

³ *Methodist Quarterly Review*, Nashville, Tenn., 1911, p. 44.

⁴ Cf. how the subject is dealt with in such widely read dogmatic treatises as Julius Kaftan's *Dogmatik*³. 4. (1901), §§ 42, 44 ff.; and F. A. B. Nitzsch's *Lehrbuch der evangelischen Dogmatik* (1892), §§ 43 ff.

into a law. . . . This dogma had first to be shattered before men could once more go out in quest of the historical Jesus, before they could even grasp the thought of his existence.⁵

By "the historical Jesus" is here meant the merely human Jesus; and it is quite true that the doctrine of the Two Natures interposes an insuperable obstacle to the recognition of such a Jesus as the real Jesus. There is a sense also in which it may be truly said that at Chalcedon the West impressed on the East its long-established doctrine of the Two Natures—a doctrine which had been fully formulated in the West from at least the time of Tertullian. But by this very token it is clear that the doctrine decreed at Chalcedon was nothing new; and if, as is often the case,⁶ the further suggestion is conveyed that what was new in it was the "Two Natures" itself, the perversion becomes monstrous.

It was no part of the task of the fathers at Chalcedon to invent a new doctrine, and the doctrine which they formulated had no single new element in it. Least of all was the doctrine of the Two Natures itself new. No one of the disputants in the long series of controversies which led up to Chalcedon, any more than in the equally long series of controversies which led down from it, cherished the least doubt of this doctrine—not even Arius, and certainly not Apollinaris, or Nestorius, or Eutyches, or any of the great Monophysite or Monothelite leaders, or any of their opponents. The doctrine of the Two Natures formed the common basis on which all alike stood; their differences concerned only the quality or integrity of the two natures united in the one person, or the character or effects of the union by which they were brought together. It was the adjustment of these points of difference alone with which the council was concerned, or rather, to speak more precisely, the authoritative determination of the range within which such attempted adjustments might be tolerated in a church calling itself Christian.

It was not to the fourth-century fathers alone, however, that

⁵ *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*, E.T., 1910, p. 3.

⁶ Cf. J. Weiss, *Christus*, usw. (1909), 88: "A series of inexpressibly complicated and supremely unhappy controversies attached itself to this, until the famous compromise formula [*Beschwichtigungsformel*] of one person in two natures was discovered, which no matter how acutely it may be elaborated can never give satisfaction."

the doctrine of the Two Natures was "given." There never was a time when it was not the universal presupposition of the whole attitude, intellectual and devotional alike, of Christians to their Lord. The term *δύο οὐσίαι* may first occur in extant writings in a fragment of Melito's of Sardis⁷ (Tertullian, *duae substantiae*; Origen and later writers generally, *δύο φύσεις*). But the thing goes back to the beginning.⁸ When we read, for example, in Clement of Rome's Letter to the Corinthians, in a passage (xvi) containing echoes of Heb. 1:8 and Phil. 2:6, that "the Scepter of the Majesty of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, came not in the pomp of arrogance or pride—though he could well have done that—but in lowliness of mind," or in a passage (xxxii) manifestly reminiscent of Rom. 9:5, that "the Lord Jesus," . . . that Lord Jesus to whom the highest predicates are ascribed (as e.g. in xxxvi)—is "according to the flesh," "of Jacob," the two natures are as plainly presupposed as they are openly asserted in such Ignatian passages as: "There is one only Healer, fleshly and spiritual, generate and ingenerate, God in man, true life in death, both of man and of God, first passible and then impassible, Jesus Christ our Lord" (Eph. 7:2), or: "For our God, Jesus Christ, was borne in the womb of Mary, according to a dispensation, of the seed of David, indeed, but also of the Holy Spirit" (18:2). Adolf Harnack, it is true, has made a brilliant attempt to distinguish "adoptionist" as well as "pneumatic" Christologies underlying the Christian tradition. But he has felt himself compelled notably to qualify his original representation,⁹ while F. Loofs has quite properly permitted the whole notion to drop out of sight;¹⁰ and R. Seeberg has solidly refuted it.¹¹ To discover a one-natured Christ, we must turn to the outlawed sects of the Docetists on the one hand, and the Ebionites with their successors, the Dynamistic Montanists, on the other. Whatever else the church brought with it out of the apostolic age, it emerged from that, its formative, epoch with so firm a faith in

⁷ Fragment VI, Otto, IX, p. 416.

⁸ Cf. F. Loofs, *Herzog*³, IV, 36, 37: "Melito spoke of *δύο οὐσίαι* in Christ. The tradition of Asia Minor supplied to him the materials for this: the formula was not derived from it by Melito."

⁹ *Grundriss*⁴, 44, note.

¹⁰ *Herzog*³, IV, 23 ff.

¹¹ *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte*² (1908), I, 104 ff.

the Two Natures of its Lord as to be incapable of wavering. "Perfect man"¹² it knew him to be. But the exhortation of Christians to one another ran in such strains as we find in the opening words of the earliest Christian homily that has come down to us: "Brethren, thus ought we to think of Jesus Christ—as of God, as of Judge of quick and dead";¹³ and so exhorting one another, they naturally were known to their heathen observers precisely as worshipers of Christ.¹⁴ So fixed in the Christian consciousness was the conception of the Two Natures of the Savior, that nothing could dislodge it. We shall have to come down to the radical outbreak which accompanied the Reformation—Trancendental or Socinian—for the first important defection from it after the early Dynamistic Monarchianism; and it was not until the rise in the eighteenth century of the naturalistic movement known as the Enlightenment that there was inaugurated any widespread revolt from it. It is under the influence of this revolt, which has not yet spent its force, that so many "moderns" have turned away from the doctrine as "impossible."

The constancy with which the church has confessed the doctrine of the Two Natures finds its explanation in the fact that this doctrine is entrenched in the teaching of the New Testament. The Chalcedonian Christology, indeed, in its complete development is only a very perfect synthesis of the biblical data. It takes its starting-point from the New Testament as a whole, thoroughly trusted in all its declarations, and seeks to find a comprehensive statement of the scriptural doctrine of the Person of Christ, which will do full justice to all the elements of its representation. The eminent success which it achieves in this difficult undertaking is due to the circumstance that it is not the product of a single mind working under a "scientific" impulse, that is to say, with purely theoretical intent, but of the mind, or rather the heart, of the church at large searching for an adequate formulation of its vital faith, that is to say, of a large body of earnest men distributed through a long stretch of time, and living under very

¹² Ignatius, *ad Symrn.* IV, 2, *ad fin.*; Zahn compares the fragment of Melito's alluded to above (n. 7): *θεὸς γὰρ ὦν ὁμοῦ τε καὶ ἀνθρώπος τέλειος ὁ αὐτός.*

¹³ 2 Clem. Rom. I, 1.

