

Discourse on the Trinity

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According to Thomas A. Schafer, Edwards began the manuscript of what he called the "Discourse on the Trinity" (otherwise known as "Essay on the Trinity") in early 1730, when he wrote eight folio pages in a short time. He was able to write at such a pace because he could draw upon numerous "Miscellanies" entries on the topic written up to that time.¹ He later went back over these eight pages, making some changes, soon after their original composition, struggling to improve the language and clarify the thought. Edwards' intention for the composition is unclear; he put it aside for some time, apparently several years.

When in the mid-or late 1730s he took up the manuscript again, he added another folio signature (pp. 9–12), as well as an additional leaf or signature that is now missing.² The additions are of two kinds and perhaps reflect Edwards' changing perception of the piece as a whole. At first he tried to improve the original portion of the essay by signaling additions, via cue marks, to particular passages. Probably in the early to mid-1740s, however, he simply started appending discrete entries without connecting them to earlier passages. This latter phase suggests that Edwards came to view the manuscript as a source book rather than as an autonomous statement, a speculation borne out by his willingness to cannibalize it for other works such as *A Divine and Supernatural Light*, *Treatise on Grace*, and *Religious Affections*. All the same, there are no use marks.

The first part of the "Discourse" is taken up with describing the persons of the Trinity, particularly the Son and the Holy Spirit. God, Edwards begins, is infinitely happy in the enjoyment and contemplation of himself, which engenders a "perfect idea of himself." Thus the Deity is "repeated."³ God's idea of himself is "the express and perfect image of himself" and is a "spiritual idea," or the repetition of all of God's memories,

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exercises, and powers—that is, a replication of God, or God himself again. This is confirmed by scriptural descriptions of the Second Person, where the Son is the "image" and "face" of God, the "brightness, effulgence and shining forth of God's glory," the "wisdom," "logos," and "Amen" of God. Between the Father and Son exists a mutual love, joy, and delight, a "pure act," or the "Deity in act," which is the Holy Spirit.⁴ The Holy Spirit is the love of the Father and Son for each other, the love that "quicken and enlivens" creation and created spirits, and comforts God's people. Again,

Scripture confirms this definition by describing the Holy Spirit as a dove, a symbol of love; scriptural types and similitudes of the Holy Spirit are oil, water, fire, breath, and wind, all of which connote a "flowing out." So the saints' communion with God consists in partaking of the Holy Spirit, or God's love. This is why, in the New Testament, Paul's greetings always mention the love and grace of the Father and Son, and the *communion* of the Holy Ghost.

In the next section, Edwards moves on from a discussion of the persons in themselves to a consideration of their shared qualities. He reiterates that the Deity can be understood as God, understanding, and love— everything else is a "mode or relation of existence." All the persons are co-essential and co-eternal, yet each has his distinct office; all have equal honor, are equally concerned in the work of redemption, and garner equal glory from it; and all believers are equally dependent upon each person of the Trinity in redemption. At this point Edwards, seeking to correct what he sees as a prevailing tendency to neglect the Third Person, expands upon the role of the Holy Spirit in order to claim its equal importance and honor.⁵ Edwards ends this section of the "Discourse" (bringing us to page eight) by mentioning two images of the Trinity in the "visible creation": the human soul with its various faculties, and the sun, its constitution, rays, and "beautiful colors."

In the entries added after the mid-1730s, Edwards refines the language of the earlier discussion and attempts to reach further into the complexities of the relationships of the three persons. He repeats his realization that there are many objections that can be raised against his view, and reasserts the mysterious nature of the topic. Edwards then assembles Scripture texts on the Son and Holy Ghost, setting the tone for the remaining entries. The end of creation is for the gratification of the Son, including "providing a spouse for Christ," namely, the elect. A stray quarto fragment

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contains a collection of short entries alternating between the Son and Holy Spirit, the order of their proceeding, and their place in the economy of the Trinity.

The "Discourse on the Trinity" was the subject of some controversy in the late nineteenth century.⁶ In 1851 Horace Bushnell wrote that he had heard of a manuscript in which Edwards espoused an "*a priori* argument for the Trinity," and demanded that it be published because he had not been allowed to see it.⁷ Word spread that Edwards was a closet Arian, Sabellian, or Pelagian. In 1880 Oliver Wendell Holmes echoed Bushnell's earlier challenge to publish the document. That same year Egbert Smyth of

Andover Theological Seminary in Massachusetts published "Miscellanies" no. 1062, *Observations Concerning the Scripture Economy of the Trinity and Covenant of Redemption*, under the mistaken idea that this was the document in question. The following year Edwards A. Park published a two-part article on Edwards and the Trinity and pointed to the existence of a separate writing on the Trinity, which he claimed to own but added, characteristically, that he had misplaced it.⁸ The manuscript was eventually discovered and published in 1903 by George P. Fisher under the title "Essay on the Trinity."⁹ The title given here, "Discourse on the Trinity," not only follows Edwards' own appellation but is also more reflective of the early eighteenth-century conception of an intellectual exercise as opposed to the more nineteenth-century "essay."

Fisher's edition contains the text of the twelve folio pages, but since then a quarto-sized signature (made from a folded letter cover) discovered elsewhere in the Yale collection has been restored to the "Discourse." The content of this errant fragment is published here for the first time. That this signature was once a part of the "Discourse" is confirmed not only by its similar subject matter but also by stitch holes on its fold corresponding exactly to those in the folio pages. However, the original place of the quarto signature cannot be precisely determined, so its text is presented at the end of the "Discourse."

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First page of the manuscript of "Discourse on the Trinity." Courtesy of Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

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Discourse on the Trinity

When we speak of God's happiness, the account that we are wont to give of it is that God¹ is infinitely happy in the enjoyment of himself, in perfectly beholding and infinitely loving, and rejoicing in, his own essence and perfections. And accordingly it must be supposed that God perpetually and eternally has a most perfect idea of himself, as it were an exact image and representation of himself ever before him and in actual view. And from hence arises a most pure and perfect energy in the Godhead, which is the divine love, complacence and joy.

Though we cannot conceive of the manner of the divine understanding, yet if it be understanding or anything that can be anyway signified by that word of ours, it is by idea. Though the divine nature be vastly different from that of created spirits, yet our souls are made in the image of God: we have understanding and will, idea and love, as God hath, and the difference is

only in the perfection of degree and manner. The perfection of the manner will indeed infer this, that there is no distinction to be made in God between power or habit and act; and with respect to God's understanding, that there are no such distinctions to be admitted as in ours between perception or idea, and reasoning and judgment— excepting what the will has to do in judgment— but that the whole of the divine understanding or wisdom consists in the mere perception or unvaried presence of his infinitely perfect idea. And with respect to the other faculty, as it is in God, there are no distinctions to be admitted of faculty, habit and act, between will, inclination and love: but that it is all one simple act. But the divine perfection will not infer that his understanding is not by idea, and that there is not indeed such a thing as inclination and love in God.[2](#)

That in John, "God is love" [1 John 4:8, 1 John 4:16], shows that there are more persons than one in the Deity: for it shows love to be essential and necessary

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to the Deity, so that his nature consists in it; and this supposes that there is an eternal and necessary object, because all love respects another, that is, the beloved. By love here the Apostle certainly means something beside that which is commonly called self-love, that is very improperly called love, and is a thing of an exceeding diverse nature from that affection or virtue of love the Apostle is speaking of.

The sum of the divine understanding and wisdom consists in his having a perfect idea of himself, he being indeed the all-comprehending Being, he that is and there is none else. So the sum of his inclination, love and joy is his love to and delight in himself. God's love to himself, and complacency and delight in himself, they are not to be distinguished, they are the very same thing in God; which will easily be allowed. Love in man being scarcely distinguishable from the complacence he has in any idea, if there be any difference it is merely modal, and circumstantial.

The knowledge or view which God has of himself must necessarily be conceived to be something distinct from his mere direct existence. There must be something that answers to our reflection. The reflection, as we reflect on our own minds, carries something of imperfection in it. However, if God beholds himself so as thence to have delight and joy in himself, he must become his own object: there must be a duplicity. There is God and the idea of God, if it be proper to call a conception of that that is purely spiritual an idea.

And I do suppose the Deity to be truly and properly repeated by God's thus having an idea of himself; and that this idea of God is a substantial idea and has the very essence of God, is truly God, to all intents and purposes, and that by this means the Godhead is really generated and repeated.

1. God's idea of himself is absolutely perfect, and therefore is an express and perfect image of him, exactly like him in every respect. There is nothing in the pattern but what is in the representation— substance, life, power, nor anything else— and that in a most absolute perfection of similitude; otherwise it is not a perfect idea. But that which is the express perfect image of God, and in every respect like him, is God to all intents and purposes, because there is nothing wanting; there is nothing in the Deity that renders it the Deity but what has something exactly answering of it in this image, which will therefore also render that the Deity.

2. But this will more clearly appear if we consider the nature of spiritual ideas, or ideas of things purely spiritual. Those that we call ideas of reflection— such as our ideas of thought, love, fear, etc.— if we diligently attend to them, we shall find they are repetitions of those very things either

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more fully or faintly; or else they are only ideas of some external circumstances that attend them, with a supposition of something like what we have in our own minds that is attended with like circumstances. Thus 'tis easy to perceive that if we have an idea of thought, 'tis only a repetition of the same thought, with the attention of the mind to that reflection. So if we think of love— either of our [own self]— love³ or of the love of others that we have not— we either so frame things in our imagination, that we have [for a moment]⁴ a love to that thing, or to something we make to represent it and stand for it; or we excite for a moment that love that we have to something else, and suppose something like it there; or we only have an idea of the name with some of the concomitants and effects, and suppose something unseen that used to be signified by that name.⁵

And such kind of ideas very commonly serve us, though they are not indeed real ideas of the thing itself; but we have learned by experience, and it's become habitual to us, to govern our thoughts, judgment and actions about it as though we conceived of the thing itself. But if a person has truly and properly an idea of any act of love, of fear, or anger, or any other act or motion of the mind, things must be so ordered and framed in his mind that he must for that moment have something of a consciousness of the same motions, either to the same thing or to something else that is made to represent it in the mind; or towards something else that is *pro re nota* thither referred and as it were transposed: and this consciousness of

the same motions, with a design to represent the other by them, is the idea itself we have of them. And if it be perfectly clear and full, it will be in all respects the very same act of mind of which it is the idea, with this only difference: that the being of the latter is to represent the former.⁶

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If a man could have an absolutely perfect idea of all that passed in his mind, all the series of ideas and exercises in every respect perfect as to order, degree, circumstances, etc. for any particular space of time past—suppose the last hour—he would really, to all intents and purposes, be over again what he was that last hour. And if it were possible for a man by reflection perfectly to contemplate all that is in his own mind in an hour, as it is and at the same time that it is there, in its first and direct existence; if a man had a perfect reflex or contemplative idea of every thought at the same moment or moments that that thought was, and of every exercise at and during the same time that that exercise was, and so through a whole hour: a man would really be two.⁷ He would be indeed double; he would be twice at once: the idea he has of himself would be himself again.

