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De Principiis and the Contra Celsum of Origen*

Tamarah Kay Foote

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A Discussion of the Doctrines of God, the Trinity, and the  
Incarnation and the Relation of Man to Each in the  
*De Principiis* and the *Contra Celsum* of Origen

by  
Tamarah Kay Foote

In Trinitarian theology, Origen is chiefly known for subordinating the Son to the Father, rather than understanding the intricate and personal relationships which not only comprise the Trinity, but also which maintain a manward orientation. In the *De Principiis* and the *Contra Celsum*, Origen balances a systematic, objective understanding of God as one, three, and incarnate with a practical understanding of God's creation of man in his own image. An adjacent discussion of these two works results in a sense not only of the reality of God to Origen, but also of the same depth he wishes his readers to attain in their relationships with God. These two works then together clarify the issue of subordinationism and communicate the philosophical and personal theology of the relationships within the Trinity and between God and man.

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Incarnation and the Relation of Man to Each in the  
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by  
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## Introduction

### An Analysis of Origen's Christ: An Investigation of God

A major criticism against Origen is his subordination of Christ to the Father. While orthodox theologians accept the subordination of the humanity of Christ to the persons of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, they naturally reject the inferiority of Christ's deity. Origen's ambiguous consideration of Christ's human soul detracts from his deity, and Origen's distinct emphasis on Christ's Sonship detracts from his eternity. Such lessening of the Son to the Father violates the basic idea of the Trinity: three persons constituting one God, each person being completely equal and completely eternal with each other person.

Perhaps scrutinizing one's own preconceptions of the Trinity and one's relationship to it as a whole and to its persons individually will reveal misconceptions of and about Origen on God and clarify an understanding of God. In order to evaluate Origen's contribution to the reader's understanding of the theoretical and practical nature of the Trinity and the incarnation, one would profit from an examination of these matters first apart from Origen. It is important to discuss some of the nuances of the Trinity, confronting the paradox in its definition, rethinking the concept as a useful tool, recognizing its practicality, and maintaining its integrity both as doctrine and as literal truth. It is likewise beneficial to investigate the Trinity from different perspectives, including methods of reconciling three persons with one God, the Trinity as both

model and reality, the attributes of God in contrast with their manifestation, the relationship between the deity and the humanity of Christ, and the creation of man in God's image as an aid in understanding God in general and the incarnate Christ specifically.

The Trinity is a fascinating subject, but a concept, a truth, that even after diligent study appears to encapsulate contradiction. Christianity is not polytheistic, yet, despite the clear monotheism of the Old Testament, the word for God in Hebrew, *elohim*, is plural. The word for God in Greek, *θεός*, is used in the singular in the New Testament, and as such affirms monotheism. The Old and New Testaments, however, are neither contradictory in substance nor in language. The person of God in the Old Testament is ultimately no different from the person of God in the New Testament. For the Christian, the three persons of the Trinity exist in both parts of the canon of Scripture. Just as the apostle Paul speaks of Christ as the fulfilment of the law, the three persons of the Godhead are revealed more thoroughly and described with a different emphasis in their persons, attributes, and functions in the New Testament than in the Old. The Father, Son, and Spirit are progressively revealed in the canon of Scripture, and in the entirety of their revelation are infinitely harmonious and unified.

Variation in the Biblical presentation of God does not resolve the tension; it presents it. While in the Old Testament God is frequently simplistically portrayed as

either punishing the Jews or blessing them, in the New Testament one is accustomed to three specific persons, each with his specific function. Together with the Father and the Holy Spirit is the Son. Either the presence of the incarnate Christ pervades the Gospels, or the memory of him and the reality of his existence at the right hand of the Father pervade the Epistles. Following and predicated on the ascension of Christ, the role of the Holy Spirit evolves. He reveals himself as distinctly personal in the life of the individual Christian. From an historical, chronological perspective, then, the dichotomies are not resolved, merely presented distinctly.

The harmony and unity of the Trinity suggest a method for reconciling this dichotomy by establishing and by understanding the oneness of God before the threeness of God. Just as God has one single plan and purpose, so God is one. Just as God has an infinite number of plans and purposes which constitute and effect his single plan, so the threeness of God conforms to his oneness.

The dilemma arises when one considers the threeness of God, which obviously seems to contradict his oneness. The concept of one God being three persons, not three Gods, further complicates the situation. The conclusion of three Gods seems natural, yet it implies polytheism and is Biblically unsound. Yet Christ is a person, as one thinks of God being a person. Christ is not part of a person. He is God, completely. The Father is God, completely. The Holy Spirit is God, completely. These three persons constitute one God, and they are each God independent of the divinity

of the others. Thus they share or possess the same essence, as shadows of each other, similar to one ray of light going through a prism and reappearing as three separate streams. It could be that the concept of the Trinity is one of accommodation or model or analogy for man. According to man's frame of reference and reasoning ability, one person alone could not possess and be capable of all the characteristics and functions in which the Father, Son, and Spirit participate. More than a model, however, the Trinity is reality.

This is not the only occasion that a reality as important as the Trinity has been subjected to language of accommodation, by God for the human mind. Another example is redemptive grace. Grace is God's essential participation in order for man to be rescued from complete and eternal condemnation. It is an essential participation on God's part because grace is a natural expression of the character of God and, by nature, independent of the quality of the recipient. Grace supersedes justice, and no one would ever label it injustice. From man's point of view, the grace of God is more than the fulfilment of any obligation, out of a sense of justice, by God for man. From God's point of view, the grace of God is the justice of God. His standards for himself are higher than man's.

The parallel between grace and the Trinity is that both are accommodational concepts and, at the same time, realities, literal realities foundational to the infinity and essence of God, to the existence of man, and to his relationship with God and fundamental to man's faith.

Without language of accommodation these doctrines would, to an entirely greater extent, be incomprehensible and unappreciable. As with the concept of grace, so with the Trinity (as with any subject, for that matter), the most sensible process for understanding it is by establishing the known concepts and realities first, and then advancing to the questionable or partially understood ideas. That God is one is easier to understand than the statement that singular is plural, that he is three.

One method for reconciling singular with plural, one with three, is by recognizing the Trinity as both model and reality. First of all, as far as the process of human comprehension goes, it is a model; and secondly, reality. As far as ultimate truth is concerned, the Trinity should primarily be understood as reality and secondarily as model. To accommodate man's finite mind, however, the Trinity as a model must first be understood.

The Trinity as a model is suited to man's frame of reference. One identifies with one of the relationships among the Trinity, especially because of the parallel in human life. The Father/Son relationship is natural and concrete, and the analogy with human life is plain. The natural hierarchy and submission in such a relationship in human life reflects the Father's authority over the Son and the Son's respect for and obedience of his Father. That the Father possesses authority over the Son because he predates him illustrates a simplistic application of the human father/son relationship with God. Presenting the Son as subservient and subsequent to the Father is where the

analogy to human life falls short. God the Father and God the Son are both infinitely and eternally divine.

Although there is no such thing as a spirit in human life which is also a person, spirits, feelings, temperaments, and truths do exist in an impersonal form. The fundamental distinction between these and the Holy Spirit is that these are not founded, even impersonally, on either the quality of thought or the quality of person on which the truths of the Spirit are based, which are divine and perfect and complete. The Spirit is more than personal; he is a person, and he is God. At best, a spirit in human life reflects divine truths. The power and infinite truth of the Spirit, if not discernible to the human mind, transcends the mind or illuminates it, if the human mind so desires. The interaction of the Spirit with man is no less real than the Father's and the Son's interaction with man. The interaction of one combination of the Father, Son, and Spirit is just as real as any other combination of them.

The contrast between the relationship of the Father and the Son to the Spirit, who has no divine counterpart and no human analogue, is stark, yet complementary. It could seem from the human perspective that the Spirit has no one to whom to relate in the same fashion as the Father and the Son do. This is not to say, however, that the Spirit has no relationship with the Father and the Son. Each person of the Trinity possesses an infinite and personal relationship with each other person. The closeness of a father and son is, at best, a finite reflection of the infinite intimacy between the Father and the Son. This intimacy does not exclude the

Holy Spirit, for the Spirit eternally possesses it with them. While each relationship in the Trinity is unique, each is equally infinite and intimate. Each relationship in the Trinity is necessary to and for God; each is likewise useful as a model for man. Together these divine relationships form a balance and reflect a oneness which is inherent to the being of God.

The names of the persons who comprise the Trinity reinforce the Trinity as an analogy for man. The names Father and Son are dependent in nature. A father, to be a father, must have a son. A son, to be a son, must have a father. This closeness may seem to exclude a third person for whom man has no frame of reference. A spirit does not possess personal attributes in human life and is not a human being or some category of human being. A spirit can be thought of as a power, a driving force, or a system of belief. It is personal only so far as a person is associated with it. By contrast, the relationship of the Holy Spirit with the Father and the Son and with mankind may be more abstract and less tangible, but it is no less real. It is personal.

The Trinity, then, is useful as a model, for it depicts God reflecting God and exemplifies the quality of relationship man can have with God. Each of the Trinity reflects, harmonizes, and complements the other. The Trinity is a pattern for man: he sees one person of the Trinity responding to and interacting with another person in the Trinity and learns about God and how to interact with each of the Trinity and with other men. The literal reality

of the Trinity prevents its eventual breakdown as a model for man. As a result, it consistently verifies and personalizes the existence of such a multi-faceted God.

While the Trinity distinguishes God from himself, so to speak, an examination of the shared attributes emphasizes the inherent unity of the three and helps to harmonize their distinctions. The attributes of God, in contrast with their manifestation, are absolute, constant, and stable. Their manifestation, which appears as it does because of the environment of human circumstances, sometimes seems to reveal a different God from the one before. Because of the demands of human circumstances, the purpose of God and its necessary and logical function appear to change. Sometimes human circumstances reveal a specific or a different person of the Trinity from the one before. In response to the demands of varying circumstances, God varies his own functions, although his ultimate purposes do not change. Accordingly, a different person of the Trinity predominantly appears, but not to the exclusion of the omnipresent functions of the remaining persons of the Trinity. Circumstances may require interaction from the Father, Son, or Spirit, or from various combinations of them. On the other hand, circumstances may evoke responses from the same person of the Trinity, but the responses themselves are then varied, not in violation of divine essence or of function specific to the individual deity, but in response to individual circumstances. Perhaps purpose and function evoke and define deity, not person function, from man's perspective.

Such reasoning does not degrade God or depict a God subservient to man. Rather it verifies a flexible, adaptable God, who obviously possesses the coordination to maintain his integrity and still accommodate man in both presentation of himself, by virtue of the existence of the Trinity, and in execution, by virtue of his perfect adaptability to human circumstances.

Just as the Trinity is tailored to man's frame of reference and the execution of the attributes of God on behalf of man to man's circumstances, so the similarity between the attributes of God and the human soul verifies the creation of man in God's image. The mental facility with which man relates to the Trinity, especially to the Father/Son relationship, and the flexibility of God in adapting to human circumstances, do not simply exist because of a sovereign decision by God for which man has no reason. God is attracted to that which is like him. His decision to create man in his own image gave him pleasure. The benefit man continues to receive from this decision, besides his own existence, is the comparative ease with which he is thus capable of understanding, appreciating, and communicating with God. Man's knowledge of God and knowledge of himself are complementary. The more man understands God, the more he understands himself. Likewise, the more he understands himself, the more he understands God. The cycle feeds itself when man initiates the process of seeking to know and understand God. Man comes to know God, know how loved he is by him, and love God in return. Man comes to realize that the extent to

which God loves him includes even becoming one like him and among him in the person of the incarnate Christ. Man comes to realize that God did all this for him without violating God's essence or denying his divinity. God created man, including the incarnate Christ, from himself and in the pattern of himself.

Certainly the pinnacle of the relationship between God and man and the complete fusion of model and reality in the Trinity occur in the incarnate Christ. There is literally no greater living example and verification of the creation of man in God's image and the flexibility of God toward man than in the humbling of Christ the God in becoming Christ the man. His presence on earth verifies the Trinity, the essence of God, even the existence of God as literal reality. His verbal claims before men as both God and man simultaneously, yet separately, eliminates doubt of the Trinity's validity as doctrine and of God as anything less than personal. The problem remains of reconciling the eternity and equality of the Son with the Father's both inclusive and exclusive of the incarnation. For is not a son subordinate and subsequent to his father?

While the major criticism against Origen is his inordinate subordination of Christ to the Father, Origen's courage in seeking to unravel the mysteries of the Trinity and the incarnation reflects a desire for more than a common knowledge of God. Origen desired an uncommon knowledge of God, a knowledge which is superlative and passionate. This desire for intimacy with God is one of the major driving forces behind Origen's boldness to address

issues with depth and specificity unknown to the church before his time. He ventured into the labyrinth of the Trinity, the incarnation, and the relation of man to God, vulnerable to errors in thinking and speculation from which others would derive heresy only later to be attributed solely to him. In his article, "Origen Studies and Pierre Nautin's *Origène*", Daly cites ". . . overenthusiastic Origenists who turned Origen's speculations into doctrine, and . . . the anxious guardians of orthodoxy who likewise misunderstood Origen's thought and intentions."<sup>1</sup>

Origen's passion for God, as any believer's, is identified with a desire to know himself, his origin, his spiritual destiny, and the path which joins them. Since some of his speculation wanders into areas tangent to the scope of this study, only those will be addressed which connect man with God in a general sense, with the persons of the Trinity individually and collectively, and with the incarnate Son during the incarnation and, in a spiritual sense, since the incarnation. Just as the oneness and threeness of God are a dichotomy and the union of deity and humanity is also a dichotomy, so God and man are dichotomies. There is the infinity of God and the finiteness of man, incorporeality and corporeality, perfection and imperfection. Despite these opposites, there is a bond; at least there is meant to be a bond. The capacity for the fulfilment of this bond is not foreign to the nature of either. The capacity to love and the desire to be loved, for example, is inherent in God and man. Man is meant to

appreciate and enjoy the oneness in the Trinity. The complete harmony and oneness of the two natures in the incarnate Son fulfil the hope that can indeed be reality for man. Christ the man knew himself, his origin, his destiny, and the path which joined the two. He knew himself in his humanity because of the complete harmony and oneness he had not only with his own deity, but with the persons of the Father and Holy Spirit as well. This dissertation will examine Origen's examination of these matters.

Most scholars interpret Origen's writings in abstract theological terms, in philosophical terms, or in historical terms. Some theologians even evaluate his writings in mystical terms. The validity of these approaches is certainly unnecessary to challenge. Theologians have basically overlooked, however, the very real, immediate, and practical value of Origen's writings for the modern Christian. While a systematic theological background provides an important foundation of knowledge for the growing believer, the application of such abstract truths, or in this case, truths which concentrate on the person and the function of God, validates the truths themselves in producing genuine, spiritual, individual fulfilment. The availability of Origen is, therefore, not limited to the scholar, but extends to the Christian reader who seeks to understand the depths of God with the result of deepening his own relationship with God. It is this writer's supposition that relationship with God is effectively developed first by knowing about God and the persons of the Trinity in their own terms, and then by knowing about God

in the context of his relationship with man through the incarnation. As Trigg notes in *Origen: The Bible and Philosophy in the Third-century Church*, "Origen . . . did not consider God's activity in the Incarnation an end in itself but the means to bring us to the knowledge of God."<sup>2</sup> For this balance, these particular works of Origen were chosen, and in this sequence, both this dissertation and the *De Principiis* and the *Contra Celsum* develop. When pertinent theories and comments of theologians are cited, it should be understood that they may be cited out of their original context and purpose, in order to include them in the context of this dissertation.

This dissertation, therefore, is not just meant to address, counter, or condone Origen's doctrines and beliefs on God, but to examine their application in the believer's life as well. Each description of God, whether in general terms, in terms of the individuality in the Trinity, or in terms of the incarnation is necessary to offer man a complete picture of God. From man's knowledge of the existence of God to his intimate relationship with the persons of the Trinity and the incarnate Christ, Origen discusses the attributes and the person of God and the infinite possibilities for man in relationship with God by implication and by direct statement in the *De Principiis* and *Contra Celsum*. Before the substance of Origen's statements about God can be evaluated in a practical light for man's benefit, it must be examined in systematic, theoretical terms. What Origen says about God, the Trinity,

and the Incarnation in specific passages will be addressed in a commentary fashion as the respective texts themselves develop. Origen's juxtaposition of specific persons and specific functions of the Trinity will also be noted. These statements are hopefully presented in a way that allows the believer to apply them in his life, for the merit of a doctrinal system or standard for belief lies in its accuracy, vision, effectiveness, and practical, realistic value.