¹⁴ Plin., *Ep.* x. 96: "carmenque Christo quasi deo dicere secum invicem."

varied conditions, each passionately asserting, and seeking to have justice accorded to, elements of the biblical representation which particularly "found" him. The final statement is not a product of the study, therefore, but of life; and was arrived at, externally considered, through protracted and violent controversies, during the course of which every conceivable construction of the biblical data had been exploited, weighed, and its elements of truth sifted out and preserved, while the elements of error which deformed it were burned up as chaff in the fires of the strife. To the onlooker from this distance of time, the main line of the progress of the debate takes on an odd appearance of a steady zigzag advance. Arising out of the embers of the Arian controversy, there is first vigorously asserted, over against the reduction of our Lord to the dimensions of a creature, the pure deity of his spiritual nature (Apollinarianism); by this there is at once provoked, in the interests of the integrity of our Lord's humanity, the equally vigorous assertion of the completeness of his human nature as the bearer of his deity (Nestorianism); this in turn provokes, in the interests of the oneness of his Person, an equally vigorous assertion of the conjunction of these two natures in a single individuum (Eutychianism): from all of which there gradually emerges at last, by a series of corrections, the balanced statement of Chalcedon, recognizing at once in its "without confusion, without conversion, eternally and inseparably" the union in the Person of Christ of a complete deity and a complete humanity, constituting a single person without prejudice to the continued integrity of either nature. The pendulum of thought had swung back and forth in ever-decreasing arcs, until at last it found rest along the line of action of the fundamental force. Out of the continuous controversy of a century there issued a balanced statement in which all the elements of the biblical representation were taken up and combined. Work so done is done for all time; and it is capable of ever-repeated demonstration that in the developed doctrine of the Two Natures (as it is worked out with marvelous insight and delicate precision in such a presentation of it as is given, say, in the *Admonitio Christiana*, 1581, written chiefly by Zacharias Ursinus and published in his works) and in it alone, all the biblical data are brought

together in a harmonious statement, in which each receives full recognition, and out of which each may derive its sympathetic exposition. This key unlocks the treasures of the biblical instruction on the Person of Christ as none other can, and enables the reader as he currently scans the sacred pages to take up their declarations as they meet him, one after the other, into an intelligently consistent conception of his Lord.

The key which unlocks so complicated a lock can scarcely fail to be its true key. And the argument may be turned around. That all the varied representations concerning our Lord's Person contained in the New Testament fall into harmony under the ordering influence of so simple a hypothesis as that of the Two Natures, authenticates these varying representations as each a fragment of a real whole. It were inconceivable that so large a body of different and sometimes apparently divergent data could synthesize in so simple a unifying conception, were they not component elements of a unitary reality. And this consideration is greatly strengthened by the manner in which these differing or sometimes even apparently divergent data are distributed through the New Testament. They are not parceled out severally to the separate books, the composition of different writers, so that one set of them is peculiar to one writer or to one set of writers, and a set of different import peculiar to another writer or set of writers. They are, rather, pretty evenly distributed over the face of the New Testament, and the most different or apparently divergent data are found side by side in the writings of the same author or even in the same writing. The doctrine of the Two Natures is not merely a synthesis of all the data concerning the Person of Christ found in the New Testament; it is the doctrine of each of the New Testament books in severalty. There is but one doctrine of the Person of Christ inculcated or presupposed by all the New Testament writers without exception. In this respect the New Testament is all of a piece. Book may differ from book in the terms in which it gives expression to the common doctrine, or in the fulness with which it develops its details, or with which it draws out its implications. But all are at one in the inculcation or presupposition of the common doctrine of the Two Natures.

It has no doubt required some time for the critical study of the New Testament writings to arrive solidly at this conclusion. But it is at this conclusion, it may fairly be said, that the critical study of the New Testament has at length arrived. The day is gone by in which a number of mutually exclusive Christologies could be ascribed to the writers of the New Testament and set over against one another in crass contradiction. Nowadays, the New Testament is admitted to be Christologically much on a level, and though we still hear of a pre-Pauline, a Pauline, and a post-Pauline Christology, this very phraseology shows the dominance of a single type, and the boundary lines which separate even the varieties which are thus suggested are very indistinct. There are in fact next to no pre-Pauline writings in the New Testament, and therefore no pre-Pauline Christologies are taught in it; and though there are writings in the New Testament which in point of chronological sequence are post-Pauline, it is only with much ado that a post-Pauline Christology in the proper sense of the term can be even plausibly discovered in it. F. C. Baur discriminated three sharply divergent types of Christology among the New Testament writers. To the Synoptists Christ was a mere man, endowed with the Holy Spirit as Messiah; to Paul he was still a man but a deified man; to John he was a God incarnated in a human body. We have to travel far from this before we reach, say, Johannes Weiss. To Weiss the whole New Testament is written under the influence of Paul who introduced the Logos Christology. Before Paul, men indeed thought of Christ as a deified man; but no New Testament book is written from this standpoint. After Paul, some explication of what is already implicit in Paul took place; but the general lines laid down by Paul are only deepened, not departed from. The Christologies of Peter, Paul, and John are still distinguished; but the distinctions are posited on little or no differences in recorded utterances.

The difficulty in discovering a substantial difference between the Christologies of Paul and John, for example, is fairly illustrated by the straits to which so acute a writer as Johannes Weiss is brought in the effort to establish one. The only such difference he is able to suggest is that the superhuman Being whose incarnation

constituted the Two-Natured Christ believed in by both writers alike, is, with Paul, though divine in his nature, yet of subordinate rank to the supreme God, while with John he is the supreme God himself. Unfortunately, however (or, rather, fortunately), when Paul speaks of the superhuman element in the person of his Lord, he does not hesitate to declare him the supreme God in the most exalted sense, and that in language which, for clearness and emphasis, leaves nothing for John to add to it.

