

“He is True, Eternal God, the Almighty”

A Sermon on Article Ten of the Belgic Confession.

Texts: Isaiah 9:2-7; John 1:1-18

Article 10 - Jesus Christ is True and Eternal God

We believe that Jesus Christ according to His divine nature is the only-begotten Son of God,¹ begotten from eternity, not made, nor created - for then He would be a creature - but of the same essence with the Father, equally-eternal, who reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of His nature (Heb 1:3), and is equal to Him in all things.² He is the Son of God, not only from the time that He assumed our nature but from all eternity,³ as these testimonies, when compared with each other, teach us: Moses says that God created the world;⁴ the apostle John says that all things were made by the Word which he calls God.⁵ The letter to the Hebrews says that God made the world through His Son;⁶ likewise the apostle Paul says that God created all things through Jesus Christ.⁷ Therefore it must necessarily follow that He who is called God, the Word, the Son, and Jesus Christ, did exist at that time when all things were created by Him. Therefore He could say, “Truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am” (Jn 8:58), and He prayed, “Glorify Thou Me in Thy own presence with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was made” (Jn 17:5). And so He is true, eternal God, the Almighty, whom we invoke, worship, and serve.

¹ Mt 17:5; Jn 1:14, 18, 3:16, 14:1-14, 20:17, 31; Rom 1:4; Gal 4:4; Heb 1:2 ² Jn 5:18, 23, 10:30, 14:9, 20:28; Rom 9:5; Php 2:6; Col 1:15; Tit 2:13 ³ Jn 8:58, 17:5; Heb 13:8 ⁴ Gen 1:1 ⁵ Jn 1:1-3 ⁶ Heb 1:2 ⁷ 1 Cor 8:6; Col 1:16

While almost a truism in modern American—“Jews, Muslims and Christians, all worship the same God”—the deity of Jesus Christ is the most obvious reason why this is not the case. Like Jews and Muslims, Christians are monotheists. But unlike Jews and Muslims, Christians are also Trinitarians. We believe that the one God is triune and is revealed as three distinct and divine persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. If Jesus Christ is fully God, and if Jews and Muslims reject his deity, then Jews and Muslims do not worship the same God that we do.

Christians embrace the New Testament as part of God’s self-revelation (unlike the Jews). Since Christians believe that the New Testament’s teaching regarding the deity of Jesus Christ supercedes all subsequent supposed revelation from God (i.e. the Koran—the Holy Book of Islam), then the person and work of Jesus Christ will necessarily define the Christian view of God. However, Jews, Muslims, and many indigenous American cults (i.e. Jehovah’s Witnesses and Mormons) do not accept the deity of Jesus Christ. It is especially important that we believe the doctrine of the deity of Jesus Christ in order to be saved—for salvation is found in no other name, than the name of Jesus (cf. Acts 4:12)—it is also vital to confess this doctrine before the watching world so that people might come to a saving knowledge of God, through the saving work of Jesus Christ, who is the true and eternal God, the Almighty. We must also confess this doctrine because so many mistakenly think that Jews, Christians and Muslims all worship

the same God. No, we do not worship the same God and we cannot allow this mistaken but popular assumption to go unchallenged. Thus we must believe and confess the deity of Jesus.

No one wants to say anything bad about Jesus. This is why so many non-Christian religions attempt to co-opt Jesus and make him one of their own. But this is not easy to do since the doctrine of the deity of Jesus Christ differentiates Christianity from all other religions. If Jesus is true and eternal God, then the Christian doctrine of God is absolutely unique. It does not make Christianity one religion among many, it makes Christianity the only true religion. If Christians are correct, then all those who reject the deity of Jesus are wrong about their view of God—plain and simple. It is this claim to exclusive truth, which is an offense to our culture, as well as an embarrassment to many Christians who now seek ways to remove differences among religions so as to find common cause in the culture wars, or to soften the offense of the gospel so all religions can pretend to be one, which is the goal of the so-called ecumenical movement.

