

**MESSIAH THE SON OF GOD**

Messiah Sermon 27 by Handel

Heb. 1:5.

- *For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee?*

I would like you to read this Trinitarian document by Brother Handel in his sermon talks and see how he understood Christ as the Son of God. ***This confirms to me that even Sunday Trinitarians acknowledged what today is not acknowledged by Trinitarians***

Though every part of a revelation from God must of course be equally true, there may be a considerable difference even among truths proposed by the same authority, with respect to their immediate importance. ***There are fundamental truths, the knowledge of which are essentially necessary to our peace and holiness: and there are others of a secondary nature, which, though very useful in their proper connexion, and though the right apprehension of them is greatly conducive to the comfort and establishment of a believer; are not so necessary, but that he may be a true believer before he clearly understands them. Thus our Lord pronounced Peter, Blessed Mt 16:17, for his acknowledgement of a truth, which had been revealed to him, but by flesh and blood, but from above, tho' he was at that time very deficient in doctrinal knowledge. It is not easy to draw the line here, and precisely to distinguish between fundamental and secondary truths; yet some attention to this distinction is expedient; and the want of such attention, has greatly contributed to foment and embitter controversies in the church of Christ; while fallible men, from a mistaken zeal for the faith once delivered to the saints, have laboured to enforce all their religious sentiments, with an equal and indiscriminate vehemence.*** It is evident that the truths essential to the very being of a christian, must be known, and experienced by all, of every nation, people and language, who are taught of God Isa 54:13. For they, and they only, are Christians indeed, who are thus taught. And therefore it seems to follow, that no doctrine, however true in itself, which humble and spiritual persons, who study the scripture with prayer, and really depend upon divine teaching, are not agreed in, can be strictly fundamental. And perhaps the chief part of the apparent diversity of their sentiments, does not so often respect the truth itself, as the different acceptation they put upon the words and phrases, by which they endeavour to express their meaning to each other.

***We ascribe it therefore to the wisdom and goodness of God, that a doctrine so important, the very pillar and ground of truth, is not asserted once, or in a few places of scripture only. It does not depend upon texts which require a nice skill in criticism, or a collection of ancient manuscripts, to settle their sense;*** but, like the blood in the animal economy, it pervades and enlivens the whole system of revelation. The books of Moses, the Psalms and the Prophets, all testify of Him, who was styled the son of God in so peculiar a sense, that the apostle, in this passage, considers it as a sufficient proof, that he is by nature superior to all creatures. The form of the question, implies the strongest assertion of this superiority. As if he had said, Conceive of the highest and most exalted of the angles, it would be absurd to suppose that God would say to him, in this passage, considers it as a sufficient proof, that he is by nature superior to all creatures. The form of the question, implies the strongest assertion of this superiority. As if he had said, Conceive of the highest and most exalted of the angles, it would be absurd to suppose that God would say to him, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.

The verse contains three terms which require explanation, My Son—Begotten—This day. But who is sufficient for these things? If I attempt to explain them, I wish to speak with a caution and modesty becoming the sense I ought to have of my own weakness, and to keep upon safe ground; lest instead of elucidating so sublime a subject, I should darken counsel by words without knowledge. And I know of no safe ground to go upon in these enquiries, but the sure testimony of scripture. It would be to the last degree improper to indulge flights of imaginations, or a spirit of curiosity or conjecture upon this occasion. Those are the deep things of God, in which if we have not the guidance of his word and Spirit, we shall certainly bewilder ourselves. Nor would I speak in a positive dogmatizing strain; at the same time I trust the scripture will afford light sufficient, to preserve us from a cold and comfortless uncertainty.

The gracious design of God in affording us his holy scripture, is to make us wise unto salvation 2Ti 3:15. His manner of teaching is therefore accommodated to our circumstances. He instructs us in heavenly things by earthly. And to engage our confidence, to excite our gratitude, to animate us to our duty by the most affecting motives; and that the reverence we owe to his great and glorious Majesty, as our Creator and Legislator, may be combined with love and cheerful dependence, he is pleased to reveal himself by those names which express the nearest relation and indearment amongst