He does this, for example, in Rom. 9:5, where he describes Christ as to his higher nature in these great words: *ὁ ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων θεὸς εὐλογητὸς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας, ἀμήν*. It is instructive to observe how Johannes Weiss deals with such a passage. He is arguing that Paul carefully avoids calling Christ by the high name of "God," although he places Him as "Lord" by the side of God (I Cor. 3:23, 8:6); and he adds:¹⁵

It is, then, very remarkable that in the present text of Rom. 9:5 there stands the following doxology, which can be referred only to Christ: "He who is God over all, be blessed for ever." If *κύριος* had stood here we should not have been surprised; that the text should, however, ascribe to Him here a predicate which puts Him altogether in God's place—without any indication of subordination—is inconceivable. Accordingly it has been rightly assumed that there is a textual corruption here. It is undoubtedly genuine, however, when, in John 20:28, Thomas exclaims to the resurrected Christ: "My Lord and my God." So also Christ is called God in I John 5:20 and Titus 2:13. This is accordant with the dominant Hellenistic mode of thought in these late New Testament writings. The strictly Jewish foundation of the oldest Christianity is no longer so strong; feeling is no longer shocked by the appearance by the side of God of a second Godhead.

Needless to say, however, there is not a scintilla of evidence of textual corruption in Rom. 9:5; corruption is assumed solely because the assertion of the passage does not fit in with the lowered Christology which Weiss would fain assign to Paul. The allusion to previous writers who have assumed corruption is doubtless to the recent attempt¹⁶ to revive an old emendation proposed by the Socinian controversialists, J. Schlichting and J. Crell. The suggestion is that the words *ὁ ὢν* be transposed, so as to read

¹⁵ *Christus* (1909), 29.

¹⁶ J. Lepsius, *Das Reich Christi* (1904); Strömann, *ZNTW* (1907), 319; (1908), 80 (A. Bischoff).

ὦν ὁ (Hoekstra would be satisfied with the simple omission of the ὁ).¹⁷ Thus it is thought the last clause of the passage would be brought into parallelism with its predecessors, and the whole would rise to its climax in the assertion that not only do the fathers belong to the Jews, and not only has the Christ (as regards the flesh) sprung from them, but to them belongs also the supreme God himself who is blessed forevermore, Amen. The mere statement of the proposal surely is its sufficient refutation. The variation of the construction in the instance of the Christ from ὦν to ἐξ ὦν, and the limitation of even this assertion with respect to him to his flesh (τὸ κατὰ σάρκα) render the adjunction of such a clause as the reconstructed form gives us simply incredible. Should Paul, after refusing to declare their own Messiah to belong distinctively to the Jews and carefully limiting his relation to them to merely that of issuing from them—and that, only “according to the flesh”—immediately assert with climactic emphasis that the supreme and eternal God himself is their peculiar possession? “Is he the God of the Jews only and not also of the Gentiles?” Paul asks in the same broad context (Rom. 3:29), and answers with emphasis, “Yes, of the Gentiles also”; and by that answer advertises to us that he could not have written here, in his enumeration of the distinctive privileges of the Jews, that “theirs is the God over all, blessed forever.” The resort to textual emendation to ease the pressure of the passage fails, thus, as dismally as, according to Weiss’s own confession, the more common resort to artificial exegesis of it fails—whether this follows the older methods of varying merely the punctuation so as to throw the obnoxious clause into innocuous isolation as an interjected doxology to God, or the new suggestion of F. C. Burkitt which would take the ὁ ὦν as the Tetragrammaton itself, and read the whole passage as not “description but ascription”—a protestation, calling the Eternal to witness the sincerity of Paul’s great asseveration.¹⁸ It is at least a healthful sign of the times

¹⁷ Cf. W. C. van Manen, *Conjecturaal-kritiek* toegepast op den Tekst van de Schriften des Nieuwen Testaments (1880), 262. Van Manen wonders that no one, instead of θεὸς has read ὁς after the analogy of I Tim. 3:16; but that would scarcely (here any more than at I Tim. 3:16) mend the matter. Christ would remain ὁ ἐπὶ πάντων and be εὐλογητὸς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας; and these predicates import deity at its height.

¹⁸ JTS, V, 451-55.

when Weiss discards all such artificial exegesis; we may even hope that the day has dawned when it is no longer possible.¹⁹ It is mere matter of fact that Paul, speaking distinctly οὐ κατὰ τιμήν, ἀλλὰ κατὰ φύσιν, as the contrast with τὸ κατὰ σάρκα shows, designates Christ here "God over all, blessed forever." It were well for us to adjust our theories to this plain fact and cease to endeavor to brush the fact out of the way of our theories.

Why so much zeal and ingenuity should be expended in attempting to vacate this declaration of its plain meaning, it is meanwhile a little difficult to comprehend. If it stood alone among Paul's utterances²⁰ it might be natural for those who wish to attribute

¹⁹ C. Clemen, *Religionsgeschichtliche Erklärung des N.T.* (1909), 262-63, writes: "If even Jesus himself already exalted himself above the measure of other men by his proclamation of his return to judgment, and this happened to a still greater extent in the primitive Christian community, yet it was Paul who first designates him as the Lord in whom all things consist, and not only sets him side by side with God, but—according to the much more probable interpretation of Rom. 9:5—even gives him the very name." Even when the reference to Christ is denied, it is frequently admitted that the exegetical considerations favor it. Thus, M. Brückner, *Die Entstehung der paulinischen Christologie* (1903), 67, allows that "exegetically the reference to Christ is almost necessary," though, pleading that "grammatical exegesis cannot always be permitted to give the decision," he decides against it, on the strange ground that it is "precisely here out of place to emphasize the divine nature of Christ," as if the fact that the possession of divine nature by the Messiah who issued from them was not the Jews' supreme glory! Similarly, Robert B. Drummond writes (*The Academy*, March 30, 1895, No. 1195, p. 273): "I must confess that I feel very strongly the grammatical difficulty of the Unitarian interpretation, but, on the other hand, the improbability of Paul attributing not only deity, but supreme deity (ἐπι πάντων θεός) to Christ, seems to me so great as to outweigh all other considerations." Why, however, it should be thought "improbable" that Paul should attribute to Christ in terms the supreme deity he everywhere accords him in fact does not appear; had Paul held Drummond's views concerning Christ it would have been a different matter. On Rom. 9:5 in general, see Dwight, *Journal of the Exegetical Society* (1881), 22, and Sanday-Headlam, Gifford, and Zahn, *in loco*.