In the interest of the pertinent topics, several chapters in the *De Principiis* and the entirety of the *Contra Celsum* contain a somewhat superimposed although sequential organization, an interpretive adaption, and an external structure, sometimes tangent to Origen's actual development which includes other topics. Trigg admits that Origen's

works are often repetitive, diffuse, and stylistically undistinguished. . . . [However, we] are constantly aware in reading Origen of the presence of a powerful and fascinating mind shaping and transforming all with which it deals. We always know, even in tedious passages . . . that Origen is up to something, and the desire to discover what it is and how he will pull it off rivets our attention.<sup>3</sup>

In addition, needlessly repetitive sections or isolated remarks which do not alter or add to Origen's views may be omitted in the interest of space. For example, the first three chapters in Book 4 of the *De Principiis* which summarize Origen's views of inspiration are also integrated in the *Contra Celsum*. Moreover, it must be remembered that the combination of these two works does not contain the entirety of what Origen discussed on these topics.

Part One

The *De Principiis*

## Introduction

Neither the *De Principiis* nor the *Contra Celsum* are specifically meant to address the relationship between God and man. The *De Principiis*, which Origen probably wrote in 229, "presents a mature theological vision that he never altered significantly."<sup>1</sup> This work in part consists of a systematic doctrinal discussion of God, the Trinity, and the incarnation. When it addresses the subject of man, it does so systematically and objectively; it does not describe the personal relationship which is meant to be reciprocal between God and man. Although this work is intentionally theoretical, the reader can develop the practical conclusions and personal applications which Origen occasionally introduces. For the most part, however, Origen expands simple doctrinal statements established in Scripture into his own theoretical system. As he progresses more deeply into abstraction and speculation, he increasingly risks drawing false conclusions. From the plainest Biblical statements, to his own theories on questions not specifically answered in Scripture, even to passages of Scripture which themselves are challenging, Origen addresses knowledge which has commonly been accepted or dismissed on faith, with scrutiny and with vigor. In "Actualité d'Origène", Crouzel appreciates the importance of the continual development of theology and the secular, historical influences on the truly innovative theologian. He says:

Le . . . point qui sera examiné concerne la recherche théologique . . . qui ne se contente pas de répéter les enseignements du passé, mais qui, s'insérant dans <<la tradition>>, conçue comme un courant ou un développement selon les conceptions, . . . s'efforce de répondre aux problèmes de son époque et d'assimiler, en pleine fidélité au message du Christ, les éléments positifs qui proviennent de la culture profane du temps. Là aussi Origène peut être pour nous un modèle.<sup>2</sup>

Not in unbelief in the revelation and revelatory nature of God, Origen is motivated to purify and strengthen his beliefs with reason and, in so doing, reveals the levels and the depth of his own relationship with God, with the persons of the Trinity, and with the incarnate Christ. For knowledge nourishes faith, and faith invigorates thinking. In "Recherche et Tradition chez les Pères du II<sup>e</sup> et du III<sup>e</sup> siècles", Daniélou remarks on the importance of distinguishing dogma from speculation when evaluating Origen's writings. He says that Origen

introduit ainsi une nouvelle signification de la *ζήτησις*. Il détermine un domaine nouveau qui est celui des *quaestiones disputatae*. Le problème qui va se poser est celui de la relation de ces *ζητήματα* avec les *δόγματα*. C'est le problème de la relation entre le théologique et le dogmatique.<sup>3</sup>

As the *De Principiis* unfolds, so does the progression in Origen's thinking. He advances from a general concept of God, as originally established in Scripture, to the Trinity and the incarnation, and relates these concepts to each other and, on occasion, to man. In *Patrology*, Quasten cautions readers: "We cannot be surprised that a pioneer attempt had its shortcomings in form as well as in content.

It suffers from repetitions and a lack of coordination."<sup>4</sup>

## Chapter 1

### Origen's Recognition of God as the Source of Truth and Specification of God as Both One and Three

#### The Importance of Motive and Adherence to the Bible in the Search for Truth

Given that the study of theology requires a higher authority than man, Origen's acknowledgement of the authority of both the written Word and the living Word establishes his orthodox position on God as the source of truth. In *Origen's Doctrine of Tradition*, Hanson emphasizes Origen's consistent adherence to the authority of Scripture, when he says:

The most cogent argument for the view that Origen believed that Scripture was the sole source of doctrine for himself or for any other Christian is that (unlike Clement) he never quotes any other source as his authority for doctrine, and usually assumes without question that in any discussion the deciding factor is the evidence of the Bible."<sup>1</sup>

According to Wiles in *The Cambridge History of the Bible*, Origen primarily used the Septuagint as his text for the Old Testament, but he did not deny the validity of other versions, including those used by Jews.<sup>2</sup> Regarding Origen's text of the New Testament, Wiles says:

Clearly there are books to be rejected, but he does not feel any need for the line between the two to be a rigid and inflexible one. He is at his firmest with the gospels. The four already stood out firmly in tradition. . . . The epistles do not rank in his eyes as on precisely the same level as the gospels. . . . This

leads Origen to speak of them as at a slightly lower level of inspiration than the gospels. But it is not a distinction which reveals itself in the way he treats them in practice.<sup>3</sup>

In the Preface to the *De Principiis*, Origen acknowledges divine authority over and authorship of truth, over the Scriptures as at least the partial verbalization of truth, and over his interpretation of them.<sup>4</sup> He implies that the logic of his arguments which follow is not so much a reflection of his own perspicacity but, more than this, of a genuine, whole-hearted desire for truth. Such a desire, when subject to divine authority and in recognition of divine omniscience, God rewards by imparting truth and revealing himself through both the written Word and the function of the Holy Spirit. Indeed in humility and teachability, Origen sets forth the sources for his own spiritual authority and wisdom in their respective ranks: Christ as the one and only source for truth, and the apostles who recorded truths in Scripture. He adds that only real "lovers of wisdom" will understand "the grounds of statements" in Scripture.<sup>5</sup> As his explanations of "the grounds of statements" unfold, specifically on the Trinity, so in fact does his understanding of divine authority over the revelation of truth, and consequently of the person and aspects of God in teaching him.

#### Apostolic Tradition in Origen's Rule of Faith and Origen's Speculation Within That Tradition

By acknowledging and respecting God as a teacher,

Origen hopes to clarify doctrines which the apostles established in Scripture, the interpretations over which many Christians disagree. Some of these doctrines, he says, have been expounded "in the plainest terms", but the apostles left "the grounds of their statements . . . to be investigated by such as should merit the higher gifts of the Spirit and in particular by such as should afterwards receive through the Holy Spirit himself the graces of language, wisdom, and knowledge."<sup>6</sup> In "Origen and the *Regulae Fidei*", Outler explains:

Very significant is the care with which Origen points out the places where, on the one hand, the tradition was clear and definite, and where, on the other hand, he felt that there were areas of legitimate speculation which might serve to clarify and extend the meaning of the items of the rule.<sup>7</sup>

Continuing his discussion on the doctrines established by the apostles, Origen explains that the apostles did not clarify all doctrines found in Scripture:

There were other doctrines, however, about which the apostles simply said that things were so, keeping silence as to the how or why; their intention undoubtedly being to supply the more diligent of those who came after them, such as should prove to be lovers of wisdom, with an exercise on which to display the fruit of their ability.<sup>8</sup>

Once again Origen emphasizes the importance of being a true lover of wisdom in order to acquire wisdom. Bigg emphasizes, however, that Origen "had the strongest persuasion that all his speculations lay within . . . [the] norm" of what the Apostles taught.<sup>9</sup> Hanson emphasizes the Biblical foundation on which Origen based his ideas when he

says: "In Origen there is no evidence for a source of doctrine independent of the Bible."<sup>10</sup> God honours the pure desire for truth by imparting truth and wisdom to the eager recipient. The greater a person's desire for truth, the deeper the truths and their interpretations God reveals to him. In *Origen and Greek Patristic Theology*, Fairweather echoes Origen when he says: "The true goal of humanity is union with God; but this can be reached only by a gradual process of enlightenment and purification."<sup>11</sup> Origen here recognizes that he is about to delve into the concepts which Scripture has veiled. He believes that God will honour his passion to know these veiled truths and reveal them to him. It is perhaps ironic that the partial activity of the Trinity, specifically the revelatory function of the Spirit, is necessary to learn about the Trinity.

Of the doctrines that the apostles taught in "the plainest terms", "the necessary ones" are the following three, Origen says: "that God is one, who created and set in order all things, and who, when nothing existed, caused the universe to be"; that "Christ Jesus, he who came to earth, was begotten of the Father before every created thing"; and "that the Holy Spirit is united in honour and dignity with the Father and the Son".<sup>12</sup> These doctrines constitute the fundamental principles of Christianity and contain the format of a rule of faith. Outler describes the historical context of the rule of faith and the theological stability it provided. He says:

In the second century there began to appear, in

many Christian writings, short summaries of belief, objectively stated, which were called variously 'the canon of truth,' 'the preaching of the church,' *regulae fidei*, etc. These were distillations, so to say, of the *paradosis*, that complex of authoritative teaching which had been handed down in the church by the apostles and their successors. Such summaries tended not only to set the bounds of theological speculation, but also to lay the foundation for the eventual elaboration of Christian dogma in the ecumenical creeds. . . . [T]hey . . . served to distinguish Catholic doctrine from all heresy.<sup>13</sup>

Outler continues describing the *paradosis*, but in terms of the contrast between the church in the East and the West.

He says:

Comparison of types yields the impression that, up to this time, at least, the *paradosis* was more flexible and less stereotyped in the East than in the West. It would be only natural, therefore, to expect to find in Origen, the most typical of the Greek fathers, a much less rigid and variable treatment of the tradition than in Irenaeus or Tertullian.<sup>14</sup>

Perhaps the nuances of these doctrines the apostles did not teach in "the plainest terms", and the bulk of the *De Principiis* delves into and develops these nuances. It is also important to note that Origen has set out to explain "necessary" doctrines, as both the Latin and Greek (*Περὶ Ἀρχῶν*) titles of this work attest to. It so happens that these doctrines include the individuals of the Trinity. Origen has not set out to discourse on the Trinity, but on the most essential doctrines, of which the Trinity is integral and which the apostles, whose judgment Origen does not challenge, have labelled as such under the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Out of respect for the apostles' divinely

designated authority in writing Scripture which is as perfect and flawless as God himself, Origen does not challenge the doctrines which they have labelled "necessary" as necessary. He does not challenge the content, incomplete and veiled or not, of these doctrines either. Outler continues:

It is too much to say that Origen recast the rule of faith. Rather he seems to have attempted deliberately to sum up all the doctrinal points of which there was general agreement in the church. To these he adds his own prime assumption of moral freedom. . . . He was moving from faith to philosophy, and as a part of that process he was undertaking to transform statements born out of religious experience, affirmations suited to moments of worship, into extremely comprehensive and general conclusions about God, the world, and man. It is evident that in so doing he clearly overreached Catholic orthodoxy, but it is equally evident that he was not trying to cram philosophy into the Procrustean bed of an unphilosophical religious tradition. To Origen, the consensus of the belief of the church, based on the Scriptures and the oral tradition, was of paramount importance; his obvious intention was to use it everywhere as a norm for his teaching. . . .<sup>15</sup>

Whether or not Origen "clearly overreached Catholic orthodoxy" is certainly open to debate, but his application of specific philosophical ideas, principles, and approaches to the topics contained in his rule of faith is obvious. Origen definitely did not lose sight of his theological purpose, for Outler concludes:

. . . in Origen's thought the faith of the church holds a primary place; it is *sine quâ non* to the wider development of theological speculation, and is the beginning of that upward movement of the rational

soul which, in its completion, brings one to that 'wisdom among the perfect,' characteristic of full salvation. His was a bold and original mind, but as far as his relation to the doctrinal norms of the church of his day is concerned, he was *ἄνηρ ἐκκλησιαστικός*.<sup>16</sup>

## The Importance of Language in Distinguishing God from Man

Discovering and assimilating truths which are veiled within truths requires a discussion of the apostles' vocabulary. Certainly the most specific analysis of any author's work, including these "necessary" doctrines on which Origen expounds, requires an analysis of the author's language. The actual words an author uses, in contrast with the words he does not use, never become so relevant and an analysis of them never so effectual than when the subject is God. For language readily uses metaphor, whether obvious or implied. When it is difficult to find human equivalents in personality or action to elucidate the subject under discussion, a detailed analysis of language becomes even more important. The closest equivalent to God is man, because man is made in the image of God. The more closely one examines human attributes and personality traits equivalent to God's, the less the human soul seems like the divine soul, because the human soul, which often reveals its limitations overtly, simply cannot compare with the divine being. Certainly a specific parallel between God and man reveals more about God's nature than a general parallel. A word analyzed often reveals more than a phrase analyzed, and the real distinction between synonyms and between

synonymous phrases matters.

## A Comparison of Origen's Language with the Apostles' Language

Understanding Origen's language and terminology regarding the Trinity requires understanding the apostles' language and terminology and Origen's interpretation of it. When Origen says that the apostles laid down the doctrine of the Trinity in "the plainest terms", he implies that their descriptions were clear in distinguishing what they did not veil regarding the persons of God and their natures. One may initially suppose that his distinction between the apostles' or his own fine lines of meaning is not precise enough because of the primitive state of knowledge which existed during Origen's age in contrast with the present age, not to mention the scientific scrutiny which has become so refined in modern times. Although a degree of over-generality and ambiguity may be expected from a church father, primitiveness certainly does not describe Origen's vision; naiveté does not abound in the acutely perceptive mind. As Origen's perspective unfolds, the reader becomes progressively aware of the nuances of the Trinity which the author seeks to unravel in the most lucid and complete manner. Origen sometimes does not explain his own language as much as he explains the teachings of the apostles. As a result, it becomes the job of the analyst to ascertain the meaning of both.

That the apostles used their own personalities, styles of

writing, even language, does not detract from God as the source of truth, as the source of the truth which they recorded, or equally as perfect as his written Word.

### An Analysis of Origen's Language in His Introductory Remarks on the Trinity

While the apostles harmoniously use the terms of Father, Son, and Spirit to describe the persons of the Trinity, Origen, not the apostles, uses the term "necessary doctrines (*quaecumque necessaria*)". He concludes that the reality of the persons and the nomenclature of the Father, Son, and Spirit coincides with the harmonious descriptions of these three persons in Scripture, which Origen has summarized in his own words and labelled as necessary.

A singular beauty in Origen's style is no better exemplified than in his wording of these doctrines as necessary. His wording is not contradictory, and it confirms the dichotomies that each person of the Trinity possesses in person and function, which must be reconciled. In introducing these distinctions, Origen may appear vague. He may seem to interchange names and functional names haphazardly as his argument develops. It becomes clear, however, that while his introduction to the concept of a person possessing several functions, with one function perhaps standing out, is general and incomplete, Origen becomes increasingly specific.

#### Origen's Description of the Father

When he describes the persons of the Trinity as the "necessary" doctrines, he lists them as "God", "Christ Jesus", and "the Holy Spirit". He does not list the Father as the Father, but as God. By contrast, he uses the parallel designations of "Christ Jesus" and "the Holy Spirit", which plainly distinguish two persons of the Trinity. Christ Jesus and the Holy Spirit are surely God, yet Origen distinguishes them by naming them according to their functional and personal names.

The Father, however, he calls God. Perhaps "Father" is more functional, specific, and personal than "God". By designating the Father as God, Origen emphasizes the divinity of the Father rather than the divinity of the Son and the Spirit. Choosing a less personal and less specific title for the Father, he adds to the abstract nature of this discussion. It is fair to say, though, that there are occasions, because of the authority wielded, for example, when one person of the Trinity may appear to be "more" God than another, at least from man's perspective. The Father as the originator of the plan often appears in this role as an authority figure, not only over creation but over the Son and the Spirit as well.

It can be argued that Origen does not consciously, deliberately allude to such a fine distinction; it is possible that the human mind in the early centuries of Christianity was not so oriented to detail. Certainly the academic, systematic, categorical, and scientifically organized explanation of Scripture was in an embryonic stage. Origen,

however, advanced the development of this scrupulous examination of Scripture. As the *De Principiis* continues, it should become clear that the doctrinal nuances which he does not address in the Preface, he alludes to and often specifically addresses in later chapters of the book. It should become clear that the depth of Origen's vision did include a thirst for God in detail, as Origen implies in his opening remarks in the Preface.

To say that in his opening remarks on doctrines which the apostles considered necessary to Christianity, Origen intended for his readers to consider the Father "more divine" than the Son and the Holy Spirit, is not necessarily true. That the distinction exists apart from Origen's intentions is plausible, however. God has not only been distinguished as three persons, but only two of these persons have been identified by name, while the third is simply identified as God. Whether Origen is motivated to emphasize the Father's divinity or to identify the general and abstract concept of God as possessing specific functions and, therefore, as personal, is open to question. Specifying one of those persons as God without specifying the other two persons as God in the same context can be misleading. One may still learn, however. One may consider that it is natural to specify one of the three persons of the Trinity as God; one may select one person of the Trinity to fulfil his impression of God. It is not only doctrinal to think in terms of the oneness of God and a God who is personal, but it is also natural to think in terms of one God, even though intellectually the believer knows that there are

three persons who constitute God.

