

# QUOTES FROM THE MEET & RIGHT PODCAST WITH FR. DANIEL ABBA MOSES

## Trinitarian Theology

1. The Divine Essence (One will find many references, in liturgical services, talking about the Divine Essence and the different aspects of It: i.e. Watos verse of the cymbals – We worship the Father and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, the Holy and Coessential Trinity)

### a. It is unknowable

- i. ‘...the nature of God is incomprehensible... human beings cannot understand God's nature’<sup>1</sup>
- ii. “the incomprehensible nature [of God]”<sup>2</sup>
- iii. ‘the very simple, and blessed, and incomprehensible essence itself of Him that is, (for though we be unable to master what He is, yet hearing ‘Father,’ and ‘God,’ and ‘Almighty,’ we understand nothing else to be meant than the very essence of Him that is<sup>4</sup>)’<sup>3</sup>
- iv. ‘For the divine is by nature invisible. For it is written, “No one has ever seen God.”<sup>36</sup> But he is known by us, as far at least as that is attainable, from his mighty works, his unspeakable power, and his supreme pre-eminence... From his mighty, godlike power, therefore, which transcends all discourse, it is possible in a way to receive knowledge concerning his ineffable divinity.’<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Athanasius of Alexandria, “On Virginity” *Athanasius and Asceticism*; Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1995. Page 309. Print.

<sup>2</sup> Athanasius of Alexandria. (1892). On Luke 10:22 (Matt. 11:27). In P. Schaff & H. Wace (Eds.), A. T. Robertson (Trans.), *St. Athanasius: Select Works and Letters* (Vol. 4, p. 89). New York: Christian Literature Company.

<sup>4</sup> *De Decr.* 29, note 7.

<sup>3</sup> Athanasius of Alexandria. (1892). Councils of Ariminum and Seleucia. In P. Schaff & H. Wace (Eds.), J. H. Newman & A. T. Robertson (Trans.), *St. Athanasius: Select Works and Letters* (Vol. 4, p. 469). New York: Christian Literature Company.

<sup>36</sup> Jn 1:18.

<sup>4</sup> Cyril of Alexandria. (2013). *Festal Letters, 13–30*. (J. J. O’Keefe & D. G. Hunter, Eds., P. R. Amidon, Trans.) (Vol. 127, p. 183). Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press.

**b. It is uncompounded**

- 
- i. 'why do they say that the Holy Spirit, who has the same unity with the Son as the Son has with the Father, is a creature? Why hasn't it dawned on them that, just as by not dividing the Son from the Father they preserve the unity of God, so too, by dividing the Spirit from the Word they no longer preserve the divinity in the Trinity as one, but rupture it, and mix with it a nature that is foreign to it and different in kind, and reduce it to the level of creatures? This in turn renders the Trinity no longer one but compounded of two distinct natures, because the Spirit, as they imagine among themselves, is different in substance...'<sup>5</sup>
  - ii. 'Therefore the Lord himself ranked the Spirit together with the name of the Father in order to show that the Holy Trinity is not compounded of two different things, that is, Creator and creature, but that there is one divinity in the Trinity'<sup>6</sup>
  - iii. "being uncompounded in nature, He is Father of One Only Son"<sup>7</sup>
  - iv. 'the Godhead is incorporeal, without configuration or parts, not quantitatively measurable, or limited by position but that it fills all and exists in all, being infinite by its very nature.'<sup>8</sup>
  - v. 'If that which pertains to God alone is inevitably also His essence, He will be composed of many essences. For there are many things that pertain by nature to God alone and to no other being. Indeed, the divine Scriptures call Him King, Lord, incorruptible, invisible, and say many thousands of other things about Him. If, then, each of His attributes is ranked with essence, how

<sup>5</sup> Ibid ("1.2.3-4" Page 55)

<sup>6</sup> Ibid ("2.15.5-16.1" Page 126)

<sup>7</sup> Athanasius of Alexandria. (1892). *De Decretis or Defence of the Nicene Definition*. In P. Schaff & H. Wace (Eds.), J. H. Newman & A. T. Robertson (Trans.), *St. Athanasius: Select Works and Letters* (Vol. 4, p. 157). New York: Christian Literature Company.

<sup>8</sup> St Cyril of Alexandria. "Answer to Tiberius: #3" *Cyril of Alexandria: Selected Letters.*: New York: Oxford university press, 1983. Pages 147-9. Electronic (pdf)

can the simple God not be composite? But this is a most absurd view to hold.’<sup>9</sup>

**c. It is indivisible**

- i. ‘Nor does he have a nature that is divisible into parts.’<sup>10</sup>
- ii. ‘So, the Trinity is holy and perfect, confessed in Father and Son and Holy Spirit. It has nothing foreign or external mixed with it, nor is it composed of Creator and creature, but is entirely given to creating and making. It is self-consistent<sup>11</sup> and indivisible in nature, and it has one activity.’<sup>12</sup>
- iii. “the will and desire of Father and Son is one, since their nature also is one and indivisible”<sup>13</sup>
- iv. ‘the impassible and impartitive nature of the Father’<sup>14</sup>
- v. ‘The divine and indivisible nature’<sup>15</sup>

2. The Divine Hypostases (Each one is Its own Hypostasis and God; therefore, worship is due equally to each Divine Hypostasis. An example being the response to the Acts: Blessed are you in truth with Your good Father and the Holy Spirit)

**a. These are individual Subjects distinct from one another as Subjects**

- i. ‘For it is through him that the creatures come into existence. Or you may put it this way: “Is the Spirit the Son, and the Son himself the Holy Spirit?” 3.6.2. But those who think such things will be external to the Holy Trinity and considered godless... our faith is in the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit: the Father who cannot be called grandfather, the Son who cannot be

<sup>9</sup> *Treasures* 31 (P.G. LXXV, 444BC)

<sup>10</sup> Ibid ("1.16.2-7" Pages 78-9)

<sup>11</sup> Gk. ὁμοία ἑαυτῆι, lit. “like itself.” See Serap. 1.17.1.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid ("1.28.2-4" Page 97)

<sup>13</sup> Athanasius of Alexandria. (1892). On Luke 10:22 (Matt. 11:27). In P. Schaff & H. Wace (Eds.), A. T. Robertson (Trans.), *St. Athanasius: Select Works and Letters* (Vol. 4, p. 89). New York: Christian Literature Company.

<sup>14</sup> Athanasius of Alexandria. (1892). De Decretis or Defence of the Nicene Definition. In P. Schaff & H. Wace (Eds.), J. H. Newman & A. T. Robertson (Trans.), *St. Athanasius: Select Works and Letters* (Vol. 4, p. 157). New York: Christian Literature Company.