²⁰ That it does stand alone in Paul's writings is, of course, the implication of Weiss, and is often explicitly asserted. Thus, for example, E. P. Gould, *The Biblical Theology of the New Testament* (1900), 93-94, reasons as follows: "All that can be said in favor of this interpretation, according to which Jesus is here called God, is that it is a natural interpretation, probably the natural explanation of the passage as it stands, supposing there is nothing against it. But on the other side is the fact that it stands absolutely alone in the Apostle's writings." Phil. 2:6 Gould interprets as implying that equality with God was something the preincarnate Christ did not possess but might conceivably aspire to (ἀρπαγμός, active). Colossians he denies to Paul.

another doctrine to him to seek to set it in some way aside. But so far from standing alone, it is but one of many declarations running through his epistles, to the same effect. There is Phil. 2:6, for example, where, beyond question, Christ Jesus is asserted to be "on an equality with God"²¹—an assertion, one would think, not easy to reconcile with the notion that he was a being definitely lower than God. Lietzmann seems therefore to speak very sensibly when he writes in his comment on Rom. 9:5: "Since Paul represents Christ in Phil. 2:6 as ἴσα θεῷ there is no reason why he should not, on occasion, call him directly θεός."²² When he goes on, however, to say: "The decision here, as often, if we are not acting under dogmatic prejudices, is a matter of pure feeling; to me it seems that ὁ ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων θεός is more suitable for the 'Almighty God' the Father of Jesus," he seems to forget that his former remark forbids him to say this feeling could be operative with Paul—which is the only matter *ad rem*. That the writer of Phil. 2:6 might very well "on occasion" call Christ directly God is made even more clear by the circumstance that he does this very thing in this very passage, and that in the most emphatic manner possible. For that the representation of Christ Jesus as ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων is precisely to call him God is evidenced not merely by the intimation which is immediately given that he who is "in the form of God" is "on an equality with God," but by the connotation of the phraseology itself. It is undeniable that in the philosophic-popular mode of speech here employed, "form" means just that body of characterizing qualities which makes anything the particular thing it is—in a word, its specific character.²³ To say that

²¹ The interpretation (represented by E. P. Gould; see above n. 20; cf. also M. Brückner, *op. cit.*, 66 ff., who thinks the thing lacking to make Christ "equal with God" was only "the name and position of 'Lord'") which first insists on the active form of ἀρπαγμός and then represents Christ's example as consisting on the negative side in a refusal to aspire to equality with God (Brückner even draws a parallel with Gen. 3:5-9) is certainly wrong. If ἀρπαγμός is to be taken actively the only tolerable sense is something like that given it by J. Ross, *JTS* (1909), 573-74: Christ "did not think that to be on an equality with God spelled rapacity, plundering, self-aggrandizement," that is to say, did not treat the equality which he had with God as an opportunity for self-aggrandizement but made nothing of himself.

²² *Handbuch zum N.T.*, in *loc.*

²³ Cf. J. B. Lightfoot, in *loc.*: "μορφή implies not the external accidents but the essential attributes"; "μορφή must apply to the attributes of the Godhead; in

Christ Jesus is²⁴ "in the form of God" is then to say not less but more than to say shortly that he is "God": for it is to emphasize the fact that he has in full possession and use all those characterizing qualities which make God the particular Being we call "God"; and this mode of expression, rather than the simple term "God," is employed here precisely because it was of the essence of the Apostle's purpose to keep his reader's mind on all that Christ was as God rather than merely on the abstract fact that he was God.

By the side of Phil. 2:6 there stands also Col. 2:9, where it is declared that in Christ "there dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily," that is to say, in plain words, that Christ is an incarnation of the Godhead in all its fulness, which again is a statement rather difficult to harmonize with the notion that its author believed it was something less than God which was incarnated in Christ. And by the side of the whole series of such passages there stands the immense number of instances in which Christ is designated "Lord." For *κύριος* is not with Paul of lower connotation than *θεός*. Johannes Weiss does, indeed, in the passage we have quoted from him above,²⁵ suggest that if only it were *κύριος* instead of *θεός* which we found in Rom. 9:5 we should experience no surprise at the declaration and, presumably, feel no inclination to correct the text; the implication being that Paul might very well call Christ "Lord over all" but not "God over all." "Lord over all" would have meant, however, precisely what "God over all" means;²⁶ and it is singularly infelicitous other words, it is used in a sense substantially the same which it bears in Greek philosophy"; "this sense of *μορφή* as the specific character."

²⁴ This is the right tense: for *ὑπάρχων* is not a past participle; and hence already involves that continuance of Jesus "in the form of God" after as well as before he had assumed "the form of a servant," which is one of the chief implications of the whole passage. There is here, in other words, as often in Paul, an explicit assertion of the Two Natures. Cf. E. H. Gifford, *The Incarnation*, 1897.

²⁵ P. 345.

²⁶ Peter is reported in Acts 10:36 as declaring that Jesus Christ is "Lord of all" and this high designation is sustained by the further announcement in 10:42 that he has been "ordained of God to be the judge of quick and dead," a purely divine function. How, then, can it be said, as is often said, as, e.g., by Schmiedel (*Jesus or Christ?* 62), that in Acts 10:38, lying between these two statements of express deity, there "is expressed with noteworthy clearness" the notion that Jesus "had been a man who differed from others merely by reason of being endowed with divine power"? On the

tous to give the impression that Paul in currently speaking of Christ as "Lord" placed him on a lower plane than God. Paul's intention was precisely the opposite, viz., to put him on the same plane with God; and accordingly it is as "Lord" that all divine attributes and activities are ascribed to Christ and all religious emotions and worship are directed to him. In effect, the Old Testament divine names, Elohim on the one hand, and Jehovah and Adhonai on the other, are in the New Testament distributed between God the Father and God the Son with as little implication of difference in rank here as there. "Lord," in a word, is Paul's divine name for Christ; is treated by him as Christ's proper name—as, in fact, what can scarcely be called anything else than his inter-trinitarian name and, in this technical sense, his "personal" name. Accordingly Paul does not enumerate the Persons of the Trinity as our Lord is reported as doing (Matt. 28:19), according to their relations to one another, "Father, Son, and Spirit," but according to his own relation to each in turn, as God, the Lord, the Spirit: "the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all" (II Cor. 13:13). The only distinction which can be discerned between "God" and "Lord" in his usage of the terms is a distinction not in relative dignity, but in emphasis on active sovereignty. "God" is, so to speak, a term of pure exaltation; "Lord" carries with it more expressly the idea of sovereign rulership in actual exercise. It is probable that Paul's appropriation specifically of the divine designation "Lord" to Christ was in part at least occasioned by his conviction that he, as God-man, has become the God of providence in whose hand is the kingdom, to "reign until he hath put

meaning of "Lord of all" compare G. Dalman, *Der Gottesname Adonai* (1889), 83. Referring to the use of the term "Lord" by Luke to characterize Christ, he writes: "It is the same that Paul uses in Phil. 2:11 where Jesus appears as the Lord to be recognized in heaven and earth and beneath the earth in a position in which the Old Testament knows God alone. Jesus is here the πάντων κύριος of Acts 10:36 (cf. קַיְרִי קָלָא of God, Talm. Nedarim, 22b) which does not lie far from the ἐπι πάντων θεός of Rom. 9:5." Dalman goes on, to be sure, to say that "the Apostles would have shrunk from designating Jesus by the Hebrew יהוה or אֲדֹנָי, since these expressions too closely recalled the θεός ἀόρατος, and that only Thomas' confession (John 20:28) "treads on the boundary line here"; but these remarks are only the unauthorized expressions of Dalman's own prejudices.