Muslims view Jesus as a prophet on par with Moses and Abraham, but the doctrine of his deity is completely inconsistent with the Koran's teaching that God is one. Muslims believe that the doctrine of the deity of Christ is a perversion of true biblical teaching, which must be properly understood through the lens of the teachings of the prophet Mohammed. In other words, the Koran must correct the erroneous assumptions of Christians who misread the Bible. Jews, on the other hand, at least historically, have viewed Jesus as a blasphemer who was the supreme threat to the true religion of Israel. Although a number of Jews will now grant that Jesus may have been a Messiah of sorts to the Gentiles, if not to Israel, many Jews worry that any discussion of the deity of Jesus and his claim to be the only Savior will lend credence to the rising tide of anti-Semitism. When Christians speak of the deity of Jesus in this culture, many Jews cry foul, and call us anti-Semites.

Eastern religions re-define Jesus as a great teacher who was somehow privy to ancient Eastern thinking which was misunderstood by those in the West. When viewed through this lens, Jesus is an enlightened teacher of wisdom, like the Buddha, or some other ancient sage. Protestant Liberals have generally viewed Jesus as the world's greatest ethicist, the supreme model life for all of us to emulate—a kind of nineteenth century WWJD. It was the German theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher who taught that Jesus was the ideal man (really the ideal German man), who demonstrated more than anyone else who ever lived what it meant to be absolutely dependant upon God. This means that while Christianity might be the best religion, it is not the only true religion. There's a huge difference between these two views.

The great irony is that virtually all religions want to say nice things about Jesus, they all reject (implicitly or explicitly) the main point the New Testament makes about Jesus, that he is God in human flesh, which is something Jesus clearly believed and proclaimed about himself. Christianity stands or falls based upon our conception of Jesus Christ. Is Jesus fully God? Or is he a mere man with an extra-ordinary consciousness of God? This is why even though Christians are monotheists, we cannot talk about the one true God with Jews or Muslims, without addressing the subject of the deity of the Son. It is our confession of Jesus Christ as true and eternal God which divides Christians from everyone else. This is an extremely unpopular position to take in modern America. But if we are to be faithful to Holy Scripture this is one truth we must confess, perhaps louder than all others!

Having devoted two articles to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity—article eight set forth a basic explanation that God is one in essence while revealed as three distinct persons, while article nine summarizes the biblical evidence for the Trinity and affirms that Reformed Christians are also “catholic” Christians—our confession now moves on to article ten, which deals with the deity of Jesus Christ. If each of the three persons of the Trinity fully participate in the one divine essence, then it is important to turn to the rather

voluminous biblical data which affirms the deity of the Son (Jesus Christ), the second person of the Holy Trinity. Likewise, we will do the same when we consider the biblical evidence for the deity of the Holy Spirit, which is summarized for us in article eleven.

There is no question that the doctrine of the Holy Trinity is very difficult to understand. Indeed, the doctrine is a mystery beyond our comprehension and while we cannot define the Trinity, we can offer some basic definitions which help us understand who God is, while at the same time, help us ward off certain errors that people often make when discussing this doctrine. That there is one God is easy to understand. But that the one God exists in three distinct persons, each of whom are fully God and possess distinct personal properties unique to each of the three persons, is much more difficult to grasp. How can three persons be one God? Yet this is precisely how God is revealed to us in his word.

Furthermore, as Christians, each one of us personally encounters each of the three persons of the Godhead who act according to their own distinct personal properties to save us from our sins. God the Father is often spoken of as our creator, God the Son is often spoken of as our redeemer, and the blessed Holy Spirit is often spoken of as our sanctifier. Our confession is absolutely correct to point out that we can reason backwards from our experience of God's gracious working in our lives to each of the three distinct persons of the Godhead, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. As our confession puts it in article nine: "All this we know both from the testimonies of Holy Scripture and from the respective works of the three Persons, and especially those we perceive in ourselves."

