

Jesus Christ And The Trinity- What Does The Bible Say?

Transcript Of A Debate (With Leslie Everitt)¹

Saturday 12th November 1988
Bromley Christian Center, Masons Hill, Bromley, Kent UK

Speakers:

For the Trinitarian position: Mr. Leslie Everitt (Evangelical Christian)

For the non-Trinitarian position: Mr. Duncan Heaster (Christadelphian)

Chairman: Mr. Graham Baldwin (Bromley Christian Center)

Index:

Introduction

Mr. Heaster's first speech: The non-trinitarian position

Mr. Everitt's first speech: Bible evidence for the trinity. The trinitarian position

Mr. Heaster's second speech : Bible evidence against the trinity

Mr. Everitt's second speech: Jesus is both God and man

Questions from the floor

Summation by Mr. Heaster: The seed of Abraham

Summation by Mr. Everitt: Ego eimi : I am he

Concluding remarks by Chairman

Introduction

CHAIRMAN:

I have been asked to point out that the Bromley Christian Center are just hosting this. They are in no way involved in either the planning or whatever to do with this debate. I was asked if we could actually find a location that was somehow local and central. That was how it came to be here. You probably know both of the people who are going to be debating the proposition : *“Jesus Christ and the Trinity – What does the Bible Say?”*. This is Mr. Leslie Everitt, who is an Evangelical Christian from a brethren tradition, and this is Mr. Duncan Heaster, who is a Christadelphian.

The way that this is actually going to be run will be that initially there will be a twenty minute opening speech each, with Mr. Heaster actually leading off. There will then be a second speech of ten minutes' duration. We are then going to have a break for coffee for which there will be a charge of 20p for coffee and biscuits (but that can be sorted out later). There will also be soft drinks. Following that break there will be ten minutes of question time directed at each of the speakers, and then they will be given five to ten minutes to sum up at the end.

I would like to say that this is being recorded. You have probably seen on your seats this yellow leaflet. If you want a transcript of the debate, fill it in. There is a box there and one in the vestibule.

We will hand it over now to Mr. Heaster to start.

¹ Taken from http://www.aletheiacollege.net/dbb/1-1The_Trinity_Debate.htm with the permission of Duncan Heaster

Mr. Heaster's First Speech

The non-trinitarian position

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Everitt, ladies and gentlemen, good evening.

In Jeremiah 9:24 we read these words:

“Thus saith the Lord (Yahweh), Let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me”.

I would suggest to you that the Trinity is a conception of God which is impossible to understand and which completely contradicts the clear teaching of the word of God. Can you understand a God who is one and yet three and three and yet one? Can you conceive of a son who existed before he was born? A son who is as old as his father? I suggest that the doctrine of the Trinity finds no place at all in the Word of God. There is no mention of the word “trinity” in the Bible, and it was introduced into Christianity, as most of us here will be aware, in the 3rd century A.D.

The word “God” occurs about 1,300 times in the New Testament, and in not one of those passages where the word “God” occurs is there any suggestion of a plurality of persons in the Godhead. By contrast, we read in Isaiah 45, “Thus saith the Lord (Yahweh)... I am Yahweh and there is none else, there is no God besides me”. So far as the Bible is concerned there is one God and that one God is Yahweh. Now I presume Mr. Everitt believes that there is one God. He believes there is one God consisting of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. But that God, I submit, is unknown to the pages of the Scriptures. We turn to the New Testament where we read in 1 Corinthians 8:6 “to us (the true believers) there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things...and one Lord Jesus Christ”. So far as the Bible is concerned there is one God, not God the Son, God the Father, and God the Holy Ghost. There is one God, the Father, and in addition, there is one Lord Jesus Christ. Malachi 2:10 likewise associates "the Father" with the one God: "Do we not all have one Father? Has not one God created us?". The Father is the only God. Jesus himself said, John 17:3 “Father (notice how he called God his father) this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent”. So again, there is only one God, the Father, and in addition, one Lord Jesus Christ sent by the Father. Ephesians 4 tells us the same thing “There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all.” *God the Father is above all.* 1 Timothy 2:5 “There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus”. There's evidently a difference between the Holy Spirit and Jesus- according to trinitarianism, they're "one", yet Jesus Himself speaks as if they are separate. He says that whoever blasphemes Him will be forgiven, but blasphemy of the Holy Spirit isn't forgivable in this way (Lk. 12:10).

Now I suggest that every passage that Leslie may quote can be explained in harmony with this simple teaching of the Bible. The idea of the Trinity needs to be read into every passage that may be quoted.

Now concerning this one God, Yahweh, we read in John 1:18 “No man hath seen God at any time”, and yet in Exodus 19 we read that Yahweh came down on Mount Sinai, and in Exodus 24:9 “Then went up Moses and Aaron ...and they saw the God of Israel”. But John says that “No man hath seen God at any time”. Exodus 24 says Moses and Aaron went up into the mountain and they saw the God of Israel. Now does the book of Exodus contradict the gospel of John? Well, of course not. The two are reconciled by Acts chapter 7, where we read in Acts 7:38 “This is he (Moses), that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him from Mount Sinai”. So when it says that Yahweh came down onto the mountain and that they went up and they saw the God of Israel, Stephen tells us in Acts 7 that it wasn't Yahweh himself, in person, who came down it was an angel who came down. Concerning that angel, we are told in Exodus 23 God says, Yahweh says “I send an angel before thee to keep thee in the way. Beware of him, for *my name* is in him”. So there was an angel who carried the name of Yahweh and it is said that where this angel went Yahweh was said to go. When this angel spake, it is said that Yahweh spake. When this angel did things, it is said that Yahweh did them. This angel then, represented Yahweh; he carried Yahweh's name. But that angel was not Yahweh himself. That angel was not God himself in person. He represented God. And that is an important point to which I will return later.

Now throughout the Old Testament, there are indications that it was in the purpose of Yahweh to manifest Himself in another way different to this manifestation through the angels. This purpose of God to manifest Himself in another way is indicated by His very name “Yahweh” or “Jehovah” which means “He who will be”.

Now this purpose is elaborated, it is expanded upon in prophecies like 2 Samuel chapter 7 where God says to David, 2 Samuel 7:14 “When thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up (the phrase there in the Septuagint is ‘I will resurrect’, incidentally) thy seed after thee (thy descendant) and I will establish his kingdom. I will be his father and he shall be my son”. Now there is no doubt who this great descendant, who this seed of David really is. The very first verse of the New Testament: “The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David”.

So then, God said to David concerning Jesus “I will be his father, he shall be my son”. Now notice the future tense there. How could Jesus have been existing as God, next to God, at the time when God spoke those words to David. God said “I *will be*”, I the future, his father, “he *shall be* my son”.

Psalm 132 develops the same theme, verse 11, God says to David “Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne”, and that's quoted in Acts 2 concerning Jesus. He was the fruit of David's body that was to be set upon the throne of God. If Jesus was the fruit of David's body how could he then have been in existence at the time when God spoke those words to David?

So David was to have a son. The son did not exist at the time but the promise was made.