all his enemies under his feet" (I Cor. 15:24, etc.; cf. Phil. 2:9 ff.), or, as it is expressed with great point and fulness in Eph. 1:20-23, He has been seated on the right hand of God, far above any conceivable power and made head over all things for his church. In a word, the term "Lord" seems to have been specifically appropriated to Christ not because it is a term of function rather than of dignity, but because along with the dignity it emphasizes also function.

All this is, of course, well known to Johannes Weiss. He writes:²⁷

To expound the religious significance which the use of the name "Lord" had for the early Christians, the whole New Testament would need to be transcribed. For in the formula "our Lord Jesus Christ" the essence of the primitive religion is contained. Obedient subjection, reverence, and holy dread of offending him, a complete sense of dependence on him for all things ("if the Lord will," I Cor. 4:19), gratitude and love and trust—in short, everything that man can feel in the presence of God—comes to expression in this term. We can best perceive this in the benedictions at the opening of the epistles. Here "grace and peace" are invoked or desired "from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." What is looked for from God can also be granted by the Lord. This inclusion of God and Christ in a single view which corresponds precisely with their coenthronement is characteristic of the piety of primitive Christianity. As Christians cry "Abba Father" and pray to him, so there can be no doubt that they also "prayed" in the strict sense of the word to Christ, not only in loyal adoration, but also in the form of petition. We have particular instances of this "calling on the Lord" (Rom. 10:12) in Paul (II Cor. 12:8) and in Stephen (Acts 7:60). But such prayers were certainly made infinitely more often. Christians stand, therefore, in point of fact, over against Christ, as over against God (cf. 2 Clem. 1:1).

And again, from Phil. 2:9 ff. as a starting-point:²⁸

Now not only is this word (*κύριος*) known in the general language of Hellenisticism, but it has a special history in the peculiar region of Jewish Hellenisticism. The Jews were taught to substitute for the proper name of God, Jahwe, in the sacred text the expression Adonai (Lord). The Greek translators of the Old Testament were acting in the correct Jewish fashion when they replaced the name יהוה by *κύριος*, the frequently occurring combination יהוה האלהים by *κύριος ὁ θεός* that is, exactly, "Lord, the God" (so also, Luke 1:32, 68, etc.). The *κύριος* without an article is felt almost as a proper name. When Luther represents it by "God, the Lord," it is on the contrary "God" that he feels as a proper name. It is from this that the passage in the Epistle to the Philippians may be understood—all the more that there

²⁷ *Christus*, usw. (1909), 24-25.

²⁸ *Christus*, usw. (1909), 27.

is a reminiscence here of passages like Isa. 42:8, 45:23: "I am *κύριος* ὁ θεός, this is my name, my honor will I not give to another"; "to me shall every knee bow and every tongue confess God." This name which God jealously guards as his own prerogative, he has now ceded to Christ, and has thereby publicly proclaimed that all beings shall bow to him and acknowledge him Lord. The transference of the name signifies, according to ancient usage, endowment with the power which the name designates. This passage is only another declaration of the transference to him by God of sovereignty over the world, of His constitution as "Lord of Lords and King of Kings." Thus the content of this passage coalesces in substance with what is said in Acts 2:36 and intimated in I Cor. 8:5. But whereas it is there to be understood that Christ alone rightly bears the name of *κύριος*, there is this much more intimated here—that *κύριος* is not merely a general designation of honor but the name of God become almost Christ's proper name. By this Christ is not merely elevated into a generally divine region; He takes the very place of the omnipotent God. Here, accordingly, *κύριος* cannot in any case have a weaker meaning than *θεός*.

Despite, however, such a clear perception of the high connotation of *κύριος* in the case of Paul (and the whole primitive Christian community), Johannes Weiss endeavors to interpret it, on Paul's lips, as expressive of something short of "God." He asserts (quite in the teeth of the facts, as we have seen) that Paul carefully avoids using the term "God" to denote Christ. Forgetting that with Paul, Christ (because—as nobody doubts—he is a two-natured person) is not only all that God is, but also all that man is, he appeals to I Cor. 3:23 to prove that Christ is dependent on God specifically with respect to his divine nature. He even points to I Cor. 8:6 as implying this manner of subordination. Let us, however, hear him fully on this latter passage. He writes:²⁹

What Paul understands by the term "Lord" may be seen from I Cor. 8:5. When he here grants that there are, in point of fact, many (certainly only so-called) "Gods and Lords," he means to say that there exist many (in his view demonic) beings to whom men render worship and adoration, calling upon them as God or Lord. In contrast with these many "lords," particularly perhaps to emperor worship, Christians acknowledge and venerate only the *one κύριος*, Jesus Christ (cf. Deissmann, *Licht von Osten*, 233 ff.). It would not be impossible—though there is no way certainly to prove it—that in Paul's sense the predicate "Lords" stands a grade lower than "Gods," that he would recognize it as applied only to deified men, heroes, and gods of lower degree. In any event, speaking from the point of view of style, to the word "Gods" in

²⁹ *Christus*, usw., 26.

vs. 5 the "God the Father" of vs. 6 corresponds; and to the word "Lords" the "Lord Jesus Christ." Now there can be no doubt (and precisely our passage gives a distinct proof of it) that what Paul seeks to do is, in spite of Christ's position by God's side, to subordinate him again to God (so, e.g., II Cor. 1:3 when he calls God not only the Father but also "the God of our Lord Jesus Christ": cf. Eph. 1:17; John 20:17). And thus it were possible that he took over all the more readily the name *κύριος* derived by him from the primitive community, because he could express by it, no doubt, the divine position of Christ and the divine veneration due to him, and yet draw a line by means of which the interval between Christ and God should remain protected.

