

and admire the truth and beauty of the saying ascribed to an ancient heathen sage: "God is a circle whose centre is everywhere and its circumference nowhere"? Paradoxical and contradictory of itself and of axiomatic truth as the saying is, could there be a finer expression of the Scripture idea of the immensity of the divine essence? For the God of the Jewish and Christian Scriptures is not a being whose essence or substance is diffused through infinite space, so that each point of space is occupied by an infinitesimal portion of deity or of the divine essence; but a being who is wholly present everywhere throughout immensity, so that there is no point of infinite space where God is not present in the totality of His essence and perfections and power of action. If, when the mind has been freed from the weakness and folly of superstition, it readily accepts that greatest of mysteries—an existence which cannot be described with an approach to adequacy, except in terms contradictory of axiomatic truth—it accepts nothing that is more incomprehensible in believing, in accordance with Scripture, that "all the fulness of the Godhead" (Col. ii. 9) is personally united with humanity in Christ, or with an individual man, "the man Christ Jesus." Similar, if not deeper, mystery is involved in the relation of the Divine existence to infinite time.

In accordance with the common faith of the church universal, we assume,

(2) The doctrine of the Trinity, repelling the objection that it is incomprehensible, as we do in relation to the incarnation, and denying that, when expressed in proper terms, it involves even anything contradictory. For we cannot know anything of the constitution of the Godhead or the Divine essence, except as we are divinely informed of it. And, following the teaching of Scripture, which we receive as God's revelation of Himself, we believe that there exists in the Divine essence—the essence of the one only living and true God—such a distinction that we can say, "There are three persons in the Godhead." It is, however, in place to explain that the word "person" is used only because language cannot supply a better to express this mysterious and incomprehensible, but real, essential, and eternal distinction of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, in the essence of the one God. The doctrine of the Trinity implies that none of these is without the other, that "these three are one God" (Shorter