Psalm 89 is, if you like, God's commentary upon this promise that he made to David. In that Psalm we read in verse 27 about this son promised to David. God says “I will make him my firstborn”. Now therefore there is no question of Jesus being “eternally begotten”, whatever that

means, as the doctrine of the Trinity states. No question at all of Jesus being begotten eternally. God says "I will (future) make him my firstborn". Now earlier in verse 26 of that Psalm, we read "He shall cry unto me, Thou art my Father, my God and the rock of my salvation". So, Jesus calls God "my Father, my God". Of course, one thinks of the cross, the crucifixion, Christ saying on the cross, "my God, my God, why have you forsaken me". Now there is no possibility, as I can see it, that Jesus was very God when he said things like that. Notice also "He shall cry unto me (Jesus crying to God) thou art the rock of my salvation", and so this son of David who was to be the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, would need salvation. He was to cry unto God "thou art the rock of my salvation". So then, Jesus needed salvation.

So we come in the New Testament to the circumstances surrounding the birth of Jesus. Remember how the angel came to Mary and said to her "Thou shalt conceive in thy womb and bring forth a son, and shall call his name Jesus. He shall be great, (notice the future tense again) and shall be called the Son of the Highest, and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David". "He shall be called the Son of the Highest." It doesn't say "he *is* called", no, "He *shall be* called the Son of the Highest". Notice the "Son" of "the Highest". Now if God is "the Highest", if words mean anything at all, how can Jesus be co-equal and co-eternal with God, if God is "the Highest" and Jesus Christ is "the Son" of the Highest. Now please see whether Leslie answers that point.

So then, we go on. How was this to be brought about? How was Jesus to become the Son of God? Well, the Holy Spirit came upon Mary, and the Holy Spirit is defined there in Luke 1 as the "power of the Highest". The Holy Spirit therefore is not a person; it is the power of "the Highest" who is God himself.

Matthew 1:18 puts it this way "Mary was found with child of the Holy Spirit". If Mary was found with child of the Holy Spirit, and if the doctrine of the Trinity is true and we have God the Holy Spirit, then the Holy Spirit is the father of Jesus, for she was "found with child of the Holy Spirit". So the doctrine of the Trinity surely introduces into the simple teaching of God's Word, contradiction and confusion.

So Jesus was the son of David through Mary and he was Son of God because he was begotten of God by the power of the Holy Spirit. Now I want to bring to your mind a very well known passage, John 3: 16 – and this is typical of where people read a passage, hear it preached from, preached about and yet they don't actually stop to think what it really implies. Now we are all like that. So let's think about that verse again. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life". Now if Jesus was begotten, he had a beginning; and if he had a beginning, and he was begotten by God, he could not be co-eternal with the Father, neither could he be God, for God, we are told, has no beginning. In Galatians 4:4 we are told Christ was "made seed of a woman". Romans 1:3 says Christ was "made of the seed of David and declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead".

Now we can take it a stage further. We read in Hebrews 1:5 "unto which of the angels said he (God) at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee". So according to the Scriptures, the Son of God was begotten at a definite point in time. "Thou art my Son, *this day*

have I begotten thee". So Jesus was not eternally begotten as the Trinity maintains. A being cannot be eternal and be begotten. So I submit that since Jesus came into existence and was born, begotten of the Father at a definite point in time, he cannot be the second person of the Trinity.

So we go on in Christ's life. Luke 2:52 "Christ increased in wisdom and in favour with God and man". The word "favour" there means "acceptability, giving of pleasure". Christ increased in acceptability, in giving of pleasure to his God. So we come to the baptism of Jesus. Jesus said he was baptized because "thus is becometh us to fulfil all righteousness".

Now if Jesus was God he wouldn't need salvation, and yet, as we have touched on earlier, the Bible teaches that he did need salvation, and he asked God for that salvation. Hebrews 5:7 puts it this way: "In the days of his flesh, when Christ offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears (notice how Jesus prayed to God) unto Him (that is God) that was able to save him from death, and was heard, in that he feared". So then Christ prayed to God to save him from death. Therefore Christ needed salvation. It goes on another two verses which are very difficult to understand from the Trinitarian viewpoint: "Though Christ were a son yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered". Obedience to whom? Obedience to God. Christ learned obedience to God by what he suffered. There is no way that God can learn obedience to God Himself. Verse 9 "and being *made perfect*, he became the author of eternal salvation". So Jesus was *made perfect* in the sense of "*made complete*". It shows therefore that he wasn't perfect right when he was born. Now I stress the word "perfect" there doesn't necessarily mean "sinless", it just means "complete". Jesus was sinless, holy, harmless, undefiled.

Now we also read in Hebrews, Hebrews 13:20 we read that "God brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ through the blood of the everlasting covenant". Well, what was the 'blood of the everlasting covenant'? It was the blood of Jesus. So it was through the sacrifice of Jesus, through his own blood, offered on the cross, that he was saved, that he was brought again from the dead.

And so Jesus began his ministry. Hebrews 4:15 tells us that during that time he "was tempted in all points like as we are" and yet James 1:13 says that "God cannot be tempted with evil". So if God can't be tempted but Jesus was tempted, surely the conclusion is that Jesus was not God.

Now again, we can go a stage further because James 1 goes on to say that every man is "tempted when he is drawn away of his own evil desires and enticed" and then he goes and sins. Now Jesus was "tempted in every way" that we are tempted it said in Hebrews 4:15. James 1 says that we are tempted by these evil desires inside us. So for Jesus to be tempted, he had to have our evil desires inside us. He had to be of our nature. Now of course, it is blasphemous to say that God Himself in person has the possibility of sinning and of temptation. Christ was tempted like we are tempted, in exactly the same way, it says. Now when you and I are tempted, we come in our lives to a point when we can either obey God or we disobey God. Jesus came to those same divergent paths. Every time though he obeyed. At the end of his life, another temptation, he obeyed. Always going God's way. By definition therefore, he had the possibility of sinning or else he wouldn't have really been tempted. He had the possibility of failure. He didn't sin, he didn't fail, but he could have done. And God himself has no possibility of any failure. Now as we said, 2 Samuel 7 that prophecy about Jesus who would be the great descendant of David, it

goes on to say “If he commit iniquity, I will punish him”. Now that prophecy is quoted about Jesus in the New Testament where it is talking about the Son of God. “I will be his father and he shall be my Son”, and yet God says about Jesus “If he commit iniquity, I will punish him”. So therefore, God knew when made that promise to David that Jesus had the possibility of sinning. Now he ***DID NOT SIN***, I cannot labour that strongly enough. He was perfect. But he could have sinned.

Now although Jesus was not God Himself, he was God’s representative – like the angel – he carried the name. “I am come”, he said in John 5:43 “in my Father’s name”. That is why we read in Matthew 1:23 that Christ was called “Emmanuel” “God with us”.

(I’m going to go over time a little bit).

Now I would point out to you that Jesus did not demonstrate God the Son Incarnate in his life. He showed us what the Father is like. Because he was perfect, he could say “he who hath seen me, hath seen the Father”. The words Jesus spoke were not the words of God the Son Incarnate, they were the words of the Father. Jesus said “he that sent me is true and I speak to the world those things that I have heard of him; as my Father hath taught me I speak these things”. So Jesus was the vehicle, if you like, through whom the Father was speaking to Israel. John 3:34 “he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God because God giveth not the spirit by measure unto him”. Notice how Jesus said that he was sent by God. He says later that he who is sent is inferior to him who sent him. And he said another time when people started to think that he was God Himself, he said “why callest thou me good, there is none good but one, that is God”. He was aware as keenly as anyone else, as anyone ever has been, that he had our human sin-cursed nature in which Paul says “dwelleth no good thing”.