It certainly is surprising to find Weiss suggesting here that Paul may be using the term "Lord" after a heathen fashion to designate only gods of lower degree; we have just seen him solidly proving that, in its application to Christ, at least, Paul employs it in a sense in which it is not capable of discrimination from "God." For the same reason it is surprising to find him suggesting here that one of Paul's motives in applying to Christ the term "Lord" may perhaps have been to avoid confounding him with God. And in view of Paul's doctrine of the Two Natures (which Weiss does not in the least question) it is still further surprising to find him adducing here the circumstance that Paul sometimes speaks of God as the "God," as well as the Father, "of our Lord Jesus Christ" as throwing doubt on his ascription of proper deity to Christ's divine nature—a procedure which one would think would have been rendered impossible by the circumstance (to which Weiss himself calls attention) that the same mode of speech occurs in John, where, at least, Weiss does not doubt Christ is simply God. Finally, how little I Cor. 8:5, 6 itself can be supposed to suggest the subordination of the "Lord" Jesus Christ as to His deity to "God" the Father, becomes evident at once on our noting that the two—the one Lord Jesus Christ and the one God the Father—are represented here as together constituting that God of which it is emphatically declared there is but one. For it is precisely in exposition of his energetic assertion in verse 4, in contradiction of all polytheistic points of view, that "there is no God, except *one*," that Paul declares that Christians recognize that there is only "one God the Father and one Lord Jesus Christ." By as much as it is certain that he did not intend to represent the

Christians themselves as polytheists, worshipping, like the rest, deity in grades, but, in contrast with all polytheists, as worshippers of but one Deity, it is clear that he did not intend to assign to Christ the position of a secondary deity. Obviously to him the "one God the Father" and "the one Lord Jesus Christ" were in some high and true sense alike included in that one God who alone is recognized as existing.

This energetic assertion of monotheism by Paul, combined with a provision within it for at least some kind of dualism, leads us to revert for a moment to the closing clauses of the first extract we quoted from Johannes Weiss.³⁰ There Weiss, having recognized for the Johannine writings and the Pastoral Epistles³¹—what he would not recognize for Paul—that in them Christ is directly called "God" with the fullest meaning, seeks to account for this by suggesting that these "late New Testament writings" may have lapsed from the strictness of Jewish monotheism under the influence of Hellenistic modes of thought, and thus have been enabled to place a second God by the side of God the Father in a sense still impossible to Paul. On the face of it, however, it certainly does not appear that there has been any falling away from the highest monotheism in their case; monotheism is rather the presupposition of all their teaching (John 5:44; 17:3; I Tim. 1:17, 25; 6:15). It is Weiss's method which is again at fault. Whatever con-

³⁰ Above, p. 345.

³¹ For Weiss treats the Pastoral Epistles together as the work of one author, described as "a pupil of Paul." Even in their case, however, though admitting their high Christology, Weiss throws out a gratuitous expression of doubt as to the integrity of the text in which this high Christology finds its most precise expression. He writes (*Christus*, usw., 68-69; Schiele's *Religion* usw., I, col. 1733): "Although, therefore, the author energetically emphasizes that Jesus was *man*, he holds at the same time fast to his divine origin—yes (if we have the right text), he calls him (Tit. 2:13) precisely 'our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.' But even if we must read or explain this text otherwise, there is *one* expression, which our author uses with predilection, that will give us light. He speaks (II Tim. 1:10) of the 'epiphany' of the Savior. Every Greek reader must have understood this well-known term in the sense that Jesus Christ is a God appearing in human form on earth. It was thus that the epiphany of a God was spoken of, when he appeared to men to command perhaps the building of a temple, or the establishment of a festival, or to confer benefactions: thus Antiochus IV of Syria was called 'Epiphanes' as a God walking on the earth; and so the expression on the lips of our author means just *the incarnation of a God.*"

clusions may seem valid to him he obtrudes without more ado upon the New Testament writers, although their point of view obviously differs from his by a whole diameter. On his frankly Socinian postulates,³² it may seem clear that where two are God there cannot be one God only. He therefore at once declares that the monotheism of John and the author of the Pastoral Epistles, who recognize at least two as God, is clearly falling into decay. But the Socinian postulates, dear to Weiss, have not determined the point of view of these writers! Their ascription of proper deity to Christ, therefore, in no wise imperils the purity of their monotheism; no monotheism, however strict, could inhibit the fullest recognition of the proper deity of Christ with writers whose fundamental thought runs on the lines on which their thought runs, and the ascription of a purer monotheism than theirs to Paul, on the ground that they look upon the deity of Christ as proper and supreme, is nothing but a gratuitous prejudicing of the case. In point of fact, Paul stands precisely on the same level with them as with respect to the doctrine of God, so with respect to the doctrine of Christ. Every line of his epistles is vocal with the cry of Thomas, "My Lord and my God"; for the Epistle to the Romans as truly as for the Epistle to Titus, Christ is "our great God and Savior"; to the Epistle to the Philippians as fully as to the First Epistle of John, Christ is "the true God," that is to say, he fills out and perfectly satisfies the whole idea of God—for that is as distinctly the connotation of *ὑπάρχων ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ* as it is of *ὁ ἀληθινὸς θεός*.

The attempt to separate Paul's doctrine of Christ from John's as something essentially different, therefore, utterly fails. It is much more plausible to expound John's doctrine as a mere copy of Paul's. There is considerable appearance of reasonableness, for example, in P. Wernle's representation that the significance of

³² Cf. his *Paulus und Jesus* (1909), 4-5, where, describing two forms of "Christianity," one of which is "Christ-religion" and worships Christ, and the other is "God-religion" and worships God alone, only permitting itself to be led by Jesus of Nazareth "to the Father," he adds: "I make no secret of my profession, in company with the majority of recent theologians, of the second of these views. . . . But as a historian I must declare it widely different from the dominant view of primitive Christianity, from the Pauline view."