### The Psychological Explanation for Perceiving God as One Person

The New Testament speaks of God loving man. Just as man naturally associates maximum human love and the most personal of relationships with one person, so man associates maximum divine love with one God, not with three Gods. There is a unique closeness the believer possesses with each person of the Trinity, and this intimacy occurs with the Father, Son, and Spirit individually, not collectively. The perception of a collective God coincides with harmonizing the unity and diversity in his function toward man. The collective description of God in terms of the Trinity may seem to describe a machine which is always perfectly coordinated in purpose and in function. The perfect reliability of the Trinity in its loving, just, and faithful function toward man is not impersonally motivated, however, and should not be perceived impersonally.

While the Old Testament obviously influences Origen's association of God as the Father, such a portrayal of God is perhaps also linked to the perception of the human father. In theory and often in practice, the human father is identified with authority and as a guardian whose actions are ideally motivated by faithful and responsible love. There exists a parallel between the power of his love and the power of his actions. In theory and often in practice,

the human son is identified as one who should obey his father's wishes and yield to his father's authority, for his father has obviously played an essential role in his life and in his existence.

Origen's association of God with one person in the Trinity, rather than three, emphasizes the oneness of God over the threeness of God. Origen ranks unity over diversity in this passage. The divine person he chooses to embody and to exemplify the main authority, and thus uphold unity, emphasizes strength and protection which should comfort man. Man derives a greater feeling of security from one leader, from one authority than from three, who act as messengers to execute the overriding divine will of the, and thus one, divine authority.

#### The Psychology of Perceiving God Specifically, Individually, and as a Trinity

Origen alludes to the benefit of the diversity of God by specifying God as three persons, each with functions beneficial to man and responsible for the existence of the universe. Although Origen does not develop his argument psychologically, a psychological approach can help explain his frequent association of God with the Father and his various portrayals of the Son and the Spirit, for Origen's explanations may only portray one or several aspects of them without giving the total picture. The one God, or "God [who] is one", Origen initially describes as the person "who created and set in order all things and who, when nothing

existed, caused the universe to be."<sup>17</sup> In describing the authority and the general effect of this one God, Origen also appears to describe the domain of the Father. Christians think of God the Father as a father on two personal levels: of the Son and of themselves. Christians also think of the Father on an impersonal or general level: as the creator of the universe, including man. Were it not for man's own existence, which the Father planned, man would obviously not need a savior and a comforter, who are the Son and the Spirit. Even in his pre-Christian days, if he investigates the source of his being, the cause for his existence, and the hope for happiness on earth, man senses this divine sovereignty. He senses it belongs to one person, not three, and he realizes the possibility for a more personal relationship between this person and himself, however simplistic his ideas and hopes may be.

Even for those people who never become Christians, there exists a relationship between them and the Father, whether or not they acknowledge that relationship. God created them. He created them in his image. The human soul is a reflection of the divine being, only without perfection. Thus man is man and is not God. The extent to which this innate relationship is investigated is proportionate to the extent to which man recognizes God as the power which created him. The same power which created him also sustains him in his life. This power is divided into separate functions in which the Father, Son, and Spirit individually and collectively participate with

man. Before man consciously interacts with the three, however, he interacts with one of these three, namely the Father who created him. The Father initiates the sequence of the relationships between man and God. The relationships of the Son and the Holy Spirit with man follow. The diversity of God becomes increasingly real in the life of the Christian as man's knowledge of the general concept of God and his relationship with each person of the Trinity deepens. The initial relationship with the Father and the oneness of God represented in that relationship complements the subsequent relationships with the Son and the Spirit and thus shows the diversity of the Trinity. Man's relationships with the Son and the Spirit are no deeper, no more intimate than his relationship with the Father. The depth he experiences with the persons of the Trinity individually coincides with the harmony he perceives in their collective function, even in their oneness.

### Origen's Description of the Son

Having specified the Father as a person of the Trinity, Origen next specifies the Son, whom he calls "Christ Jesus", as a person of the Trinity. Origen describes him as one "who came to earth, [and] was begotten of the Father before every created thing."<sup>18</sup> Jerome, however, claims that this passage actually says that "nothing is uncreated except God the Father alone".<sup>19</sup> The clarity of this version combines with the text in general to characterize the Son as neither

uncreated as the Father is, nor created as man is. It is sensible and orthodox that Origen distinguishes the Son from man and other created beings. Origen's orthodoxy is called into question, however, when he ranks deity over deity, that is, when he does not ascribe uncreatedness to both the Father and the Son. One may deduce that the Father and the Son are not equally infinite and equally eternal. In this context, Origen does not mention the incarnation and, as a result, does not compare the humanity of Christ with the humanity of all other human beings. Thus while Origen does not define "begotten", "created", and "uncreated", he aligns "uncreated" with the Father's deity and "begotten" with the Son's deity, both of which are contrasted with "every created thing". He makes a fundamental distinction between the three categories and establishes the following hierarchy: that Christ is under the authority of God, who is, by implication, the Father who begot him; and that created things, including man, are subordinate to the Son in this hierarchy.

### Origen's Description of the Holy Spirit

When Origen describes the Holy Spirit, he once again uses the vocabulary of the model of the threeness of God in order to specify the Holy Spirit by name. He discusses the Holy Spirit as the Holy Spirit, just as he has discussed the Son as the Son. In fact, he ranks the Spirit equally with the Father and the Son, for the three are "united in honour and dignity (*Tum deinde honore ac dignitate patri ac filio*

*sociatum tradiderunt spiritum sanctum*). . . ."<sup>20</sup> Such a statement implies three realities: that important as authority is (such as in creation), the authority of the Father does not, by contrast to the lack of the same exercise of authority in the Spirit, detract either superficially or really from the divinity of the Spirit; that by absence of any concrete explanation, there is no simple, straightforward human analogy for the Spirit which helps to explain both person and function in relation especially to man; and that this honour and dignity, not authority or some other position or attribute perceived by man, although undeveloped and undefined by Origen at present, confirm divinity. God is what he is, to paraphrase the line from the episode of Moses and the burning bush, and his function with man or his appearance in revealing himself to man does not produce, validate, or create the divinity of any person of the Trinity. Divine revelation only verifies divinity; God alone reveals himself. The divinity of God and the reality of it are totally independent of his creation of man or man's perception of him. In short, God to be God does not always have to appear as God.

### The Need for Various Emphases in Describing the Trinity

Descriptions of any person of the Trinity or of God in general may vary, depending on which aspect of God is being emphasized. For example, Origen may discuss the Father in

terms of his function toward man. He may discuss the Son in terms of his interaction with the Father and the Spirit. Or he may discuss the Spirit in terms of his own personal attributes which qualify him as a distinct person who is individually and completely God. To gain a thorough understanding of God, however, one must understand God and the persons of the Trinity in terms of who each is personally and individually; who each is as similar to and distinct from the other persons of the Trinity; and who each is in a relationship with man.

Origen's initial description of the Father in terms of God emphasizes the Father's relationship with the creature, especially with man. While his description does not emphasize the love and the grace which motivate the Father to act sovereignly, this description of the Father as God emphasizes the actions of God which attest to his sovereignty and to his omnipotence. Man owes his existence to God, and the common man thinks in terms of owing his existence to God, not to the Father. The Father, who is the source of life of all creatures and the planner of all creation, is the specific person of the Trinity who fulfills these functions. The incarnate Son is the person of the Trinity who acts as a mediator between any person of the Trinity and man. Whether the specific person of the Trinity happens to be the Father, the Holy Spirit, or the deity of the Son, God cannot have a relationship with man apart from the function of the incarnate Son as mediator. In his initial description of the Son, Origen suggests that this person of the Trinity is not as eternal or infinitely independent in his

own existence as the Father, yet Origen does not directly deny the Son's deity. Fairweather, however, understands Origen's portrayal of the Son in terms of his distinction from the Father, not his distinction from divinity. He says: "Of most crucial importance was the question as to the distinct personality of the Son. What Origen and the theologians of his age were chiefly concerned to show was, that while Jesus is God He is nevertheless not the Father."<sup>21</sup>

#### The Question of Origen's Orthodoxy in His Initial Remarks on the Son

Without specifying the importance of the incarnation, without supplying the details of the interaction of the Son's deity and humanity during the incarnation, and without comparing the Son, incarnate and not incarnate, Origen's orthodoxy is called into question by his own general remarks that seem to place the person of the Son, rather than his function, as mediator between God and man. Implicit in the Holy Spirit's unity or oneness in honour and dignity with the Father and the Son in their attributes is the ascription of perfect deity to the Son. In contrast to his description of the Son which detracts from deity, emphasizes humanity, and does not distinguish between the deity and the humanity of Christ, Origen's description of the Spirit seems to confirm the perfect divinity of both the Son and the Spirit along with the Father.<sup>22</sup>

The question of orthodoxy cannot be resolved, however, until Origen's position on the relevant details is examined. While Origen has specified the Father as creator and has alluded to the Son as mediator, Origen here does not speak of the Holy Spirit's function as comforter, as one example of his functions, but rather of the person of the Spirit which completely qualifies him as God. Thus Origen's descriptions of the persons of the Trinity in the Preface are not complete, and a thorough examination of the logic, the accuracy, and the orthodoxy of his beliefs will unfold as the *De Principiis* continues.

## Chapter 2

### The Versions of the *De Principiis*

#### The Accuracy of the Text and the Question of Orthodoxy

Having explained and, if necessary, justified Origen's designation of the Father as God and assertion that only the Father is uncreated, one should consider briefly the major, basic textual problems with the *De Principiis*. There is not one, but several versions of this work, most of which are incomplete. Only a small portion of the original exists, principally and accurately preserved in the *Philocalia* and in the treatise of the Emperor Justinian to the Patriarch Mennas of Constantinople. In contrast to this original Greek version, several other versions remain. These versions from various sources not only supply the content missing from the few fragments and occasional passages of the original, but also serve an interpretive purpose. The major, fundamental problem with the principal Latin translation by Rufinus, however, is that he admittedly and significantly altered portions of the original text. He admitted to changing passages which could be construed as heretical to orthodox. An admirer and defender of Origen, Rufinus wished to circumvent allegations of heresy against Origen.<sup>1</sup>

The debate over the accuracy of Rufinus' translation, among other versions, has brought opposite conclusions on the part of scholars. These conclusions extend from criticism of virtually complete faithlessness, including

omissions and major changes to the original, especially on matters of questionable orthodoxy, to favorable consideration, even praise, of what other scholars consider to be a non-literal translation of literary accomplishment in light of a culturally, temporally, and thus theologically different audience from the original recipients, and without sacrificing or altering the original content. De Faye represents the negative, critical view of translations, particularly Rufinus'. He says in *Origen and His Work*:

Rufinus has left us a version of the *De Principiis*. Serious criticism has proved, with growing evidence, that these Latin versions are not to be trusted. The translators were afraid of offending their readers in the West if they retained in their text certain bold statements of Origen. . . . Speaking generally, they modified the original text. It frequently happened that they either translated only a part of the original, or intercalated mitigating phrases. Jerome was fond of enhancing the somewhat colourless style of Origen with a few literary embellishments. In short, the translators of the fourth century showed not the slightest scruples in treating the text with the utmost freedom. . . . No one denies that he [Rufinus] took great liberties with the text he translated.<sup>2</sup>

De Faye continues:

We need only compare the quotations of Justinian and the extracts from Jerome's translation with the version of Rufinus to see that the latter is anything but faithful. . . . Not only has Rufinus . . . knowingly distorted the original, for the purpose of eliminating all that was too audacious in the doctrine, but very often he clearly does not understand the author's meaning. . . . He [Rufinus] is Latin and belongs to the West; Origen is Greek and belongs to the East. . . . This explains why, even in passages which have nothing to do with doctrine, Rufinus so often failed to catch the thought of Origen, with all its shades of meaning.<sup>3</sup>

Daly is representative of those who basically do not find fault with Rufinus' translation. In "Origen Studies", Daly gives his reason from

the extensive Greek fragments of the *Commentary on Romans* found at Taura. This affords proof . . . that Rufinus' much maligned Latin translation, except for occasional incomprehension of Origen and some updating of Trinitarian terminology, is actually a fairly accurate summary of Origen's thought.<sup>4</sup>

In his article, "The Greek and Latin of the Discussion on Free Will in the *De Principiis*, Book III", Rist examines the problem in more detail and offers a balanced and thorough solution. He says:

Rufinus himself, in his preface, admitted that he had removed a number of offensive passages and in some cases had substituted other phrases drawn from the other works of Origen: his justification was that Origen's texts had been contaminated by heretics. As a result the question that has arisen is whether these techniques . . . vitiate his translation as a whole or whether we can readily identify his changes and be satisfied with his translation of the remaining parts of the text.<sup>5</sup>

Rist continues:

There are two ways of approaching the general problem of Rufinus' reliability. We could look at passages in which there is very strong reason to believe that Rufinus might be concerned to protect Origen from suspicion of heresy, and in which he might therefore be inclined to tamper with the text. In other words we could look at those texts in which Rufinus would be very much aware of his own proceedings and in which <<softenings>> of over bold Origenist theses would be clearly deliberate. Or again we could look at passages in which Rufinus would not be concerned with fears of heterodoxy and in which we might therefore hope to catch him off his guard.<sup>6</sup>

Rist next emphasizes the effect of Rufinus' knowledge of a Latin audience on his style and method of translating, in contrast to Origen's Greek audience:

Rufinus is a Latin, translating Origen's Greek, the product of a Greek-speaking, philosophically-oriented society, into Latin for the benefit of people for whom a philosophical tradition is rather remote. . . . But Rufinus has done more than produce a word for word version of Origen; he has tried to show what Origen would have written, and the way he would have written, if his original language had been Latin rather than Greek. In other words Rufinus is not trying to produce a crib for Latin speakers, but to create a work of art in Latin as he imagined Origen would have written it. This means that the stylistic features of Latin have to replace those of Greek, and where the Greek is non-rhetorical, but in the different tradition of philosophical debate, the Western mode has to replace the plainer original. Such a process will entail no *necessary* changes in creed or theory, but a wider use of *exempla*, probably including contemporary *exempla*, and a tendency to moralizing.<sup>7</sup>

He summarizes: "Rufinus . . . is translating Origen for an audience with its Christian prejudices developed by the habit of authority -- a different world from that of Origen."<sup>8</sup> Rist believes that Jerome's translation suffered from "intent hostile to Origen" and that Rufinus' unreliability as a translator "unless otherwise proven -- is as likely to derive from other factors as from a desire to conceal Origen's doctrinal unorthodoxy."<sup>9</sup> Rist also maintains that "Rufinus' treatment of glaringly objectionable material cannot sensibly be taken as an index of his general accuracy as a translator of Origen."<sup>10</sup> Rist concludes: "Surely that apart from the specific passages of

Origen's text which have come down to us obelized as objectionable we can usually accept Rufinus as approximately satisfactory authority for the bare bones of what Origen had to say, if not for his intention or intellectual context."<sup>11</sup> Butterworth concurs: ". . . it would be folly to deny that, for all the good intentions of Rufinus, we lose much when we turn to his version. . . ." <sup>12</sup>

Assuming for the sake of argument that Rufinus' translation is inaccurate in retaining Origen's actual language and thought in detail and precision, his translation is still beneficial, for it preserves the direction of Origen's thought and the skeleton of the work itself. While the specific tone, style, and subtlety of Origen himself have been masked or in places lost, the subjects he addresses have remained in Rufinus' version as have the gists of his arguments. The spectrum from paraphrase to inaccuracy depends on the liberties Rufinus took with the original text. The details and conclusions of Origen's arguments, as preserved in Rufinus' Latin translation, are only as accurate as Rufinus was faithful to the original text in both letter and spirit.

However little or however much Rufinus deviated from Origen's actual content, the content is deep and often profound. The arguments and the analogies, examples, and explanations which comprise the arguments are both astute and detailed. When the original is not extant against which to measure another version for accuracy, one can learn from the available text. Whether the text is the original, a direct

quotation from the original, an exact translation, an interpretive translation, or none of these but a change, one still learns about the workings and the nuances of the Trinity. When one does possess the original against which to measure another recording, one learns on two levels. First, one begins to grasp preserver's trends in thought in contrast to Origen's, so that possibly when the Greek does not remain, one can theorize what it said. Second, one can view preserver's text in an interpretive light. Stylistically, of course, one sees the trends and pattern of thinking in Origen himself when the original does exist. Thus both style and content contribute to an analysis of a text other than the original. A text of this category, then, proves to be not just a loose rendering possessing a vague, misleading mirror of the original, but rather a valuable tool to gain anywhere from the gist to the precise content of Origen's arguments.

#### The Accuracy of the Text in Light of Vocabulary and the Use of Language

The accuracy of a text is measured by its content, and the vocabulary, style, and sentence structure a writer uses to express his thought shape the content. One or two words may determine a text's accuracy, even orthodoxy. The presence of two versions of the same text creates a greater range of interpretations, complicates the true meaning, or clarifies an accurate interpretation, depending on the faithfulness to the original text of the versions themselves.