Note: by having a reflex or contemplative idea of what passes in our own minds, I don't mean consciousness only. There is a great difference between a man's having a view of himself⁸ so as to delight in his own beauty or excellency, and a mere direct consciousness. Or if we mean by consciousness of what is in our own minds, anything besides the mere simple existence in our minds of what is there, it is nothing but a power by reflection to view or contemplate what passes.

But the foregoing position about a man's being twofold or twice at once is most evident, by what has been said of the nature of spiritual idea; as for everything that a man is in that hour, he is twice fully and perfectly: for all the ideas or thoughts that he has are twice perfectly, and every judgment made, and every exercise of inclination or affection, every act of the mind.⁹

Therefore as God with perfect clearness, fullness and strength understands himself, views his own essence (in which there is no distinction of substance and act, but it is wholly substance and wholly act), that idea which God hath of himself is absolutely himself. This representation of the divine nature and essence is the divine nature and essence again. So that by God's thinking of the Deity, [the Deity] must certainly be generated. Hereby there is another person begotten; there is another infinite, eternal, almighty, and most holy and the same God, the very same divine nature.

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And this person is the second person in the Trinity, the only begotten and dearly beloved Son of God. He is the eternal, necessary, perfect,

substantial and personal idea which God hath of himself. And that it is so, seems to me to be abundantly confirmed by the Word of [God].

1. Nothing can more agree with the account the Scripture gives of the Son of God his being in the form of God and his express and perfect image and representation. 2 Corinthians 4:4, "Lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of [God], should shine unto them." Philippians 2:6, "Who being in the form of God." Colossians 1:15, "Who is the image of the invisible God." Hebrews 1:3, "Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person."¹ The express image of his person": in the original it is χαρακτηρ της υποστασεως αυτου, which denotes one person as like another, as the impression on the wax is to the engraving on the seal (Hurrion, *Of Christ Crucified*, vol. 1, pp. 189–90).² And what can more agree with this that I suppose, that the Son of God is the divine idea of himself?

What can [be] more properly called the image of a thing than the idea? The end of other images is to beget an idea of the things they represent in us; but the idea is the most immediate representation, and seems therefore to be a more primary sort of image. And we know of no other spiritual images, nor images of spiritual things, but ideas. An idea of a thing seems more properly to be called an image or representation of that thing than any distinct being can be. However exactly one being— suppose one human body— be like another; yet I think one is not in the most proper sense the image of the other, but more properly in the image of the other. Adam did not beget a son that was his image properly, but *in* his image; but the Son of God, he is not only *in* the image of the Father, but he *is* the image itself in the most proper sense.³ The design of an idea is to represent, and the very being of an idea consists in similitude and representation. If it don't actually represent to the beholder, it ceases to be. And the being of it is immediately dependent on its pattern. Its reference to that ceasing, it ceases to be its idea.

That Christ is this most immediate representation of the Godhead, viz.

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the idea of God, is in my apprehension confirmed by John 12:45, "He that seeth me seeth him that sent me"; and John 14:7–9, "If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with [you, and] yet hast thou not seen me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou, Show us the Father?" See also John 15:22–24. Seeing the perfect idea of a thing is to all intents and purposes the

same as seeing the thing; it is not only equivalent to the seeing of it, but it *is*⁴ the seeing it: for there is no other seeing but having the idea. Now by seeing a perfect idea, so far as we see it we have it; but it can't be said of anything else, that in seeing of it we see another, strictly speaking, except it be the very idea of the other.

2. This well agrees with what the Scripture teaches us concerning God's love to and delight in his Son: for the idea of God is that image of God that is the object of God's eternal and infinite love, and in which he hath perfect joy and happiness. God undoubtedly infinitely loves and delights in himself and is infinitely happy in the understanding and view of his own glorious essence; this is commonly said. The same the Scripture teaches us concerning that image of God that is his Son. The Son of God, he is the true David, or beloved. John 3:35 and John 5:20, "The Father loveth the Son." So it was declared at Christ's baptism and transfiguration, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" [Matthew 3:17]. So the Father calls him his elect, in whom his soul delighteth [Isaiah 42:1]. The infinite happiness of the Father consists in the enjoyment of his Son. Proverbs 8:30, "I was daily his delight," i.e. before the world was. It seems to me most probable that God has his infinite happiness but one way, and that the infinite joy he has in his own idea and that which he has in his Son is but one and the same.

3. Christ is called the face of God (Exodus 33:14). The word in the original signifies face, looks, form or appearance. Now what can be so properly and fitly called so with respect to God as God's own perfect idea of himself, whereby he has every moment a view of his own essence? This idea is that face of God which God sees, as a man sees his own face in a looking glass, his⁵ aspect, form or appearance, whereby God eternally appears to himself. The root that the original word comes from signifies to look upon or behold. Now what is that which God looks upon or beholds in so eminent

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a manner as he doth on his own idea, or that perfect image of himself which he has in view? This is what is eminently in God's presence, and is therefore called the angel of God's presence, or face (Isaiah 63:9).

4. This seems also well to agree with Christ being called the brightness, effulgence or shining forth of God's glory, upon two accounts. First, because 'tis by God's idea that his glory shines forth and appears to himself. God may be conceived of as glorious, antecedent to his idea of himself; but then his glory is latent. But 'tis the idea by which it shines forth and appears to God's view, so that he can delight in it. Second, God is well represented by the luminary and his idea to the light: for what is so properly

the light of a mind or spirit as its knowledge or understanding? The understanding or knowledge of God is much more properly represented by light in a luminary than the understanding of a created mind: for knowledge is light rather let into a created mind than shining from it. But the understanding of the divine mind originally proceeds from this mind itself and is derived from no other.⁶

5. But that the Son of God is God's own eternal and perfect idea, is a thing that we have yet much more expressly revealed in God's Word:

First, in that Christ is called the wisdom of God. If we are taught in the Scripture that Christ is the same with God's wisdom or knowledge, then it teaches us that he is the same with God's perfect and eternal idea. They are the same as we have already observed, and I suppose none will deny. But Christ is said to be the wisdom of God (1 Corinthians 1:24; Luke 11:49 compared with Matthew 23:34); and how much doth Christ speak in Proverbs under the name of Wisdom, especially in the Proverbs 8. We there have Wisdom thus declaring, Proverbs 8:22–31:

The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, or ever the earth was. When there was no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he [set] a compass upon the face of the depth: when he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: when he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth. Then was I by him, as one

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brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before [him]; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men.

It has been usual to say that he that God thus possessed and set up from everlasting, and that was brought forth before the world, that was by God as his companion and as one brought up with him, that was daily his delight, was the personal wisdom of God; and if so, it was God's personal idea of himself.

Secondly, in that the Scripture teaches us that Christ is the logos of God It will appear that this logos is the same with the idea of God, whether we interpret it of the reason of God, or the word of God. If it signifies the

reason or understanding of God, I suppose it won't be denied that 'tis the same thing with God's idea. If we translate it the word of God, he is either the outward word of God, or his inward. None will say he is his outward.

Now the outward word is speech, whereby ideas are outwardly expressed. The inward word is thought or idea itself, the Scripture being its own interpreter: for how often is thinking in Scripture called saying or speaking when applied to both God and man. The inward word is the pattern or original of which the outward word, by which God has revealed himself, is the copy. Now that which is the original, from whence the revelation which God hath made of himself is taken and the pattern to which it is conformed, is God's idea of himself. When God declares himself, it is doubtless from and according to the idea he hath of himself.

Thirdly, to the same purpose is another name by which Christ is called, viz. the amen, which is a Hebrew word that signifies truth. Now what is that which is the prime, original and universal truth but that which is in the divine mind, viz. his eternal or infinite knowledge or idea?

And joining this with what was observed before, I think we may be bold to say that that which is the form, face, and express and perfect image of God, in beholding which God has eternal delight, and is also the wisdom, knowledge, logos and truth of God, is God's idea of himself. What other knowledge of God is there that is the form, appearance, and perfect image and representation of God, but God's idea of himself?

And how well doth this agree with his office of being the great prophet and teacher of mankind, the light of the world, and the revealer of God to creatures. John 8:12, "I am the light of the world." Matthew 11:27, "No man knoweth the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." John 1:18, "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

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Who can be so properly appointed to be [the] revealer of God to the world as that person who is God's own perfect idea or understanding of himself? Who can be so properly appointed to be the light by which God's glory shall appear to creatures, as he is that effulgence of his glory by which he appears to himself? And this is intimated to us in the Scripture to be the reason why Christ is the light of the world and the revealer of God to men, because he is the image of God. 2 Corinthians 4:4, [7](#) "Lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." John 12:45–46, "And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me. I am

come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness."