John's Gospel consists merely in its "bridging the chasm between Jesus and Paul and transferring the Pauline gospel back into the discourses and life-delineation of Jesus."³³ Was it not precisely through this transposition, indeed, he asks, that Paulinism first attained to dominance in the church? The trouble with this representation, however, is twofold: it ascribes distinctively to Paul what was the common doctrine of the whole church; and it credits particularly to John a service which had already been rendered—if it needed to be rendered—by the Synoptics. For the difficulty of construing Paul's Christology in lower terms than that of John is fairly matched by the difficulty of construing the Christology of the other writers of the New Testament in lower terms than that of Paul. The attempt has most frequently been made with respect to the Synoptic Gospels, and among them probably most persistently with respect to Mark. We have often been told that in that "oldest of the Gospels"—the first attempt to sketch a narrative "life of Christ"—we have a portrait of the human Christ, unfalsified as yet by "dogmatic elements." From this ineptitude, it is to be hoped, we have now been conclusively delivered, more especially through its trenchant exposure by Wrede, who, whatever else he did, certainly made it abundantly clear that what we have in the Gospel of Mark is far from what has been called a "primitive document" presenting a "primitive" view of the Person of Christ.³⁴ The highest astonishment is accordingly being now expressed from every quarter that it could

³³ *Die Anfänge unserer Religion* (1904), 446-48. Wernle, of course, does not deny that certain "modifications" were made in Paul's doctrine when it was taken over by John. While the groundwork remains the same, yet in John the *life* of Christ among men comes more to its rights, alongside of his death, and is filled with a positive content of divine revelation. The sole *deviation* from Paul's point of view which he finds in John, however, is that the earthly life of Jesus is conceived by John more under the category of exaltation than of humiliation—and this came to John from the Synoptics. He is constrained to add, however: "It must be said, nevertheless, that the Pauline Christology harmonizes admirably with the Johannine supplement, and acquires by it its convincing power." Cf. the sound criticism of Wernle by Jules Lebreton, *Origines du dogme de la Trinité* (1910), 376: "There is, no doubt, between John and Paul, a basis of identical doctrine which has become the common doctrine of the church; but there are also in the case of each of them doctrinal aspects which are purely individual, and by which they are profoundly distinguished from one another."

³⁴ Wrede, *Das Messiasgeheimnis in den Evangelien* (1901).

ever have been imagined that documents written in "the sixties," or at least in "the fifties," could fail to reflect the high Christology which, as we know from Paul's letters, was at that time the established faith of the whole Christian community.³⁵ In any event the Christology of the Synoptic Gospels is indistinguishable from that of Paul, and this is as true of the Christology of Mark as of that of Matthew or of Luke. We do not ourselves look upon Mark as "the primitive Gospel";³⁶ we do not even subscribe to the now almost universal opinion that it is the earliest of our three Synoptics; we agree with Johannes Weiss in assigning it to 64-68 A.D., but for reasons of our own we place it quite at the end of this period; we agree with Harnack in thinking Luke certainly as old as this and much more likely as old as 63 A.D., or even as 58-60 A.D.; and Matthew, we are sure, is as old as Mark and may very well be as old as Luke; we should find no serious difficulty, indeed, in placing both Matthew and Luke early in the "fifties."

³⁵ So far, at least, agreement is perfect among writers otherwise of polar divergence. H. Bavinck (*Gereformeerde Dogmatiek*, III, 284) remarks: "It is the same Christ who meets us throughout the whole New Testament. How could it be otherwise? The Synoptic Gospels are just as truly apostolic writings as the letters of Paul and were written even later than Paul's letters; there is nowhere any suggestion of a controversy among the apostles over the Person of Christ." J. Weiss says of Mark's Gospel particularly (*Christus*, usw., 14): "That the evangelist takes his start from a distinct Christology is certain—how could it be otherwise with a writer who presupposes the work of Paul and is writing down after the death of the first apostolic generation the 'Gospel of Jesus Christ' for the practical use of the mission to the heathen?" And then of the Synoptics at large (p. 73): "None of their authors was an eye-witness and all belong to the second generation, whose care it was to preserve the precious possession which had been intrusted to it"; "they all start, with respect to the dogmatic-christological positions, no longer at the standpoint of the first community: the exaltation-Christology has long [this in the fifties or sixties!] been transcended, and in its place there has stepped, as with Paul, the Incarnation-Christology."

³⁶ Cf. J. Weiss, *Jesus von Nazareth* (1910), 135: "Mark is anything but a first draftsman of the tradition; he is rather an eclectic reworker of old traditions; his book is not a source but a receptacle (*Sammelbecken*)"; also, *Das älteste Evangelium* (1903), 1-4: "As firmly as I am convinced that we have in Mark the oldest Gospel, I can as little agree that it presents the first and original cast (*Niederschlag*) of the evangelical tradition. So far as I can judge, Mark is already a station on the road which ends in John's Gospel, not the commencement of that road. It is no longer a source but a receptacle (*Sammelbecken*). The tradition which precedes it and which has received literary form in it was no longer fluid and unfixed but had reached already a relatively fixed shape."

But the brevity, and, so to say, relative externality, of Mark naturally suggest it as the particular one of the Synoptics in which the Christology common to them all is likely to be expressed in, if not its lowest, yet at least its least-elaborated terms; and it is not unnatural, therefore, that it has been scrutinized with especial care with a view to determining the real nature of the synoptic conception of Christ. The result has been to make it perfectly plain that the Synoptic conception of the Person of Christ is just that doctrine of the Two Natures which, as we have seen, is given expression in Paul's epistles and is everywhere presupposed in them as the established faith of the Christians of the middle of the first century, and of any earlier date to which the retrospective testimony of this body of Epistles may be allowed to extend.

The Christology of the Gospel of Mark [writes Johannes Weiss]³⁷ is already given expression in the title: his gospel treats of Jesus Christ (the Son of God, in case these last words are genuine). . . . The particularly designating names of Jesus are for him "the Son of God" and "the Son of Man." When the evangelist so frequently places the latter of these in the mouth of Jesus as a self-designation, he thus betrays that he no longer possesses any sense of the suitability of this name exclusively for the heavenly Messiah, whether as pre-existent or as exalted. For him it is precisely the Jesus who walks the earth who is no other than the "heavenly Man," who came down from heaven, and has been again exalted to heaven (15:62), whence he is to come again in the clouds with great power and glory (13:26). Accordingly he makes Jesus call himself the Son of Man even when he is speaking of his earthly activity (2:10, 28; 10:45), of his sufferings (e.g., 8:31), and of his resurrection (9:9). He was in this already preceded by the Discourses-source (Matt. 11:9=Luke 7:34) and Matthew carried still farther this replacement of an "I" in the mouth of Jesus by "the Son of Man" (cf. Matt. 16:13 with Mark 8:27). This use of the name is an altogether sufficient proof that, just like Paul, Mark looked upon Jesus as the "Man" who came from heaven. Similarly it cannot be doubted that this post-Pauline writer understood, as Paul understood it, the name "Son of God," which stood perhaps in the title of his gospel as the most significant name of dignity—that is to say, not in the theocratic sense, examined above (pp. 19 ff.), of him who has been chosen and called to the messianic kingship, but (p. 34) of him who was the sole one among men that, of his nature, bears in himself the essence (*Wesen*) of God.