<sup>15</sup> Saint Cyril of Alexandria. (2013). *Commentary on John*. (D. Maxwell, Trans.) (Vol. 1, p. 227). Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press Academic.

called father, and the Holy Spirit who is given no other name than the one he has. 3.6.4. It is not permitted to exchange the names of this faith: the Father is always Father, and the Son always Son, and the Holy Spirit is and is said to be always Holy Spirit.’<sup>16</sup>

ii. “for the Father is not from a father; therefore doth He not beget one who shall become a father; nor is the Son from effluence of the Father, nor is He begotten from a father that was begotten; therefore neither is He begotten so as to beget. Thus it belongs to the Godhead alone, that the Father is properly<sup>3</sup> father, and the Son properly son, and in Them, and Them only, does it hold that the Father is ever Father and the Son ever Son... For as the Father is ever Father and never could become Son, so the Son is ever Son and never could become Father... But if the Father is unalterable, and what He is that He continues, necessarily does the Image also continue what He is, and will not alter.”<sup>17</sup>

iii. ‘And just as the Father could never have been a son, so too the Son could never become a father. And just as the Father will never cease to be only a father, so too the Son will never cease to be only a son... In the Scriptures the Spirit is never called a son, lest he be considered a brother. Nor is he called a son of the Son, lest the Father be thought of as a grandfather. Instead, the Son is called the Son of the Father, and the Spirit is called the Spirit of the Father, and thus in the Holy Trinity there is one divinity and one faith.’<sup>18</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Ibid ("3.6.1-4" Page 135)

<sup>3</sup> κυρίως, *de Decr.* 11, note 6. Elsewhere Athan. says, ‘The Father being one and only is Father of a Son one and only; and in the instance of Godhead only have the names Father and Son stay, and are ever; for of men if any one be called father, yet he has been son of another; and if he be called son, yet is he called father of another; so that in the case of men the names father and son do not properly, κυρίως, hold.’ *ad Serap.* i. 16. also *ibid.* iv. 4 fin. and 6. *vid.* also κυρίως, *Greg. Naz. Orat.* 29. 5. ἀληθῶς, *Orat.* 25, 16. ὄντως, *Basil. contr. Eunom.* i. 5. p. 215.

<sup>17</sup> Athanasius of Alexandria. (1892). *Four Discourses against the Arians.* In P. Schaff & H. Wace (Eds.), J. H. Newman & A. T. Robertson (Trans.), *St. Athanasius: Select Works and Letters* (Vol. 4, p. 319). New York: Christian Literature Company.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid ("1.16.2-7" Pages 78-9)

iv. 'by showing that the Word was "with God," he indicates that the Son is one thing and subsists in himself, while God the Father, "with" whom "the Word was," is another... He beautifully corresponds in every detail, as stated above, to the form of the one who begat him; indeed, he genuinely depicts in himself the one who begat him, the one from whom he exists. However, he will not for that reason lose his own subsistence, nor will the Father lose his. Neither will their complete likeness cause any confusion of the hypostases so that we understand the Father who begat to be the same in number as the Son who was begotten of him. We will confess the identity of nature for both, but the proper subsistence of each one surely follows so that we should think of the Father as really the Father and the Son as the Son. In this way, since the Holy Spirit is numbered with them and also counted as God, the holy Trinity will have the proper fullness.'<sup>19</sup>

b. These three individual Subjects are one in the Divine Essence that They are constituted of

**i. Perichoresis/Coinherence**

1. Because the Divine Essence is indivisible, each Divine Hypostasis of the Holy Trinity completely possesses and is constituted of the Divine Essence; for this reason, when a Divine Hypostasis is said to possess or be constituted of the Divine Essence, the other Divine Hypostases that are also constituted of the Divine Essence are completely within that Hypostasis
2. 'For he [the Holy Spirit] is not in a place but outside all things and in the Son, as the Son is in the Father... For the Spirit is not external to the Word, but is in the Word, and through the Word is in God.'<sup>20</sup>

**c. Monarchy**

<sup>19</sup> Saint Cyril of Alexandria. (2013). *Commentary on John*. (D. Maxwell, Trans.) (Vol. 1, p. 10). Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press Academic.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid ("2.13.3-14.4" Pages 123-4)

- 
- i. 'in this way is the one God preached in the Church, who is above all and through all and in all [Eph 4.6]—above all as Father, as beginning, as source'<sup>21</sup>
  - ii. 'Therefore, since the Son is older than even the ages themselves, he will elude any notion that he came to be in time. Through all time, he “was” in his Father as in a source according to his own statement, “I came from the Father and have arrived.” Therefore, since the Father is considered as source, “the Word was in him” because the Word was his wisdom, power, imprint, radiance and image.'<sup>22</sup>
  - iii. 'The saints too refer to God the Father as the “beginning”<sup>23</sup> of the Son only to indicate whom he is “from.”... The Father is the beginningless beginning of the Son’s nature, so to speak, but only in the sense of source because the Son’s existence is “from” the Father.'<sup>24</sup>

**d. All salvific work is the accomplishment of the Holy Trinity as a whole, although each**

**Divine Hypostasis has its own distinct role**

- i. 'The Father creates and renews all things through the Word in the Holy Spirit'<sup>25</sup>
- ii. 'Understand, rather, that the Father is a coworker with the Son, and the Son in turn is a co-worker with the Father, and our salvation and rising again from death to life is a work of the entire (so to speak) holy Trinity.'<sup>26</sup>

**e. All work is accomplished by the Father, through the Son and in the Spirit**

- i. 'The Father creates all things through the Word in the Spirit.'<sup>27</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Ibid ("1.28.2-4" Page 97)

<sup>22</sup> Saint Cyril of Alexandria. (2013). *Commentary on John*. (D. Maxwell, Trans.) (Vol. 1, p. 7). Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press Academic.

<sup>23</sup> Αρχή.

<sup>24</sup> Saint Cyril of Alexandria. (2013). *Commentary on John*. (D. Maxwell, Trans.) (Vol. 1, p. 8). Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press Academic.

<sup>25</sup> DelCogliano, M., A. Radde-Gallwitz & L. Ayres. "1.24.6" *Works on the Spirit*; Yonkers: Saint Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2011. Page 91. Print

<sup>26</sup> Saint Cyril of Alexandria. (2013). *Commentary on John*. (D. Maxwell, Trans.) (Vol. 1, p. 223). Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press Academic.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid ("2.13.3-14.4" Pages 123-4)

- ii. 'The Father does all things through the Word in the Holy Spirit.'<sup>28</sup>
- iii. 'God the Father effectively summons things into existence exclusively through the Son, through his own Wisdom and power, in the Spirit.'<sup>29</sup>

3. The Divine Attributes (These are important to us because this is how we have communion with God; He can share nothing with us except His attributes. The word communion comes from Latin *communio(n)*, from *communis* meaning common, something that is shared between objects. A liturgical example is the Anaphora in the Gregorian liturgy: The love of God that Father; the grace of the only-begotten Son, our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ; and the communion and gift of the Holy Spirit be with you all.)

a. These can be shared with created beings, through a process called Theopoiesis, or participation (μετοχή, or μέθεξις) in God

- i. 'being the good Offspring of Him that is good, and true Son, He is the Father's Power and Wisdom and Word, not being so by participation<sup>5</sup>, nor as if these qualities were imparted to Him from without, as they are to those who partake of Him and are made wise by Him, and receive power and reason in Him'<sup>30</sup>
- ii. 'just as he, as God, ungrudgingly deemed it necessary to exalt us with his own good attributes. That is why he calls us gods and light. What good titles, after all, does he not give us?'<sup>31</sup>
- iii. 'fire is hot by nature, and other things are hot by participating in its activity, like iron or wood.'<sup>32</sup>

b. These are not the:

<sup>28</sup> Ibid ("1.28.2-4" Page 97)

<sup>29</sup> St Cyril of Alexandria. "On the Creed" *Cyril of Alexandria: Selected Letters.*: New York: Oxford university press, 1983. Page 107. Electronic (pdf)

<sup>5</sup> μετοχή, cf. *de Syn.* 48, 51, 53. This was held by Arians, but in common with Paul Samos, and many of the Monarchian heretics. The same principle in Orig. on Ps. 135 (Lomm. xiii. 134) οὐ κατὰ μετουσίαν ἀλλὰ κατ' οὐσίαν Θεός.