Throughout the New Testament letters the Apostles constantly refer to Jesus as “the Son of God” and they use phrases like “blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ”. Jesus then, looked upon his Father as his God. “I ascend to my Father, to your Father; to my God and to your God”. He said in John 14:28 “My Father is greater than I am” and yet the Creed of St. Athanasius which defines the Trinity says that in the Trinity no part of it is greater or less than any other part and yet Christ himself said “My Father is greater than I”.

So then, I rest the non-trinitarian position. I submit that Jesus Christ is not the second person of the Trinity, he is the Son of God who is the Father.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN:

Actually, two minutes before the end of the period we are just ringing to let the people know they have two minutes before the end of the period and then, obviously, if they do go over then it will be deducted from their second speech. So we will balance it up there. Right.

Mr. Everitt's First Speech

Bible Evidence For The Trinity

Good evening, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Heaster, ladies and gentlemen.

My task, as I see it at this point, is to show you the Scriptural teaching that Jesus is Divine.

This can be shown of course in many ways. Indeed, one of the problems that anyone discussing the subject like this has, is that there is so much evidence that Jesus is God that it is impossible in the time available to even begin to touch all of it. All that I can do is to show you something of the main lines upon which Scripture operates.

Now one thing that is quite clear is that in a number of passages of scripture, Jesus is called God. The first verse that I will call as witness to this effect is the first verse of John's gospel: "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God". Now that Scripture has, of course, been the subject of a great deal of discussion. But one thing is perfectly clear – I have been into this with some care – that when it says "the Word was God" that is telling us who and what the Word was. It isn't simply that Jesus represented God – that is not what it says at all – but that the Word, which is Jesus, was God. Now I believe our friends, the Christadelphians, teach that the word "Word" in this context does not refer to Jesus. It is simply a statement of the purpose of God. And yet when you read the passage as a whole you find that there are many statements made which refer to a person by means of an abstraction. Allow me to demonstrate that. I will continue reading until I get to the point I want to make:

Verse 3: "All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in the darkness and the darkness comprehended it not. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name".

Now you see the person that is referred to there is the light; and the light is the same person as we've got referred to right at the beginning as the Word. And if you carry on to verse 14 it says "and the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. John bare witness of him, and cried saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me; for he was before me". You see there is no break in the thought sequence between the Word and Jesus actually in this world. I mean no break in the thought sequence as to the person spoken of.

Now, John's gospel is a very long book in one way. Not long in the terms of words but long in terms of ideas, and one of the themes of John's gospel is to bring out from time to time pointers to the fact that, as he says in his opening verse, Jesus was God.

Now as I understand it, the way Jesus came was not to get up and say boldly, "I am God"; but he went about, as it says in another passage "doing good, and healing all those that were oppressed of the devil for God was with him". If you read the gospels (I think this is true of all four gospels) what you find is a man comes in and immediately the question arises, 'Who is he?' 'Who is this man?' And from time to time you are given hints or pointers as to who he really was. For example, if we go to Mark's gospel (because, although I've spoken much about John, this point we're making is spread out through the whole of Scripture) – we go to the second chapter of Mark, and we find that Jesus had been defending his disciples against the Pharisees, who were insisting upon the detailed observance of the Sabbath law in accordance with their prescribed rules. The disciples had been eating ears of corn on the Sabbath day which they had plucked from a ripe corn field. Jesus says in verse 27, "the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath. Therefore the Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath". The title 'Son of Man' goes in parallel, so to speak, with the title 'Son of God'. It is used some eighty times or so in the gospels always, or most always, from the mouth of Jesus himself. Therefore, when he says "the Son of Man" he is referring to himself. "The Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath". The word 'Lord' in basic meaning means 'a person who has power over something or someone'. Who can have power over the Sabbath which God created, except God?

I just make that as one witness from another part of Scripture. I said time is short and therefore I will pass over the other passages that might be referred to in John's gospel and take you right to the end, or rather, to the end of chapter 20. Chapter 21 forms a kind of supplement, or appendix, or epilogue, to John's gospel and the main narrative ends with chapter 20. Chapter 20 tells us how Jesus rose from the dead. It also tells us that there was some difficulty among his disciples in believing this, in particular with Thomas. Thomas, one might say, was a typical twentieth century man – wouldn't believe anything he couldn't see. But Jesus appeared to his disciples, first when Thomas wasn't there, which aroused his unbelief, and secondly when Thomas was there. And in verse 27 it says, "then saith he (this is, Jesus) to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God". Now if Jesus had not been God, he would have had to have immediately refuted that.

I can draw your attention for example, to illustrate this point, to Acts 14. Paul and Barnabas had been preaching in Lystra which is in what we now call Turkey. They had healed a man that had been a cripple and when the people saw it, they said (verse 11 of chapter 14) "The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men. And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercurius; because he was the chief speaker". And so they attempted to offer sacrifices to Paul and Barnabas. And immediately it says, verse 14, when Barnabas and Paul heard of (it) "they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out, And saying, Sirs, why do ye do these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven and earth, and the sea and all things that are therein": and so on. And it says, verse 18 "And with these sayings scarce restrained they the people that they had not done sacrifice unto them".

Again in Acts 10 we find Peter comes to Cornelius. Cornelius, a Roman centurion, had sent messengers to Peter asking him to come and preach the gospel to him. When he came it says, verse 25, “and as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him. But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also and a man”.

Again, you go to Revelation. In chapter 1, John falls down at the feet of Jesus appearing in magnificent form as “one like unto the Son of Man”. There is no rejection of that.

Go to the end of the Book and you find chapter 22 and verse 8 “And I John saw these things and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God”.

You see, any other being accepting worship, save God, is gravely sinning because as the Lord himself said when he was tempted by the devil, to worship the devil, “thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and him alone shalt thou serve”. And yet, you see, Jesus accepted worship.

Again, it says in the end of Luke, after Jesus was parted from them and carried up into heaven, “they worshipped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy”.

Indeed, there are many passages in Scripture where Jesus is worshipped. For example, at the end of the second epistle to Timothy, we find, chapter 4 verse 18, “And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever”.

Again at the end of the second epistle of Peter, he exhorts his hearers to “grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen”.

Go to Revelation 1:6 (or rather verse 5) “And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen”.

Go to chapter 5 verse 9. This is the elders exclaiming, “And they sung a new song saying, Thou art worthy to take the book and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue and people, and nation” – addressed, you see, to Jesus.

Again, you get in verse 13 Jesus linked with God in worship “Blessing and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever”.

Jesus the Lamb of God is worshipped with God. He is God.

Now on the question of the Trinity, I will remind you of one thing (because my time is almost elapsed) and that is at the end of Matthew's gospel the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are joined together in one single name. The final commission of Jesus to his disciples, chapter 28 verse 19, is "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost". One name, three persons, one God.

That, I think, is all I need to tell you for the moment. I hope to answer some of Mr. Heaster's points in my second speech.

This is Bible evidence for the Trinity.