While fully understanding the doctrine of the Trinity is impossible, and defining the doctrine in such a way as to be clear while warding off errors is admittedly difficult, one way in which this whole subject becomes a bit easier to understand is simply to consider the deity of the second and third persons of the Trinity, Jesus and the Holy Spirit. While there are several biblical passages which speak of the Deity of the Holy Spirit, the Bible is full of passages which speak of the deity of Jesus Christ. If we can prove from the Scriptures that Jesus is fully God, then we have gone a long way towards establishing the doctrine of the Holy Trinity and the Christian doctrine of God. Therefore, when those who belong to other monotheistic religions tell us that Jews, Muslims and Christians all worship the same God, or when Eastern Religions tell us Jesus was one of their own, or when Liberal Protestants tell us that Jesus was a peasant or a revolutionary who, in the words of Dr. John Warwick Montgomery, liked to help little old ladies across the Sea of Galilee, the best line of defense is to turn to the biblical evidence for the deity of Jesus Christ. Much of it is summarized here in article ten of our confession. This is why it is a good thing to keep handy so that you are prepared when those pesky JW's show up at your front door!

Our confession divides its discussion of the Deity of Jesus Christ into two main parts. The first part entails a discussion of the eternal sonship of Jesus Christ, while the second part speaks of the fact that Jesus does the works of God.

Our confession speaks of Jesus as follows: "We believe that Jesus Christ according to His divine nature is the only-begotten Son of God, begotten from eternity, not made, nor created - for then He would be a creature - but of the same essence with the Father, equally-eternal, who reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of His nature (Heb 1:3), and is equal to Him in all things. He is the Son of God, not only from the time that He assumed our nature but from all eternity, as these testimonies, when compared with each other, teach us: Moses says that God created the world; the apostle John says that all things were made by the Word which he calls God. The letter to the Hebrews says that God made the world through His Son (Hebrews 1:2); likewise the apostle Paul says that God created all things through Jesus Christ (Colossians 1:16). Therefore it must necessarily follow that He who is called God, the Word, the

Son, and Jesus Christ, did exist at that time when all things were created by Him. Therefore He could say, “Truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am” (John 8:58), and He prayed, “Glorify Thou Me in Thy own presence with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was made” (John 17:5).

The first matter addressed in article ten is that Jesus is truly and eternally God. But we should point out that this entire discussion is set forth against the backdrop of those heresies and heretics mentioned at the end of article nine. While we touched on these heresies briefly last time, for our purposes this morning, we simply need to recall that the most famous of these heretics was Arius, who believed and taught that Jesus was the first creation of God, and that Jesus, in turn, created everything else. If Arius is correct—and his view nearly prevailed in the church, were it not for the heroic efforts of St. Athanasius—it means that Jesus is a creature, that he is not eternal, nor is he fully God. And if you think this view is a relic of the past, this is the view of Jesus Christ taught by the Jehovah’s Witnesses. The serious nature of this error is why our confession begins with the assertion, that according to his divine nature, Jesus is fully and eternally God, not created nor made, but eternally begotten.

That the doctrine of the deity of Jesus Christ is not the invention of the early church can be seen by simply scanning the pages of Holy Scripture, which is replete with teaching regarding the deity of Jesus in both testaments. One of the most powerful lines of evidence are those verses in the Old Testament, such as the famous messianic prophecy in Isaiah 7:14. The coming Messiah is to be given a very specific title: “therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.” The messiah will be miraculously conceived and given the title “God with us.” Then, beginning in chapter 9:6 of Isaiah’s prophecy, (part of our Old Testament lesson), Isaiah goes on to speak of this coming Messiah using some very amazing language:

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.

This is an amazing prophecy when you consider it was given some seven hundred years before the coming of Jesus Christ.