<sup>30</sup> Athanasius of Alexandria. (1892). *Against the Heathen.* In P. Schaff & H. Wace (Eds.), A. T. Robertson (Trans.), *St. Athanasius: Select Works and Letters* (Vol. 4, p. 29). New York: Christian Literature Company.

<sup>31</sup> Saint Cyril of Alexandria. (2013). *Commentary on John.* (D. Maxwell, Trans.) (Vol. 1, p. 50). Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press Academic.

<sup>32</sup> Saint Cyril of Alexandria. (2013). *Commentary on John.* (D. Maxwell, Trans.) (Vol. 1, p. 241). Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press Academic.

## i. Divine Essence

1. 'Now, He has the prerogative of creating and making, of Eternity, of omnipotence, of immutability... Well then, if these prerogatives belong to the Son, they clearly do so, not on account of His virtue, as said above, but essentially, even as the synod said, 'He is of no other essence' but of the Father's, to whom these prerogatives are proper.'<sup>33</sup>
2. 'Men of good sense who focus their minds' eyes sharply on the attributes of the ineffable Godhead,<sup>34</sup> see it as existing beyond every created thing, transcending all acuity of intellect, being wholly outside bodily appearance and, as all-wise Paul says, '*dwelling in light*<sup>35</sup> *unapproachable*'. But if the light surrounding it<sup>36</sup> is unapproachable, how can one gaze on it?... Diety,<sup>37</sup> then, is wholly incorporeal, with dimensions or size and not bounded by shape.'<sup>38</sup>
3. 'the divine Cyril says in his Treasures: 'If that which pertains to God alone is inevitably also His essence. He will be composed of many essences. For there are many things that pertain by nature to God alone and to no other being. Indeed, the divine Scriptures call Him King, Lord, incorruptible, invisible, and say many thousands of other things about Him. If, then, each of His attributes is ranked with essence, how can the simple God not be composite? But this is a most absurd view to hold.'<sup>39/40</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Athanasius of Alexandria. (1892). To the Bishops of Africa. In P. Schaff & H. Wace (Eds.), A. T. Robertson (Trans.), *St. Athanasius: Select Works and Letters* (Vol. 4, pp. 492–493). New York: Christian Literature Company.

<sup>34</sup> Θεότητος

<sup>35</sup> φως

<sup>36</sup> περι αὐτὴν φως

<sup>37</sup> Θειον

<sup>38</sup> St Cyril of Alexandria. "Doctrinal Questions and answers: 1" *Cyril of Alexandria: Selected Letters*.: New York: Oxford university press, 1983. Page 185. Electronic (pdf)

<sup>39</sup> *Treasures* 31 (P.G. lxxv, 444BC).

<sup>40</sup> Gregory Palamas. (1995). 119. (G. Palmer, P. Sherrard, & K. Ware, Trans.), *Philokalia* (Vol. 4, p. 402). London: Faber and Faber.



## ii. Divine Hypostases

1. 'Proceed we then to consider the attributes of the Father, and we shall come to know whether this Image is really His. The Father is eternal, immortal, powerful, light, King, Sovereign, God, Lord, Creator, and Maker. These attributes must be in the Image, to make it true that he 'that hath seen' the Son 'hath seen the Father'<sup>7</sup>.'<sup>41</sup>
2. 'For if all things are delivered unto Him, first, He is other than that all which He has received; next, being Heir of all things, He alone is the Son and proper according to the Essence of the Father... as receiving all things, He is other than them all, and alone proper to the Father. Moreover that 'Was given' and 'Were delivered' do not shew that once He had them not'<sup>42</sup>
3. 'Rather then is the Word faithful, and all things which He says that He has received, He has always, yet has from the Father; and the Father indeed not from any, but the Son from the Father... For the Father, having given all things to the Son, in the Son still<sup>2</sup> hath all things; and

<sup>7</sup> John 14:9.

<sup>41</sup> Athanasius of Alexandria. (1892). *Four Discourses against the Arians*. In P. Schaff & H. Wace (Eds.), J. H. Newman & A. T. Robertson (Trans.), *St. Athanasius: Select Works and Letters* (Vol. 4, p. 318). New York: Christian Literature Company.

<sup>42</sup> Athanasius of Alexandria. (1892). *Four Discourses against the Arians*. In P. Schaff & H. Wace (Eds.), J. H. Newman & A. T. Robertson (Trans.), *St. Athanasius: Select Works and Letters* (Vol. 4, p. 413). New York: Christian Literature Company.

<sup>2</sup> πάλιν. vid. *Or.* i. 15, n. 6. Thus iteration is not duplication in respect to God; though *how* this is, is the inscrutable Mystery of the Trinity in Unity. Nothing can be named which the Son is in Himself, as distinct from the Father; we are but told His *relation* towards the Father, and thus the sole meaning we are able to attach to Person is a relation of the Son towards the Father; and distinct from and beyond that relation, He is but the One God, who is also the Father. This sacred subject has been touched upon *supr. Or.* iii. 9, n. 8. In other words, there is an indestructible essential relation existing in the One Indivisible infinitely simple God, such as to constitute Him, viewed on each side of that relation (what in human language we call) Two (and in like manner Three), yet without the notion of number really coming in. When we speak of 'Person,' we mean nothing more than the One God in substance, viewed relatively to Him the One God, as viewed in that Correlative which we therefore call another Person. These various statements are not here intended to explain, but to bring home to the mind *what* it is which faith receives. We say 'Father, Son, and Spirit,' but when we would abstract a general idea of Them in order to number Them, our abstraction really does hardly more than carry us back to the One Substance. Such seems the meaning of such passages as Basil. *Ep.* 8, 2; *de Sp.* S. c. 18; Chrysost. *in Joan. Hom.* ii. 3 fin. 'In respect of the Adorable and most Royal Trinity, 'first' and 'second' have no place; for the Godhead is higher than number and times.' Isid. *Pel. Ep.* 3, 18. Eulog. *ap. Phot.* 230. p. 864. August. *in Joan.* 39, 3 and 4; *de Trin.* v. 10. 'Unity is not number, but is itself the principle of all things.' Ambros. *de Fid.* i. n. 19. 'A trine numeration then does not make number, which they rather

the Son having, still the Father hath them; for the Son's Godhead is the Father's Godhead, and thus the Father in the Son exercises His Providence<sup>3</sup> over all things.<sup>'43</sup>

4. 'And again, if all that is the Father's, is the Son's (and this He Himself has<sup>3</sup> said), and it is the Father's attribute to know the day, it is plain that the Son too knows it, having this proper to Him from the Father.'<sup>44</sup>

a. If Divine Attributes = Divine Hypostases, then the Father = Son

5. 'The attributes that are ascribed and apply properly and in the strict sense to him who is Son by nature are brought down to us, since on occasion the Holy Scripture often applies the qualities of a natural son to those who are sons by adoption.'<sup>45</sup>

**c. They are without temporal beginning and have always existed, just as the Divine Essence and the Divine Hypostases are without temporal beginning and have always existed; for this reason, They can be called uncreated, or eternal**

- i. 'It is necessary, then, that we should perceive that in the Father reside Everlastingness, Eternity, Immortality. Now these reside in Him not as adventitious attributes, but, as it were, in a well-spring they reside in Him, and in the Son.'<sup>46</sup>
- ii. 'the like passages do not shew that the Son once had not these prerogatives—(for had not He eternally what the Father has, who is the Only

---

run into, who make some difference between the Three.' Boeth. *Trin. unus Deus*, p. 959. The last remark is found in Naz. *Orat.* 31, 18. Many of these references are taken from Thomassin *de Trin.* 17.