Substituting synonymous words and phrases in one version may change the emphasis, even meaning, of a passage in another version. The recurrence of the same words from version to version or from passage to passage in the same version may indicate the original text. Recognizing consistency of thought from context to context and harmonizing conflicting emphases provide the necessary scrutiny to know the real Origen and discern his actual beliefs and questions.

A specific examination of language helps to reveal when the Latin and Greek versions reflect the original text of the *De Principiis*, and when each or both differ from the original. When these versions agree, one may assume that translations have preserved the original, or nearly so. When they disagree, it is obvious that both cannot preserve the original. One of the two versions may or may not. Given Rufinus' admission to adapting and changing the original to avoid criticisms of heresy against Origen and the high reputation of Jerome, Justinian, Photius, and others as scholars and theologians, the accuracy of these versions of Jerome, Justinian, and Photius can be little doubted. An ardent admirer of Origen, Rufinus, for example, would have been interested in preserving the direction of Origen's thought; that is, the objectives of Origen's theology which endeared Origen so much to him. As a result, Rufinus, for example, attempted to restate Origen's language appearing less heretical while simultaneously preserving the core of Origen's doctrine. Jerome, on the other hand, while at one time an ardent admirer of Origen, later on and prior to the

time of his translation, became an enemy, determined to emphasize passages questionable in their orthodoxy.

### One Example in Discerning the Accuracy of the Text

Keeping in mind that Rufinus' Latin version may preserve Origen's intent and that the original Greek version preserves his language, one should examine Origen's language in each version, his vocabulary when he explains the doctrines which he says the apostles explained "in the plainest terms". The passage which explains these doctrines only remains in Rufinus' version. While the entirety of the Greek version has not survived, Jerome's criticism of Origen's statements on these doctrines has survived, accompanied by an excerpt from Jerome's version of the text. While Rufinus' version affirms the subjects of these doctrines to be the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and generally describes the person and function of Christ Jerome quotes Origen as saying, "Christ was not begotten the Son of God, but made such."<sup>13</sup> Butterworth comments:

Rufinus . . . modified this statement. It is probable, however, that *γενετόν* and *γεννητόν* were not very clearly distinguished in Origen's time. Origen taught that the Son and Holy Spirit were created but he thought the alternative to this was to assert that they were unbegotten, which was true of the Father alone.<sup>14</sup>

Davies agrees: "Origen's theological task was further complicated by the lack of an exact terminology with an accompanying failure to distinguish between derivation and creation. So he could speak of the Word as both *agenetos*

and *genetos* and of the Spirit as *ageneton* and *geneton*. . . ."15 Bigg summarizes: ". . . it is affirmed that the 'praedicatio apostolica' does not decide of the Spirit 'utrum natus an innatus'. Jerome has 'utrum factus an infectus'. Apparently Rufinus read γεννητὸς ἢ ἀγέννητος, Jerome γενητὸς ἢ ἀγέννητος. The words are constantly interchanged in MSS."16

The motive behind Rufinus' change of the original seems to be to prevent any charges of unorthodoxy, for the quotation from Jerome's text detracts from the co-eternity and co-equality of the Father, Son, and Spirit at best. While Rufinus says that the Son "was begotten of the Father", Jerome says that the Son "was made". This classic difference between what the original Greek actually said, if one assumes that Jerome's translation is accurate, and what Rufinus' translation says, seems to contribute wholeheartedly to the premise that Rufinus cannot be trusted to be consistently accurate. Although he has obviously violated the letter of Origen's thought, his diametric change has not necessarily violated the spirit. While the principle of the spirit behind Origen's thought, that is, his pattern of thinking, can only be suggested at this early stage of analysis of his writing, it should prove consistent. Origen's use of language was not thoroughly precise. To demand precision from him not only shows Rufinus frequently and blatantly incorrect, but also ascribes blatant contradiction in Origen. As will be seen, Origen may describe one person of the Trinity in one way, in one context, and in another context appear to contradict

himself in describing the personal qualities or functions of the same person of the Trinity. Out of context and lack of consideration of Origen's selective and unthorough precision in language, one may see contradiction whether in the original Greek, in Rufinus' translation, in Jerome's translation, or in another version which is generally thought to be accurate. It was certainly Rufinus' responsibility to preserve the spirit of the original text, and surely if he could preserve the spirit of the text without its exact language, he presented the readers of Origen with an acceptable text. Indeed he presented the readers of Origen with an apologetic version of the original text suited to the post-Nicene orthodox reader.

Both the time in which Origen lived and the contribution of this occasionally unthorough content, unpolished style of writing, and simplified understanding of doctrine contribute to his inconsistent use of selective, precise theological language. Living in a time before the refinement of doctrine and before rigorous standards of orthodoxy, Origen, his occasional verbal clumsiness, and the orientation of his thought are understandable. In the process of refining doctrines and refining them more precisely, Origen was not so interested in the origins, the processes, and the means of existence and of transformation, such as how Christ is God, became God, or became man, but in the reality of the existence of Christ being both God and man, whom he somehow became (not that Origen is that vague). Both the divinity and humanity of Christ and the unique nuances in the personality and

functions of Christ are especially relevant to Origen. He is not interested in somehow perfecting the finite description of origins, as he is in present realities and everlasting relationships. The grammatical analogy could be made that Origen is more inclined to use precise nouns than verbs. Again, he is more interested in the reality of a situation, in the true description of a person, than in how this person came to be how he is, in the action that precipitated the existence of a person, and in the definition of a person by external circumstances. For Origen's purposes, the means is subordinate to the existence of something; therefore, Origen's concentration is on existence and on reconciling and harmonizing several existences.

Since the Son is the most diverse, adaptable, and complex person of the Trinity, for he became man, and since Jerome criticizes Origen in this context, a further discussion of Origen's development of the Son clarifies what Origen, according to Jerome, means by saying that the Son is "made". If Jerome is correct and Rufinus did change "made" to "begotten", Rufinus very possibly changed the rest of the description of Christ. To gain Origen's, usage of "made", according to Rufinus, we may cite the following from Rufinus' version:

And after he [the Son] had ministered to the Father in the foundation of all things, for "all things were made through him", in these last times he emptied himself and was made man, was made flesh, although he was God; and being made man, he still remained what he was, namely, God. He took to himself a body like our body, differing in this alone, that it was born of a virgin and of the Holy Spirit.<sup>17</sup>

An element in Origen's style which pervades all of his writing, and even Rufinus' translation, is his direct quotation of Scripture in arguing a principle or describing a person. This element appears in this passage and helps give credence to Origen's description, for the written source of truth, the authority of which Origen acknowledges by so citing, is no greater source for truth. This history of Christ's human life and function emphasizes what is important to Origen -- the function of the son of man, retaining his divinity, and the summary of his history. Origen undoubtedly maintains that Christ retained divinity in becoming man. Although Origen may be unclear or even wrong in predicating "made" of the Son rather than "begotten" in describing his birth as God, from the Father, he does not question Christ's divinity. He dogmatically affirms it.

Rufinus quite possibly did quote Origen when he repeats the verb "made": Christ "was made man, was made flesh (*homo factus est, incarnatus est*)". Although the Greek has not survived, one may conjecture what Origen said and draw conclusions. If he said, "χριστὸς ἐνηνθρώπησεν, σαρωθεὶς. . . .", then there is no question that Origen repeated the two "mades". Rufinus does not either. Surely Origen was simply using technical language already in use in the church in his day. Perhaps Origen wanted to unite the process of becoming and being by using the same verb. Perhaps he wanted to emphasize the unity of the deity and humanity of Christ when they became co-existent. As the

*De Principiis* continues, it becomes clear that Origen is interested in how the hypostases of each in the Trinity, form a perfectly harmonious interrelationship even with their independent functions.

### The Ambiguity of Origen's Description of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the next subject for discussion of whom Origen says that he "is united in honour and dignity with the Father and the Son."<sup>18</sup> He adds:

. . . it is not yet clearly known whether he is to be thought of as begotten or unbegotten, or as being himself also a Son of God or not; but these are matters which we must investigate to the best of our power from holy scripture, inquiring with wisdom and diligence.<sup>19</sup>

Bigg comments on the possible subordination or the complete divinity of the Spirit:

He [Origen] has indeed no technical word to denote the relation of the Third to the other Persons, nor does he ever definitely bestow upon Him the title of God. But the idea, if not the word, is clearly there. The full divinity of the Holy Spirit lay enfolded in the Baptismal formula, and is the logical consequence of the assertion of His hypostasis. His eternity Origen teaches as distinctly as that of the Son; His equality is virtually though not so clearly contained in many passages. . . . He is one of the adorable Trinity which is wholly present in each of the Persons.<sup>20</sup>

The functions of the Father and the Son are much more clear to Origen than that of the Holy Spirit. He understands that the Holy Spirit is no less God than the Father and the Son, but he does not understand if the Spirit, like the Son, finds

his source in the Father. With this question in Origen's mind, it is important to examine the terminology "Son of God". Origen continues to give one of the functions of the Spirit toward man as

certainly taught with the utmost clearness in the Church, that the Spirit inspired each one of the saints, both the prophets and the apostles, and that there was not one Spirit in the man of old and another in those who were inspired at the coming of Christ.<sup>21</sup>

The Holy Spirit, as the most abstract and difficult to explain by human analogy, since there is no human, personal "equivalent" for him, Origen introduces in general terms, emphasizing his inspiration immutability and eternity.

### The Various Contexts of the Trinity

While the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are the first three doctrines which Origen lists as having been explained "in the plainest terms" by the apostles, he includes descriptions of other subjects as well. Regarding the Trinity he includes a general description of each of its persons, along with the function of each toward man. Included on the list is Scripture, which was designed from the power of the Spirit, for the benefit of man. Origen says: ". . . the scriptures were composed through the Spirit of God and they have not only that meaning which is obvious, but also another which is hidden from the majority of readers."<sup>22</sup> Origen has already made reference to men who possess a real and wonderfully uncommon hunger for truth and to these eager recipients of truth the Holy Spirit

imparts truth. Although Origen does not here amplify what he means by "the Spirit of God", some relationship between this Spirit of God and the Holy Spirit can be proposed. They may be one and the same, or the designation "the Spirit of God" may emphasize the functional aspect of the Holy Spirit rather than the personal aspect, which would emphasize the Trinitarian context.

There are actually three distinct contexts in which to see any one person of the Trinity: within the Trinity but with emphasis on individual function rather than communal function; communal function within the Trinity, whereby both the functions and each of the persons of the Trinity seem at least partially to depend and be shaped by the other persons; and distinct from the Trinity as a functioning whole, with emphasis on the relationship between each of the persons to man personally and to human functions or media. In fact, the written Word, which is the divine Word written down for man, is the medium for conveying and propagating divine wisdom to man. As the impersonal means, yet personal, real motive, the Holy Spirit has inspired not only the personal lives of the saints of the Old and New Testaments, but also the Scripture these people composed. As Origen elaborates in this paragraph, he attributes man's wisdom to understand the Scriptures as acquired from the Holy Spirit. Although he does not go so far as to clarify that the Spirit of God is one and the same as this Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God would naturally have a place in the Trinity even if referring to the Spirit of God, in general. The term, the Spirit of God, could refer to the

Trinity as a whole, to the Father specifically when used synonymously with God, as in this context, or to the Holy Spirit himself. The alternative which seems the most likely is the inanimate terminology of the Spirit, which emphasizes his function.

Origen's analogical, descriptive ability and sharpness is exemplified when in the same paragraph he describes "the contents of scripture" as "the outward forms of certain mysteries and the images of divine things."<sup>23</sup> More precisely, Scripture is a mirror which filters, from God, that which is humanly perceptible and divinely ordained. God has allowed to enter Scripture only the truth which he wishes man to know and which man can understand and absorb, taking into consideration the limitations of human language which exist because of the limitations of the human mind. Overcoming these limitations, God reveals the underlying meaning and reasons for the truths stated in Scripture to believers who want the truth. Ultimately, man understands the substance of the reflection and its relationship to the original object, which is God, his mind, and his person by God himself. He understands that God is the original object personally and specifically functioning as the instrument of revelation, not by man's natural perspicacity, no matter how advanced it is.

This teaching technique of Origen is especially important because it communicates on various levels and by implication. Especially later when he describes Christ, Origen's analogies, notably the one of the image which the

mirror creates, work because the human mind understands "pictures" to explain abstract concepts, seemingly filled with irreconcilable dichotomies and apparent paradoxes. And no greater dilemma exists than the co-existent divinity and humanity of Christ. No subject is more appropriately explained with mirrors and images than is the subject of Christ. Origen's description of the function of the Scriptures and their inspiration by the Spirit of God is introductory in method to his description of the Son of God.

After Origen has discussed the Trinity in terms of an independent interdependency, he approaches God, philosophically, rather than theologically, as he addresses the infinity and incorporeality of God. He says:

We must also seek to discover how God himself is to be conceived, whether as corporeal and fashioned in some shape, or as being of a different nature from bodies. . . . The same inquiry must be made in regard to Christ and the Holy Spirit. . . .<sup>24</sup>

The incorporeality of God does not apply to the Son alone, when he became corporeal by becoming man. Incorporeality applies to the Father, to the Son, beyond the context of the incarnation, and to the Holy Spirit. In fact, when Origen brings up the subject as a matter for discussion, he at first relates incorporeality to the Father. He wonders if the Biblical language on the subject differs from the philosophical language of his day. Whether or not Biblical and philosophical language are the same, Origen sees value in examining that which is linked with physical form and shape as an expression and integral part of essence and that which is not. There is a hint at comparing

God and man.

Origen, recognizing the philosophical incompleteness of Scripture, desires to describe the nature of God apart from becoming man (as Christ did) and apart from God's actions determined by the existence of man. It is profitable to examine the nature of God apart from the function, initiation, and response of man to his created existence and apart from the circumstances resulting from God's relationship with man and man's with God. When the Scriptures are said to be incomplete philosophically, they are incomplete on the subject of God's existence apart from man; they are not inaccurate or unwholesome. For example, in the New Testament even the apostles naturally did not understand all divine matters, including the subjects of God alone, man alone, and God with man.

This is not to say that they neglected the doctrinal foundation of which to build these ideas and failed to relate such ideas to the philosophical understanding of God in general and apart from man. Moreover, understanding God philosophically apart from man is much more than an academic exercise. First, if one loves, one wants to know aspects of the beloved that are immediately irrelevant to the present relationship. Second, the more one learns about the beloved, the better one knows how to relate, how to love. Therein lies the psychological justification for wanting to know the elements of God which are not obviously and thoroughly explicated in Scripture.

Origen concludes his Preface by mentioning his motive for acquiring truth and for imparting it. He says that when

discussing "a connected body of doctrine [one] must use points like these as elementary and foundation principles. . .

.<sup>25</sup> He affirms that

by clear and cogent arguments he will discover the truth about each particular point and so will produce . . . a single body of doctrine, with the aid of illustrations and declarations as he shall find in the holy scriptures and of such conclusions as he shall ascertain to follow logically from them when rightly understood.<sup>26</sup>

Origen has outlined his method for describing some of his general beliefs, the subjects of which he ascribes importance to because of their importance to the apostles who penned Scripture, which is indeed Origen's ultimate standard for written truth. Origen next launches into a detailed explanation of the persons of the Trinity separately, as the textual problem continues.

## Chapter 3 The Father and God

### The Question of the Title

Chapter 1 in Book 1 of the *De Principiis* is entitled "The Father" by Photius and "God" by Rufinus.<sup>1</sup> The correct and more appropriate title should become clear as the chapter continues. Which title reflects Origen's intended meaning will unfold in detail as the content is analyzed, even though the body of the chapter itself only remains in Rufinus' version. It is profitable to compare the titles before an examination of the content, however. Photius' preservation of the actual title can be explained in light of Rufinus' interpretive title. It should also become clear why Rufinus entitled it "God" instead of "The Father". Perhaps he changed the original text significantly enough so that the contents would apply to the idea of God more than to the person of the Father. It is probable that Rufinus thought the original contents were more appropriate to the concept of God, than to the Father, in an age early enough in the history of the church, when distinguishing between the concept of God, the person of God, and the person of the Father was a difficult task. In the process of understanding God as a person, one tends to link the concept of God with the person of the Father, rather than with the person of God. One wants to identify God as the Father, since he is the simplest, most immediate, most concrete choice among the

persons of the Trinity because of the sense of origin, responsibility, and authority associated with a human father. (The Son is identified with man, not that he is not God as well, but he is not just God. The Holy Spirit is a much more abstract person of the Trinity and, as a result, difficult to conceive of.) The problem of subordinationism immediately arises, for if the Father, according to Origen, is actually responsible for the actions for which God, the designation often used as the collective name for the persons of the Trinity, is actually responsible, then the Father preempts the Son and the Spirit in divinity and function as God.