Mr. Heaster's Second Speech

Bible evidence against the trinity

Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to make it quite clear that I tried to explain in my first speech that, as Jesus said, he came in his Father's name: "I am come (John 5:43) in my Father's name". John 17 "I have manifested thy name" he said. In Philippians 2, which we will probably talk about later we are told that because of Christ's humility and his perfect sacrifice he was "exalted to the Father's right-hand side and given *the name* the name of Yahweh that is above every name. So then, Jesus carried the name of God. That is why we read in Isaiah 9:6 about Jesus "He shall be *called* the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father..." all these other titles of God. That name was *called upon him* and so that is why he could receive worship.

Now as Leslie has dealt with at some length with that subject, I will also give some attention to it.

Jesus then carried the name of God and therefore he could receive worship on behalf of God. The fact that he receives worship doesn't imply either co-equality or co-eternity with the Father. You may like to notice in Hebrews 1: 5 & 6, God says to Jesus "Let all the angels of God worship him". So then God commanded the angels to worship Jesus. So therefore the worship that Jesus had, in this case by the angels, was commanded, was directed by God.

Then consider John 5:22 & 23. "The Father hath committed all judgment unto the Son that (in order that) all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father". So because the Father *committed* all judgment to the Son, as I said in my first talk, therefore all men can honour the Son even as they honour the Father. Philippians 2:11 we read that because God gave Jesus "the name above every name", the name of Yahweh that was in order that Jesus should be worshipped by every tongue to the glory of God the Father. So the worship that Jesus was to be given was to the glory of God the Father and that surely is a fundamental point that *all things are to the glory of Almighty God* who as I said before, knows no equal.

Now as Leslie has pointed out, Jesus was worshipped. People paid Jesus reverence. Now it isn't altogether true that men have always declined worship. You may like to look up at your convenience 1 Chronicles 29:20 where David was worshipped. If you want a New Testament example, Matthew 18:26 the servant in the parable worshipped his master. Revelations 3:9 the Philadelphians, it says, were to be worshipped. False teachers would come and worship before their feet. In the R.V. of the New Testament there is a note which says that the word "worship" denotes an act of reverence whether paid to man or God. An act of reverence whether paid to man or God. So the fact that somebody is worshipped doesn't automatically make them God. Those notes were written by Trinitarians.

So then, we will move on from there to John chapter 1. Now many people read those verses there "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God" as if to say, well there you are, there is all the proof you need – Jesus was God. But it doesn't say that, does it? That Jesus was God. It says "In the beginning was the Word, and the *Word* was with God and the *Word* was God". Now we must notice that carefully. If John meant to say that Jesus was God, Jesus was in the beginning, well he would have said that. But it says the *word* was there in the beginning. Now, that phrase "Word", in the Greek, is the word "Logos". I quote from a Lexicon saying what that phrase means "the outward form by which the inward thought or reason is expressed". So in some way, my words express my purpose; they express the essential me, if you like, and so it is with God, with the logos. It implies the essential purpose that was with God in the beginning. It says, John 1:3, "all things were made by him", by the logos. Now that agrees with what we read in Psalm 33:6 "by the word of the Lord were the heavens made"; 2 Peter 3:5 "by the word (the logos of God) the heavens were of old". God commanded, Genesis 1, "God said, Let there be light". "God said, Let the earth bring forth cattle" and that is obviously what is being alluded to here in John chapter 1. It is clearly alluding back to the language of Genesis 1.

So then, the Word, the logos, is more than mere words as we understand them. It expresses the essential purpose, power, of God. Now, in verse 14 we read that "the Word was made flesh, and we beheld his glory as of the glory of the only begotten of the Father". So then, the Word, this purpose that God has been working out throughout history, which He had with Him in the beginning, was brought together in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Word was made flesh; it was turned into a flesh-and-blood form in the person of Jesus Christ. So then Jesus was "the Word made flesh" and that is why in revelation 19 we read of Jesus described as "the word of God" the logos of God because he was made the logos, the logos was made him, when he was born of Mary. In the other three gospels we read of the virgin birth of Jesus. We have looked at those passages already where the Holy Spirit would come upon Mary and therefore what would be born of her would be called the "Son of God" and in the exalted language of John's gospel that becomes "the Word (the spirit, the power, the purpose, of God) was made flesh and dwelt amongst us". So then, that is the meaning, I believe, of this phrase "logos", that it was the essential purpose that was with God from the beginning of the world and that Word became Jesus. That light, that Word, that purpose that was with God from the beginning, became Jesus.

So we go on to think about "my Lord and my God". Now that's in John chapter 20. If you want to look at the chapter you see in verse 17 of John 20, Jesus said "I ascend unto my Father and your Father, to my God and your God". Now it sounds very strange for Jesus to say something

like that and then to be called God Himself in person. Now one way of looking at that is that the word “God”, “my God”, “my Lord and my God” as Thomas used, it is the word “theos” which basically means “a mighty one”. It doesn’t necessarily mean God Himself in person. In the Greek New Testament incidentally there is only one word translated God. That is this word “theos” and it is used to translate the Hebrew word “elohim” which means “mighty ones”, and which is referred to angels, to men such as Moses and to other people apart from God Himself. So, it can be merely a title of ascription of honour unto Jesus or unto anybody.

Even if Thomas by saying “my Lord and my God” was implying that Jesus was his God the fact still remains as I have explained earlier that Jesus was the true manifestation of that one God. He came in God’s name, he spoke God’s words, he performed God’s works. He was God manifested in the flesh (1 Timothy 3:16).

So then, the point is perhaps tidied up a little about the use of this word “God” if you go to John chapter 10 where, I believe, the Jews made the same mistake as Trinitarians do today. They thought that Jesus was making himself God. Now notice how Jesus answers that: John 10:34, Jesus answered them “Is it not written in your Law (then he quotes from Psalm 82) I said, Ye are gods (if you look at that Psalm, we haven’t got time to do it now, but you will see that it is talking about the judges of Israel, those men who were called gods). Christ says, verse 35 “if he called them gods (just men being called gods) unto whom the word of God came and the scripture cannot be broken (i.e. you cannot deny this) say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world thou blasphemest because I said I am the Son of God”. So Jesus was saying, ‘In the Old Testament men are called God, why are you stoning me? I’m only saying I’m the *Son* of God?’.

So then, Jesus came in his Father’s name, he did his father’s work and he has been given that name at his ascension to heaven. I rest my Bible evidence against the trinity

Thank you.

Mr. Everitt’s Second Speech

Jesus is both God and man

Right! I’ve only ten minutes to answer Mr. Heaster which could require much longer, but I will deal with the last few points first.

On the word “God”, it is quite true that it is, on rare occasions, used for other beings than the One whom we call “God the Father” – but can a man accept being called “God” – addressed as God? I think the case in Acts 14 makes it perfectly plain that he can’t.

On the meaning of “logos”, it is perfectly true that it has the primary meaning that Mr. Heaster has explained. But then the word “light” too has the primary meaning of what comes from the sun, or from these electric lights here. But it also is used as a reference to Jesus personally – he was the light; and as he was the light so he was the word. He himself is the expression of everything that God is. He is the one that declared God, according to John 1:18 “the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him”. Therefore, I submit to you, that the interpretation I placed upon the first verse of John’s gospel is the right one. You can read that section 1 to 18 right through, carefully, and you will find that it is consistent.