<sup>3</sup> §§ 11, n. 4, 15, n. 11.

<sup>43</sup> Athanasius of Alexandria. (1892). *Four Discourses against the Arians*. In P. Schaff & H. Wace (Eds.), J. H. Newman & A. T. Robertson (Trans.), *St. Athanasius: Select Works and Letters* (Vol. 4, p. 414). New York: Christian Literature Company.

<sup>3</sup> John 16:15.

<sup>44</sup> Athanasius of Alexandria. (1892). *Four Discourses against the Arians*. In P. Schaff & H. Wace (Eds.), J. H. Newman & A. T. Robertson (Trans.), *St. Athanasius: Select Works and Letters* (Vol. 4, p. 418). New York: Christian Literature Company.

<sup>45</sup> Saint Cyril of Alexandria. (2015). *Commentary on John*. (D. Maxwell, Trans.) (Vol. 2, p. 312). Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press Academic.

<sup>46</sup> Athanasius of Alexandria. (1892). On Luke 10:22 (Matt. 11:27). In P. Schaff & H. Wace (Eds.), A. T. Robertson (Trans.), *St. Athanasius: Select Works and Letters* (Vol. 4, p. 89). New York: Christian Literature Company.

Word and Wisdom of the Father in essence, who also says, 'All that the Father hath are Mine<sup>9</sup>,' and what are Mine, are the Father's? for if the things of the Father are the Son's and the Father hath them ever, it is plain that what the Son hath, being the Father's, were ever in the Son),—not then because once He had them not, did He say this, but because, whereas the Son hath eternally what He hath, yet He hath them from the Father<sup>47</sup>

- iii. 'He must be omnipotent, and that this glorious attribute is, so to speak, His without a beginning, and without end.'<sup>48</sup>
- iv. 'The divine admits no turning at all or change to anything unrighteous, but it always shines forth in its eternal attributes.'<sup>49</sup>

**d. These are the ONLY means through which we are able to know God**

- i. 'For the divine is by nature invisible. For it is written, "No one has ever seen God."<sup>36</sup> But he is known by us, as far at least as that is attainable, from his mighty works, his unspeakable power, and his supreme pre-eminence. Creation proclaims him as well; David sings accordingly, "The heavens tell of God's glory, and the firmament declares the work of his hands."<sup>37</sup>... From his mighty, godlike power, therefore, which transcends all discourse, it is possible in a way to receive knowledge concerning his ineffable divinity.'<sup>50</sup>
- ii. 'Qualities that inhere in natures or happen to be possessed by them are most clearly manifested when they are brought to actuality. Fire, for example, possesses its heat by nature, but when it acts on wood, that is when we see

---

<sup>9</sup> John 16:15; 17:10.

<sup>47</sup> Athanasius of Alexandria. (1892). *Four Discourses against the Arians*. In P. Schaff & H. Wace (Eds.), J. H. Newman & A. T. Robertson (Trans.), *St. Athanasius: Select Works and Letters* (Vol. 4, p. 413). New York: Christian Literature Company.

<sup>48</sup> Cyril of Alexandria. (1859). *A Commentary upon the Gospel according to S. Luke*. (R. P. Smith, Trans.) (p. 333). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

<sup>49</sup> Saint Cyril of Alexandria. (2015). *Commentary on John*. (D. Maxwell, Trans.) (Vol. 2, p. 290). Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press Academic.

<sup>36</sup> Jn 1:18.

<sup>37</sup> Ps 19:1.

<sup>50</sup> Cyril of Alexandria. (2013). *Festal Letters, 13–30*. (J. J. O'Keefe & D. G. Hunter, Eds., P. R. Amidon, Trans.) (Vol. 127, p. 183). Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press.

what kind of power it has and how great that power is. Likewise someone who has obtained knowledge of grammar, let's say, or some other such discipline, would not be admired when silent, I think, but rather when they display the excellence of their learning for others to see. So it is with the divine and ineffable nature. When it actualizes any of its qualities or natural properties, that is when it shows itself more clearly for what it is and is thereby perceived by us as well.<sup>51</sup>

## Quotes from Episode 16: Asceticism in the Real World

### Guarding the Heart (Asceticism)

1. What is each Christian's goal?

#### a. Theopoiesis/Participation in God

- i. This allows a person to acquire life, an attribute of God, and exist; liturgical examples – Institution Narrative: 'For being determined to give Himself up to death, for the life of the world')
- ii. 'the Word was made flesh in order to offer up this body for all, and that we, partaking of His Spirit, might be deified<sup>5</sup>, a gift which we could not otherwise have gained than by His clothing Himself in our created body<sup>6/52</sup>
- iii. 'He commands them to disregard all earthly and temporal matters, and look only unto one end, the duty namely of every one saving his soul.'<sup>53</sup>
- iv. 'if they have the desire to be stronger than decay and to strip off death itself, which fell on us because of transgression, they will have to come to

<sup>51</sup> Saint Cyril of Alexandria. (2015). *Commentary on John*. (D. Maxwell, Trans.) (Vol. 2, p. 70). Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press Academic.

<sup>5</sup> [See de *Incar.* § 54. 3, and note.]

<sup>6</sup> *Orat.* ii, § 70.

<sup>52</sup> Athanasius of Alexandria. (1892). De Decretis or Defence of the Nicene Definition. In P. Schaff & H. Wace (Eds.), J. H. Newman & A. T. Robertson (Trans.), *St. Athanasius: Select Works and Letters* (Vol. 4, p. 159). New York: Christian Literature Company.

<sup>53</sup> Cyril of Alexandria. (1859). *A Commentary upon the Gospel according to S. Luke*. (R. P. Smith, Trans.) (p. 547). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

participation in the one who can give life, who both destroys decay and nullifies death.<sup>54</sup>

- v. 'The will of my Father is that a person be made a participant in the Holy Spirit'<sup>55</sup>

**b. Love, which allows one to participate in God**

- i. Liturgical example: Greet one another with a holy kiss
- ii. 'For through virtue a man enters in unto God, as Moses did into the thick cloud where God was. But through vice a man goes out from the presence of the Lord'<sup>56</sup>
- iii. 'So the person who opts to live without love is not in God, instead lying outside of a relationship with God.'<sup>57</sup>
- iv. 'So if anyone thinks it is good and desirable to partake in the divine nature and to have the God and Father of the universe indwelling and abiding in the shrine of their heart through the Son in the Spirit, let them clean out their soul and wash away the stain of wickedness by any means possible, or rather by every good work.'<sup>58</sup>
- v. 'keeping the commandments works love toward him, and we are united to him through love'<sup>59</sup>

<sup>54</sup> Saint Cyril of Alexandria. (2013). *Commentary on John*. (D. Maxwell, Trans.) (Vol. 1, p. 229). Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press Academic.