### The Incorporeality of God

Origen introduces God philosophically neither describing him in Trinitarian terms, nor in relation to man. Instead he discusses the assertion by some that God is corporeal and the supposed Biblical evidence for this assertion, which evidence he believes to be metaphorical. Such statements as, "Our God is a consuming fire", he interprets in light of John's statement that "God is spirit, and they who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth."<sup>2</sup> He cites, "God is light", to which he concludes: "And how can there be the slightest reason for supposing that from that material light the grounds of knowledge could be derived and the meaning of truth discovered?"<sup>3</sup> Origen's emphasis on the character of God is obvious. The

incorporeality of God becomes a personal subject, however, when contrasted to the corporeality of the humanity of Christ. The act of incorporeality becoming corporeality, in Christ the God becoming Christ the man, was one of the most personal acts on God's part in the history of man. In "The Incorporeality of God", Stroumsa remarks: "What is peculiar to Origen . . . is . . . the central role that God's incorporeality plays in the overall structure of his thought."<sup>4</sup> The particular foundation laid by Origen's supposedly abstract remarks on incorporeality allows for important conclusions on the reality of an invisible God to man and on the direct relationship between the overt corporeal expressions of God with his essentially incorporeal being. Trigg comments: "Like other Platonists, Origen was concerned to defend the incorporeal nature of God against the Stoic doctrine that God is a particularly rarified body called 'spirit.'"<sup>5</sup>

As his discourse on the impossibility of the corporeality of God continues, Origen likens the incorporeality of God to a consuming fire whose object of destruction is evil and whose objective is the preparation of man for relationship with God. He says:

Let us rather consider that God does indeed consume and destroy, but that what he consumes are evil thoughts of the mind, shameful deeds and longings after sin, when these implant themselves in the minds of believers . . . having first consumed all their vices and passions and made them into a temper pure and worthy of himself.<sup>6</sup>

While this consuming fire is as incorporeal as God is, its

effects are both corporeal and incorporeal. The consuming fire represents God's power to destroy human evil, which, if not destroyed while unseen in the mind and heart of man, is ultimately destroyed after it has taken on its overt expression. The destruction of human evil is not an end in itself, but the absence of evil allows a relationship between God and man. This particular manifestation of the incorporeality of God attests to the concrete ability of an abstract attribute of God. Human nature repeatedly demands concrete evidences for the theoretically personal attributes of God. Man does not easily accept love as reality, in any of its abstract aspects, including incorporeality. Although this context on the incorporeality of God would, at first glance, seem devoid of any references to the personal qualities of God directed toward man, Origen stimulates thoughts of a personal God even in an objective, philosophical discussion on incorporeality.

Origen continues the subject of incorporeality as an example for the Biblical method of describing one category of nature by using language which sets it apart from its opposite. When I John 4:24 states, "God is Spirit", Origen replies: "It is a custom of holy scripture when it wishes to point out some thing of an opposite nature to this dense and solid body to call it spirit."<sup>7</sup> While Origen's method of explanation has been one of analogy, Scripture uses contrasts and opposites. Just as it is vital to understand Origen's use of language, so it is obviously more vital to understand Scripture's accommodation of language to the

human mind. Man easily understands the concept of the body; the body is obviously an integral part of his daily existence. The concept of the spirit is opposite to the concept of the body. Origen's example of the consuming fire shows that a specific relationship between opposites exists, just as a specific relationship between corporeality and incorporeality exists.

Origen describes the result of the human will which agrees to act on the conviction and the internal scrutiny of the Holy Spirit. He makes a personal application of the incorporeality of one person in the Trinity on behalf of the corporeal limitations of man. In this example, the Spirit acts on behalf of the man who desires a total appreciation of God by overcoming the corporeal limitations inherent to all human beings, to perceive spiritual matters and ultimately to know God. The Holy Spirit prepares man's soul to understand Scripture totally, with the result that the believer has an accurate, precise, and complete knowledge of the person of Christ. Origen loosely identifies the Lord with the Word, saying, "the Lord, where . . . the Word of God is".<sup>8</sup> He does not limit the Lord to the Word, however. He includes the Holy Spirit with the Word in the equation. More specifically, he includes the revelatory function of the Spirit. When the Word of God and the Holy Spirit are consulted to compensate for human ignorance, "the veil will be taken away and we shall then with an unveiled face behold in the holy scriptures the glory of the Lord."<sup>9</sup> Origen does not analyze this process in detail, nor does he describe

the divine glory, but his faith in the power of the Word and the power of the Spirit to compensate for the limitations imposed by corporeality attests to the compensatory nature of divine incorporeality. The Spirit alone does not have a ministry in extricating false thinking from and supplying truth in the souls of believers. Origen establishes that the believer's heart must be softened toward the Lord, with a desire to know the mind of the Lord as revealed in Scripture. The Holy Spirit then uses Scripture to purify the souls of men. In the Preface, it is significant that Origen includes the Spirit's function in unveiling the face both to know truth and to see God.

Origen acknowledges the incorporeality of the Holy Spirit as sharing his incorporeality with man and specifies how incorporeality is available to man. Origen shows that this aspect is not only personal (for one partakes of the Spirit), but it is also effective. He says:

. . . although many saints partake of the Holy Spirit, he is not on that account to be regarded as a kind of body, which is divided into material parts and distributed to each of the saints; but rather as a sanctifying power, a share of which is said to be possessed by all who have shown themselves worthy of being sanctified through his grace.<sup>10</sup>

If God is incorporeal, certainly the Holy Spirit is incorporeal. The incorporeality of God has power not only to destroy evil, but also to effect good in the lives of men, specifically here believers. It is interesting to notice that in this passage the divinity of the Holy Spirit is not questioned. The topic is not the eternity of God or the

persons of the Trinity, but the invisible power of God, which is as invisible as a tangible body is visible and is equally as indivisible as a body is divisible. Partaking of this invisible and unified, even one, power means partaking of the invisible, intangible, incorporeal Holy Spirit. Such appropriation, though not physical, is perfectly real. It actually happens. Origen has identified the divine representative of divine power to be the Holy Spirit, not the Father or the Son. Thus the incorporeal functions of the imparting of knowledge and power to man find their source in the Spirit.

Applying Platonic thought to Christian theology, Origen clarifies that man can participate in and supposedly take from something intangible without subtracting any of its substance. He uses the illustration of medicine. While obviously concrete, tangible substances are used in the practice of medicine, the knowledge that comes from the study of medicine is not tangible. Medicines are finite, and a quantity of them can be depleted. Even when knowledge can be quantified, it can never be depleted no matter how much of it is used, and it is never tangible. Origen says:

. . . are we to suppose that all who share in medicine have some material substance called medicine placed before them from which they take away little particles and so obtain a share of it? Must we not rather understand that all who with ready and prepared minds gain a comprehension of the art and its teaching may be said to share in medicine? These illustrations from medicine must not be supposed to apply in every detail when compared with the Holy Spirit; they establish this point only, that a thing in which many have a share is not necessarily to be

regarded as a body.<sup>11</sup>

He distinguishes between medicine and the Holy Spirit by adding: ". . . the Holy Spirit is an intellectual existence and being of its own, whereas medicine is nothing of the sort."<sup>12</sup> Origen clarifies that medicine and the Holy Spirit are not to be construed as equivalent. His analogy should not be applied beyond its limitations. Medicine applies to earth; its applications are finite. The Holy Spirit applies to earth and heaven; his influence is felt in the past, present, future, and for all eternity. Unlike medicine, the primary effect of the Spirit is in the soul, and the secondary effect is on finite, corporeal matters. As Origen says, the Holy Spirit as a person and as God is ultimately autonomous, while the art of medicine depends on the functions and malfunctions of the human body.

Origen consults the Gospels to confirm the incorporeality of God. He cites the incident of Christ's conversation with the woman at the well to establish the relationship between incorporeality and spirituality. To the woman at the well Christ explains that worshipping God is a spiritual function, for God is spiritual. He is spirit. The physical place of worship is not important, for the spiritual quality of worship truly matters. When John 4:24 says, "God is spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth", Origen replies, "See . . . how appropriately he [Christ] associated truth with spirit, calling God spirit to distinguish him from a shadow or image."<sup>13</sup> It is clear that the standards for worship which Christ established for the woman at the well verify the

incorporeality of God. God cannot be confined to a physical place. The place of worship does not validate worship. Rather the spiritual state of the worshipper defines the quality of worship. Because God is incorporeal, communing with him, partaking in his glory, and worshipping him are also incorporeal. Origen involves the believer in the incorporeality of God to exemplify the reality of his resolution. Stroumsa maintains that Origen "succeeded to resolve the implicit conflict between the personal creator God and his absolute incorporeality; it has had momentous implications upon subsequent Christian exegesis, theology and mysticism."<sup>14</sup>

As clearly as Origen has affirmed and explained the incorporeality of God, especially as it is directed toward man, and has "refuted . . . every interpretation which suggests that we should attribute to God any material characteristics", Origen does not claim a complete understanding of God, in terms of incorporeality or otherwise.<sup>15</sup> He concludes that God is "in truth . . . incomprehensible and immeasurable."<sup>16</sup> In contrast to this specific statement by Origen, Louth notes in *The Origins of the Christian Mystical Tradition*: "Origen [overall] seems reluctant to entertain the notion of the ultimate unknowability of God. . . ."<sup>17</sup>

### The Incomprehensibility and Immeasurability of God

Incorporeality, incomprehensibility, and

immeasurability are each components of the infinity of God. That God has no body and cannot be understood completely or measured quantitatively negates any possibility of God being finite. While God has created man with a spiritual nature patterned precisely after God's, man's spiritual capabilities are not infinite as are God's. The infinity of God's mind perfectly blends with the infinity of his spirituality to reach infinite heights and depths. The finite human mind experiences limitations when it interacts with its own spirituality. Man simply cannot imagine how big and how great God really is.

Origen explains the concepts of incomprehensibility and immeasurability when he explains the inability of man's eyes to see light, not to mention the sun, in its entirety, especially if his eyesight is poor. He says:

For if we see a man who can scarcely look at a glimmer of the light of the smallest lamp, and if we wish to teach such a one, whose eyesight is not strong enough to receive more light than we have said, about the brightness and splendour of the sun, shall we not have to tell him that the splendour of the sun is unspeakably and immeasurably better and more glorious than this light he can see?<sup>18</sup>

Although Origen recognizes the human impossibility of fully seeing, that is, of perceiving God, he certainly believes that the believer should utilize his full potential to see and know God. Origen's humility is not as absurd as to give up completely the endeavor to know God better; otherwise, he would obviously not have launched into a work as the *De Principiis*. Amidst the analogies for various points which help to verify the entirely spiritual character and quality of

God, Origen has introduced the believer's relationship with God, which is directly related to his knowledge of God. While the only relationship between God and man that brings whole fulfilment is a spiritual one, such a relationship is bound by human limitations. Although increased and expanded by human desire, such imperfections in the human nature ultimately interfere with the consummate relationship with God.

In conjunction with the activity and ministry of the Spirit, however, the limitations of man's faculties are overcome. For the believer growing to spiritual maturity, knowledge of God increases beyond the normal depths of the mind. This knowledge of God is revealed, not through human concentration alone but through divine enlightenment as well. The spiritual light that man sees proportionally increases in strength as he grows. This is not to say that man, limited by his mortality, can infinitely know the immortality of God; nevertheless, the light becomes brighter and brighter in proportion to the believer's intimacy with God. Origen describes his expectations of such a coveted relationship with God when he says:

. . . among all intellectual, that is, incorporeal things, what is there so universally surpassing, so unspeakably and immeasurably excelling, as God, whose nature certainly the vision of the human mind, however pure or clear to the very utmost that mind can be, cannot gaze at or behold?<sup>19</sup>

Origen's expectations do not emphasize the believer's own genuine growth or greatness but focus on how increasingly wonderful God appears as growth occurs. Perceiving the

greatness of God and, therefore, the glory of God are what motivate Origen. For him, the more one knows God, the more immeasurable, the more infinite God appears. There is comfort for the frustration of increasingly realizing that the believer cannot infinitely perceive God's infinity. The comfort, in fact, comes from this knowledge, of which there is no end.

### The Beauty of God as Reflected in Creation

One of the methods man can use to understand at least one aspect of God, that is, his creativity regarding the physical universe, is to appreciate the supreme beauty of the universe. Origen, continuing with the analogy of light, says that just as man cannot directly look at the sun, he can observe "the brightness and rays of the sun as they pour into windows. . . ."20 From these rays, ". . . we are able to infer . . . how great is the source and fountain of physical light."21 When a cause is too vast, grand, and magnificent to behold directly, the general magnitude of the cause itself can be intuited. Even the unbeliever can perceive the beauty of the physical universe which surrounds him, although his ability to appreciate it, out of appreciating and loving the source, is definitely limited. Origen has once again used a physical analogy to help explain a spiritual God. He says of him:

. . . the works of divine providence and the plan of the universe are as it were rays of God's nature in contrast to his real substance and being, and because

the human mind is of itself unable to behold God as he is, it understands the parent of the universe from the beauty of his works and the comeliness of his creatures.<sup>22</sup>

The capacity for appreciation, especially of beauty in this passage, helps to enable man in his appreciation of the manifestations, effects, and creations of God. Such capacity finds its source in God, who made man in his image, thus bestowing upon man standards of beauty appropriate to and complementary to God's.

Origen, having contrasted aspects of the infinity of God with the finiteness of man and having especially exemplified God's incorporeality, offers a descriptive definition of God in terms of God as the, and thus, one source of all creation, even the source of unity. Reinforcing God's incorporeality, he says:

God therefore must not be thought to be any kind of a body, nor to exist in a body, but to be a simple intellectual existence, admitting in himself of no addition whatever, so that he cannot be believed to have in himself a more or a less, but is Unity, or if I may so say, Oneness throughout, and the mind and fount from which originates all intellectual existence or mind.<sup>23</sup>

Butterworth notes the philosophical language of this passage:

Rufinus has kept the Greek philosophical terms *Monas* (=Unit, unity) and *Henas* (=Oneness) probably from the difficulty of finding Latin equivalents. Some of the later Pythagoreans seem to have distinguished, as Origen does here, between the Monad, the primal Unity which gives rise to multiplicity, and the bare One, a kind of Absolute which they tried to conceive as unrelated to anything.<sup>24</sup>

The unity and the oneness of which God is the source and even himself is, by title and by function, not only directly relate to God in his inherent inclination to create, specifically to create man, but also offer man a pattern for being, thinking, and behaving. The unity and oneness of God also verify the unity and oneness in the Trinity. If the general concept of God is unified, it makes sense that the persons of the Trinity are eternally unified in motivation, purpose, and function. Unification is the process which effects oneness. In God, the process and the result are the same.

Much of Origen's description of God so far in this chapter has not purposefully concentrated on God's relationship with man and the functions of the persons of the Trinity which involve man. He has included the Son and the Holy Spirit in explanations of the relevance of the incorporeality of God to man, but has thus far not selected the Father to illustrate an aspect of God, either apart from man or in relation to man. He has included man as a contrast to God. He has included specific persons of the Trinity and their function toward man only so far as these functions help to describe the divinity of God.

If Origen's title of this chapter is "The Father", perhaps it is understandable why Rufinus changed the title of the chapter to "God". Discussions of the Son and the Spirit, even from Rufinus' translation, obviously broaden the discussion from the Father to God, at least, if not the Trinity. It cannot be shown how much Rufinus did, in fact, mold the text, to his own purposes. It is not known how

much he actually added the persons of the Trinity by name, along with their functions.

### The Corporeal Limitations of Man in Light of the Incorporeality of God

Origen's assertion that God is "the mind and fount from which originates all intellectual existence or mind" leads him to develop yet another analogy from the human realm to explain to the divine mind.<sup>25</sup> Rather than emphasizing the incorporeality of God as he has so far, Origen explains the corporeality of man in more detail. Like the study of medicine, the function of the mind in any discipline is intangible. While the effects are often visible and tangible, the causes are not. The human mind requires physical, tangible space in which to operate. The human mind, which requires a corporeal brain in which to generate incorporeal thoughts, differs from the divine mind which does not require a corporeal brain. Origen attests to the incorporeality of God which

does not need physical space in which to move and operate, nor does it need a magnitude discernible by the senses, nor bodily shape or colour, nor anything else whatever like these which are suitable to bodies and matter.<sup>26</sup>

While the human mind requires a human medium in which to operate, "only the species of deity (*deitatis specie*) . . . has the privilege of existing apart from all material intermixture."<sup>27</sup> In contrast to the human mind, Origen clarifies the incorporeal substance of the divine mind, just

as the person of God is absolutely incorporeal.