Now when it says “the word was made flesh” I think it is perhaps necessary to make one point clear. It doesn’t mean that someone made the word flesh. More exactly translated it is “the word become flesh”. We might almost say it is an act of His own.

So far.

Now the second point I want to make in referring to Mr. Heaster’s first speech is the constant use of the word “shall be”, “will be”, and similar expressions, in relation to the foretelling of the coming in of Jesus into the open world and in particular those verses he referred to in the opening chapter of Luke, referring to the birth of Jesus from Mary.

[One point I am happy to be in entire agreement with Mr. Heaster on is the virgin birth. That is something that is much denied these days and so it is worthwhile saying that I affirm it.]

But the “shall be’s” and the “will be’s” in all those passages simply refer to the person that was to be born into this world. No other word could have been used until he was actually born. The confusion arises from a failure to distinguish the place that Jesus has come into (as is explained in Philippians chapter 2) in coming out of the divine Godhead into the place or form of a servant. Once you have grasped that fact, all those difficulties disappear.

Jesus is both God and man. I have no quarrel at all with Mr. Heaster on the subject of his real manhood because Trinitarian doctrine, if I must use that expression, is one that insists equally upon his manhood. There have been, and Scripture shows us, those who denied his manhood. We are not worrying about that argument at the moment, but that’s why it is important to insist upon it. The reason it’s important is this. Christ died for our sins. If he had not been man, he could not have died. If he had not been God, his death would have been of no avail, because he bore our sins in his own body on the tree. No mere man could have done that. Therefore, I also insist that he was sinless internally as well as sinless in the sense that he didn’t commit sins. That is made perfectly clear from Scripture. It doesn’t only say that “he did no sin neither was guile found in his mouth” but “in him is not”. John’s first epistle chapter 3 verse 5 “and you know that He appeared in order to take away sins” (I should say, I am reading in this instance from the New American Standard Bible) “And you know that He appeared in order to take away sins; and in Him there is no sin”. It wasn’t simply that he didn’t commit sins, but there was no sin in him. If it had been otherwise, then his death would have been of no avail, because his sacrifice would not have been a pure sacrifice. “Holy, harmless, undefiled” refers not simply to what he did but what he was. He couldn’t have made a sacrifice for himself had he been sinful internally because the sacrifice would not have been admissible. The sacrifice to be effective had to be pure. What

he did was to sacrifice for us and it was because he was perfect internally and externally in every way that the sacrifice is acceptable to God. Our whole salvation depends upon that point.

I will add something further, just to support that. If you go to the gospel according to John 7:18, “he who speaks for himself seeks his own glory” (that refers to the opponents of Jesus) “but he who is seeking the glory of the one who has sent him” (that is Jesus) “he is true and there is no unrighteousness *in him*”.

Now turn with me to Psalm 92:15 “To declare that the Lord (that is Yahweh or Jehovah) is upright: He is my rock and there is no unrighteousness in Him”. As there was no unrighteousness in Yahweh so there was no unrighteousness in Jesus. Therefore the moral argument that has been used against the deity of Christ falls flat. And thank God it does, for our salvation depends upon the true Godhead of Jesus and the true manhood of Jesus and the sinless perfection of Jesus. It was only because of all those three he was able to die for our sins.

I think that is all I need to say. Jesus is both God and man.

CHAIRMAN:

For those of you who have been looking enviously at us as we drink our water, there is some coffee and some drinks outside.

Questions From The Floor

QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR FOR MR. HEASTER

QUESTION:

Alpha and omega

In Isaiah 44:6 it says “thus saith the Lord the King of Israel (thus saith Yahweh the King of Israel) and his redeemer the Lord of hosts: I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God”. Then in Revelation 1:17 it says “And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last, alpha and omega: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore”. It seems to me that in one passage you have Jehovah and in the other passage, Jesus both claiming to be the first and the last. Now I take Mr. Heaster’s point that when Jesus was exalted to the right – hand of God he was given the name but in John 17:5 “And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was”. If he is going to be glorified with the Father’s own self with the glory which he had before the world was, that suggests to me that the attributes between the first and the last were not something which he was given as a reward, not only as a reward, but were something which he was taking back which he had already had before the world was which he claimed as something to become.

I don't know if I make myself clear!

MR. HEASTER:

I think we've got two issues here. We have got the question of Jesus being called the "alpha and omega" and reading in Isaiah that in fact that is the name of Yahweh. I have tried, I think, as hard as I can perhaps not very well, to emphasize this fact that the titles of God were given to Jesus on his ascension to heaven and at his resurrection. "I am come" he said, John 5: 43, "in my Father's name". John 17 "I have manifested thy name" and therefore Philippians 2:11, he was given "the name which is above every name" and that name must be the name of Yahweh. That is the name which is above every name and that is what was given to Jesus. Therefore, as I briefly mentioned in Isaiah 9:6 it says about Jesus "his name shall be called the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace". These titles which beyond all dispute apply to God were to be given to Jesus. It doesn't say in Isaiah 9:6 "he *is* Mighty God, he *is* Everlasting Father" or alpha and omega if you like. No, it says "he *will be called*" in other words, he will be given that name, those titles.

So we come on to the other question, John 17:5 "the glory which I had with thee before the world was". I am afraid I don't really see how that connects very much with Jesus having the name before the world was. It says "the glory" he had with him, with God before the world was. Now in John 17:3 we read that the Father is the only true God, just to remind us of that. Now John 17:24 says that Jesus was loved before the foundation of the world. Revelation 13 says that he was slain from the foundation of the world. Now it does not mean that Jesus was literally killed at the beginning of the world, though it says that he was slain from the foundation of the world, presumably in the sense that that was in God's purpose, the logos again. Similarly his kingdom was prepared from the foundation of the world (Matthew 25:34). So therefore he had the glory with God before the foundation of the world. In other words, in God's purpose, in the same way as Jesus in God's plan and purpose had been crucified, had been resurrected, had been given a kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world, all at the beginning of the world, in the same way, he was given the glory.

It doesn't mean that he had to exist as a person for that to happen. It is surely all brought together in 1 Peter 1:20 where we read that "Christ was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times". So the sacrifice of Jesus, the kingdom of Jesus, his glory were in prospect before the world was but not an actual existing reality. You read in Ephesians 1:4 that the true believers were chosen before the foundation of the world. If you choose somebody, it implies that they, obviously, exist. But the true believers didn't exist from the foundation of the world. They were there in God's plan and so it was with Jesus. For example we read in Romans 9:23 about the true believers that they are " afore prepared (past tense) unto glory". Their glory had been prepared right from the beginning and this is the principle of Romans 4:17 that God calls "those things which be not as though they were" because to God those things have all happened, they are there in His plan, the alpha and omega, in His logos, in His purpose, but it doesn't mean that either the true believers or Jesus himself had to be there from the beginning of the world.

QUESTION:

The doctrine of the Trinity

I would like to ask Mr. Heaster just a simple question. I notice that time and again when speaking to us he took the line that if this is so how can that be so? If this is true, then surely that can't be true? For example, if the Lord Jesus is said to be the Son of the Highest then obviously he can't also be the Highest as well. If in one place he says my Father is greater than I, which many of us by the way would attribute to the elohim face he voluntarily took as man to speak and act in that kind of way, then how can he be equal with the Father and the Son. Setting one thing against another that way.