In addition to these messianic prophecies in Isaiah, we have a number of messianic Psalms (8, 89, 110, 118), in which the Father speaks of the Son as highly exalted and equal in majesty and glory. We also have verses such as Proverbs 8:22-31, which depict wisdom personified (which seen through the lens of New Testament fulfillment, is clearly a reference to the eternal Son, who is wisdom from God), Micah 5:2, where the prophet speaks of the one to be born in Bethlehem as eternal. This means that there can be no doubt that the coming Messiah is repeatedly identified as the almighty God and eternal father, the wisdom of God, righteous, highly exalted, yet to be born of a lowly virgin and, according to Isaiah 53, will also suffer as a lowly servant. These prophetic verses can only be speaking of one person: Israel’s coming Redeemer, Jesus Christ, who is the God of Abraham.

It was to verses such as these that the apostles and early Christian apologists appealed when preaching the gospel to Jews, as we see in the pages of the New Testament and read about in the writings of the church fathers. This is why we speak of Jews as holding an inaccurate or even heretical view of the true God (they worship the right God, but deny his Tri-unity). Muslims worship a false God, Allah, who is utterly impersonal and bears no resemblance whatsoever to the God of the Bible. The fact is that Old

Testament revelation of the God of Abraham to the people of Israel points us to the messianic expectation which was fulfilled by Jesus Christ—that God himself would come to visit his people to bring them salvation when the messianic age would dawn. In all our evangelistic and apologetic endeavors with Jews, the key question is the identity of Jesus. This is why we need to be conversant with messianic prophecies and why we should be able to demonstrate how Jesus was spoken of in the Old Testament so that we might see Jews come to faith in Jesus Christ, Israel’s own savior.

But we must not forget that as Gentiles, it is we who have been grafted into Israel’s redemptive story—we were the strangers and foreigners to Israel’s covenant of promise (Ephesians 2:11-22) and as Paul warns us in Romans 11, if we become proud and arrogant, and forget that we have been justified by Israel’s God based upon his mercy (not upon the fact that we are somehow better than the Jews), then we too risk suffering the fate of those unbelieving Jews who trusted in their own righteousness, rather than receive the righteousness of Jesus Christ through faith. Belief in Jesus provides no justification whatsoever for anti-Semitism. But given the history of how Jews were treated in Northern Europe by people who were supposedly Christians, we ought to be very careful to point out whenever we say Jews have a heretical view of the God of Abraham and that Jesus Christ is God in human flesh, that we are in no way condoning nor supporting hatred of the Jewish people. We should have the same attitude toward the Jews that the apostle Paul did: “Brothers, my heart’s desire for Israel is that they might be saved.”

If the Old Testament contains a number of assertions of the deity of Jesus Christ (albeit in pre-messianic terms), then the problem with the New Testament is that there is so much evidence that it is difficult to know where to begin. There are so many lines of evidence it is impossible to consider them all in our brief time this morning. From Jesus’ personal claims to be God or equal with God, to his claims to possess the authority of God, to the fact that Jesus accepted prayer, praise and worship (things reserved only for God alone), to his claims to be able to deliver from sin and death, to the fact he was given divine titles and described as possessing divine attributes, to the fact he does the work of God in redemption, to the fact that he is paralleled with God throughout the New Testament (that is, what God did in the Old Testament, Jesus is said to do in the New), to the fact that Jesus is sinless, possesses God’s glory, and is raised from the dead and then exalted on high—the fact of the matter is that there is so much evidence for the deity of Christ, it is virtually impossible to summarize it all. So, we will simply follow the pattern set forth in our confession and use those specific proof-texts which have been listed for us in article ten.

We begin with the assertion that Jesus is the only begotten Son of God. The biblical evidence for this is impressive. In Matthew 17:5, we read that “*while he was still speaking, a bright cloud enveloped them, and a voice [the Father] from the cloud said, ‘This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!’*” Thus, Israel’s God directly addresses Jesus as his Son and pronounces a divine benediction upon him.

Then, we have the prologue to John’s Gospel, our New Testament Lesson this morning. John writes in verses 1-2, “*in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning.*” When John says Jesus *was*, he means Jesus always *was*. This directly contradicts the praise chorus sung by the Arians to attack the orthodox teaching regarding the deity of Christ: “there was a time when the Son was not.” According to John, Jesus is the Word, the Word is God, the Word always was God. There never was a time when the Son was not!