Origen analyzes the human mind and its limitations, for it is "joined or intermingled" with the body.<sup>28</sup> When the body is ill, for example, the mind is certainly not as sharp as under normal circumstances. It is important for the body to be well in normal circumstances and an in environment natural to itself, so that the mind can function naturally as well. He explains: "For it seems almost against nature for the human body to live on the sea and on this account the body, as if unequal to its task, appears to sustain the mind's movements in an irregular and disordered manner. . . ." <sup>29</sup> The limitations caused by man's being a composite being help to account for the disparity, even incomparability, between the human mind and the divine mind. Although God created man in his own image, the limitations caused by the composite nature of human nature cause limitations. Although man can often expand these limitations, he cannot transcend them by his own efforts. Origen describes an important Patristic principle which attests to the diametrically different entities or substances of man and God, specifically composite (*συνθετός*) and simple, when he says: "For we men are animals, formed by a union of body and soul. . . . But God, who is the beginning of all things, must not be regarded as a composite being. . . . (*quoniam quidem nos homines animal sumus compositum ex corporis animaeque concursu. . . . Deum vero, qui omnium initium est, compositum esse non est putandum*)"<sup>30</sup>

Returning to the resources of the human mind in spite

of its limitations, Origen observes that while "the mind [does not] need physical magnitude in order to perform any act or movement. . . . [it] certainly needs intellectual magnitude, because it grows in an intellectual . . . sense."<sup>31</sup> Although Origen recognizes the inherent limitations of the human mind, he equally recognizes its potential for cultivation. Oppositely, God's mind cannot be any more cultivated or expanded, for it has no limitations and has been, always and eternally, perfectly cultivated.

The limitations that corporeality, specifically the human body, imposes on and shares in with the mind, do not extend to making spiritual matters imperceptible. Man's mortality and the reality of man as a created being result in both bodily and mental limitations. Origen distinguishes the mind from the senses, which are also limited. He does not claim to know the precise workings of the mind, but he admits that "the sense of mind is far superior to the senses", both of which are appropriately connected with a material substance towards which the particular sense is directed."<sup>32</sup> Origen calls the mind the mental sense and asserts it to be both higher than the other senses, that is, less connected with and influenced by the other senses, and as a higher sense, somehow capable of perceiving incorporeal matters without such a great corporeal burden.

Origen does not end his discussion of the human mind with its natural limitations and inabilities. He realistically demonstrates the natural affinity and connection between the mind and God. Without discussing

the mechanics in detail, he recognizes that while the mind is something created, it has some affinity with God, being made in his image, "*et per hoc possit aliquid de deitatis sentire natura*".<sup>33</sup> Origen says:

. . . there is a certain affinity between the mind and God, of whom the mind is an intellectual image, and that by reason of this fact the mind, especially if it is purified and separated from bodily matter, is able to have some perception of the divine nature.<sup>34</sup>

With this new perspective on explaining the mind, Origen has more closely connected the principle of man being created in the image of God than by stating simply, as he has previously done, that the mind is essentially incorporeal even though it is housed in the body. God's creation of man in his own image means that the human mind was made as a reflection of the divine mind, to use an anthropathism. Just as God's mind is incorporeal, so man's mind is incorporeal. Man is not vaguely created in God's image; his mind structurally (metaphorically speaking) reflects God's mind. Whether one speaks of the divine mind or the human mind, the mind refers to the intangible organ of thinking.

In addition to the actual, historical creation of the pattern of man's creation, "in the likeness of God", an examination of the term "image of God" is significant. Certainly the incorporeality of God cannot be duplicated in man, for God's incorporeality and man's corporeality are two of the fundamental distinguishing characteristics between God and man. God's incorporeality, by necessity, accompanies his infinity, and man's corporeality insures the

finiteness of his mind. Although man has incorporeal elements, such as a mind, the mind, generally speaking, has a greater authority over the body than the body over the mind. If the body is ill, however, the mind does not function as well as when the body is healthy. Likewise, when the mind is not healthy, because of psychological reasons, mental laziness, or mental exhaustion, for example, the body suffers. Perhaps a more accurate observation is that, given that the mind is more important than the body, it is capable of knowing God and determining that the body executes the will of God. It is important that what has eternal value has authority over what is temporal, temporary, and finite. The authority of what has spiritual value is more important than the authority of what is temporal. The human mind, as the image of God as mind, possesses such eternal value. The body cannot be the image of God's body, since God obviously has no body, and therefore it does not possess eternal value.

### The Corporeality and Incorporeality of Christ

For the remainder of the chapter, Origen speaks less of God in philosophical terms and more in terms of the Trinity, specifically the Son. Continuing on the subject of man's creation in the image of God, he progresses to the hypostatic Christ, who is both completely God and the most eminent of all human beings. Origen cites Colossians 1:15, which confirms Christ as "the image of the invisible God,

the firstborn of all creation'."35 Having established the Son as the image of the Father and the pattern by which the rest of mankind is created, he cites John 1:18, "No one has seen God at any time."36 He responds that this verse "plainly declares to all who are capable of understanding, that there is no existence to which God is visible; not as if he were one who is visible by nature and yet eludes and escapes the gaze of his creatures because of their frailty, but that he is in his nature impossible to be seen."37 The humanity of Christ was visible to many, but his deity was not. Contemporaries of Christ saw his humanity only, not his deity. Moreover, man's inability to see God does not result from man's limitations, but from the intangibility of God, and accordingly the invisibility of God. While the person of man includes both body and soul, the person of God includes the soul alone. Since God is invisible, man's knowledge of God and of the person of God is ultimately acquired from the invisible world of the spiritual which often has visible effects in the physical world. The ultimate source of this invisible world of the spiritual is, of course, God.

Origen emphasizes the opportunity man has to understand spiritual matters, foremost of which is the person of God, precisely because man's mind is patterned after God's. Although God is invisible because he is incorporeal, the mind of God is still reflected in the mind of man, and the mind of neither can be seen. The mind of man has been made according to divine design because God desires man to believe, know, and understand him.

Returning to Origen's example of Christ as the most outstanding member of the human race, one begins to understand both the principle of the creation of man in God's image and the principle of the invisibility of God, for the hypostatic Christ illustrates both. Christ, because he became a man, possessed a body, mind, and soul, and, because of being God simultaneously and eternally, possessed an invisible divine person within his human body, which was geographically unconfined because of divine omnipresence. Christ, as the "image of the invisible God", was the image of God in two respects: as both God and man. As man, he was created by God in God's image as other men are created by God in God's image. Since his human mind was patterned after God's, it was invisible and incorporeal. As God, he reflected the invisible, incorporeal nature of the Father, as was the function of the Son, and possessed his own invisible, incorporeal nature as God himself.

The incorporeality of the Godhead guarantees its invisibility. Without a physical body, no person of the Trinity can be seen. The question arises, however, which Origen recognizes, whether or not the Father, for example, is visible to the Son. Not directly defining visibility in spiritual terms or in physical terms, Origen says:

And if you should ask me what is my belief about the Only-begotten himself, whether I would say that God's nature, which is naturally invisible, is not even visible to him, . . . we will give it a logical answer. (For as it is incongruous to say that the Son can see the Father, so it is unbecoming to believe that the Holy Spirit can see the Son) (*Sicut enim incongruum est dicere quod possit filius videre patrem, ita*

*inconueniens est opinari quod spiritus sanctus possit videre filium).*<sup>38</sup>

Origen's answer to the question in the parenthesis actually comes from Jerome's version, and it admittedly contains subordinationism, capable of inspiring Arianism. Butterworth observes that "Origen was frequently attacked for the opinion here expressed, which Rufinus has softened down considerably. . . . Arius used Origen's language."<sup>39</sup>

Origen follows a subordinationist statement in Rufinus' version, however, affirming the incorporeality of the Father and the Son. He says:

To see and to be seen is a property of bodies; to know and to be known is a property of intellectual existence. Whatever is a property of bodies must not be believed either of the Father or of the Son, the relations between whom are such as pertain to the nature of deity.<sup>40</sup>

Origen recognizes, however, that in other passages, such as Matthew 5:8, which says: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God", the word "see" is used metaphorically, being synonymous for know.<sup>41</sup> The principle he has stressed throughout this chapter is the incorporeality and the invisibility of God in diametric distinction from the corporeality and visibility of man.

#### An Evaluation of the Correct Chapter Title in Light of Identifying Authority with God

In light of an analysis of this chapter, the issue of the disparity of the chapter title, that is, the difference

between the Greek and Latin titles, can now more easily be resolved. Origen's discussion of God focuses on the Father (if one had to specify one person of the Trinity), for the Father is not used as an illustration of difference or interaction between God and man, and all of the characteristics of God are certainly inherent to the Father. Origen uses the Son and the Holy Spirit to illustrate specific aspects and manifestations of God. These manifestations are frequently personal functions for the benefit of man. If any of the three persons of the Trinity could be said to possess ultimate authority, it would be the Father. The Son would be the ambassador of the Trinity and the mediator to man, and the Holy Spirit would be the more subtle, less obvious, and less identifiable person of the Trinity who teaches and reveals truth. Thus the Father stands out as preeminent, although he is not any more divine than the other two. Origen does not state this, however. All three persons are certainly divine, but if the passage from Jerome quoted above is genuine, they are not equally divine. Perhaps that passage suffers from Origen's lack of distinction between the pre-incarnate and incarnate Son, rather than blatant heresy, for the incarnation seems to lower the rank of the Son. As incarnate, Christ is by definition a human being, and therefore seemingly less than God. In addition, in his humanity Christ repeatedly affirms the Father's authority over him. It is fallacious to equate divinity with authority, however. Important as authority is to the person and function of God, especially in relation to his creatures, divine authority is a by-product of his

person, of his divinity, not the reverse. Origen has not discussed the paternity of God, thus his leadership and authority, except by the example of the creation of man in God's image and the unity of God above the compositeness of man.

Perhaps Rufinus' title of "God" better describes the contents of the chapter than Photius' title of "The Father" taken from the original. It is not as though these characteristics of God do not apply to the Father or to the Son or to the Spirit, but such characteristics do not distinguish each person of the Trinity. The subject of the incorporeality of God, as an example of God's infinity, applies to the Father, to the Spirit, even to the Son, whose divinity was not hindered or limited by corporeal limitations during the incarnation.

Origen's discussion of God has neither thoroughly compared the persons of the Trinity, nor completely ignored their contrasting functions. He has summarized the concept of God, illustrated the concept of God with illustrating the persons and functions of certain persons of the Trinity, and explained the basic similarities and differences between God and man.

## Chapter 4 God the Son

### Introduction

Chapter 2 in Book 1 of the *De Principiis* is entitled "Christ" in the Latin version, and Koetschau supplies the title of "Concerning Christ" (*Περὶ Χριστοῦ*) from Photius.<sup>1</sup> Most of the body of the chapter only remains in the Latin version. When the Greek version appears and when a significant disparity between the two versions exists, it will be noted. Otherwise, all subsequent references and quotations will come from the Latin version once again.

### A General Description of the Son

Origen's first statement regarding Christ is his acceptance of the co-existence of both the deity and humanity of Christ. He says:

First we must know this, that in Christ there is one nature, his deity, because he is the only-begotten Son of the Father; and another nature, which in very recent times (*in novissimus temporibus*) he took upon himself to fulfil the divine purpose

, that is, in obedience and respect of the Father's will and authority.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps "in very recent times" is reminiscent of the Scriptural expression "in the last days". Note that Origen identifies the Son as the Son, not just God. When speaking of God becoming man and retaining full divinity,

simply using the title of "God" is too non-specific. One must utilize Trinitarian vocabulary and explanations. One must specify the Father, Son, and Spirit and distinguish their functions. Origen distinguishes the Father and the Son by recognizing a fundamental Christian truth of the incarnation: that the Son became human without giving up his divinity; and that the incarnation came about because the deity of the Son acted in harmony with the plans of the Father in becoming man. The Father was the Father even before he began creating, because the Father is a creator by nature. The Father and the deity of the Son have the Father/Son relationship eternally and immutably. As previously mentioned, the Father is the leader, the authority figure over the Son and Spirit. This predominant element in his essence is a part of his person, independent of the existence of creatures whom he has created, even dependent on the eternity of the deity of the Son. Origen's designation of the Son as the Son is more important than his lack of distinction of the Father in the previous chapter, in which he commonly describes God both as opposite and similar to man. Trigg summarizes Origen's forthcoming contrast between the Father and the Son: "Origen's first endeavor, in his discussion of Christ . . . was to define the Son's relation to the Father. This meant showing how it was possible for the Son to be a separate divine hypostasis, hypostasis being a philosophical term for what we might call an individual entity."<sup>3</sup>

## The Titles of the Son, Including the Son as Wisdom

Having accepted the dichotomous person of the Son, Origen establishes as his "first task therefore . . . to see what the only-begotten Son of God is, seeing he is called by many different names according to the circumstances and beliefs of the different writers."<sup>4</sup> This statement preserves the dual nature of Christ as the subject which Origen addresses. The title "the only-begotten Son of God" is a title of the incarnate Son contemporaneous with his deity. Origen's use of this orthodox and Biblical title commences a development of the other titles of the Son which describe his many and varied functions and the aspects of his person as both God and man. The following comment from Trigg contrasts the uni-dimensional nature of the Father with the multi-dimensional nature of the Son which Origen subsequently develops:

The Father is absolutely simple, but the Son is multiple and accounts for the diversity of the creation. Origen expressed the Son's nature as multiple in terms of "aspects," *epinoiai*, a philosophical term that implies an entirely different conceptual distinction as opposed to *hypostasis*, which implies a real distinction.<sup>5</sup>

The first titles Origen cites for the Son are "Wisdom" and "Firstborn". He cites Proverbs 8:22-25 which identifies the Son with Wisdom. Origen cites the passage as follows:

. . . 'The Lord [God the Father] created me [God the Son] the beginning of his ways for his works. Before he made anything, before the ages he established me. In the beginning before he made the earth, before the springs of waters came forth, before the mountains

were settled, before all the hills he begets [rather than "begot"] me.'<sup>6</sup>

Butterworth draws attention to Origen's Homily on Jeremiah 9:4 which "lays stress on the present tense (Gr. γεννᾷ: Lat. *generat* ) as evidence of his doctrine of the Son's eternal generation by the Father."<sup>7</sup> Origen's use of the present tense which, if used for its continuous quality, reinforces the Son's subordination to the Father. Even Scripture's reference to the Son made by the Father implies at least a momentary subordination, resulting from a momentary act of creation by the Father. Origen's use of the present tense in only the last of the series of verbs emphasizes the continuousness of generation. Perhaps Origen echoes what he perceived to be the intent of the passage, and changed the tense of its most important verb, beget, to reinforce this intent. As with Scripture, so with Origen, so with evaluating Origen's interpretation of Scripture, isolating a context from all other contexts on a particular topic only seems to indicate ambiguity at best and contradiction at worst.

Referring to the Son's title of "Firstborn", he says: "The Firstborn is not, however, by nature a different being from Wisdom, but is one and the same."<sup>8</sup> Origen recognizes that these titles do not refer to different persons but to the same person with emphasis on different functions. To be firstborn indicates chronological eminence and often connotes increased responsibility in a family. The firstborn of a family theoretically possesses wisdom which the younger, less mature siblings do not possess. The humanity

of Christ is the spiritual firstborn of the human race. His spiritual wisdom, impeccability, and destiny are unmatched in the history of mankind in their quality and necessity. Moreover, the deity of Christ is wisdom. The title of wisdom does not concentrate on personal qualities of interaction, but on superlative essence. This wisdom, like all the other impersonal qualities and titles of the Son which Origen mentions, is a necessary component of the essence of the Son, as both God and man, and is a superlative benefit for mankind.

The title of wisdom is particularly applicable to the Son during the incarnation because the incarnation took place for the benefit of man; however, wisdom is not a title limited to the Son during the incarnation. Wisdom emphasizes the function of the Son's veracity and omniscience for the practical, yet eternal, benefit of man. Origen firmly declares that Christ was not merely a good man, and more importantly, he declares that this person of the Godhead even in terms of wisdom is not limited to an inanimate quality. This wisdom, even as a quality which could benefit man, could not find its source in any man, but had to be of divine origin. Moreover, this wisdom is not merely a quality of the Father, but is another name for the Son. Origen says:

Let no one think, however, that when we give him the name "wisdom of God" we mean anything without hypostatic existence, that is, to make an illustration, that we understand him to be not as it were some wise living being (*animal quoddam sapiens*), but a certain thing which makes men wise by revealing and imparting itself to the minds of such as

are able to receive its influence and intelligence.<sup>9</sup> Noting Origen's supposed Scriptural reference to Christ as "some wise living being", Butterworth refers to Origen's Commentary on Jeremiah 20:1, in which "there is also a reference to the above passage, the Word being called ζῶον (= animal vivens). This appears to depend upon a misreading of Heb. IV. 12, ζῶν γὰρ ὁ λόγος."<sup>10</sup> Whether or not Origen has misread Hebrews 4:12, what he says about the personal quality of wisdom is not inaccurate.