Now bearing in mind what Paul says in 1 Corinthians 2:14 "but the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned," in the light of that verse and other verses of similar effect, would he accept that the mere fact that I may not be able to see how apparently diverse things can exist side by side, doesn't necessarily mean that they can't?

MR. HEASTER:

Well, in trying to find out the truth of the Bible, I can see no other way of going about it than to compare Scripture with Scripture. We are unfortunately in this Debate thinking about the ideas of men as well in the doctrine of the Trinity and if that says one thing, that none is greater or less in the Godhead and the Bible says "my Father is greater than I" I don't see why you shouldn't, or I shouldn't draw the conclusion that therefore the doctrine of the Trinity contradicts the Bible.

Now concerning 1 Corinthians 2 "the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God for they are foolishness unto him"; how I interpreted the gentlemen's comment there was that God is a mystery. God is too great for us to understand. We can't understand the things of the spirit of God neither can we know them. Is that what you were saying? Were you saying that I was applying sort of human logic and yet 1 Corinthians 2 tells us that human logic is no good?

REPLY:

I was simply quoting that verse to show as I believe it shows that scripture itself accepts that to the natural man the things of God are baffling and if the things of God are baffling to the natural man, I would humbly suggest that nothing could be more baffling than that He who is the one true and living almighty, eternal God could clothe Himself with flesh while still being in the absoluteness of the Godhead in heaven and at the same time be here as a man and take up all the attributes of man and the fact that I may not understand how that could be, how the two things could exist together...

MR. HEASTER:

Thank you. I was just clarifying your view on that verse. Thank you.

So our friend is really saying that the natural man can't understand the things of the spirit of God, it is all a mystery, therefore why use human logic. Now I am afraid, I don't want to be destructive to our friend but that must be taken in context. The natural man can't receive the things of the spirit of God but verse 15 "he that is spiritual judgeth all things" and verse 10 "God hath revealed these things unto us by His spirit, for the spirit searcheth the deep things, yea the deep things of God, for we have received" verse 12 "not the spirit of the world (which you are saying you have received), but the spirit which is of God that we might know the things that are freely given unto us of God which things we also speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth but which the Holy Spirit teacheth comparing spiritual things with spiritual".

Now I submit to you, ladies and gentlemen, that the word of God is a revelation of the spirit of God, as Christ said "my words are spirit, my words are life". We have been trying to compare scripture with scripture, spiritual things with spiritual things. The doctrine of the Trinity doesn't stand up to this analysis.

QUESTION:

The meaning of logos and other points.

I would like to ask Mr. Heaster how he would react to the following point. First of all, if we take Jeremiah 9:24 about understanding God in context, I'm glad to see he cares about context, then we find that it is knowing the things that God is doing and that one can see by the way God acts justly something being revealed; but if we move on, I mean our Christian friend over there only mentioned one verse, but he said there were others that had the same thoughts, where the context is the same. Romans says something on this at the end of chapter 11 about how unsearchable God's ways are. Now, surely I would appeal to you that if God is infinite and I am purely a creature then there is going to be a limit to the capacity with which I am going to be able to understand Him and you may get a little child that comes back from the edge of the water and says I've got the ocean in my bucket and although it's true in one sense, in another it is far from true and the wonderful thing I see about the doctrine of the Trinity is that it is proved to me that my Bible comes from God in that it goes beyond something that can be neatly and mathematically put together in a way that is understandable within the confines of the human intellect.

MR. HEASTER:

O.K. Can I answer that?

REPLY:

There are two other points I want to make and then I will sit down. I would be glad to write to you, Sir, or hear from you as time is short. But there are two other points.

First, you kept on talking about the meaning of logos as God's purpose. Now if you look at the times the word is spoken of, it isn't just a purpose, it is a person.

My last comment was that Thomas when he says "my Lord and my God" and he worships him it's not just that rarely, as Leslie says, God can be used of a normal person or that sometimes, somebody will revere or respect another, but that here you have worship and the name of God going together and so Jesus doesn't refute it. The simplest understanding of that verse is that Jesus acknowledged that here was the true God and there are no other Gods except the Lord.

MR. HEASTER:

Thank you. Well, your first point was, as I said a repetition of what we've just had, that God is a mystery. Now if I may as politely as possible say that, (I don't really consider that most of what I said in my first speech has been answered I am afraid by Mr. Everitt at all. I don't think anything much at all has been touched on) to turn round and say it is all a mystery is a very easy get-out and Christ did say that unto the true believers "the mystery is revealed" – the revealed mystery. Now, I do accept that there is as Paul says "a mystery of Godliness" that God was manifested in the flesh and I am sorry if I give the impression that we Christadelphians think we know everything. I am not saying that anyone can fathom the mysteries of God fully as you say, in Romans 11. That is quite right. But the fact is that one can understand the basic simple truths of the word of God. That Christ was the Son of God, begotten by the Holy Spirit in the womb of Mary.

Regarding the the meaning of logos and the pronouns in John 1 where it says the world was made by *him*, I would firstly point out that the word "by" "the world was made *by him*" it can mean "on account of him, through him, by reason of him". As Romans 14:14 says "there is nothing unclean *of itself*". In other words, there is nothing unclean of itself, on account of itself. Well, the fact that a personal pronoun is used, doesn't necessarily imply that a person is being spoken of. There is, as I expect you recognize, a principle in the Scriptures of personification. In Proverbs 8 wisdom is spoken of as a woman "wisdom has builded her house, she has hewn out her seven pillars". Now presumably neither you nor I believe there is a woman called "wisdom" up in heaven or on this earth who is doing that – no we accept that that is the principle of personification. This is what is being used about this logos here in John 1. Now one can understand that further by the fact that logos in the Greek is a masculine word and therefore it must take a masculine pronoun, in the same way as wisdom in Hebrew is a feminine word and it therefore takes a feminine pronoun. It is no proof in itself of personality. And so it is with the meaning of logos.

You then said, I was almost pleased to hear, in your third point that the worship of Christ and the name of God go together. Well, I totally agree with you. As I have been trying to say, because Christ came in the name of God, therefore he could receive worship on God's behalf.

CHAIRMAN:

I think that although there are a lot more questions that people would like to ask, time is pressing we will have to draw a line here.

Right, now are there any questions for Mr. Everitt.

QUESTION:

The Nicean Creed

I would like to ask Mr. Everitt why it is, and he hasn't addressed this point, that we have none of the Trinitarian expressions found in the Bible. Nowhere do we read of God the Son or God the Holy Spirit. Nowhere do we read of Christ being co-equal or co-eternal. Is it true that these expressions were formulated in the Church in about the fourth century A.D. and such things as the Nicean Creed, they are not found in the Bible.

I would like that to be answered, about the Nicean Creed.

MR. EVERITT:

Firstly, the term Trinity, as I think Mr. Heaster has already said came into use early in the third century. The idea that is embodied in the Nicean Creed of 325 A.D., or rather the ideas are simply an attempt to give a rational expression in the thought system of those days to the truth of Scripture.

As regards Christ being equal with God, I would point out that Philippians says "who being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God".