<sup>55</sup> Saint Cyril of Alexandria. (2013). *Commentary on John*. (D. Maxwell, Trans.) (Vol. 1, p. 97). Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press Academic.

<sup>56</sup> Athanasius of Alexandria. (1892). Festal Letters. In P. Schaff & H. Wace (Eds.), H. Burgess & J. Smith Payne (Trans.), *St. Athanasius: Select Works and Letters* (Vol. 4, p. 529). New York: Christian Literature Company.

<sup>57</sup> Cyril of Alexandria. (2008). *Commentary on the Twelve Prophets*. (T. P. Halton, Ed., R. C. Hill, Trans.) (Vol. 116, p. 25). Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press.

<sup>58</sup> Saint Cyril of Alexandria. (2015). *Commentary on John*. (D. Maxwell, Trans.) (Vol. 2, p. 195). Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press Academic.

<sup>59</sup> Saint Cyril of Alexandria. (2015). *Commentary on John*. (D. Maxwell, Trans.) (Vol. 2, p. 211). Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press Academic.

vi. 'Indeed, in this love the power of our connection or union in the Spirit would be best maintained and preserved.'<sup>60</sup>

vii. Love is keeping the commandments of God with the:

1. Mind/Heart/Soul

a. 1Cor 13:5

2. Body

a. Joh 14:21

2. How does one cultivate love?

a. Following the commandments of God are a direct result of keeping the heart full of good and minimizing any evil content

i. Pro 15:35, Mat 12:35

ii. 'for as is his mind, such of necessity must be his actions... After this the Word, shewing that actions correspond with thoughts, says, 'They are corrupt; they are profane in their machinations'<sup>1</sup>''<sup>61</sup>

iii. 'For the things that are in the mind and heart boil over, and are vomited forth by the outflowing stream of speech. The virtuous man, therefore, speaks such things as become his character, while he who is worthless and wicked vomits forth his secret impurity.'<sup>62</sup>

iv. Asceticism → Gr. Askein = to exercise

1. Asceticism refers to exercises that have as their goal cultivating, maintaining and growing in purity of heart

a. Examples of:

<sup>60</sup> Saint Cyril of Alexandria. (2015). *Commentary on John*. (D. Maxwell, Trans.) (Vol. 2, p. 222). Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press Academic.

<sup>1</sup> Ps. 14:1, 2.

<sup>61</sup> Athanasius of Alexandria. (1892). Festal Letters. In P. Schaff & H. Wace (Eds.), H. Burgess & J. Smith Payne (Trans.), *St. Athanasius: Select Works and Letters* (Vol. 4, p. 535). New York: Christian Literature Company.

<sup>62</sup> Cyril of Alexandria. (1859). *A Commentary upon the Gospel according to S. Luke*. (R. P. Smith, Trans.) (pp. 119–120). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- i. Positive exercises: meditating on the saints  
(commemoration of the saints)

- 1. 'Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.'<sup>63</sup>

- ii. Negative exercises: careful monitoring and rejection of unnecessary cares

- 1. 'But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life'<sup>64</sup>

- 2. Asceticism can be practiced:

- a. Correctly

- i. Acknowledging it not one's final goal, but an extremely useful tool to cultivate one's final goal

- ii. 'For this we must seek solitude, for this we know that we ought to submit to fasts, vigils, hard labors, bodily nakedness, reading, and all other virtues that through them we may be enabled to prepare our heart and to keep it unharmed by all evil passions, and resting on these steps to mount to the perfection of love... Those things which are of secondary importance, such as fasts, vigils, withdrawal from the world, meditation on Scripture, we ought to practice with a view to our main object, i.e., purity of heart,

---

<sup>63</sup> Phi 4:8

<sup>64</sup> Luk 21:34

which is love... Therefore fasts, vigils, meditation on the Scriptures, self-denial, and the renunciation of all possessions are not perfection, but aids to perfection: because the end of that science does not lie in these, but by means of these we arrive at the end.’<sup>65</sup>

b. Incorrectly

- i. Thinking that asceticism itself is the final goal, and never using it to grow towards purity of heart
- ii. ‘Therefore, since every virtue is summed up and fulfilled in the form and habit of love, let us not think highly of ourselves for fasting or sleeping on the ground or other burdens of asceticism if we do not carefully preserve love for the brother... to boast in physical labors while falling short of the more important and necessary virtues is to fail at progressing toward the goal... love is like a cornerstone of every virtue’<sup>66</sup>

3. Summary:

- a. Every Christian needs the assistance of asceticism to cultivate purity of heart, so that through this purity one can be united to God, participate in Him and live with Him forever in His Kingdom

Participation in God

1. We hear in the confession, made by the priest, before Communion, that the Body and Blood of Christ are ‘...given for us for salvation, remission of sins and eternal life to those who

---

<sup>65</sup> John Cassian. “1<sup>st</sup> Conference – Abbot Moses: On the Goal and Aim of the Monk.” *Nicean and Post Nicean Fathers*. Schaff, Philip. Series II. Vol. 11. Grand Rapids: Christian Classic Ethereal Library. Pages 713-45. electronic

<sup>66</sup> Saint Cyril of Alexandria. (2015). *Commentary on John*. (D. Maxwell, Trans.) (Vol. 2, p. 141). Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press Academic.



partake of Him,' but what does this mean? How does His true Body and Blood give us eternal Life?

2. The Holy Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, is one of many powerful Sacraments, which allows us to participate in God and journey towards eternal Life

- a. 'if they have the desire to be stronger than decay and to strip off death itself, which fell on us because of transgression, they will have to come to participation in the one who can give life, who both destroys decay and nullifies death.'<sup>67</sup>
- b. 'the bread from heaven, that is, Christ, nourishes us to eternal life both by supplying us with the Holy Spirit and by participation in his own flesh, placing into us participation with God and destroying death that comes from the ancient curse'<sup>68</sup>

3. Can humans really participate in God?

4. Human beings **can** participate in the Divine Essence; this is **not** a heretical concept, it is part of what makes up the **core** of the Christian Faith

- a. Scriptural basis → 2Pet 1:4 'by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature'
- b. 'for, as partaking of the Son Himself, we are said to partake of God; and this is what Peter said, 'that ye may be partakers in a divine nature'<sup>2</sup>'<sup>69</sup>
- c. 'they were enriched with That Spirit Which makes free, even the Holy Ghost: they were made partakers of the divine nature'<sup>70</sup>

5. What exactly is participation? What does it mean?

6. Participation (*μετοχή*, or *μέθεξις*) is when a substance receives an attribute, characteristic or property from another substance