Like Origen's philosophical description of God in the previous chapter, so here his description of Christ as wisdom eager to impart to man its "influence and intelligence", the impersonal aspect of the Son becomes evident. Man's knowledge of the impersonal aspect of the Son, however, remains a part of the essential process of knowing the Son in personal terms. More than the lover of mankind who offered himself sacrificially in the place of man, he also becomes the source of wisdom, the imparter of truth. Because Origen's description of the Son in this passage does not include the function of the Son directed toward man, but precedent and, therefore, apart from all creation, Origen does not specify such divine wisdom to be the motivating force for divine love. He does not specify that this function of the person of Christ is truly the function of the divine person, for such humanity, although eminently wise, could not be so esteemed as to be revered as the ultimate source of wisdom, in fact, wisdom itself. What Origen does not include on the Son's function toward

and interaction with man, even as a man himself, can be derived. Just as all wise men derive their wisdom from God, so the humanity of Christ derived his wisdom from the deity of Christ and from the other persons of the Trinity. It is possible to reply to Origen's reasoning that human wisdom is likewise incorporeal. It is possible that this wisdom, if one were to base it on incorporeality alone, could be ascribed to the humanity of Christ. If the human mind, the capacity to think and to feel, is incorporeal just as the divine mind is incorporeal, then wisdom can come from the human mind. The reply to this suggestion is that incorporeal wisdom can and does come from the human mind but not wisdom as the source of all other wisdom.

Establishing the wisdom of the Father as eternal, Origen indirectly affirms the eternity of the Son, who is the person of wisdom. If God always existed, so his wisdom must always have existed. The Father is eternally and perfectly wise. Since wisdom always existed, the Son, who is wisdom, is eternal. He asks: "And can anyone who has learned to regard God with feelings of reverence suppose or believe that God the Father ever existed, even for a single moment, without begetting this wisdom?"<sup>11</sup> The most important implication of this rhetorical question is that the Son is eternal as the Father is eternal; in fact, the Son is equally as eternal. That the Son is the wisdom of the Father is not to imply that the Father is without wisdom himself. But as far as the qualities which distinguish the functions of the Trinity from each other are concerned, the title of



wisdom applies to Christ. God the Father always possessed wisdom in both senses: He possessed his own quality of wisdom in that he is an autonomous person, and he "possessed Christ", as the personification of wisdom, the person among the Trinity to be the representative of wisdom to mankind. God to be God certainly had to possess wisdom totally and always, whether this wisdom is a particular quality possessed by the person of the Father or a reflection of God or the Father in the form of another person, the Son. For are not the persons of the Trinity different forms, with varied emphases of the person of God?

#### The Relationship Between the Father and the Son and the Father as the Source of Life of the Son

Having established the Father's eternal possession of wisdom and, specifically Christ as wisdom, Origen clearly states the eternity of the Son in spite of discussing the paternal begetting of the Son by the Father, not denying the corresponding temporal limitation of the Son in his humanity. He says:

Wherefore we recognise that God was always the Father of his only-begotten Son, who was born indeed of him and draws his being from him, but is yet without any beginning, not only of that kind which can be distinguished by periods of time, but even of that other kind which the mind alone is wont . . . to perceive . . . with the bare intellect and reason. Wisdom, therefore, must be believed to have been begotten beyond the limits of any beginning that we

can speak of or understand.<sup>12</sup>

The beginning, the origins of personified wisdom in the form of the Son, is more difficult to grasp than the quality of wisdom in the person of the Father. The principle is the same, however. Just as the Father, to be the Father, had to possess all the attributes and qualities to be the Father at all times and not to accumulate them, so the Son cannot be said to have accumulated qualities and attributes, even to be an accumulation of the Father. Just as an attribute or quality is subsidiary to and dependent on the person to whom it belongs, so the quality personified is subsidiary to the person who "created" it. The Father, as the Father, is the creator, just as Christ is wisdom. Creativeness implies origin, and origin implies authority, authority over existence, and to this authority both wisdom personified and wisdom as a quality are subject. The difficult reconciliation for the human mind is the reconciliation of a quality and a person, which are under the authority of a creator and which, without the exercise of that authority, would not exist. Yet because that authority, that origin, and that creativeness were always exercised, they always existed. Wisdom does not just come from the Father. It is no less original than the Father. In short, the eternity of the Father demands the eternity of wisdom, and the eternity of wisdom demands the eternity of the Son.

Origen sees the person of wisdom, that is the Son, as an explanation for the Father's creativeness and as a motive behind his actual creation. He says:

And because in this very subsistence of wisdom there

was implicit every capacity and form of the creation that was to be . . . wisdom, speaking through Solomon . . . says that she was created as a "beginning of the ways" of God, which means that she contains within herself both the beginnings and causes and species of the whole creation.<sup>13</sup>

In *Zur Theologie des biblischen Wortes bei Origenes*, Gögler notes: "Was in der göttlichen Weisheit schon eine geistige Schöpfung ist und Bestand hat, ist Urbild und Modell des Seins."<sup>14</sup> More than a motive of creation, wisdom provides the pattern of creation. In addition, not only was wisdom caused and allowed to exist because of the Father's will and authority, but also, as itself divine, it possesses authority, just as anything or anyone which is divine possesses authority. That wisdom possesses its own authority, that it is an authority, and that it is not just subject to God's authority as its source, gives wisdom and God's authority an equal rank. The dichotomies and apparent paradoxes throughout God's being make such concepts difficult to grasp. For the human mind is so dependent on the authority of time that it is difficult to go beyond such authority in order to understand spiritual matters. Time to God is unimportant and irrelevant; it does not restrain or limit him. He uses time as his instrument to help explain and reveal himself to man and to make it easier for man to live, to organize, and thus to simplify his life on earth.

### Wisdom as God and as the Word

While God possesses creative authority, wisdom by

virtue of its nature and definition, possesses authority of its own. In fact, wisdom is God, and God is wisdom. God is not a composite being in the sense that man is, by the blending of corporeal with incorporeal and by being somewhat subject to corporeality, nor is God a composite being in that wisdom is one of many attributes and titles which describe not only God as a whole, but also the persons of the Trinity individually. God is wisdom as he is simultaneously other attributes, but he is not technically said to be composed of any of these attributes, for that would diminish the reality of the infinite divinity of them. It is true that certain titles are attributed to specific persons of the Trinity. For example, wisdom is normally attributed to the Son or is used as his alternate name or title. It is a title which carries just as much authority as a usual divine name, for in a sense, a title is a divine name. Not only should one consider the titles for each of the persons of the Trinity as more than characteristics, as one would apply them to man or another created being, but also as personifications, in reality, even as persons.

As Origen continues to discuss the wisdom of God as synonymous with the Son of God, so he analyzes which functions of the person of the Son are the specific functions of wisdom. While Origen has already associated this wisdom with the deity, not the humanity, of Christ, he has not as yet distinguished between Christ the person and Christ the thought or truth. He has not clarified the application of the title of wisdom to the divine living Word and the divine written Word. In the following quotation,

Origen links the exercise of the authority of the divine living Word in creation, with the divine written Word:

Now just as we have learned in what sense wisdom is the "beginning of the ways" of God and is said to have been created, in the sense namely, that she fashions beforehand and contains within herself the species and causes of the entire creation, in the same manner must wisdom be understood to be the Word of God. For wisdom opens to all other beings, that is, to the whole creation, the meaning of the mysteries and secrets which are contained within the wisdom of, and as she is called the Word, because she is . . . an interpreter of the mind's secrets (*Quali autem modo intelleximus sapientiam >initium viarum< dei esse, et quomodo creata esse dicitur, species scilicet in se et rationes totius praeformans et continens creaturae: hoc modo etiam verbum dei eam esse intellegendum est per hoc, quod ipsa ceteris omnibus, id est universae creaturae, mysterium et arcanorum rationem, quae utique intra dei sapientiam continentur, aperiat; et per hoc verbum dicitur, quia sit . . . arcanorum mentis interpret*).<sup>15</sup>

Origen perceives wisdom as contributing to the motivation behind creation and the planning and design of creation, and as revelatory of creation once the thought of creation has been executed. Wisdom as thought provides the necessary truths in the planning, execution, and perception of the creature about his own existence. Wisdom as a person emphasizes the soul, the heart, the love, and the power. The mental energy and drive combined with the actual, tangible ability to effect the desire to create are applicable to wisdom. The personal aspect of wisdom gives life to the thinking aspect of wisdom, and both together actually create, for Origen says: "*hoc modo etiam verbum dei eam esse intelligendum est. . .*"<sup>16</sup> Man understands the nature

and essence of his own creation when he first understands God's wisdom and God's thinking in creating him. Wisdom is then both the thought behind the creation of man and the thought that reveals man to himself. The contrast between the thought of wisdom and the person of wisdom is initiated by the term, the Word.

The term, the Word, provides an important balance in the person of the deity of Christ. Aside from its application to the literal, physical creation of man and this world, the Word, while not emphasizing the importance of the personal, emotive relationship with Christ, provides the thoughts, the truth by which the believer is nourished. In *God in Patristic Thought*, Prestige says:

[Origen] observes that Wisdom must be understood to be the Word of God on this ground, that it discloses to all other beings the principle of the mysteries and secrets which are contained within the wisdom of God; and it is called Word because it is, so to speak, the Interpreter of the secrets of the mind.<sup>17</sup>

The Word then provides the thoughts, the truth by which the believer grows spiritually and then can have the blossoming personal relationship with Christ. While the term, the Word, provides objective truth for the believer, it is also an authoritative word, in that it establishes a standard. Language, rather than feelings, establishes the precise standard by which God and man enter into relationship. Language enlightens man with knowledge so that he can objectively understand and know God more fully without having to rely on subjective feeling with no objective foundation of thought and truth.

Origen acknowledges the significance of John 1:1 in identifying the Word as the incarnate Christ and the Father as its source:

John uses more exalted and wonderful language in the beginning of his gospel, when by an appropriate declaration he defines the Word to be God. . . . Let him who assigns a beginning to the Word of God or the wisdom of God beware lest he utters impiety against the unbegotten Father himself, in denying that he was always a Father and that he begat the Word and possessed wisdom in all previous times or ages or whatever else they may be called.<sup>18</sup>

Not only with regard to the origins of the divine living Word but also with the divine written Word, Origen denies the temporal subordination of the Son to the Father. For not only the Son, to be God, must have always existed as God, but also the Father, to be God, must have always existed as the Father. The Father must have always been a father, even to the Son. The individuality of each person in the Trinity is significantly defined by the roles, functions, and persons of the others. Origen ascribes eternity to the Word, yet he links it with the incarnation, which was not an eternal function of the Son. The act of the deity of the Son becoming human affirms that the Son is the Word, for the Word eternally exists for the benefit of man. The event itself was no less real to the persons of the Trinity before the incarnation. God's mind is not limited in that way, for God the Son was always going to become a man at a specific time in human history.

The Son as Life

Origen describes how man receives life from the Son, just as the Son did from the Father. This is not to say that at some time in eternity past the Son was lifeless and non-existent and that at some future time the Father imparted life to him. Rather the Son, as representative of the recipients of life from the Father, is the Father's instrument for imparting life to man. Origen describes the Son as the source of life and every other abstract quality of truth which the Son personifies and which God desires man to receive. In fact, man's participation in life and in wisdom is a Platonic conception. Echoing this aspect of Platonism, Origen says:

This Son, then, is also the truth and the life of all things that exist; and rightly so. For the things that were made, how could they live except by the gift of life? Or the things that exist, how could they really and truly exist, unless they were derived from truth? Or how could rational beings exist, unless the Word or reason had existed before them? Or how could they be wise, unless wisdom existed?<sup>19</sup>

Just as man requires the existence of wisdom, at least simultaneous with his own existence, so that there is a source of wisdom outside himself, so the Son, conversely, always was wisdom in his own right, and always possessed the ability of making wisdom available even before man was created. Man needs this wisdom from the Son to become truly wise, for he can never acquire wisdom on his own without either the source or the power of divine wisdom. The Father's wisdom is personified in the Son, who serves as a mediator between the Father and mankind to impart

wisdom. Origen portrays the Son as more than just the source of wisdom for man; the Son is the source of man's life as well. In fact, in this selection Origen has not mentioned the Father, for he is thinking in terms of emanation, accepted by later Platonism. Equating the Son with life, he alludes to another of the Son's titles, that is, life. Just as the Son always existed, so the Son as wisdom and life must also have existed always. Because the Father always possessed life, so life must be said to have existed always. The existence of the Father and the existence of the Son are as eternal as the life they share with each other and possess independently. That life is eternal life.

#### Other Titles of the Son

Origen mentions other Biblical titles of Christ which reflect and confirm deity, such as "the life, the word, the truth, the way and the resurrection (*pro eo quod via est et pro eo quod resurrectio est*). For all these titles are derived from his works and powers, and in none of them is there the least reason to understand anything corporeal. . . ."20 In this statement Origen has verified the deity of the Son, for to these various titles he ascribes incorporeality. He accounts for the variety of titles for the Son by acknowledging the Son's variety of functions. While Son is a name which emphasizes his relationship with the Father, these other titles clearly include various functions toward man in fulfilment of the Father's plan. Gögler explains that the

establishment of the relationship between the various titles of the Son as an instrument in the dissemination and inculcation of truth and of God actually has a Platonic origin. He says:

Origenes hat die Wirklichkeitsvorstellung des Platonismus, für den die eigentliche Wirklichkeit in der Idee und durch Teilhabe an ihr im intellegiblen Wesen der Dinge besteht. Für den Christen Origenes ist der Seinsgrund des Seienden, das allen Seinsbereichen transzendente Wirkliche, das pneumatische Sein. Leben, Logos, Wahrheit, Licht oder Wahrheit, Weisheit und Pneuma [which Origen elaborates in his commentary on the Gospel of John] sind im Grunde identisch. Was Origenes "das wahre Sein" (τὰ ἀληθινά) oder einfach "die Wahrheit" [also in his commentary on John] nennt, ist die Urwirklichkeit, von dem alles andere Sein sich durch Teilhabe herleitet [in the *De Principiis*].<sup>21</sup>

### The Analogy of Light and Brightness

Origen continues to verify the equal infinity and eternity of the Father and the Son. Although he has provided logical reasons for this belief, he reiterates his stand: ". . . it is impious and shocking to regard God the Father in the begetting of his only-begotten Son and in the Son's subsistence as being similar to any human being . . . in the act of begetting . . ." <sup>22</sup> Having stated that this begetting is not comparable to creation, Origen begins to describe begetting as "an eternal and everlasting begetting, as brightness [which] is begotten from light. For he . . . is Son by nature."<sup>23</sup> Prestige agrees with Origen's description of

begetting or generation when he says: ". . . the difference between divine generation and human generation is as great as that between deity and humanity; therefore the Son's generation is eternal and everlasting, just as the radiance is continuously generated from the light."<sup>24</sup> If the begetting is continuous instead of instantaneous, the begetting remains with a constant nature, whereas an instantaneous momentary fleeting begetting would not. More than an analogy, the truth of the brightness coming from the light identifies the Father with light. While Origen has previously recognized light as a title for the Son, he hints at identifying the Father with light because the Son, he says, is brightness which finds its source in light. This brightness is inherently identified with and is a part of the Son. Origen reminds his readers, who might not so easily see the Son as light, that he naturally, truly, and inherently is.

The difference between light and brightness (*splendor*) Origen does not develop according to the Latin translation, but the truth in this analogy is quite significant. Brightness is an aspect of light; it focuses on the real purpose of light. Brightness is a superlative term which ascribes infinite quality to light. This light is not tainted with any darkness; it is pure. While the Father and the Son both contain and are light, the Son serves as the mirror of this light to show the world how truly this light is light, by clearly showing its brightness. Just as God is a more general word than the Father, so light is a more

general word than brightness. Such specificity and superlative vocabulary eliminates any vagueness or ambiguity in the absolute nature of a thing apart from its relative aspects and applications. Koetschau cites *In Ep. ad Hebr. Frg. 1* for further development of this context:

*Lux autem aeterna quid aliud sentiendum est quam Deus pater? qui nunquam fuit, quando lux quidem esset, splendor vero ei non adesset; neque enim lux sine splendore suo unquam intellegi potest. Quod si verum est, nunquam est, quando Filius non Filius fuit. Erat autem non . . . innatus . . . , sed sicut ingenitae lucis splendor ipsam illam lucem initium habens ac fontem, natus quidem ex ipsa; sed non erat quando non erat.*<sup>25</sup>

For further evidence for his arguments, Origen consults Scripture. He cites Colossians 1:15, which says that Christ is the "firstborn of all creation".<sup>26</sup> He quotes Hebrews 1:3, which describes Christ as the "brightness of God's glory and the express image of his substance (*splendor gloriae et figura expressa substantiae eius*)".<sup>27</sup> Origen's analogies of light and the image are not his own; they originate from Scripture. Scriptural evidence is all that is needed to verify the truth of Origen's analogies.