The Godhead being thus begotten by God's having an idea of himself and standing forth in a distinct subsistence or person in that idea, there proceeds a most pure act, and an infinitely holy and sweet energy arises between the Father and Son: for their love and joy is mutual, in mutually loving and delighting in each other. Proverbs 8:30, "I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before [him]." This is the eternal and most perfect and essential act of the divine nature, wherein the Godhead acts to an infinite degree and in the most perfect manner possible. The Deity becomes all act; the divine essence itself flows out and is as it were breathed forth in love and joy. So that the Godhead therein stands forth in yet another manner of subsistence, and there proceeds the third person in the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, viz. the Deity in act: for there is no other act but the act of the will.

1. We may learn by the Word of God that the Godhead or the divine nature and essence does subsist in love. 1 John 4:8, "He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love." In the context of which place I think it is plainly intimated to us that the Holy Spirit is that love, as in the 1 John 4:12–13: "If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. Hereby know we that we dwell in him, because he hath given us of his Spirit." 'Tis the same argument in both verses: in the 1 John 4:12 the Apostle argues that if we have love dwelling in [us], we have God dwelling in us; and in the 1 John 4:13 he clears the force of the argument by this, that love is God's Spirit. Seeing we have of God's Spirit dwelling [in us], we have God dwelling in [us]: supposing it as a thing granted and allowed, that God's Spirit is God. 'Tis evident also by this verse that God's dwelling in us, and his love— or the love that he hath or exerciseth— being in us, are the same thing. The same is intimated in the same manner in the last verses of the foregoing chapter.

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The Apostle was in the foregoing verses speaking of love as a sure sign of sincerity and our acceptance with God, beginning with the 1 John 4:18, and he sums up the argument thus in the last verse: "And hereby do we know that he abideth in us by the Spirit that [he] hath given us."

Again, in the 1 John 4:16 the Apostle tells us that "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." Which confirms not only that the divine nature subsists in love, but also that this love is the Spirit: for it is the Spirit of God by which God dwells in his saints, as the Apostle had observed in the 1 John 4:13, and as we are abundantly taught in the New

Testament.

2. The name of the third person in the Trinity, viz. the Holy Spirit, confirms it. It naturally expresses the divine nature as subsisting in pure act and perfect energy, and as flowing out and breathing forth in infinitely sweet and vigorous affection. It is confirmed both by his being called the Spirit, and by his being denominated Holy.

(1) By his being called the Spirit of God. The word "spirit" in Scripture, when used concerning minds, when it is not put [for] the spiritual substance or mind itself, is put for the disposition, inclination or temper of the mind. Numbers 14:24, Caleb was of "another spirit." Psalms 51:10, "Renew in me a right spirit." Luke 9:55, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of." 1 Thessalonians 5:23, "I pray God your whole spirit, soul and body." 1 Peter 3:4, "The ornament of a meek and quiet spirit." When we read of the spirit, of a spirit or mind, it is to be thus understood. Ephesians 4:23, "Be renewed in the spirit of your mind." So I suppose when we read of the Spirit of God, who we are told is a spirit, it is to be understood of the disposition, temper or affection of the divine mind. If we read or hear of the meek spirit, or kind spirit, or pious and holy spirit of a man, we understand it of his temper. So I suppose [when] we read of the good spirit and Holy Spirit of God, it is likewise to be understood of God's temper. Now the sum of God's temper or disposition is love, for he is infinite love; and as I observed before, here is no distinction to be made between habit and act, between temper or disposition and exercise. This is the divine disposition or nature that we are made partakers of (2 Peter 1:4); for our partaking or communion with God consists in the communion or partaking of the Holy Ghost.

[(2)] And it is further confirmed by his being peculiarly denominated Holy. The Father and the Son are⁸ both infinitely holy, and the Holy Ghost can be no holier. But yet the Spirit is especially called Holy, which doubtless

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denotes some peculiarity in the manner in which holiness is attributed to him. But upon this supposition the matter is easily and clearly explicable. For, first, it is in the temper or disposition of a mind and its exercise that holiness is immediately seated. A mind is said to be holy from the holiness of its temper and disposition. Second, 'tis in God's infinite love to himself that his holiness consists. As all creature holiness is to be resolved into love, as the Scripture teaches us, so doth the holiness of God himself consist in infinite love to himself. God's holiness is the infinite beauty and excellency of his nature. And God's excellency consists in his love to himself, as we have observed in ["The Mind"].⁹

That the Spirit of God is the very same with holiness (as 'tis in God, 'tis the holiness of God; and as 'tis in the creature, 'tis the holiness of the creature) appears by John 3:6, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Here 'tis very manifest that flesh and spirit are opposed one to another, as two contraries. And 'tis also acknowledged by orthodox divines in general that by the flesh is meant sin or corruption; and therefore by the Spirit is meant its contrary, viz. holiness. And that is evidently Christ's meaning: that which is born of the flesh is corrupt and filthy, but that which is born of the Spirit is holy.

3. This is very consonant to the office of the Holy Ghost, or his work with respect to creatures, which is threefold: viz. to quicken, enliven and beautify all things; to sanctify intelligent [creatures]; and to comfort and delight them.

(1) He quickens and beautifies all things. So we read that "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters" [Genesis 1:2], or of the chaos, to bring it out of its confusion, into harmony and beauty. So we read, Job 26:13, that God "by his spirit garnished the heavens." Now whose office can it be so properly to actuate and enliven all things, as his who is the eternal and essential act and energy of God? And whose office can it be so properly to give all things their sweetness and beauty, as he who is himself the beauty and joy of the Creator?

(2) 'Tis he that sanctifies created spirits, that is, he gives them divine love: for the Scripture teaches us that all holiness and true grace and virtue is resolvable into that, as its universal spring and principle. As it is the office of the person that is God's idea and understanding to be the light of the world, to communicate understanding, so 'tis the office of the person that is God's love to communicate divine love to the creature. In

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so doing, God's Spirit or love doth but communicate of itself. 'Tis the same love, so far as a creature is capable of being made partaker of it. God's Spirit, or his love, doth but as it were come and dwell in our hearts and act there as a vital principle, and we become the living temples of the Holy Ghost; and when men are regenerated and sanctified, God pours forth of his Spirit upon them, and they have fellowship or, which is the same thing, are made partakers with the Father and Son of their good, i.e. of their love, joy and beauty. Thus the matter is represented in the gospel. And this agreeable to what was taken notice of before of the apostle John his making love's dwelling in us and God's Spirit's dwelling in us the same thing, and explaining of them one by another (1 John 4:12–13).

When Christ says to his Father, John 17:26, "And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them," I can't think of any way that this will appear so easy and intelligible as upon this hypothesis, viz. that the love wherewith the Father loveth the Son is the Holy Spirit, that Christ here concludes and sums up his prayer for his disciples with this request, that the Holy Spirit might be in his disciples, and so he might be in them thereby. For Christ dwells in his disciples by his Spirit, as Christ teaches us, John 14:16–18, "I will give you another Comforter... even the Spirit of truth;... he shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come unto you"; and the Apostle, Romans 8:9–10, "If so be the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead."[1](#)

Mr. Howe's observation from the Galatians 5 is here pertinent, of his sermons on *The Prosperous State of the Christian Interest Before the End of Time*, published by Mr. Evans, p. 185.[2](#) His words are:

Walking in the Spirit is directed with a special eye and reference unto the exercise of this love, as you [see] in Galatians 5, Galatians 4:14–16 compared together: "All the law is fulfilled in one word" (he means the whole Law of the second table), "even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. But if ye bite and devour one another" (the opposite to this love, or that which follows upon the want of it, or from the opposite principle), "take heed that ye be not

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consumed one of another. This I say then" (observe the inference), "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh." To walk in the Spirit is to walk in the exercise of this love.

The Scripture seems in many places to speak of love in Christians as if it were the same with the Spirit of God in them, or at least as the prime and most natural breathing and acting of the Spirit in the soul. Philippians 2:1, "If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, any comfort of love, any fellowship of the Spirit, any bowels and mercies, fulfill ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind." 2 Corinthians 6:6, "By kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned." Romans 15:30, "Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit." Colossians 1:8, "Who declared unto us your love in the Spirit." Romans 5:5, having "the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given to us" (see notes on this text).[3](#) Galatians 5:13–16, "Use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. But if ye bite and devour one

another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh." The Apostle argues that Christian liberty don't make way for fulfilling the lusts of the flesh, in biting and devouring one another and the like, because a principle of love, which

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was the fulfilling of the law, would prevent it; and in the Galatians 5:16 he asserts the same thing in other words: "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh."

[(3)] The third and last office of the Holy Spirit is to comfort and delight the souls of God's people. And thus one of his names is the Comforter, and thus we have the phrase of "joy in the Holy Ghost." 1 Thessalonians 1:6 "Having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost."

Romans 14:17, "The kingdom of God is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." Acts 9:31, "Walking in the fear of the Lord, and comfort of the Holy Ghost." But how well doth this agree with the Holy Ghost being God's joy and delight. Acts 13:52, "And the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost," meaning, as I suppose, that they were filled with spiritual joy.

4. This is confirmed by the symbol of the Holy Ghost, viz. a dove, which is the emblem of love, or a lover, and is so used in Scripture, and especially often so in Solomon's Song. Canticles 1:15, "Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair; thou hast doves' eyes," i.e. eyes of love; and again, Canticles 4:1, the same words; and Canticles 5:12, "His eyes are as the eyes of doves"; and Canticles 5:2, "My love, my dove"; Canticles 2:14; and Canticles 6:9. And this I believe to be the reason that the dove alone of all birds (except the sparrow in the single case of the leprosy) was appointed to be offered in sacrifice: because of its innocency, and because it is the emblem of love,⁴ love being the most acceptable sacrifice to God. It was under this similitude that the Holy Ghost descended from the Father on Christ at his baptism, signifying the infinite love of the Father to the Son, who is the true David, or beloved, as we said before. The same was signified by what was exhibited to the eye, in the appearance there was of the Holy Ghost descending from the Father to the Son in the shape of a dove, as was signified by what was exhibited to the ear in the voice there was at the same time, viz. "This is my well beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" [Matthew 3:17].⁵

In the beginning of Genesis it is said, "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." The word translated "moved" in the original is מְרַחֵם, which, as Buxtorf and Grotius observe, properly signifies the

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brooding of a dove upon her eggs. See Buxtorf on the radix מְרַחֵם,⁶ and Grotius' *Truth of the Christian Religion*, Bk. 1, sec. 16, notes, where Grotius also observes that *meracheth* also signifies love.⁷ See my notes on Genesis 1:2. See *Synopsis* on Leviticus 1:14.⁸

5. This is confirmed from the types of the Holy Ghost, and especially from that type of oil which is often used as a type of the Holy Ghost and may well represent divine love from its soft, smooth-flowing and diffusive nature. Oil is from the olive tree, which was of old used to betoken love, peace and friendship that was signified by the olive branch, with which the dove returned to Noah. It was a token for good, a sign of God's love and favor after so terrible a manifestation of his displeasure as the deluge.