Notice, too, that John’s language here not only echoes Genesis 1:1, “*in the beginning, God*” but that in verse 3, John goes on to assign to Jesus the task of creation, something which the Old Testament assigned to YHWH. “*Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.*”

Thus Jesus is not a kind of “lesser” God as Arius taught, nor a second God associated with matter (the *demiurge*) as taught by Marcion. In fact, we can put John’s argument in the form of a basic syllogism. Jesus created all things. The Old Testament teaches that God created all things. Therefore, Jesus is God.

Notice, too, that in verse 4 of John chapter one, John asserts yet another divine attribute of the Word: “*In him was life, and that life was the light of men.*” Jesus is the source and origin of human life, a point reiterated in John 5:24-26:

I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life. I tell you the truth, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son to have life in himself.

Not only does Jesus speak words which bring the dead to life (that is, he has the ability to give the new birth), but just as God has, Jesus has the power of life in himself. This is tantamount to a claim to deity.

As John opens his gospel, it is important for him to connect Jesus to the Word who always was God, who is without beginning nor end. In John 1:14, John identifies this Word for us. “*The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.*” Not only is Jesus the word made flesh, but as he does in verse 14, John speaks of Jesus in verse 18 as follows: “*No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known.*” The term that John uses here is a compound Greek word *monogenēs*, which means Jesus is absolutely unique. He alone is God’s eternal Word made flesh.¹ There is no one else like him. God has only one eternal son, although we are all God’s adopted children through faith in Jesus. Seeing a way to prove that Jesus had a beginning, Arius attacked the deity of Jesus at this very point, writing in a letter to the famous church historian Eusebius: “And before [the Son] was begotten or created or defined or established, he was not, for he was not unbegotten. But we are persecuted because we say, ‘the Son as a beginning, but God is without beginning.’”² But John’s whole point is that Jesus is without beginning. He always was the Word. And the Word is God.

If you look at the proof texts listed in our confession, you’ll find that most of them come from John’s gospel. It is the apostle John who records Jesus saying to the Jews, “*I and the Father are one*” (John 10:30), a remarkable statement for a Jew to make about himself. In John 20:17, Jesus said [to his disciples], “*Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet returned to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, ‘I am returning to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’*” Furthermore, Jesus provoked the Jews to anger in a number of instances. In John 5:18, we read that because Jesus had healed a man on the Sabbath, “*For this reason the Jews tried all the harder to kill him; not only was he*

¹ See John 1:14, 18 [NIV margin], where John uses the term [*monogenēs theos*], usually translated “the only begotten God.” Raymond Brown argues that this should be translated “God the only Son” because the Greek means “of a single [*monos*] kind [*genes*],” and that the term is translated by Jerome and others merely as “only” in those texts not referring to Jesus. “*Monogenēs* describes a quality of Jesus, his uniqueness, not what is called in trinitarian theology his ‘procession.’” See Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John, I-XII*, The Anchor Bible, Vol. 29 (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, 1981), p. 13. Leon Morris comments, “We should not read too much into ‘only begotten.’ To English ears this sounds like a metaphysical relationship, but the Greek term means no more than ‘only,’ ‘unique.’” Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to John*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1984), p. 105.

² Arius, *Letter to Eusebius*.

breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.” While Protestant liberals may not get Jesus’ point, the Jews sure did! They clearly understood that Jesus was claiming to be God! Hence, they tried to kill him, the penalty for blasphemy.

Perhaps the most amazing assertion made by Jesus is his claim to be the one who spoke to Moses from the burning bush—the I AM. In John 8:58, Jesus is recorded as saying, “*before Abraham was, I am.*” The Jews knew exactly what Jesus was claiming, because as soon as he uttered these words, they picked up stones to kill him. Many scholars believe that the literary high point of John’s gospel comes in the twentieth chapter when Jesus appears before his disciples after his crucifixion. When Jesus appears in the midst of his disciples, all believe except one, Thomas. But having felt the wounds in Jesus’ hands and side, Thomas falls at Jesus’ feet and proclaims “*My Lord and my God!*” (John 20:28). We should not miss the fact that not only does Jesus not correct Thomas, he receives worship from Thomas.