QUESTION:

Co-equal and co-eternal

The doctrine of the Trinity states that Christ is co-equal and co-eternal with the Father. That seems to directly contradict the teaching of the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 15 and I suggest we turn to it because it quotes God telling us what is true and what is false. In the middle of 1 Corinthians 15 looking at verse 23 it describes the return of the Lord Jesus Christ to the earth after which the dead shall be raised, and then it talks about the reign of Christ upon the earth and during this reign he shall destroy all his enemies and the last enemy to be destroyed is death we read in verse 26 and then verses 27 and 28 which seem to contradict the Trinity. Verse 27 "For God has put all things in subjection under his feet (under Christ's feet) and when it says all things are put into subjection under him (under Christ) it is plain that He is excepted who put all

things under him. When all things are subject to him then the Son himself will also be subject unto him who put all things under him that God may be everything in everything". So God is subjecting all things to Christ and in the future it tells us here at the end of the reign of Christ on earth, the Son himself will be subject to his Father, therefore he cannot be co-equal and co-eternal.

MR. EVERITT:

I think the point must always be held that in coming into manhood Christ came into circumstances which were placing him in a position, I emphasize the word 'position', of lowliness in relation to God. Because God is greater than man. But it has been well said that he never ceased to be what he was because of what he became. When Christ became flesh, he came into those circumstances. Now it also is true that he remains a man and it is as man that he reigns and when you come to the end, that is, you were referring to verse 28, it says "and when all things shall be subdued unto him, then the Son also himself shall be subject unto him that out all things under him that God may be all in all". That doesn't in the least affect the fact that in his own person he is God and is included in that word "God shall be all in all". So Christ was co-equal and co-eternal with God.

QUESTION:

Jesus is not God

Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, I find myself on the horns of a terrible dilemma in listening to you speaking about the doctrine of the Trinity. It seems that I have an unthinkable alternative. Either I must believe that God who you say is co-equal with Jesus and co-eternal, that God died on the cross, or that Jesus of Nazareth did not die. Neither of those propositions can I accept and I believe that the doctrine of the Trinity does absolute violence to the plain teaching of Scripture. Jesus is not God, therefore.

MR. EVERITT:

I must confess that your question puzzles me because I should have thought it was perfectly obvious that it was a man that died on the cross.

REPLY:

You said he was God. Jesus is not God.

MR. EVERITT:

Exactly. But you see it was as man that he died.

REPLY:

God cannot die. Jesus is not God.

MR. EVERITT:

I said it was as man that he died.

REPLY:

You said he was going to reign as man as well.

CHAIRMAN:

Can we try and keep this as an open debate.

MR. EVERITT:

Sorry. If this gentleman wishes to say something to me afterwards, can I deal with that separately?

He is both man and God. That is the simple teaching as I understand it. As man he died, but he didn't cease to be God because he was man. Jesus was God.

QUESTION:

Jesus as mediator

If Jesus is God as you claim, and the New Testament in 1,250 odd times only ever alludes to him as God by the actual use of the word which in most places is 'theos' and if he was from everlasting to everlasting on his resurrection, I have always understood that Trinitarians, whoever they may be, teach that Christ Jesus is part of the Godhead in total and there was no longer any need for his manliness. How can Jesus then as Paul says in 1 Timothy be a mediator between God and men, "the man Christ Jesus". If you link that with the question the gentleman behind asked that he is there in the interim to be subject to God at all times he is inferior both before and after his resurrection. Jesus as mediator means he was not God.

MR. EVERITT:

If you use the term inferior, he is in his person equal with God; in the place he is come into he is inferior. Now the point you have referred to about 1 Timothy, Jesus as a mediator, that brings out the point where both his Godhead and his manhood are absolutely necessary. If he was not God, he couldn't be mediator of God, and if he was not man, he couldn't have been mediator of man.

He is the one that is the answer to Job's question "Oh that there were an umpire who could lay his hands upon us both" (Job 9:33 R.S.V.). Because he is God he is in figure (I accept Mr. Heaster's reference that Scripture uses figures) in figure he placed his hand on God, as man he places his hand on man. Because he was both God and man Jesus was capable of being mediator, which otherwise he couldn't have been.

QUESTION:

Christ and sin

In your remarks, I believe I am correct in saying, you said that both internally and externally Christ was without sin.

MR. EVERITT:

Yes.

REPLY:

On that premise, can you please explain to me the Apostle Paul's comment in 2 Corinthians 5:21 where Paul says (the context will show that God is speaking of Christ) "God hath made Christ to be sin for us who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in him". How is that explained if you say that either internally or externally Christ did not possess sin.

MR. EVERITT:

I should have thought that if he was made sin it was perfectly clear that he didn't have sin before.

REPLY:

But then, at some stage, Christ must have had sin.

MR. EVERITT:

Yes, on the cross. When Christ bore our sins in his body on the tree.

REPLY:

Mr. Chairman, May I just say the correct translation of that is "that made him to be a sin-offering" MacKnight, C.H. Dodd, Albright all translate that to be a "sin offering" Christ wasn't made sin.

MR. EVERITT:

Well, I don't know I wish to make any comment on what the last questioner has stated unless he wishes me to answer.

CHAIRMAN:

Right, we are now going to have a short time for both sides to sum up their arguments and hopefully without resorting to fisticuffs...

Summation By Mr. Heaster:

The seed of Abraham

Well, ladies and gentlemen, in conclusion I think we must each ask ourselves the question, Are we humble to the word of God? Do we go through this word and say "ah, my Father is greater than I. I can of my own self do nothing". Christ learned obedience to God by what he suffered. Ah, well obviously this cannot mean that Jesus is God himself. There are very few of us that have that humility and that is what, though, God is looking for.

I would also like to stress in conclusion that Christadelphians are not Unitarians. We believe, as both Old and New Testaments clearly teach, that there is one Almighty God and Father whose Son is Jesus Christ, who was begotten at a definite point in finite time by God's power, the Holy Spirit, acting on the womb of the virgin Mary. As Paul says "the head of the woman is the man, the head of the man is Christ and the head of Christ is God" (1 Corinthians 11: 3). That is conclusive to me, at least.

Jesus was then, of our nature. The man, Christ Jesus, as Paul calls him and as he is described at times even after his ascension to heaven. It was essential for him to be of our fallen nature in order that he could be tempted. As Hebrews 4 says "he was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sinning". Through his overcoming of sin, a way to forgiveness and eternal life has been opened. "The wages of sin is death" sin brings death, therefore Jesus had to have our sinful nature in order to overcome sin; in order to be tempted to sin. Because he overcame those temptations, therefore he has opened up a way of escape for us. In Hebrews 2 verses 14 to 18 we read some words which really sum up the whole of my presentation to you tonight and you may like to read them later. Hebrews 2:14-18: "Forasmuch then as the children (that is us) partake of flesh and blood (that is, human nature), he (Jesus) also himself likewise partook of the same". It is as if Paul is going out of his way there to emphasize this fact: " he *also himself likewise*" was of our nature, "he took not hold of the nature of angels (if he did he would have had the nature of angels, no he took not hold of the nature of angels); but he took hold of the seed of Abraham". Now he opened then a way of escape from sin and death for the seed of Abraham to deliver them, I am quoting again from Hebrews 2 "to deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage". And that is, of course, the position of every one of us here tonight, living in fear of death all our lifetime subject to bondage to sin and death. Christ through being of our nature having the same bondage has opened the way of escape from this miserable

position. Leslie said “how could a man take away our sins” and yet Hebrews 2 says unless he was a man then he couldn’t have done so. That was the very point of him being of our nature in order that God could lay on him the iniquity of us, his brothers and sisters. So then, if your life or if your religion seems pointless because you sense that you’re enjoying as it were a sort of “feel –good” religion as I call it, and you sense that at the end of the day you are not sure whether you are really going to overcome sin and death, then the way of escape is clear through an understanding of the real Christ and becoming one of Abraham’s seed or descendants.