The olive branch and the dove that brought it were both the emblems of the same, viz. the love of God; but especially did the holy anointing oil, the principal type of the Holy Ghost, well represent the divine love and delight by reason of its excellent sweetness and fragrancy. Love is expressly

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said to be like it in Scripture, in Psalms 133:1–2, "Behold, how good and pleasant is it for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments."⁹

That God's love, or his lovingkindness, is the same with the Holy Ghost, seems to be plain by Psalms 36:7–9, "How excellent" (or "How precious," as 'tis in the Hebrew) "is thy lovingkindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings. They shall be abundantly satisfied" (in the Hebrew, "watered") "with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them to drink of the river of thy pleasure. For with thee is the fountain of life: and in thy light shall we see light." Doubtless that precious lovingkindness, and that fatness of God's house and river of his pleasures, and the water of the fountain of life and God's light here spoken [of], are the same thing. By which we learn that the holy anointing oil that was kept in the house of God, which was a type of the Holy Ghost, represented God's love; and that the river of water of life, spoken of in the twenty-second [chapter] of Revelation, which proceeds out of the throne of God and of the Lamb— which is the same with Ezekiel's river of living and life-giving water [Ezekiel 47], which is here called the fountain of life and river of God's pleasures— is God's lovingkindness. But

Christ himself expressly teaches us that by spiritual fountains and rivers of waters of life is meant the Holy Ghost (John 4:14 and John 7:38–39).¹ That by the river of God's pleasures here is meant the same thing with that pure river of water of life, spoken of in Revelation 22:1, will be much confirmed if we compare those verses with Revelation 21:23–24 and Revelation 22:1, Revelation 22:5 (see the note on Revelation 21:23–24).² I think if we compare these places and weigh

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them, we cannot doubt but that it is the same happiness that is meant in this Psalm that is spoken of there.

6. So this well agrees with the similitudes and metaphors that are used about the Holy Ghost in Scripture, such as water, fire, breath, wind, oil, wine a spring, a river, a being poured out and shed forth, a being breathed forth. Can there any spiritual thing be thought [of], or anything belonging to any spiritual being, to which such kind of metaphors so naturally agree as to the affection of a spirit? The affection, love or joy may be said to flow out as water, or to be breathed forth as breath or wind. But it would [not] sound³ so well to say that an idea or judgment flows out or is breathed forth. It is no way different to say of the affection that it is warm, or to compare love to fire; but it would not seem natural to say the same of perception or reason. It seems natural enough to say that the soul is poured out in affection, or that love or delight are shed abroad (Titus 3:5–6)— "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts" [Romans 5:5]— but it suits with nothing else belonging to a spiritual being.

This is that river of water of life spoken of in the twenty-third [chapter] of Revelation, which proceeds from the throne of the Father and the Son: for the rivers of living water or water of life are the Holy Ghost by the same Apostle's own interpretation (John 7:38–39). And the Holy Ghost being the infinite delight and pleasure of God, the river is called the river of God's pleasures (Psalms 36:8), not God's river of pleasures, which I suppose signifies the same as the fatness of God's house which they that trust in God shall be watered with; by which fatness of God's house I suppose is signified the same thing which oil typifies.

7. It is a confirmation that the Holy Ghost is God's love and delight, because the saints' communion with God consists in their partaking of the Holy Ghost. The communion of saints is twofold: 'tis their communion with God, and communion with one another. 1 John 1:3, "That ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." Communion is a common partaking of goods, either of excellency or happiness. So that when it is said the saints have⁴

communion or fellowship with the Father and with the Son, the meaning of it is that they partake with the Father and the Son of their good, which is either their excellency and glory— 2 Peter 1:4, "Ye are made partakers of the divine nature"; Hebrews 12:10, "That we might be partakers

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of his holiness"; John 17:22–23, "And the glory which thou hast given me I have given them; that may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me"— or of their joy and happiness, John 17:13, "That they may have my joy fulfilled themselves." But the Holy Ghost, being the love and joy of God, is his beauty and happiness; and it is in our partaking of the same Holy Spirit that our communion with God consists. 2 Corinthians 13:14 "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all." They are not different benefits, but the same, that the Apostle here wishes, viz. the Holy Ghost. In partaking with the Father and the Son of the Holy Ghost, we possess and enjoy the love and grace of the Father and the Son: for the Holy Ghost is that love and grace. And therefore I suppose it is that in that forementioned place, 1 John 1:3, we are said to have fellowship with the Son and not with the Holy Ghost, because therein consists our fellowship with the Father and the Son, even in partaking with them of the Holy Ghost. In this also eminently consists our communion with the saints, that we drink into the same Spirit: this is the common excellency and joy and happiness in which they all are united; 'tis the bond of perfectness by which they are one in the Father and the Son, as the Father is in the Son, and [he in him].[5](#)

8. I can think of no other good account that can be given of the apostle Paul's wishing grace and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ in the beginning of his epistles, without ever mentioning the Holy Ghost— as we find it thirteen times in his salutations in the beginnings of his epistles— but that the Holy Ghost is himself the love and grace of God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. And in his blessing at the end of his Second Epistle to the Corinthians, where all three persons are mentioned, he wishes grace and love from the Son and the Father, but the communion, or the partaking, of the Holy Ghost. The blessing from the Father and the Son is the Holy Ghost; but the blessing from the Holy Ghost is himself, the communication of himself. Christ promises that he and the Father will love believers, but no mention of the Holy Ghost (John 14:21, John 14:23); and the love of Christ and the love of the Father are often distinctly mentioned, but never any mention of the Holy Ghost's love.[6](#)

This I suppose to be the reason that we have never any account of the

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Holy Ghost's loving either the Father or the Son, or of the Son's or Father's loving the Holy Ghost, or of the Holy Ghost's loving the saints: though these things are so often predicated of both the other persons.⁷ I think the Scripture reveals a great deal more about it than is ordinarily taken notice of.

And this I suppose to be that blessed Trinity that we read of in the holy Scriptures. The Father is the Deity subsisting in the prime, unoriginated and most absolute manner, or the Deity in its direct existence. The Son is the Deity generated by God's understanding, or having an idea of himself, and subsisting in that idea. The Holy Ghost is the Deity subsisting in act or the divine essence flowing out and breathed forth, in God's infinite love to and delight in himself. And I believe the whole divine essence does truly and distinctly subsist both in the divine idea and divine love, and that therefore each of them are properly distinct persons.

And it confirms me in it, that this is the true Trinity, because reason is sufficient to tell us that there must be these distinctions in the Deity, viz. of God (absolutely considered), and the idea of God, and love and delight; and there are no other real distinctions in God that can be thought [of].

There are but these three distinct real things in God; whatsoever else can be mentioned in God are nothing but mere modes or relations of existence. There are his attributes of infinity, eternity and immutability: they are mere modes of existence. There is God's understanding, his wisdom and omniscience, that we have shown to be the same with his idea. There is God's will: but that is not really distinguished from his love, but is the same, but only with a different relation. As the sum of God's understanding consists in his having an idea of himself, so the sum of his will or inclination consists in his loving himself, as we have already observed. There is God's power or ability to bring things to pass. But this is not really distinct from his understanding and will; it is the same, but only with the relation they have to those effects that are or are to be produced. There is God's holiness, but this is the same— as we have shown in what we have said of the nature of excellency⁸— with his love to himself. There is God's justice, which is not really distinct from his holiness. There are the attributes of goodness, mercy and grace, but these are but the overflowings of God's infinite love. The sum of all God's love is his love to himself. These three— God, and the idea of God, and the inclination, affection or love

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of God— must be conceived as really distinct. But as for all those other things— of extent, duration, being with or without change, ability to do— they are not distinct real things, even in created spirits, but only mere

modes and relations. So that our natural reason is sufficient to tell us that there are these three in God, and we can think of no more.

It is a maxim amongst divines that everything that is in God is God, which must be understood of real attributes and not of mere modalities. If a man should tell me that the immutability of God is God, or that the omnipresence of God and authority of God [is God], I should not be able to think of any rational meaning of what he said. It hardly sounds to me proper to say that God's being without change is God, or that God's being everywhere is God, or that God's having a right of government over creatures is God. But if it be meant that the real attributes of God, viz. his understanding and love, are God, then what we have said may in some measure explain how it is so: for Deity subsists in them distinctly, so they are distinct divine persons. We find no other attributes of which it is said that they are God in Scripture, or that God is they, but Λογος and Αγαπαι, the reason and the love of God (John 1:1 and 1 John 4:8, 1 John 4:16). Indeed, it is said that God is light (1 John 1:5). But what can we understand by divine light different from the divine reason or understanding? The same Apostle tells us that Christ is the true light (John 1:9), and the apostle Paul tells us that he is the effulgence of the Father's glory (Hebrews 1:3).[9](#)

This is the light that the Holy Ghost in the prophet Daniel says dwells with God. Daniel 2:22, "And the light dwelleth with him." The same with that Word or reason that the apostle John says (John 1) was with God, and was God; that he there says is the "true Light," and speaks much of under that character (Daniel 2:4–5, Daniel 2:7–9). This is that Wisdom that says in Proverbs 8:30 that he was by God "as one brought up with him." This is that light with respect to which especially, God the Father may be called the Father of Lights.