And then we have the remarkable exchange recorded in John 14. In verse 8, we read of Philip’s question to Jesus. “*Philip said, ‘Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.’*” But it is Jesus’ answer which takes us back. In verse 9,

Jesus answered: ‘Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? Don’t you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves. I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.

If Jesus is not fully God, then his words are not those of a good teacher, but those of a liar and a deceiver (the so-called tri-lemma). Only God in human flesh would dare claim that to see him is to see God and that the Father is working in him and through him.

As John brings his gospel to an end, he once again appeals to the fact that God is working through Jesus. While Jesus did many more miracles than those recorded in John’s gospel, nevertheless, John says, “*but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.*” From beginning to end, John portrays Jesus as God in human flesh.

Our confession also mentions a number of verses from the apostle Paul, which underlie the assertion that Jesus is explicitly called “God,” that he possesses divine attributes, and that he performs works assigned to God in the Old Testament. In Romans 9:5, Paul speaks of Jesus in doxological terms, “*Christ, who is God over all, forever praised!*” Not only does Paul call Jesus “God, over all,” Paul praises Jesus just as he would praise YHWH. In Philippians 2:6, Paul states that Jesus is “*in very nature God,*” while in Colossians 1:15, Paul says of Jesus, “*He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.*” In verse 16, Paul goes on to state of Jesus, “*For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him.*” Jesus is not only the very image of God, he is the creator of all things, which exist for him. And then in Titus 2:13, Paul speaks of “*the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.*” The apostle Paul clearly believed that Jesus is God.

And we could go on and on, with more texts from Paul (his repeated use of the title *Kurios* for Jesus), texts from the Book of Revelation (Jesus is the Alpha and Omega), from the Book of Acts (God purchased the church with his own blood), from the gospels (the Son of Man language), but following the lead of our confession, we need only use those primary verses necessary to prove the point, that the Scriptures teach that Jesus is eternal God, that he is without beginning or end, and that he not only creates all things, but has the power of life in himself. Thus, as Christians, we cannot talk about God without also talking about the deity of Jesus Christ.

Finally, our confession goes on to speak as the apostles do, of the honor due to Jesus Christ, because he is truly God, the Almighty.

After briefly summarizing the doctrine of the deity of Jesus Christ, and then laying out some of the biblical data supporting it, our confession comes to this brief conclusion. “And so He is true, eternal God, the Almighty, whom we invoke, worship, and serve.” Perhaps one of the most overlooked lines of evidence for the deity of Jesus Christ is found in the fact that as Christians, we not only believe and confess that Jesus is true and eternal God, the Almighty, but we put that confession of Christ’s deity into practice when we invoke Jesus’ name when we pray, when we worship him just as we worship the Father, and when we serve him, just as we do the Father.

Think about this for a moment. To invoke, worship, and serve a creature would violate the first three commandments! And yet in John 5:23, Jesus himself states the Father has entrusted judgment to the Son, so “*that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him.*” To honor Jesus is to honor God. To invoke Jesus’s name and presence, to worship him, to pray to him is not idolatry! This is what is commanded of us because he is God! In fact, this point is one of the great weaknesses of Arianism. If Arius is correct, that Jesus is but a mere creature and not fully God, then to worship Jesus would be a horrible sin, since Jesus is not fully God, and only God deserves our worship. When we invoke Jesus Christ to come into our midst, when we worship him, when we serve him, we are giving him his due, because he is true and eternal God, the Almighty. For Jesus is King of Kings and Lord of Lords, the God of Abraham, the God of Moses, and he is that one before whom Mohammed, the Buddha and all others must bow. Amen!