---

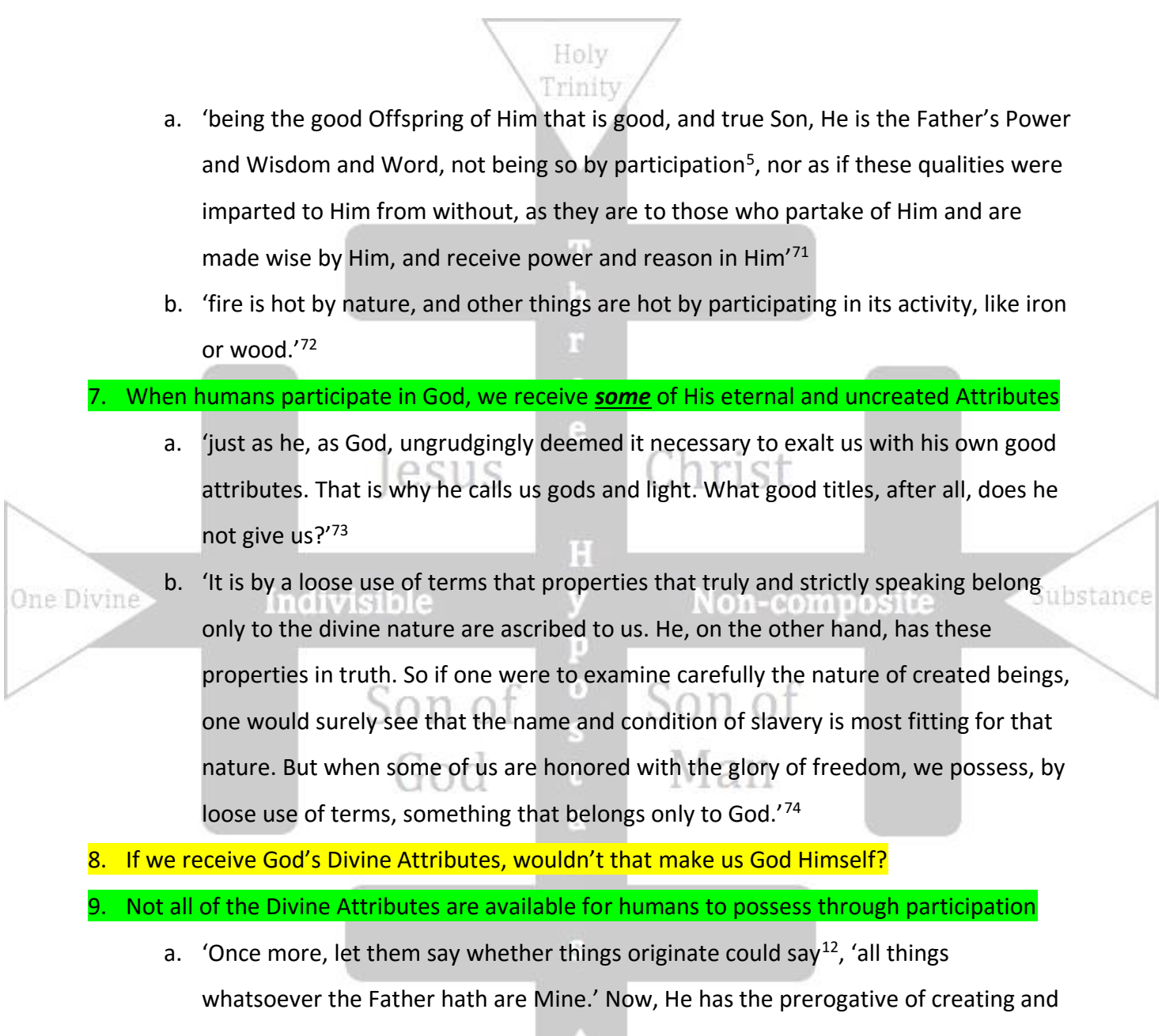
<sup>67</sup> Saint Cyril of Alexandria. (2013). *Commentary on John*. (D. Maxwell, Trans.) (Vol. 1, p. 229). Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press Academic.

<sup>68</sup> Saint Cyril of Alexandria. (2013). *Commentary on John*. (D. Maxwell, Trans.) (Vol. 1, p. 212). Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press Academic.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Pet 1:4.

<sup>69</sup> Athanasius of Alexandria. (1892). Four Discourses against the Arians. In P. Schaff & H. Wace (Eds.), J. H. Newman & A. T. Robertson (Trans.), *St. Athanasius: Select Works and Letters* (Vol. 4, p. 316). New York: Christian Literature Company.

<sup>70</sup> Cyril of Alexandria. (1859). *A Commentary upon the Gospel according to S. Luke*. (R. P. Smith, Trans.) (p. 27). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- 
- a. 'being the good Offspring of Him that is good, and true Son, He is the Father's Power and Wisdom and Word, not being so by participation<sup>5</sup>, nor as if these qualities were imparted to Him from without, as they are to those who partake of Him and are made wise by Him, and receive power and reason in Him'<sup>71</sup>
  - b. 'fire is hot by nature, and other things are hot by participating in its activity, like iron or wood.'<sup>72</sup>

**7. When humans participate in God, we receive some of His eternal and uncreated Attributes**

- a. 'just as he, as God, ungrudgingly deemed it necessary to exalt us with his own good attributes. That is why he calls us gods and light. What good titles, after all, does he not give us?'<sup>73</sup>
- b. 'It is by a loose use of terms that properties that truly and strictly speaking belong only to the divine nature are ascribed to us. He, on the other hand, has these properties in truth. So if one were to examine carefully the nature of created beings, one would surely see that the name and condition of slavery is most fitting for that nature. But when some of us are honored with the glory of freedom, we possess, by loose use of terms, something that belongs only to God.'<sup>74</sup>

**8. If we receive God's Divine Attributes, wouldn't that make us God Himself?**

**9. Not all of the Divine Attributes are available for humans to possess through participation**

- a. 'Once more, let them say whether things originate could say<sup>12</sup>, 'all things whatsoever the Father hath are Mine.' Now, He has the prerogative of creating and making, of Eternity, of omnipotence, of immutability. But things originate cannot

<sup>5</sup> μετοχή, cf. *de Syn.* 48, 51, 53. This was held by Arians, but in common with Paul Samos, and many of the Monarchian heretics. The same principle in Orig. on Ps. 135 (Lomm. xiii. 134) οὐ κατὰ μετουσίαν ἀλλὰ κατ' οὐσίαν θεός.

<sup>71</sup> Athanasius of Alexandria. (1892). *Against the Heathen*. In P. Schaff & H. Wace (Eds.), A. T. Robertson (Trans.), *St. Athanasius: Select Works and Letters* (Vol. 4, p. 29). New York: Christian Literature Company.

<sup>72</sup> Saint Cyril of Alexandria. (2013). *Commentary on John*. (D. Maxwell, Trans.) (Vol. 1, p. 241). Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press Academic.

<sup>73</sup> Saint Cyril of Alexandria. (2013). *Commentary on John*. (D. Maxwell, Trans.) (Vol. 1, p. 50). Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press Academic.

<sup>74</sup> Saint Cyril of Alexandria. (2015). *Commentary on John*. (D. Maxwell, Trans.) (Vol. 2, p. 166). Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press Academic.