One¹ of the principal objections that I can think of against what has

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been supposed is concerning the personality of the Holy Ghost, that this scheme of things don't seem well to consist with that, [that] a person is that which hath understanding and will. If the three in the Godhead are persons, they doubtless each of 'em have understanding: but this makes the understanding one distinct person, and love another.

How therefore can this love be said to have understanding? Here I would observe that divines have not been wont to suppose that these three had three distinct understandings, but all one and the same understanding. In order to clear up this matter, let it be considered, that the whole divine essence is supposed truly and properly to subsist in each of these three—

viz. God, and his understanding, and love— and that there is such a wonderful union between them that they are after an ineffable and inconceivable manner one in another; so that one hath another, and they have communion in one another, and are as it were predicable one of another. As Christ said of himself and the Father, "I am in the Father, and the Father in me" [John 10:14], so may it be said concerning all the persons of the Trinity: the Father is in the Son, and the Son in the Father; the Holy Ghost is in the Father, and the Father in the Holy Ghost; the Holy Ghost is in the Son, and the Son in the Holy Ghost. And the Father understands because the Son, who is the divine understanding, is in him. The Father loves because the Holy Ghost is in him. So the Son loves because the Holy Spirit is in him and proceeds from him. So the Holy Ghost, or the divine essence subsisting in divine love, understands because the Son, the divine idea, is in him. Understanding may be predicated of this love, because it is the love of the understanding both objectively and subjectively. God loves the understanding and the understanding also flows out in love, so that the divine understanding is in the Deity subsisting in love. It is not a blind love. Even in creatures there is consciousness included in the very nature of the will or act of the soul; and though perhaps not so that it can so properly be said that it is a seeing or understanding will, yet it may truly and

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properly [be] said so in God by reason of God's infinitely more perfect manner of acting, so that the whole divine essence flows out and subsists in this act. The Son is in the Holy Spirit, though it don't proceed from him, by reason that the understanding must be considered as prior in the order of nature to the will or love or act, both in creature and in the Creator. The understanding is so in the Spirit, that the Spirit may be said to know, as the Spirit of God is truly and properly said to know and to "search all things, even the deep things of God" [1 Corinthians 2:10].[2](#)

All the three are persons, for they all have understanding and will. There is understanding and will in the Father, as the Son and the Holy Ghost are in him and proceed from [him]. There is understanding and will in the Son, as he is understanding and as the Holy Ghost is in him and proceeds from him. There is understanding and will in the Holy Ghost, as he is the divine will and as the Son is in him. Nor is it to be looked upon as a strange and unreasonable figment that the persons should be said to have an understanding or love by another person's being in 'em: for we have Scripture ground to conclude so concerning the Father's having wisdom and understanding or reason, that it is by the Son's being in him; because we are there informed that he is the wisdom and reason and truth of God. And hereby God is wise by his own wisdom being in him. Understanding

and wisdom is in the Father, as the Son is in him and proceeds from him. Understanding is in the Holy Ghost because the Son is in him, not as proceeding from him but as flowing out in him.

But I don't pretend fully to explain how these things are, and I am sensible a hundred other objections may be made, and puzzling doubts and questions raised, that I can't solve. I am far from pretending to explaining the Trinity so as to render it no longer a mystery. I think it to be the highest and deepest of all divine mysteries still, notwithstanding anything that I have said or conceived about it. I don't pretend to explain the Trinity, but in time, with reason, may [be] led to say something further of it than has been wont to be said, though there are still left many things pertaining to it incomprehensible. It seems to me that what I have here supposed concerning the Trinity is exceeding analogous to the gospel scheme, and agreeable to the tenor of the whole New Testament, and abundantly illustrative of gospel doctrines; as might be particularly shown, would it not exceedingly lengthen out this discourse.

I shall only now briefly observe that many things that have been wont

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to be said by orthodox divines about the Trinity are hereby illustrated. Hereby we see how the Father is the fountain of the Godhead, and why when he is spoken of in Scripture he is so often, without any addition or distinction, called God; which has led some to think that he only was truly and properly God. Hereby we may see why, in the economy of the persons of the Trinity, the Father should sustain the dignity of the Deity; that the Father should have it as his office to uphold and maintain the rights of the Godhead, and should be God, not only by essence, but as it were by his economical office. Hereby is illustrated the doctrine of the Holy Ghost preceding both the Father and the Son. Hereby we see how that it is possible for the Son to be begotten by the Father, and the Holy Ghost to proceed from the Father and Son, and yet that all the persons should be co-eternal. Hereby we may more clearly understand the equality of the persons among themselves, and that they are every way equal in the society or family of the three. They are equal in honor besides the honor which is common to 'em all, viz. that they are all God; each has his peculiar honor in the society or family. They are equal not only in essence.³ The Father's honor is that he is as it were the author of perfect and infinite wisdom. The Son's honor is that he is that perfect and divine wisdom itself, the excellency of which is that from whence arises the honor of being the author or generator of it. The honor of the Father and the Son is that they are infinitely excellent, or that from them infinite excellency proceeds. But the honor of the Holy Ghost is equal, for he is that divine excellency and

beauty itself. 'Tis the honor of the Father and the Son that they are infinitely holy and are the fountain of holiness; but the honor of the Holy Ghost is that he is that holiness itself. The honor of the Father and the Son is, they are infinitely happy and are the original and fountain of happiness; and the honor of the Holy Ghost is equal, for he is infinite happiness and joy itself.

The honor of the Father is that he is the fountain of the Deity, or he from whom proceed both divine wisdom and also excellency and happiness. The honor of the Son is equal, for he is himself the divine wisdom, and is he from whom proceeds the divine excellency and happiness. And the honor of the Holy Ghost is equal, for he is the beauty and happiness of both the other persons.

By this also we may fully understand the equality of each person's concern in the work of redemption, and the equality of the redeemed's concern with them and dependence upon them, and the equality and honor and praise due to each of them. Glory belongs to the Father and the Son,

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that they so greatly loved the world: to the Father, that he so loved that he gave his only begotten son; to the Son, that he so loved the world as to give up himself. But there is equal glory due to the Holy Ghost, for he is that love of the Father and the Son to the world. Just so much as the two first persons glorify themselves by showing the astonishing greatness of their love and grace, just so much is that wonderful love and grace glorified, who is the Holy Ghost. It shows the infinite dignity and excellency of the Father, that the Son so delighted and prized his honor and glory, that he stooped infinitely low rather than man's salvation should be to the injury of that honor and glory. It showed the infinite excellency and worth of the Son, that the Father so delighted in him, that for his sake he was ready to quit his anger and receive into favor those that had [deserved] infinitely ill at his hands. And what was done shows how great the excellency and worth of the Holy Ghost, who is that delight which the Father and the Son have in each other, shows it to be infinite. So great as the worth of a thing delighted in is to anyone, so great is the worth of that delight and joy itself which he has in it.

Our dependence is equally upon each in this affair: the Father appoints and provides the Redeemer, and himself accepts the price and grants the thing purchased; the Son is the Redeemer by offering up himself, and is the price; and the Holy Ghost immediately communicates to us the thing purchased by communicating himself, and he is the thing purchased. The sum of all that Christ purchased for man was the Holy Ghost. Galatians 3:13–14, he was "made a curse for us... that we might receive the promise

of the Spirit through faith." What Christ purchased for us, was that we have communion with God in his good, which consists in partaking of the Holy Ghost, as we have shown. All the blessedness of the redeemed consists in their partaking of Christ's fullness, which consists in partaking of that Spirit which is given not by measure unto him. The oil that is poured on the head of the church runs down to the members of his body and to the skirts of his garment (Psalms 133:2). Christ purchased for us that we should have the favor of God and might enjoy his love; but this love is the Holy Ghost. Christ purchased for us true spiritual excellency, grace and holiness, the sum of which is love to God, which is but only the indwelling of the Holy Ghost in the heart. Christ purchased for us spiritual joy and comfort, which is in a participation of God's joy and happiness; which joy and happiness is the Holy Ghost, as we have shown. The Holy Ghost is the sum of all good things. Good things and the Holy Spirit are synonymous expressions in Scripture. Matthew 7:11, "How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" The sum of all spiritual

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good which the saints have in this world is that spring of living water within them, which we read of, John 4:10–15; and those rivers of living water flowing out of them, which we read of, John 7:38–39, which we are there told means the Holy Ghost. And the sum of all happiness in the other world is that river of water of life which proceeds out of the throne of God and the Lamb, which we read of, Revelation 22:1, which is the river of God's pleasures and is the Holy Ghost; and therefore the sum of the gospel invitation is to come and take the water of life (Revelation 22:17).

The Holy Ghost is the purchased possession and inheritance of the saints, as appears, because that little of it which the saints have in this world is said to be the earnest of that purchased inheritance (Ephesians 1:14, 2 Corinthians 1:22 and 2 Corinthians 5:5). 'Tis an earnest of that which we are to have a fullness of hereafter. The Holy Ghost is the great subject of all gospel promises, and therefore is called the Spirit of promise (Ephesians 1:13). This is called the promise of the Father (Luke 24:49, and the like in other places). If the Holy Ghost be a comprehension of all good things promised in the gospel, we may easily see the force of the Apostle's arguing, Galatians 3:2, "This only would I learn, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" So that 'tis God of whom our good is purchased, and 'tis God that purchases it, and 'tis God also that is the thing purchased. Thus all our good things are of God, and through God, and in God; as Romans 11:36, "For of him, and through him, and to him" (or "in him," as εἰς is rendered, 1 Corinthians 8:6) "are all things: to whom be glory forever." All our good is of God the Father; 'tis all through God the Son; and all is in the Holy Ghost, as he is himself all our good.

God is himself the portion and purchased inheritance of his people. Thus God is the Alpha and the Omega in this affair of redemption.