ourselves. Thus he condescends to style himself the Father, the Husband, and the Friend of his people. But though in this way, we are assisted in forming our conceptions of his love, compassion, and faithfulness; it is obvious that these names, when applied to hum, must be understood in a sense agreeable to the perfections of his nature, and in many respects different from the meaning they bear amongst men. And thus when we are informed that God has a Son, an only Son, an only begotten Son, it is our part to receive his testimony, to admire and adore; and for an explanation adapted to our profit and comfort, we are to consult, not our own pre-conceived ideas, but the further declarations of his word, comparing spiritual things with spiritual, attending with the simplicity of children to his instructions; and avoiding, as much as possible, those vain reasonings, upon points above our comprehension, which, though flattering to the pride of our hearts, are sure to indispose us for the reception of divine truth. A distinction in the divine nature, inconceivable by us, but plainly revealed in terms, must be admitted, upon the testimony and authority of him, who alone can instruct us in what we are concerned to know of his adorable essence. There are three that bear Let us first, if we can, account for the nature, essence, and properties of things with which, as to their effects, we are familiarly acquainted. Let us explain the growth of a blade of grass, or the virtue of the load-stone. Till we are able to do this, it becomes us to lay our hands upon our mouths, and our mouths in the dust. *Far from attempting to explain the doctrine of the Trinity to my hearers, I rather wish to leave an impression upon your minds, that it is to us (and perhaps to the highest created intelligences) incomprehensible. But if it be contained in the scripture (which I must leave to your own consciences to determine in the sight of God) it is thereby sufficiently proved, and humble faith requires no other proof.*

Our Lord, in his conference with Nicodemus, was pleased to say, God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, &c Joh 3:16. It was undoubtedly his design, by this expression, to give to Nicodemus and to us, the highest idea possible of the love of God to sinners. He so loved the world, beyond description or comparison, that he gave his only begotten Son.—*Surely then the gift spoken of must not be limited to signify the human nature only. This was not all that he gave. The human nature was the medium of the acts and sufferings of MESSIAH; but he who assumed it was the Word, who was before all, and by whom all things were made. It is true the human nature was given, supernaturally formed by divine power, and born of a virgin. But he who was in the beginning God with God, was given to appear, obey, and suffer, in the nature of man, for us and for our salvation. And to him are ascribed the perfections and attributes of Deity; of which the highest angels are no more capable, than the worms which creep upon the earth.*

*I cannot, therefore, suppose, that the title of Son of God, is merely a title of office, or belonging only to the nature which he assumed. But that MESSIAH is the Son of God, as he is God and man in one person.* If the forming a perfect and spotless man, like Adam when he was first created, could have effected our salvation, it would have been a great and undeserved mercy to have vouchsafed the gift; but I think it would not have required such very strong language as the scripture uses, in describing the gift of the Son of God. The God-man, the whole person of Christ, was sent, came forth from the Father. *The manhood was the offering, but the Word of God, possessed of the perfections of Deity, was the altar necessary to sanctify the gift, and to give a value and efficacy to the atonement.*

*The term begotten, expresses with us the ground of relation between Father and Son, and upon which an only son is the heir of a father. I feel and confess myself at a loss here. I might take up your time, and perhaps conceal my own ignorance, by borrowing from the writings of wiser and better men than myself, a detail of what have been generally reputed the more prevailing orthodox sentiments on this subject. But I dare not go beyond my own ideas. I shall not, therefore, attempt to explain the phrase eternal generation, because I must acknowledge that I do not clearly understand it myself.* Long before time began, the purpose of constituting the Mediator between God and sinners, was established in the divine counsels. With reference to this, he himself speaks, in the character of the Wisdom of God. *The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. Then I was by him, as one brought up with him, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth, and my delights were among the sons of men Pr 7:22,27. If the Word of God had not engaged according to an everlasting and sure covenant, to assume our nature, and to accomplish our salvation, before the earth was formed, he would not have appeared afterwards; for we cannot with reason conceive of any new determinations arising in the mind of the infinite God; to whom, what we call the past and the future, are equally present. In this sense, (if the expression be proper to convey such a sense) I can conceive that he was the begotten Son of God from eternity.* That is, set up and appointed from eternity for the office, nature, and work, by which in the fullness of time, he was manifested to men. But if the terms, begotten or eternal generation, be used to denote the manner of his eternal existence in Deity, I must be silent. *I believe him to be the eternal Son;* I believe him to be the eternal God. And I wish not to exercise my thoughts and enquiries more than is needful, in things which are too high for me.