<sup>12</sup> John 16:15.

have the power of making, for they are creatures; nor eternity, for their existence has a beginning; nor of omnipotence and immutability, for they are under sway, and of changeable nature, as the Scriptures say.<sup>75</sup>

- b. 'Those who follow Christ ought to have the same qualities that made Christ stand out—not the God-befitting properties that are above humanity (since no human can imitate him who is by nature true God), but those that human nature is capable of displaying, not by bridling the sea and doing things like that but by being humble and meek and putting up with insults.'<sup>76</sup>

**10. None of the Divine Attributes will ever be naturally, or essentially, in humans**

- a. 'Furthermore, a nature that decays and changes, that is, one that has been created, may never be enriched by an inherent resistance to change, nor may a creature ever boast in the virtues of the divine nature as if they were its own. If it tried to, it would deserve to be told, "What do you have that you did not receive?"'<sup>77/78</sup>
- b. 'For to be essentially holy suits not any one whatsoever of those things, which from nonexistence have been brought into being: but only that supreme nature which transcends all.'<sup>79</sup>

**11. Participation does **not** cause human essence to change into the Divine Essence**

- a. 'But as we, by receiving the Spirit, do not lose our own proper substance, so the Lord, when made man for us, and bearing a body, was no less God; for He was not

---

<sup>75</sup> Athanasius of Alexandria. (1892). To the Bishops of Africa. In P. Schaff & H. Wace (Eds.), A. T. Robertson (Trans.), *St. Athanasius: Select Works and Letters* (Vol. 4, pp. 492–493). New York: Christian Literature Company.

<sup>76</sup> Saint Cyril of Alexandria. (2015). *Commentary on John*. (D. Maxwell, Trans.) (Vol. 2, p. 104). Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press Academic.

<sup>77</sup> 1 Cor 4:7

<sup>78</sup> Saint Cyril of Alexandria. (2014). To Theodosius. D. King (Trans.), *Three Christological Treatises* (p. 45). Washington D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press

<sup>79</sup> Cyril of Alexandria. (1859). *A Commentary upon the Gospel according to S. Luke*. (R. P. Smith, Trans.) (p. 332). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

lessened by the envelopment of the body, but rather deified it and rendered it immortal<sup>7</sup>.<sup>80</sup>

- b. “Indeed talk of the body's being changed into Godhead's nature is equally as absurd as talk of the Word's being changed into the nature of the flesh. Just as the latter is impossible (for the Word is unchanging and unalterable) so is the former that a creature could transfer to Godhead's substance or nature does not come within the realm of possibilities, and the flesh is a created thing.”<sup>81</sup>

12. You also mentioned that God's Attributes are 'eternal' and 'uncreated', why do you specify eternal and uncreated?

13. The Divine Attributes have always existed, there was never a time in which they did not exist and then were brought into existence; therefore, they can be referred to as eternal or uncreated

- a. ‘It is necessary, then, that we should perceive that in the Father reside Everlastingness, Eternity, Immortality. Now these reside in Him not as adventitious<sup>82</sup> attributes, but, as it were, in a well-spring they reside in Him, and in the Son.’<sup>83</sup>
- b. ‘He must be omnipotent, and that this glorious attribute is, so to speak, His without a beginning, and without end.’<sup>84</sup>
- c. ‘The divine admits no turning at all or change to anything unrighteous, but it always shines forth in its eternal attributes.’<sup>85</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup> Cf. *Orat.* ii. 6. [See also *de Incar.* § 17.]

<sup>80</sup> Athanasius of Alexandria. (1892). *De Decretis or Defence of the Nicene Definition*. In P. Schaff & H. Wace (Eds.), J. H. Newman & A. T. Robertson (Trans.), *St. Athanasius: Select Works and Letters* (Vol. 4, p. 159). New York: Christian Literature Company.

<sup>81</sup> Saint Cyril of Alexandria. (1983). *First Letter to Succensus*. L. Wickham (Ed. & Trans.), *Cyril of Alexandria: Selected Letters* (p. 81). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

<sup>82</sup> Coming from another source and not inherent or innate

<sup>83</sup> Athanasius of Alexandria. (1892). *On Luke 10:22 (Matt. 11:27)*. In P. Schaff & H. Wace (Eds.), A. T. Robertson (Trans.), *St. Athanasius: Select Works and Letters* (Vol. 4, p. 89). New York: Christian Literature Company.

<sup>84</sup> Cyril of Alexandria. (1859). *A Commentary upon the Gospel according to S. Luke*. (R. P. Smith, Trans.) (p. 333). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

<sup>85</sup> Saint Cyril of Alexandria. (2015). *Commentary on John*. (D. Maxwell, Trans.) (Vol. 2, p. 290). Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press Academic.

14. Saint Athanasius mentioned immortality as one of God's Attributes, this makes me think of Adam and Eve when they were initially in the Garden of Eden

15. Humans initially participated in God, after being created

- a. 'But seeing that he ought to be not merely rational with an aptitude for doing good and right, but also a participator in the Holy Spirit, he breathed into him, so that he might have brighter marks of the divine nature within him, the breath of life. This is the Spirit furnished through the Son to rational creation and shaping it into the sublimest, that is the divine, form'<sup>86</sup>
- b. 'When in ancient times Adam came into being, God made him a partaker of his own Spirit, giving to his nature a most perfect beauty. For "he breathed on his face the breath of life."<sup>15,87</sup>

c. What are the 'divine marks' and 'sublime form' that Saint Cyril mentioned, which come through participation in God?

d. Being created in the Divine Image and Likeness

- i. 'Therefore, just as humanity was formed and came into being in the beginning, so also it is renewed. And just as then it was formed into the image of its creator, so also now it is refashioned by participation in the Spirit to the likeness of its maker.'<sup>88</sup>
- ii. '... we are conformed to the true and exact image of the Father, that is, to the Son, and that his divine beauty is impressed on our souls through participation in the Holy Spirit.'<sup>89</sup>

<sup>86</sup> Saint Cyril of Alexandria. (1983). Doctrinal Questions and Answers. L. Wickham (Ed. & Trans.), *Cyril of Alexandria: Selected Letters* (p. 189-91). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

<sup>15</sup> Gen 2:7.

<sup>87</sup> Simonetti, M. (Ed.). (2002). *Matthew 14-28* (p. 214). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

<sup>88</sup> Saint Cyril of Alexandria. (2015). *Commentary on John*. (D. Maxwell, Trans.) (Vol. 2, p. 369). Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press Academic.

<sup>89</sup> Saint Cyril of Alexandria. (2000). The Creation of Man in the Image of God. N. Russell (Trans.), *Cyril of Alexandria* (p. 199). New York: Routledge.

16. What is to keep someone from adopting that attitude of, 'Ok, I have gone through the Sacraments, which enable me to participate in God and receive His Attribute of immortality, I don't need to be active in Church anymore'?