If we suppose no more than used to be supposed about the Holy Ghost, the concern of the Holy Ghost in the work of redemption is not equal with the Father's and the Son's, nor is there an equal part of the glory of this work belongs to him. Merely to apply to us or immediately to give or hand to us the blessing purchased after it was purchased (as subservient to the other two persons), is but a little thing to the purchasing of it by the paying an infinite price by Christ's offering up himself in sacrifice to procure; and 'tis but a little thing to God the Father's giving his infinitely dear Son to be a sacrifice for us, and upon his purchase to afford to us all the blessings of his purchase. But according to this, there is an equality. To be the love of God to the world is as much as for the Father and the Son to do so much from love to the world; and to be [the] thing purchased was as much as to be the price: the price, and the thing bought with that price, are

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equal. And 'tis as much as to afford the thing purchased: for the glory that belongs to him that affords the thing purchased, arises from the worth of that thing that he affords; and therefore 'tis the same glory, and an equal glory: the glory of the thing itself is its worth, and that is also the glory of him that affords it.

There are two more eminent and remarkable images of the Trinity among the creatures. The one is in the spiritual creation, [the] soul of man. There is the mind, and the understanding or idea, and the spirit of the mind, as it is called in Scripture, i.e. the disposition, the will or affection.

The other is in the visible creation, viz. the sun. The Father is as the substance of the sun (by substance I don't mean in a philosophical sense, but the sun as to its internal constitution). The Son is as the brightness and glory of the disk of the sun, or that bright and glorious form under which it appears to our eyes. The Holy Ghost is as the action of the sun, which is within the sun, in its intestine heat, and being diffusive, enlightens, warms, enlivens and comforts the world. The Spirit, as it is God's infinite love to himself and happiness in himself, is as the internal heat of the sun; but as it is that by which God communicates himself, is as the emanation of the sun's action, or the emitted beams of the sun. They well represent the love and grace of God, and were made use of for this purpose in the rainbow after the flood; and I suppose also in those rainbows that were seen round about the throne by Ezekiel (Ezekiel 1:28, Revelation 4:3), and round the head of Christ by John (Revelation 10:1).

The various sorts of the rays of the sun and their beautiful colors do well represent the Spirit, or the amiable excellency of God, and the various beautiful graces and virtues of the Spirit. These beautiful colors of the sun beams we find made use in Scripture for this purpose, viz. to represent the graces of the Spirit; as Psalms 68:13, "Though ye have lien among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold," i.e. like the light reflected in various beautiful colors from the feathers of a dove, which colors represent the graces of the heavenly dove. The same I suppose is signified by the various beautiful colors reflected from the precious stones of the breastplate. And that those spiritual ornaments of the church are what are represented by the various colors of the foundation and gates of the new Jerusalem (Revelation 21 and Isaiah 54:11–12), and the stones of the temple (1 Chronicles 29:2). And I believe the variety there is in the rays of the sun and their beautiful colors was designed by the Creator for this very purpose, and indeed, that the whole visible creation, which is but the shadow of being, is so made and ordered

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by God as to typify and represent spiritual things, for which I could give many reasons.⁴ I don't propose this merely as an hypothesis, but as a part of divine truth sufficiently and fully ascertained by the revelation God has made in the holy Scriptures.⁵

I am sensible what kind of objections many will be ready to make against what has been said. What difficulties will be immediately found: How can this be? and how can that be? I am far from asserting this as any explication of this mystery that unfolds and removes the mysteriousness and incomprehensibility of it: for I am sensible that however, by what has been said, some difficulties are lessened, others that are new appear; and the number of those things that appear mysterious, wonderful and incomprehensible are increased by it. I offer it only as a further manifestation of what of divine truth the Word of God exhibits to the view of our minds concerning this great mystery. I think the Word of God teaches us more things concerning it to be believed by us than have been generally taken [notice of], and that it exhibits many things concerning it exceeding glorious and wonderful than have been taken notice [of]; yea, that it reveals or exhibits more many wonderful mysteries than have been taken notice of: which mysteries that have been overvalued are incomprehensible things, and yet have been exhibited in the Word of God, though they are an addition to the number of mysteries that are in it. No wonder that the more things we are told concerning that which is so infinitely above our reach, the number of visible mysteries increases. When we tell a child a little concerning God, he has not an hundredth part so many mysteries in view

on the nature and attributes of God, and his works of creation and providence, as one that is told much concerning God in a divinity school; and yet he knows much more about God, and has a much clearer understanding of things of divinity, more clearly to explicate some things that were dark and very unintelligible to him. I humbly apprehend that the things that have been observed increase the number of visible mysteries in the Godhead in no other manner, even as by them we perceive that God has told us much more about it than was before generally observed. Under the Old Testament, the church of God was not told near so much about the Trinity as they are now; but what the New Testament has revealed, though it has more opened to our view the nature of God, yet it

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has increased the number of visible mysteries and things that appear to us exceeding wonderful and incomprehensible. And so also it has come to pass in the church, being told more about the incarnation and the satisfaction of Christ and other glorious gospel doctrines. 'Tis so not only in divine things but natural things: he that looks on a plant, or the parts of the bodies of animals, or any other works of nature, at a great distance, where he has but an obscure sight of it, may see something in it wonderful and beyond his comprehension; but he that is near to it and views them narrowly, indeed understands more about them, has a clearer and distinct sight of them; and yet the number of things that are wonderful and mysteries in them that appear to him, are much more than before. And if he views them with a microscope, the number of the wonders that he sees will be much increased still. But yet the microscope gives him more of a true knowledge concerning them.

God is never said to love the Holy Ghost, nor are any epithets that betoken love anywhere given to him, though so many are ascribed to the Son: as God's elect, the beloved, he in whom God's soul delighteth, he in whom he is well pleased, etc. Yea, such epithets seem to be ascribed to the Son as though he were the object of love, exclusive of all other persons, as though there were no person whatsoever to share the love of the Father with the Son. To this purpose evidently he is called God's only begotten Son, at the same that it is added, in whom he is well pleased. There is nothing in Scripture that speaks of any acceptance of the Holy Ghost, or any reward, or any mutual friendship between the Holy Ghost and either of the other persons, nor any command to love the Holy Ghost, or to delight in or have any complacency in [him], though such commands are so frequent with respect to the other persons.[6](#)

THE SON OF GOD. Agreeable to the Son of God's being the WISDOM or UNDERSTANDING of God is that, Zechariah 3:9, "For behold the stone

that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone shall be seven eyes." This stone is the Messiah (see observations on the place in my discourse on the "Prophecies of the Messiah").[7](#) By these eyes is represented God's understanding,

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by the explanation which God himself gives of it in the next chapter, Zechariah 3:10: "Those seven are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth." The seven eyes being by a wonderful work of God, graven on the stone, a thing in itself very far from sight, represents me incarnation of Christ in uniting the logos or wisdom of God, to that which is in itself so weak and blind and infinitely far from divinity as the human nature. The same again is represented, Revelation 5:6, "And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God." The plain allusion here to that other place in Zechariah, shows that the stone there spoken [of] with seven eyes is the Messiah, that elsewhere is often called a stone. And whereas these seven eyes are here said to be the seven Spirits of God, i.e. the perfect and all-sufficient Spirit of God: for 'tis by the Holy Spirit, that the divine nature and the divine Logos, or understanding or wisdom, is united to the human nature.

That[8](#) in Romans 5:5, "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us," in the original is, "The love of God is poured out into our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given to us"; so that the same representation is made of the manner of communicating it that is made from time to time to signify the manner of communicating the Spirit of God himself, and the same expression used to signify it. The love of God is not poured out into our hearts in any propriety any other way than as the Holy Spirit, which is the love of God, is poured out into our hearts; and it seems to be intimated that it is this way that the love of God is poured out into our hearts by the words annexed, "*by the Holy Ghost which is given to us.*"

HOLY[9](#) GHOST. Those two texts illustrate one the other: Canticles 1:4, "We will remember thy love more than wine"; and that, Ephesians 5:18, "Be not drunk with wine; but be ye filled with the Spirit."[1](#)

That knowledge or understanding in God which we must conceive of as first, is his knowledge of everything possible. That love which must be this knowledge is what we must conceive of as belonging to the essence of the Godhead in its first subsistence. Then comes a reflex act of knowledge, his viewing himself and knowing himself, and so knowing his own

knowledge: and so the Son is begotten. There is such a thing in God as knowledge of knowledge, an idea of an idea, which can be nothing else than the idea or knowledge repeated.

The world was made for the Son of God especially. For God made the world for himself from love to himself; but God loves himself only in a reflex act He views himself and so loves himself; so he makes the world for himself, viewed² and reflected on, and that is the same with himself repeated or begotten in his own idea: and that is his Son. When God considers of making anything for himself, he presents himself before himself and views himself as his end; and that viewing himself is the same as reflecting on himself or having an idea of himself. And to make the world for the Godhead thus viewed and understood is to make the world for the Godhead begotten: and that is to make the world for the Son of God.

The love of God as it flows forth *ad extra* is wholly determined and directed by divine wisdom, so that those only are the objects of it that divine wisdom chooses. So that the creation of the world is to gratify divine love as that is exercised by divine wisdom. But Christ is divine wisdom, so that the world is made to gratify divine love as exercised by Christ, or to gratify the love that is in Christ's heart, or to provide a spouse for Christ— those creatures which wisdom chooses for the object of divine love as Christ's elect spouse, and especially those elect creatures that wisdom chiefly pitches upon and makes the end of the rest.

TRINITY.³ The righteousness of Christ, the thing given in justification, is in some respect the Holy Spirit in Christ, the expressions and fruits of his influence and actings in him.

TRINITY. In the sun peculiarly divine beauty manifested to men and to all creatures with peculiar advantage, and by how it appears in the Godhead itself, vid. sermon on the excellency of Christ, "His name is as ointment poured forth" [Canticles 1:3].⁴

The glory of the Father appears chiefly in him, in his face; and the Spirit, who is the loveliness and love of the Father, flows nextly from him to men. How many respects the Father first in order, fountain of Godhead, sustains dignity of Deity, sends forth the other two. All is from him, all is in him originally.