Now I’d like to talk a lot more about Abraham’s seed because it was only, Paul says there in Hebrews 2, for Abraham’s seed or descendants that a way of escape has been opened, through Jesus having our nature. So then, we have got to become Abraham’s seed or descendants if we are going to have the hope of salvation from sin and death which Jesus opened up. So how can we do it, how can we become the descendants of Abraham? The natural descendants of Abraham are the Jews. So how then can Gentiles become part of those people in order that Christ’s sacrifice should apply to us? Paul gives us the answer, Galatians 3:27-29 “as many of you (he says) as have been baptized into Christ...are Abraham’s seed” or descendants. Only as many of us as are baptized into Christ (the real Christ) are “Abraham’s seed”, and that baptism, I suggest to you, is not just a sprinkling, it is a total dipping in water.

At this point we must consider, I feel, the question, “what is the gospel?” What is the gospel? I submit to you that the majority of Evangelical Christians and Christendom generally have no clear cut – and – dried answer to that question. What is the gospel? And yet it does, fundamentally, affect our eternal salvation. Galatians 3:8 says that the gospel was preached to Abraham in the form of the promises that God made to him. God promised Abraham two things. He promised him, first of all, that he would have a great descendant through whom blessing and forgiveness would be brought to this earth. Galatians 3:16 tells us that that descendant was Jesus Christ. The second thing Abraham was promised was that he would have many descendants who would reign for ever upon this earth, Romans 4:13. So then, the gospel is made up of those two parts. Things about Jesus, the seed of Abraham, and things about the descendants of Abraham who are going to live for ever upon the earth. They are the two elements of the gospel which were preached by Jesus; remember how he went around the cities of Israel and the villages preaching the gospel, the good news of the coming kingdom of God that he would establish when God sent him back to the earth, and those two elements were preached by Christ’s apostles. Acts 8:5 says that Philip went to Samaria and preached Christ. Now in the eyes of many of you, you would say: well, he turned round and said “believe on Jesus everybody” – but he didn’t. It goes on to define what “preaching Christ” involves. Acts 8:12 says that when the people believed Philip preaching the *things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ* they were baptized. So then, there are the same two elements that were preached to Abraham. The things concerning the kingdom of God were preached to Abraham when he was told he would have many descendants who would reign for ever upon this earth. The things concerning the name of Jesus Christ were preached to Abraham when he was told that he would have one great descendant through whom the world would be blessed.

Now I submit to you that that is the gospel message in a nutshell. I also submit to you that if you believe in the Trinity, that belief makes a nonsense of that clear, simple, original gospel message. If you believe that Jesus was God, how could he have been Abraham’s descendant. If he had no

beginning, how could he have been a descendant of Abraham or David because those promises were repeated to Isaac, to Jacob and to David. God said to David that of the fruit of his body he would raise up this descendant who would be Jesus the Christ. Jesus said “salvation is of the Jews” John 4:22. It is only by being the descendants or seed of Abraham that we can have hope of salvation from death through Jesus.

So then, you see that these things are of vital importance. This is the gospel, the true gospel, I humbly, honestly believe that we are preaching to you tonight.

“God has appointed a day in the which he will judge the world (Acts 17:31) by that man whom he hath appointed” whom He will send back to this earth to set up God’s kingdom.

So then, Jesus is coming, the Son of God coming back to this earth to set up God’s kingdom upon this earth, and at the end of the first thousand years, we believe, of that kingdom, as someone has already commented tonight in 1 Corinthians 15, he will give up the kingdom to God who put all things under his feet, that *God may be all in all*.

So then, ladies and gentlemen, this is not just an academic debate. I am sorry if it has sounded like that at times. It is not an academic debate. “This is life eternal (this is everlasting life) that we should know the only true God and Jesus Christ whom he sent”.

Thank you and God bless you all.

Summation By Mr. Everitt

Ego eimi: I am he

Once more, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Heaster, ladies and gentlemen, one thing I am in complete agreement with Mr. Heaster over is that this is not just an academic debate. My point is that while there is much that he has said about the gospel I would agree with, the whole thing is nullified by refusing to believe that Jesus is divine. If I might quote another Scripture, to underline many scriptures that have already been quoted, it is Hebrews 13:8, where it says, that “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever”. Now when it says “the same” that is a title of Deity. It is a word for example that is used in Psalm 102:27 addressing God when it says “thou art the same”. That is used in the second person. When it is transferred to the first person it is translated “I am he”. Now that occurs in Isaiah chapter 43:10 “Yes are my witnesses, saith the Lord and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I *am* he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me”. Ego eimi, “I am he”.

Turn now with me to the New Testament to John’s gospel chapter 8. This is the end of an argument between Jesus and the Jews. Jesus says verse 56 “your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day and he saw it and was glad. Then said the Jews unto him, Thou are not yet 50 years old

and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you before Abraham was, I am”. Now the words Jesus quotes there “Ego eimi” are exactly the words given as “I am he” in Isaiah where I have quoted from. The slight difference is due to the differences in the Hebrew language. If you want to know what that means, I will just quote from a scholar whom I by no means universally approve of but who gives an independent opinion from my own, when he says “before Abraham came into being, I eternally was, as now I am, and ever continue to be”. A comment by a Jewish scholar on Isaiah 43:10 says, “I am he, that is, always the same, ever was, is and will be”. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today and forever. Ego eimi. I am he.

Now that brings me to the point about him dying for us. Of course, it was as a man that he died for us. I thought I had made that as clear as I possibly could, but evidently it needs repeating. It was as man he died for us. It was as man he bore the judgment for us. But you see, for him to have borne the judgment of our sins would have broken him, if he had been a sinful man as has been suggested. His death would have been necessary for himself not for us. He came into conditions indeed where it was possible for him to die. He became into real flesh and blood, apart from sin. In him sin was not. And it is because he was perfect it was possible for God to use the scripture my friend over there quoted to “make him sin for us who knew no sin that we might become the righteousness of God in him”. The Christian can face death without fear because he knows he has placed his trust upon the eternal Son of God and the one who has borne his sins. To quote the figurative expression of the Old Testament, those sins have been borne “as far away as the east is from the west” as Jehovah says. “Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and...he was buried, and he was raised again the third day according to the scriptures:” and is now risen, ascended on high where it says, he ever lives to make intercession for those that call upon God through him.

I don't think I need to add anything more.

Concluding Remarks By The Chairman

Well, it just leaves me to thank you all for coming and to remind you that if you want a transcript of this, there is a yellow slip for you to fill in and to place in one of these boxes.

Once again, thank you very much for coming.

FROM THE FLOOR:

Mr. Chairman, May I be allowed to thank you and the speakers for the very reverent and patient way in which you have conducted these proceedings.

(Applause)