17. Participation is not a permanent but reversible process

- a. 'For things which are from participation, are called like, not in reality, but from resemblance to reality; so that they may swerve, or be taken from those who share them.'<sup>90</sup>

18. Other names for participation in God

a. Deification/Theopoiesis/Theosis

- i. 'This is why, with regard to us, the holy man said, 'Lord, who shall be likened unto thee<sup>7</sup>,' and 'who among the gods is like unto you, Lord<sup>8</sup>;' meaning by gods those who, while created, had yet become partakers of the Word, as He Himself said, 'If he called them gods to whom the word of God came<sup>9</sup>.' But things which partake cannot be identical with or similar to that whereof they partake.'<sup>91</sup>
- ii. 'for many are sons by grace and *gods*\* and *lords* both *in heaven* and *in earth*, as the Divine-uttering Paul too writes to us: yet [they are so] as participating with Him Who is so by Nature and in imitation [of Him].'<sup>92</sup>

<sup>90</sup> Athanasius of Alexandria. (1892). Councils of Ariminum and Seleucia. In P. Schaff & H. Wace (Eds.), J. H. Newman & A. T. Robertson (Trans.), *St. Athanasius: Select Works and Letters* (Vol. 4, p. 479). New York: Christian Literature Company.

<sup>7</sup> Ps. 83:1, LXX.

<sup>8</sup> Ps. 86:8.

<sup>9</sup> John 10:35.

<sup>91</sup> Athanasius of Alexandria. (1892). To the Bishops of Africa. In P. Schaff & H. Wace (Eds.), A. T. Robertson (Trans.), *St. Athanasius: Select Works and Letters* (Vol. 4, p. 492). New York: Christian Literature Company.

\* 1 Cor. 8:5.

<sup>92</sup> Cyril of Alexandria. (1881). *Five Tomes against Nestorius; Scholia on the Incarnation; Christ Is One; Fragments against Diodore of Tarsus, Theodore of Mopsuestia, the Synousiasts* (p. 50). London; Oxford; Cambridge: James Parker and Co.; Rivingtons.

iii. **Etymology:**

1. From Greek
  - a. Theo = God
  - b. –poiesis = creating
  - c. Thus, it literally means creating a ‘god’
  - d. This process obviously does not apply to the Holy Trinity, but to humans
    - i. ‘nor indeed is a made God conceivable’<sup>93</sup>

iv. **One is made a ‘god’, not by nature (substance), but by participation (grace)**

1. ‘But if some have been called gods, they are not gods by nature but by participation in the Son.’<sup>94</sup>
2. ‘For we, too, were called gods<sup>33</sup> according to grace, but the Son of God is not God in this way, rather he is God according to nature and in truth’<sup>95</sup>

v. **Being a ‘god’ is an honor that God wills to give us out of His love for us**

1. “Indeed we ourselves are crowned with such an appellation, since God says to us: “I said, you are gods and all of you sons of the Most High” (Psa 82:6)... For when the Creator of all things made that part of creation which is intelligent and rational in accordance with his own image and likeness, in his goodness he also honored it with the title of ‘god’. And there is nothing unreasonable in this. For we ourselves

<sup>93</sup> Athanasius of Alexandria. (1892). *Four Discourses against the Arians*. In P. Schaff & H. Wace (Eds.), J. H. Newman & A. T. Robertson (Trans.), *St. Athanasius: Select Works and Letters* (Vol. 4, p. 355). New York: Christian Literature Company.

<sup>94</sup> DelCogliano, M., A. Radde-Gallwitz & L. Ayres. "2.4.4" *Works on the Spirit*; Yonkers: Saint Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2011. Page 110. Print

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Ps 81(82):6; Jn 10:34.

<sup>95</sup> Cyril of Alexandria. (1987). *Letters, 1–50*. (T. P. Halton, Ed., J. I. McEnerney, Trans.) (Vol. 76, pp. 20–21). Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press.

are accustomed to calling a man's portrait, for example, by the same appellation as the original, namely 'a man'.<sup>96</sup>

2. 'And it is not surprising that if we have obtained the name of offspring, God in his loving kindness wants to honor us, since he even used the name gods to describe those who are admittedly of the earth.'<sup>97</sup>

vi. Humans were called 'gods' because they have greater glory than irrational creatures

1. 'Therefore since that part of creation which is intelligent and rational was given a higher status by God than that which is not rational and intelligent, it appears to have been assigned the greater glory and gilded with the title of 'god'.<sup>98</sup>

vii. The title 'god' suited us because we had authority over creation, as part of being made in the Image and Likeness of God

1. 'Likewise the term God (*Theos*) we have taken from His providential and overseeing activity.'<sup>99</sup>

b. Knowing God

- i. 'I think that the "knowledge" in this passage does not refer simply to intellectual knowledge, but it stands for a relationship, either in terms of nature and kinship or in terms of participation in grace and honor.'<sup>100</sup>

c. Receiving Divine Grace

---

<sup>96</sup> Saint Cyril of Alexandria. (2000). *The Creation of Man in the Image of God*. N. Russell (Trans.), *Cyril of Alexandria* (p. 201). New York: Routledge.

<sup>97</sup> Saint Cyril of Alexandria. (2015). *Commentary on John*. (D. Maxwell, Trans.) (Vol. 2, p. 312). Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press Academic.

<sup>98</sup> Saint Cyril of Alexandria. (2000). *The Creation of Man in the Image of God*. N. Russell (Trans.), *Cyril of Alexandria* (p. 201). New York: Routledge.

<sup>99</sup> St Gregory of Nyssa. (1995). 84. (G. Palmer, P. Sherrard, & K. Ware, Trans.), *Philokalia* (Vol. 4, p. 385). London: Faber and Faber.

<sup>100</sup> Saint Cyril of Alexandria. (2015). *Commentary on John*. (D. Maxwell, Trans.) (Vol. 2, p. 66). Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press Academic.



- i. 'Wherefore He is very God, existing one<sup>2</sup> in essence with the very Father; while other beings, to whom He said, 'I said ye are Gods<sup>3</sup>,' had this grace from the Father, only by participation<sup>4</sup> of the Word, through the Spirit.'<sup>101</sup>
- ii. 'He is not light by participation, that is, by grace, nor does he have this dignity in himself as an accident. Light is not brought in like grace but is an immutable and unchangeable good fruit of his uncreated nature that extends from the Father to the heir of his substance.'<sup>102</sup>

Jesus Christ

H  
y  
p  
o  
s  
t  
a  
s  
i  
s

One Divine

Indivisible

Non-composite

Substance

Glory be to the Incomprehensible Holy Trinity: The Father, Son and Holy Spirit. One God, indivisible and uncompounded in His Essence, divers in His Attributes, Amen.

Son of  
God

Son of  
Man

Please pray for my weak self  
Daniel Abba Moses

[COPTICHYMNSINENGLISH.COM/MEETANDRIGHT](http://COPTICHYMNSINENGLISH.COM/MEETANDRIGHT)

Email us if you have any questions or feedback

[coptichymnsinenglish@gmail.com](mailto:coptichymnsinenglish@gmail.com)

Father  
Son  
Holy Spirit

<sup>2</sup> [This is the only occurrence of the word ὁμοούσιος in these three Discourses.]

<sup>3</sup> Ps. 82:6.

<sup>4</sup> *de Decr.* § 14 fin.; *de Syn.* § 51.

<sup>101</sup> Athanasius of Alexandria. (1892). *Four Discourses against the Arians*. In P. Schaff & H. Wace (Eds.), J. H. Newman & A. T. Robertson (Trans.), *St. Athanasius: Select Works and Letters* (Vol. 4, p. 311). New York: Christian Literature Company.

<sup>102</sup> Saint Cyril of Alexandria. (2013). *Commentary on John*. (D. Maxwell, Trans.) (Vol. 1, p. 43). Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press Academic.