The Son. Though all be firstly from the Father, yet all is nextly from the Son. As 'tis a peculiar honor that all should be firstly from the Father, so

there is a peculiar honor in that 'tis immediately from the Son.

And even *ad intra*, though the Holy Ghost proceeds both from the Father and the Son, yet he proceeds from the Father mediately by the Son, viz. by the Father's beholding himself in the Son. But he proceeds from the Son immediately by himself by beholding the Father in himself. The beauty and excellency and loveliness of the divine nature, though from the Father first and originally, yet is by the Son and nextly from him. The joy and delight of the divine nature is in the Father by the Son, but nextly and immediately in the Son.

Though the Spirit, the beauty, the loveliness and joy of the Deity, be from the Father originally and primarily, and from the Son as it were secondarily, yet the Son hath this honor that the Father hath not: that that Spirit is from the Son immediately by himself. Yet 'tis the Father not immediately by himself, but by the Son, by his beholding himself in the Son. For though it be from the Son by his beholding the Father, yet he beholds himself in himself. He beholds him no otherwise than in the idea of the Father, which is himself; and indeed, his beholding the Father is nothing else but his existing: for 'tis nothing else for an idea of a thing to behold that thing that it beholds, but only for an idea to exist. The idea's beholding is the idea's existing.

As the Father in the economy of the persons of the Trinity is especially the Lord, sovereign, lawgiver, and judge and disposer, so prayer is especially directed to him. He is as much especially the object of prayer as he is especially Lord, for prayer is directed to one only as Lord. Lordship and dominion and judgment belongs to the Son secondarily, viz. in the name of the Father; so prayer is to be directed to him secondarily as the Father's representative. The Spirit is Lord and disposer, and commands, as we have account he does— Acts [Acts 16:7], "But the Spirit suffered them not"— but 'tis but as the representative and messenger of both the other persons. So prayer is to be directed to him, as their representative. Thus we may pray to the Son in us, or communicating himself to us.

Consider that question, whether Christ is to be worshipped as mediator.

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HOLY GHOST is DIVINE BEAUTY, love and joy. The Holy Ghost, or Comforter, is the great blessing then promised of Christ before his ascension. 'Tis called by way of eminency the promise of the Father, that is spoken of as the sum of all good (Luke [Luke 24:49]). This therefore Christ died to purchase. This is the blessing chiefly to be sought by prayer, and this was the blessing chiefly prayed for by Christ, chiefly sought by Christ's

intercession. Hence he says, John 14:16, "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever." It would therefore be strange if in that solemn prayer of Christ's for his disciples and church, John 17, that is left as a specimen of his intercession for his church, we should have no request for this Comforter or Holy Spirit, which doubtless we have in these three places:⁵ John 17:13, "That they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves"; John 17:22–23, "And the glory which thou gavest me have I given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me"—for the Spirit is the bond of union and that by which Christ is in his saints and the Father in him, as we have elsewhere observed; and especially John 17:26, all the last purpose of his prayer and sum of all, "that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them."⁶

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1. See "Miscellanies" nos. 68, 81, 93, 94, 96, 97, 103, 104, 107b, 108, 117, 119. "Miscellanies" no. 621 (c. 1732–33) contains a reference to the "Discourse on the Trinity." [↵](#)
2. The two sheets on which pp. 1–8 are written both have Shield watermarks, while the sheet for pp. 9–12 has a Crown/GR mark. That there was at least one more leaf in the Discourse at one time is indicated by JE's own references. [↵](#)
3. See "Editor's Introduction," pp. 10–20. [↵](#)
4. For an important development in JE's conception of the Holy Spirit, see "On the Equality of the Persons of the Trinity," p. 147, and "Editor's Introduction," pp. 18–19. [↵](#)
5. Ibid. [↵](#)
6. See *Works*, 13, 548–49. See also A. V. G. Mien, *Jonathan Edwards* (Boston, 1889), 338–45, and Richard D. Pierce, "A Suppressed Edwards Manuscript on the Trinity," *Crane Review* 1 (1959), 66–80. [↵](#)
7. Horace Bushnell, *Christ in Theology* (Hartford, 1851), vi. [↵](#)
8. Edwards A. Park, "Remarks on Jonathan Edwards on the Trinity," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 38 (1881), 147–87, 333–69. [↵](#)
9. George P. Fisher, *An Unpublished Essay of Edwards on the Trinity with Remarks on Edwards and His Theology* (New York, 1903). [↵](#)

1. Shortly after he composed the first part of the Discourse, JE revised the first sentence up to this point. The original reads: "Tis Common when speaking of the divine happiness to say that God." ↵
2. The following paragraph is inserted here at JE's direction from the "third sheet," on MS p. 9. It is in the hand and ink of the mid to late 1730s. ↵
3. Conjecture for where the text on the bottom corner of the first leaf is rubbed away. ↵
4. MS damage; the insertion is according to Fisher, *An Unpublished Essay*, p. 82. ↵
5. JE deletes the following passage with a vertical line: "and govern our thoughts about it, as though we conceived of the thing itself, as we learned how by experience and as it became habitual to us by use. So if we have an idea of a judgment not our own, the same ideas that are the terms of the proposition are repeated in our own mind, and recur to something in our minds, in our judgment, and suppose something like it there (that is, we govern our thoughts about it as if it were there), if we have a distinct idea of that judgment. Or else we have only an idea of some of the attendants and effects of the judgment, and supply the name and govern our actions and thoughts as supposing it there, as we have habituated ourselves in such cases. And such kind of ideas serve us in most cases: but evermore when we have clear and lively ideas of any spiritual act, there is a degree of the repetition of the very things themselves in our own minds; and if the idea be perfect, it is the very same thing absolutely over again. And especially is it so in God's most perfect idea and view he hath of his own nature and essence, which is pure act." ↵
6. The next three paragraphs are inserted according to JE's cues from "the End of this discourse," i.e. the bottom half of p. 8, which is still a part of the original composition of the Discourse. ↵
7. MS: "two during." ↵
8. MS: "a <view of himself> Reflex or Contemplative Idea of himself." ↵
9. At the end of the addition on p. 8, JE deletes the following passage with a large X: "*Memorandum*: Remember to look [at] all the texts in the Concordance where the Father is mentioned, to collect a catalogue of those texts where the Father and Son are mentioned and not the Holy Ghost, for this reason, viz. because divine love is the Holy Ghost." ↵

1. The remainder of the paragraph has been moved, according to JE's directions, from MS p. 9. In the addition, JE repeated the citation of Hebrews 1:3. ↵
2. John Hurrion (1675–1731), *The Knowledge of Christ and Him Crucified... Applied in Eight Sermons* (London, 1727). JE probably called this "vol. 1" because in 1729 Hurrion published a companion volume, *The Knowledge of Christ Glorified, Opened and Applied, in Twelve Sermons on Christ's Resurrection, Ascension, Sitting at God's Right Hand, and Judging the World*. ↵
3. Ed. italics. ↵
4. Ed. italics. ↵
5. MS: "tis." ↵
6. JE deletes: "In Revelation 21:23 and Revelation 22:5, the Father is spoken of as being the luminary and the light that 'giveth them light'; but 'the Lamb is the light thereof.'" ↵
7. JE mistakenly cites Philippians 2:6. ↵
8. MS: "&." ↵
9. A reference to "The Mind" no. [45], §§9–13 (*Works*, 6, 364–65), written in 1726 or 1727. The following paragraph is inserted here at JE's direction from MS p. 9. ↵

1. The following paragraph is moved here at JE's direction from MS p. 9. A later addition to the Discourse, it is roughly contemporaneous with the fragments from the "Treatise on Grace" (see pp. 149–50). ↵

2. John Howe, *The Prosperous State of the Christian Interest Before the End of Time, by a Plentiful Effusion of the Holy Spirit; Considered in Fifteen Sermons on Ezek. Ezekiel 39:29... Published by the Reverend John Evans* (London, 1726), p. 185. ↵

3. The "Blank Bible" note on Romans 5:5, written contemporaneously with the Discourse, begins: "'Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.'] By this expression 'tis evident that love to God is something else besides a mere act of judgment, or merely a judicious determination of the mind as to its choice and the course of life. But there is a divine, sweet, holy and powerful affection that is as it were diffused in the soul." In another note on the text that is slightly later than the first, JE continues: "The argument of the Apostle in these words is this: our hope of the glory of God is not an hope that only occasions the grief of disappointment, but meets with success, and has already obtained the thing hoped for in some degree in the earnest of it, in the earnest of the Spirit that are given in our hearts (Ephesians 1:13–14, 2 Corinthians 5:5–6, 2 Corinthians 1:20–22, Ephesians 4:30, Romans 8:23), which we feel in that holy, sweet, divine love that 'is shed abroad' in us, which is the breathing and the proper and natural act of the Holy Ghost. Thus we are enabled to 'glory in tribulation' Romans 5:3]... For when we, through hope of the reward, bear 'tribulation' with 'patience' in waiting for the reward, our patience issues in this joyful 'experience' of the earnest of the reward even here in this life. And this does further confirm hope, as in the two foregoing verses, so that we ben't frustrated and left in confusion, when we through hope 'patiently' bear 'tribulation,' and under 'tribulation, patiently' wait for the reward. For when we thus bear and wait, God gives us our reward in the earnest of it, by causing us to feel the earnest of the Spirit in our heart in the sweet exercises of divine love and holy joy, mentioned, Romans 5:11, so that we do even glory in tribulation. Hence an argument may be drawn that the Holy Ghost is only divine love, or the essence of God flowing out in love and joy, viz. that the Apostle mentions the love of God and joy in God that we feel in our hearts as that by which especially we are sensible of the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts, which is because the nature of the Spirit consists in love and joy." ↵

4. MS: "of the love." ↵

5. The following paragraph, which JE entitled "HOLY GHOST, LOVE represented by the symbol of a dove," is inserted here at his direction from the middle of MS p. 11. The handwriting of this passage appears to date from the late 1740s. Following the cue on MS p. 5 that corresponds to this

place, JE also wrote a cue to "p. 13.c," but the sheet or signature containing the passage is missing. ↪