³⁷ *Christus*, usw., 75-76, and Schiele's *Religion* usw., I, coll. 1734-35; cf. the further discussion in *Das älteste Evangelium* (1903), 45 ff., 96 ff., where he particularly shows that from the christological doctrine of John "our Gospel of Mark does not stand far"; that "the Christology of Mark stands much nearer that of John than is commonly allowed," etc.

Of course Weiss would distinguish shades of view among the several writers—the authors of the Gospels severally and Paul—but his testimony to the main matter is quite distinct; that, in a word, to the author of Mark, as to all the others of these writers, Christ was, as he himself puts it, “a divine being ‘incarnated’—we must already make use of this expression—in a man.”³⁸ And it will be found impossible to make this divine being, with Mark any more than with Paul, anything less than the supreme God himself. When Mark records our Lord himself as testifying that he is, in the hierarchy of being, above even the angels, he places him outside the category of created beings; and there is no reason to doubt that with him as truly as with all his Jewish compatriots the Son of God which he repeatedly calls Jesus connoted, as John defines the phrase for us (5:18), just “equality with God.”

It is not necessary to labor the point. It is undeniable that the Christ of the whole body of New Testament writers, without exception, is a Two-Natured Person—divine and human; and indeed this is scarcely any longer denied. Whatever attempts are still made to discriminate between the Christologies of the New Testament writers fall within the limits of this common doctrine. Wilhelm von Schnehen does not go one whit beyond the facts of the case when he declares,³⁹ no doubt after a fashion and with implications derived from his own point of view:

Go back into the history of Christianity as far as you will, you will nowhere find the least support for the notion that Jesus was revered on the ground of his purely human activity and attributes, say as the founder of a religion, as teacher of morals, or even only as religious-ethical example. Understand the content of the word “gospel” as you may, never has it to do with a mere “man” Jesus, never does it give to this the central place in Christian worship. For the glad-tidings of the Rabbi of Nazareth, even the adorers of his human personality will not in the end deny this. That it is valid also for the Gospel-writings of the New Testament is equally indubitable. The Jesus of which these writings tell us is through and through not a man but at the very least a super-man. Yes, he is more than that; he is the unique Son of God; the Christ, the coming God-man of the orthodox church. For the Fourth Gospel this is, of course, universally recognized; the Johannine Jesus is an incarnate creative word, the human manifestation of the “Logos,” who from

³⁸ *Christus*, usw., 77.

³⁹ *Der moderne Jesuskultus*² (1907), 10-11.

the beginning was with God and himself was God, whose divine glory was continuously apparent to his disciples, beneath its earthly shell. But the other Gospels also think of nothing so little as telling us of a mere "man" Jesus, and demanding a believing reverence for such a one. No, the miraculously begotten Son of the Virgin with Luke and Matthew, the Jesus who rose from the dead and ascended into heaven of the First and Third Gospels, is just as little a mere "natural man" as the Johannine Christ. And as regards finally the Gospel of Mark, Professor Bousset, for example, remarks: "It is already from the standpoint of faith that the oldest Gospel is written; already for Mark Jesus is not only the Messiah of the Jewish people but" (in consequence of the communication of the Spirit at the baptism!) "the miraculous, eternal Son of God whose glory shines into this world. And it has been rightly emphasized that in this respect our three first Gospels differ from the Fourth only in degree."

The comment which is made on this and similar utterances of recent radicalism, by Richard Grützmacher⁴⁰ is eminently justified:

The immense significance of this acknowledgment can be measured only by one who knows the unnumbered theological and extra-theological attempts of the last century and a half from the extremest left to far into the circle of the mediating theology to obtain from the New Testament itself, or at least from the three first Gospels, a purely human portrait of Jesus, and to eliminate all metaphysical and supernatural content from their expressions. The "modern" and the church interpretation of the New Testament at the beginning of the twentieth century—to which also in very large measure the later "Liberalism" gives its adhesion—is in complete accord in this result: that the church-doctrine of the God-man Christ can appeal with full right to the New Testament in its entire compass, and any development beyond that which has taken place is only formal. The allegorizing-dogmatic exegesis of the last hundred and fifty years has been transcended.⁴¹

That is to say, the doctrine of the Two Natures of Christ is not merely the synthesis of the teaching of the New Testament, but the conception which underlies every one of the New Testament writings severally; it is not only the teaching of the New Testament

⁴⁰ *Ist das liberale Jesusbild modern?* (1907), 29, 30.

⁴¹ Grützmacher very properly, in a note (p. 30), cries out on "the marvelous anachronism and self-deception" of which Julius Kaftan is guilty when he represents that in the portrait of the God-man, "it is the unhistorical interpretation of the New Testament, dominated by ecclesiastical dogma, that is working" (*Jesus und Paulus*, 59). Over against this he sets A. Kalthoff (*Entstehung*, usw., 9): "From the ecclesiastical God-man there leads a straight line backward through the epistles and gospels of the New Testament to the Apocalypse of Daniel in which the ecclesiastical type of the portrait of Jesus took its beginning."

as a whole but of the whole of the New Testament, part by part. Historically, this means that not only has the doctrine of the Two Natures been the invariable presupposition of the whole teaching of the church from the apostolic age down, but all the teaching of the apostolic age rests on it as its universal presupposition. When Christian literature begins, this is already the common assumption of the entire church. If we wish to translate this into the terms of positive chronology, what must be said is that before the opening of the sixth decade of the first century (for we suppose that I Thess. must be dated somewhere about 52 A.D.), the doctrine of the Two Natures already is firmly established in the church as the universal foundation of all Christian thinking concerning Christ. Such a mere chronological statement, however, hardly does justice to the case. What needs to be emphasized is that there is no Christian literature in existence which does not base itself, as upon an already firmly laid foundation, on the doctrine of the Two Natures. So far as Christian literature can bear testimony, there never has been any other doctrine recognized in the church. This literature itself goes back to within twenty years or so of the death of Christ; and of course—since it did not create but reflects this faith—has a retrospective value as testimony to the faith of Christians.

Nevertheless, men still seek to posit an "earlier," "more primitive," "simpler" view of the Person of Christ, behind this oldest attested doctrine. In another article we shall ask whether it is possible thus to go back of the doctrine of the New Testament writings to a more "primitive" view of the Person of Christ.