6. Johannes Buxtorf, *Lexicon Hebraicum et Chaldaicum* (Basel, 1646), pp. 695–96. On the radix generally, Buxtorf writes: "*Commoveri, Commovere* Se: Hebræi notant, Verbum proprium esse avium alas motitantium, dum vel pullos ad volatum provocant..." On Genesis 1:2, "*Incubare...* Quemadmodum columba incumbit pullis suis, neque eos attingit aut lædit alis suis..." JE first refers to this work in his "Catalogue" probably between 1744 and 1746, and in 1747 received a copy of it from David Brainerd (Princeton University Collection). ↪

7. Hugo Grotius, *Truth of the Christian Religion*, trans. John Clark (London, 1729), Bk. 1, sec. 16: "In Moses's history we find the spirit or breath, and the darkness; and the Hebrew word *Merachepeth*, signifies *Love*... Now, because the Hebrew word *Merachepeth* signifies properly the brooding of a dove upon her eggs, therefore it follows in Sanchuniation, that the living creatures, that is, the constellations, were in that mud, as in an egg; and hence that spirit is called by the name of the *dove*... Lucius Ampelius, in his book to Matrinus, says, 'It is reported that, in the river Euphrates, a dove sat many days upon a fish's egg, and hatched a goddess, very kind and merciful to the life of man.'" ↪

8. In the "Blank Bible" note on Genesis 1:2, roughly contemporary with this addition to the Discourse, JE quotes extensively from Theophilus Gale's *Court of the Gentiles* (London, 1647), Pt. 1, bk. 3, ch. 3, §7, pp. 42–44 (see below, p. 144, n. 6). Here Gale is discussing heathen traditions about the creation of the world and what they felt was "first matter," e.g. Thales thought it was water, Plato chaos, etc. Eusebius thought it was wind, "where the first moving principle of the universe is made to be a dark blustering spirit or wind, who finding the chaos confused, and involved in darkness, without bounds or order, being moved with love of his own principle, he made a contexture called love, whence the first production of all things proceeded." JE goes on to note that Aristotle speaks of Parmenides as making "love or cupidity the first principle." Matthew Poole, *Synopsis Criticorum*, 1, on Leviticus 1:14: "Qu. Cur non de aliis auibus, gallinis, perdicibus, &c? Resp. Cæteræ aves vel sunt magis sylvestres; vel, si sunt domesticæ, vescuntur immundo nutrimento, ut gallinæ, anates, &c. *E turturibus etiam magnis; quia turtur compare mortua nonjungitur alteri: aliter columbe, ideominores tantum aptae.* Vel, quia turtures in matura, columbae in tenera, aetate maxime præstunt. *Quia vero ambas istas aves aliae persequuntur, ideo elegit eas Deus.* Turtur significat Christi castitatem; Columba, quae felle caret, ejus dulcedinem, sive mansuetudinem." ↪

9. The following paragraph is inserted here at JE's direction from the bottom of MS. p. 9. Following the cue on MS p. 5 that corresponds to this

place, JE also placed a cue to "p. 13c," but the sheet or signature containing the passage is missing. [←](#)

1. The remainder of the paragraph is a later addition, written in the hand and black ink characteristic of 1739–42. [↵](#)
2. "Blank Bible note" on Revelation 21:23–24, written in 1739–42: "Lowman has this note here. 'This part of the prophetic description seems to be taken from the *Shekinah*, or glory of God, in the several divine appearances. This is represented as a bright and glorious light. The Holy of Holies, the seat of God's presence in the temple, had no other light than that of the *Shekinah*, or the glory that shone over the mercy seat between the cherubim. How strong is this figurative representation, to show that this happy state of the church shall be without comparison, more glorious than any former state of the church had been? The *Shekinah*, or glory of God's presence, shall not be shut up or concealed in one part of the temple, but shall be spread through the whole extent of this spacious city, and every inhabitant shall enjoy the full felicity represented by it.' Whereas it is here said, 'The nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light of it.' Let this be compared with Isaiah 2:5, taken with the preceding verses that speak of the nations that shall be saved that shall resort to Jerusalem. See also Psalms 89:15, and compare these two verses, taken with the Psalms 90:1, with Psalms 36:8–9." The quote is from Moses Lowman, *Paraphrase and Notes on the Revelation* (London, 1737; 2d ed. 1745), p. 266. [↵](#)
3. MS: "it would sound." [↵](#)
4. MS: "of." [↵](#)
5. Lacuna where corner of MS page is broken off; Fisher, *Unpublished Essay*, p. 109, has ellipsis dots. The conjectural insertion is based on John 17:21, which JE seems to be paraphrasing in the latter part of the sentence. At the top of the next page (MS p. 6), JE wrote and deleted the following: "*Memorandum*: Remember to look through all the texts in the Concordance where the Father is mentioned." [↵](#)
6. The following paragraph is inserted here at JE's directions from the bottom of MS p. 8. [↵](#)
7. The following sentence is found on the top of MS p. 9, written in the hand and ink of the mid to date 1730s; JE's movement of passages on this page make this the only place where the sentence fits. [↵](#)
8. Another reference to "The Mind," no. [45]. See above, p. 123, n. 9. [↵](#)
9. The following paragraph (probably written in the late 1730s or early 1740s) is inserted here at JE's direction from MS p. 9. [↵](#)

1. Here we return to MS p. 6, at which point there are two deleted paragraphs that constitute an abortive attempt to formulate what is in the following paragraph. The deleted passage, which JE crossed out with diagonal lines, reads: "I can foresee many objections that may be made and many doubts that may arise concerning what has been said, many of which I don't pretend to be able fully to solve. One of the principal objections that I can think of, is that this scheme don't seem well to agree with the personality of the Holy Ghost. A person is that that hath an understanding, and hath a will, and love: and how can the understanding and love themselves be said to be persons?"

"The three that are in the Godhead, if they are persons, they doubtless all understand and all love. To this I would say, first, that divines have not been wont to suppose that those three are three distinct minds, but they are all the same mind in three distinct ways of subsisting. Neither have they been wont to suppose that they had three distinct understandings or three distinct wills, out that all three had the same understanding, and the same will, and the same love, and that because they have all the same essence, and the attributes are not distinct from the essence. To this I answer, that there is such an union of the persons in the Trinity, [and] that after an ineffable and inconceivable manner, one in another, so that one hath another and one is as it were predicable of another: the father is in the Son, and the Son in the Father; the Father is in the the Holy Ghost, and the Holy Ghost in the Father; the Holy Ghost is in the Son, and the Son in the Holy Ghost, and that because they are all the same divine essence. Christ often says, 'I am in the Father, and the Father in me.'" ↵

2. The following paragraph is inserted here at JE's direction from MS p. 8, an addition made contemporaneous with or very shortly after the original composition. ↵

3. MS: "essence but ." ↵

4. The final sentence of this paragraph is inserted here at JE's direction from MS p. 9. ↵

5. At this point the text of the original composition (MS pp. 1–8) ends. From here we must go to MS p. 10 due the many previous additions that JE has made. The hand and ink at this point date from the late 1730s or early 1740s. ↵

6. The following paragraph, written on MS p. 11 in what appears to be the ink and hand of the mid-1740s, relates to the discussion above of the second person, but JE does indicate where in that discussion it is to be placed. ↵

7. The discourse begins in "Miscellanies," no. 891, and is continued in Nos. 922 and 1067. Sec. 9 of no. 891, which dates from the early 1740s (this entry in the Discourse is not contemporaneous with it), deals with Zechariah 3:8–10. JE writes: "And this Branch that has been mentioned in

prophecies that have been already mentioned, is undoubtedly the same person with him that is spoken of once and again in the prophecy of Zechariah, and there called by way of eminence, THE BRANCH... So he appears to be the 'Shiloh' or 'Safe-maker.'" [↵](#)

8. Here begins MS p. 12; the angular handwriting and dark gray-black ink indicate a date of the very late 1740s or early 1750s. [↵](#)

9. This paragraph is written in a brown ink. [↵](#)

1. The next three paragraphs constitute a still later addition, dating from the early to mid-1750s. ↵
2. MS: "views." ↵
3. Here begins the text of the fragment, once stitched into the MS at an indeterminable point, that has been restored to the Discourse. It is made from a letter cover, folded over once, to make a quarto-sized signature. The hand and ink of the fragment indicate a date of the late 1730s. ↵
4. There are two extant sermons on Canticles 1:3, the first undated, the second dated June 1733 and inscribed "preached at Boston." It is the second to which JE refers, the doctrine of which is "Jesus Christ is a person transcendently excellent and lovely." Under the doctrine, JE explains that Christ's excellency consists in his having the nature and likeness of the Father, in being possessed of all the excellencies of human nature (meekness, lowliness, love, etc.), in his being both God and man, in his end as Redeemer, and in the benefits by which he endears himself to humankind. ↵
5. MS: "& w where if we in them." JE apparently meant to cancel these words. ↵
6. On the final page of the fragment, JE wrote and then deleted with diagonal lines the following two entries, separated by about twelve blank lines: 1) "Heathen Philosophers speak of the Holy Spirit as Love; see Gale's *Court of the Gentiles*, Pt. I, Bk. 3, ch. 3, p. 42." 2) "Heathen Philosophers speak of the Son of God as Wisdom or Idea or Logos; Gale's *Court of the Gentiles*, Pt. I, Bk. 3, ch. 3, p. 42 at the bottom, and 44 at top." The passage on the Holy Spirit as love, from Pt. 1, Bk. 3, ch. 3, p. 42 ff., is excerpted above on p. 127, n. 8; the passage on the Son as Wisdom is found on the bottom of p. 43 and the top of p. 44: "There is one of Orpheus' verses amongst the ancient Philosophers, which mentions this Divine love:... *The first productive Principle was Wisdome and Sweet Love*. The *Stoics* also held, that there was... *a spermatic efformative word*, whereby the world was formed and shaped into its particularities, &c." ↵