### The Father and the Son as Wisdom

Just as a distinction exists between the light of the Father and the brightness of the Son, so Origen sums up the relationship between the wisdom of God, as found in the pages of the Word of God, for example, and its origin, the Father. He says:

. . . the wisdom of God has her subsistence nowhere else but in him who is the beginning of all things, from whom also she took birth. And because he himself who alone is a Son, by nature, is this wisdom, he is on this account also called the "only-begotten" (*>Sapientiam vero dei< . . . subsistentiam habentem non alibi nisi in eo, qui est initium omnium, ex quo et nata est. Quae sapientia quia ipse est, qui est solus natura filius, idcirco et >unigenitus< dicitur*). [*Subsistentia* translates ὑποστάσις.]<sup>28</sup>

In the first sentence wisdom seems to be equated with the Father, whom the Father identifies as God, and in the second sentence wisdom is obviously equated with the Son, whom Origen once again emphasizes as finding its source in the Father. He comes close to saying that they are two aspects of the same essence. In other selections Origen has identified both wisdom and the Son as dependent on a creator, namely the Father, for their existence. This is not to say that either of them could have not existed. For if one exists, so must the other. Primarily, however, the Father by virtue of being the Father, possesses a Son, whose existence has no temporal limitations or hindrances.

### Conflicting Statements on the Begetting of the Son

Understanding and explaining the eternity of the Son in coordination with his origin is a constant issue to Origen. While he repeatedly asserts his belief in the eternity of the Son, he also believes that the Son came from the Father, but not temporarily and not as a created being, such as angelic or human creation. That the Son came from the Father seemingly indicates that the Son had a beginning, but

temporal limitations cannot be ascribed to eternal God, who the Son is, along with the Father. Perhaps it would be better to say that the Son comes from the Father. The following selections illustrate the contradiction between the Latin and Greek versions of the same text. Upholding the Biblically based truth that the Son and the Holy Spirit are the begotten persons of the Trinity, Origen, according to the Latin version, states: "This point must above all be upheld by those who allow nothing to be unbegotten, that is, unborn, except God the Father only."<sup>29</sup> According to Jerome, Origen really said: "' . . . nothing is *uncreated* [rather than unborn] except God the Father only'."<sup>30</sup> But there is a real question as to the extent to which ἀγέννητος and ἀγέννητος were differentiated in Origen's day.<sup>31</sup> Ignoring the other dogmatic affirmations Origen has made that the Son is just as divine as the Father, one could understand Jerome's version to mean that the Son, in his deity, was created by and from the Father, and that the creation is similar to or the same as angelic or human creation. The Son would then be perceived to have a beginning. Such a conclusion would contradict Origen's allegiance to the absolute deity and infinity of the Son in his deity. Thus far, however, Origen, according to Rufinus' translation, has stated over and over that, in spite of the apparent subordination of Christ, which seems to be reinforced by his humanity, the Son is just as much God as the Father is God. For the Father always existed and always existed as the Father, and to be a father one must have a son. Therefore, the Son must have always

existed as well. This statement by Origen, as preserved by Jerome, attesting to the uncreation of the Father and the creation of the Son, appears to be in blatant contradiction to Rufinus' record. The two texts can be harmonized, however, if one views Origen as emphasizing the Father as the source of the other person of the Trinity and his authority in the planning and over the act of creation, included in which is the humanity of the incarnate Christ. When Origen, according to Jerome, ascribes creation to the deity of the Son, he does not assign temporal limitations to him as well. In his other statements, Jerome's version should be understood in a general sense, not with the usual limitations of creation ascribed to mankind or the angels. It is doubtful that Rufinus changed the content of all of Origen's previous arguments.

### The Son as the Image of the Father

Origen, in the Latin version, criticizes the Gnostics' explanation of the Trinity in terms of emanations, in light of the impossibility of the divisibility of incorporeality.<sup>32</sup> Origen describes the general meaning of creation as applied to the Son in terms of the Son originating from the Father's will and thus his mind. He says:

Rather must we suppose that as an act of the will proceeds from the mind without either cutting off any part of the mind or being separated or divided from it, in some similar fashion has the Father begotten the Son, who is indeed his image; so that as the Father is invisible by nature, he has a begotten image that is

also invisible.<sup>33</sup>

Just as something tangible and visible can be reflected in a mirror, so the Son, intangible and invisible, in his deity, is the eternally reflected image of the Father, whose eternal reflection is seen as the Son. Another explanation could include a mirror, just as eternal as the Father, in front of which the Father eternally stands, metaphorically speaking.<sup>34</sup> The reflection, which is the Son, would therefore be eternal as well. Origen does not go so far as describing a mirror which reflects for eternity, however. In this quotation from Rufinus' version, Origen admits that he does not understand how the Son did actually come from the Father. While the humanity of Christ was created, his deity was not created in the sense of creatures coming into existence, for the manner in which deity came into existence is neither subject to time nor to corporeal creation.

### Christ as the Image of the Father

Origen clarifies that Christ is an image of the Father because he reflects the Father's truth. He says, according to Rufinus: "Our Saviour is therefore the image of the invisible God, the Father, being the truth, when considered in relation to the Father himself, and the image, when considered in relation to us, to whom he reveals the Father."<sup>35</sup> In this selection, Origen specifies the Son's humanity, not his deity, as the visible reflection of invisible God, who is the Father. A discrepancy exists

between Rufinus' text and the original as documented by both Jerome and "by an anonymous defender of Origen whose book is described by Photius".<sup>36</sup> According to the original text, Origen says: "The Son, who is the image of the invisible Father, is not the truth when compared with the Father; but in relation to us, who are unable to receive the truth of God almighty, he is a shadow and semblance of truth."<sup>37</sup> Butterworth believes that Photius preserves what Origen actually said, when he describes the Son as "'the image of God, considered in relation to God whose image he is, and in so far as he is image, is not truth'."<sup>38</sup> The disparity between the two versions is that Origen humanizes the Son more than Rufinus allows. In Origen's attempt to make the Son more humanly perceptible and identifiable, he emphasizes the humanity of Christ and links humanity with deity rather than deity with deity. Accordingly he muddles the origin of the deity of the Son in the Father with the role of the Father in creating mankind, specifically the humanity of Christ. When Origen says that the Son "is a shadow and semblance of truth", he does not necessarily deny the genuine truth which the deity of the Son embodies. Rather he affirms the Father as the source of truth for the other persons of the Trinity as well as for all creation. Emphasizing the Father as the source of truth, Origen detracts from the Son's exactly equivalent association with, even being, truth. Origen is once again deterred from reconciling the co-infinity of the Father with the deity of the Son by the temporal limitations, sequences,

and delays inherent to regular creation. God thinks the thought of creation, desires its execution, and then creates, when mankind, for example, is the subject of creation. When creation is applied to a person of the Trinity, the temporal limitations, sequences, and delays normally associated with creation are neither applicable nor relevant. When words such as light and truth are applied to the Son, they are also applied to the Father. Each and both have a share in and are these attributes. For both to be God, this must be the case. When such attributes are directed to man, they are attributed to the Son, who, in his humanity, remains the mediator between the Father and mankind. In *Early Christian Thinkers: An Introduction to Clement of Alexandria and Origen*, Kraft observes: ". . . the begetting of the Son must be a happening which belongs to the very being of God. Indeed, in the strict sense of the term one should not speak of a happening. The begetting of the Son does not differ from the statement that God is Father."<sup>39</sup>

### The Analogy of the Mirror and Its Reflection

Origen draws the analogy between the Son and the Father to man and the Son. In the Greek version, Origen says: "We, therefore, having been made according to the image, have the Son, the original, as the truth of the noble qualities that are within us. And what we are to the Son, such is the Son to the Father, who is the truth."<sup>40</sup> The Son and the truth, which he both is and possesses, reflect the

Father's truth. The Son is "the original", for he is God. While the source and authority for his truth he finds in the Father, no temporal limitation on the Son's essence or possession of truth exists. Moreover, the Son, as the image of the Father, is the image of the entire Father. Although man is created in the image of God, the natural limitations imposed by virtue of man's humanity prevent the image from being whole and divine. Certainly man cannot be thought of as divine in any circumstances, but the distinction between the two kinds of images, of the Son and of man, is significant. The Son, as God, is well able to receive the divinity of the Father being reflected. Mankind, by contrast, is only partially able to fulfil such divine potential, which can never be fully realized in man because of man's inherent limitations as a created being. Thus the Son, as God and capable of reflecting divinity, is just as real and divine as the original and possesses the purity, quality, even perfection of the original himself. Although the Son is not the original in an authoritative, ultimately original context, he is the original in that he has perfectly retained the divinity of the Father he reflects, and always did so, just as the Father was always reflecting; for both are eternal. The analogy between two divine persons and deity and humanity, however, is only as truthful and as accurate as the differences between these two components permit. The oppositeness of infinity and finitude distinguish the Father and the Son, in their eternity and independence from man, between man and his lack of eternity and dependence on God.

## The Disproportion of Light and Brightness

Yet another discrepancy occurs between the two texts. Once again Jerome cites Origen as saying: "God the Father is light incomprehensible. In comparison with the Father, Christ is a very small brightness, though to us by reason of our weakness he seems to be a great one"; and citing Theophilus, Jerome continues: "Again, as much as Paul or Peter differ from the Saviour, so much is the Saviour less than the Father."<sup>41</sup> If Origen is speaking of the deity of Christ and not the humanity, he is incorrect. It is possible that, as before, he emphasizes the hierarchy within the Trinity as a model for the hierarchy between God and man. From man's point of view, Christ, as the perfect divine image of the Father, cannot be completely perceived or conceived of by man. If Origen literally means that the difference between Christ and the Father is as great as the difference between other men and the Father, Origen is certainly wrong by the standards of Nicene orthodoxy. It must be remembered that in contrast to human frailty Christ in his humanity appears very strong.

What can be learned is the importance of point of view. Most commonly used as a literary term, point of view lends insight on the truth of a subject when considered from several aspects, having first ascertained which is the correct aspect or perspective in a given passage. Both the divine and human points of view should be considered when trying to understand the Trinity along with its nuances.

Although Christ certainly recognized himself as divine, he humbled himself to the Father, as shown during the incarnation and in his various dissertations with the disciples and the questioning masses. On the one hand, Christ portrayed a Father much more significant than himself; Christ seemed merely a liason between man and the Father. On the other hand, Christ did not deny his deity. Although he was the Father's messenger on earth by whom the Father's purposes were executed, Christ presented himself as one to imitate thoughtfully, not to emulate blindly or superficially. Although they could never rise to Christ's divine heights, for their physical origin and physical birth differed from his, men could use his standards and his life as an absolute criterion for their own lives. Thus Origen's emphasis on the humanity of Christ or on the authority and rank held by the Father does not reveal the total perspective. Such an emphasis does reveal the difficulty in appreciating Christ's deity and humanity simultaneously.

Origen seems to return frequently to the principle and analogy of the image and here he alternates it with the analogy of light. When he quotes I John 1:5 as "God is light", he comments: "The only-begotten Son, therefore, is the brightness of this light, proceeding from God without separation, as brightness from light, and lightening the whole creation."<sup>42</sup> Just as the Son is the perfect image of the Father reflecting divinity, so the brightness of this light has a divine intensity. From man's point of view,

perhaps the brightness/light analogy is more suitable, for it is matched to man's limited mentality. While man cannot directly look without difficulty at literal, physical light because of the limitations of human eyesight in withstanding the intensity of light, he can without difficulty see the rays which the light produces. The analogy of the image, like the analogy of light, elucidates the immensity of God in contrast with the incapacity of man in man's efforts to perceive God totally and with perspective, not withstanding the reality of two such opposite beings.

Origen declares his purpose for analyzing the analogy of brightness. He says: ". . . we [must] arrive at the meaning of his being the brightness; for it is through its brightness that the nature of the light itself is known and experienced (*intellegere debemus etiam splendoris opus; per splendorem namque quid sit lux ipsa agnoscitur et sentitur*)."<sup>43</sup> Origen explains that by slowly looking at more and more light, man's capacity for viewing it increases so that eventually he is "capable of enduring the glory of the light, [that is, its brightness] becoming in this respect even a kind of mediator between men and the light."<sup>44</sup> As these analogies have shown, there is a necessity for a mediator between man and God. Man is unable to assimilate light, except by assimilating a portion of its brightness. Man is likewise unable to appreciate God, except through Christ who both reflects and simplifies God; that is, he verbalizes the message and the purposes of God the Father in a language

discernible to man. By assimilating the Son, man assimilates the Father, for the Son reflects the glory of the Father, which man is unable to discern on his own. The more the believer grows in his relationship with the Son, the closer he becomes to the Father, and the more he can assimilate the brightness of the Father's glory.

Origen combines these two analogies: "Christ is said . . . by the apostle to be not only 'the brightness of God's glory (*splendor gloriae*)' but also 'the express image of his substance or subsistence (*figura expressa substantiae vel subsistentiae eius*)'."<sup>45</sup> Origen elaborates on the adjective, express: ". . . when wisdom outlines first in herself the things which she wishes to reveal to others, by means of which they are to know and understand God, then she herself may be called the express image of God's substance."<sup>46</sup> Christ, as the messenger and spokesman of the Father is, and chooses to be, the instrument of the truth to be revealed to mankind, just as the image produced by the Father is, even chooses to be, the instrument of truth to be revealed to mankind. Just as the image produced by the Father in the Son is completely assimilated by the Son, but is only partially appreciated by man, so the infinite dimensions of truth which the Son possesses are limited in the human soul by its finite dimensions. Man is only able to understand the truths which God allows or desires him to understand, whether through the revelation of the mind of Christ in the divine written Word or through man's own perceptive capabilities which he innately possesses by

virtue of being created in the image of God.

### The Analogy of the Two Statues

Origen further clarifies "the express image of God's substance" by introducing another of his own illustrations from the tangible, material world. He says:

Let us suppose, for example, that there existed a statue of so great a size as to fill the whole world, but which on account of its immensity was imperceptible to anyone, and that another statue was made similar to it in every detail, in shape of limbs and outline of features, in form and material, but not in its immense size, so that those who were unable to perceive and behold the immense one could yet be confident that they had seen it when they saw the small one, because this preserved every line of limbs and features and the very form and material with an absolutely indistinguishable similarity.<sup>47</sup>

The analogy is simple to understand. Obviously the Father represents the large statue and the deity of the Son the small replica. The analogy can mislead in that the small statue is not so small that man has no trouble seeing or perceiving it. Even the smaller one is too immense for the human mind to see it completely. In addition, the view of the smaller replica which man possesses is not a view of the whole statue. His perception is thus not completely balanced, for he does not see the context of the portion he sees. He does not see the totality of the physical statue, nor does he perceive the totality of the Son and of the truth the Son is and possesses.

Origen, in explaining the statue, brings in the analogy

of brightness and light, for he says:

. . . through this fact of his becoming to us the brightness, we who were not able to look at the glory of pure light while it remained in the greatness of his godhead, may find a way of beholding the divine light through looking at the brightness.<sup>48</sup>

Origen further comments on the similarity of the smaller statue with the humanity of Christ. Statues of human beings obviously exist and represent the corporeal and overt characteristics of men. The deity of the Son, however, represents or reflects the spiritual nature of the Father. Origen has already asserted the incorporeality of the Father and the Son. In the following quotation, Origen shows how even the humanity of Christ reflects the glory of the Father, which is an aspect of incorporeality:

. . . a comparison with statues, taken from the region of material things, is to be allowed for no other purpose but to show that the Son of God, though brought within the very narrow compass of the human body, yet gave indications, in the likeness of his power and works to those of God the Father, of the immense and invisible greatness that was in him. . .  
.49

Whether or not one can distinguish between the humanity and deity of Christ to such an extent as to say that the humanity here is actually reflecting or imitating the deity of Christ who is reflecting the Father, Origen does not affirm. Certainly the corporeality of Christ's humanity limited the extent that his humanity reflected the Father; the human body possesses limited mental and physical capabilities and retards spiritual capabilities.

## The Relationship Between the Will and the Power of the Father and the Eternity of the Son

Responding to the light, power, and glory of God in Wisdom of Solomon 7: 25, 26, Origen links the power of God, which includes the authority of God, with the will of God. He says:

. . . the strength of all this power, so great and so immense, comes to have a subsistence of its own; and although it proceeds from the power itself as will proceeding from mind, yet nevertheless the will of God comes itself to be a power of God. There comes into existence, therefore, another power, subsisting in its own proper nature, . . . drawing from this source whatever existence it has; and there is no time when it did not exist.<sup>50</sup>

Just as the Son's existence is dependent on the Father's will, so in this context the existence of the divine will is predicated on divine power. Just as the Father brought about the Son, so God's power brings about God's will. While the temporal element in cause and effect creates the problem of the eternal and everlasting existence of the Son from the will of the Father, the cause, which is the power, does not precede the effect, which is the will. God's actions toward himself and any of the actions of the persons of the Trinity toward themselves are independent of time. For God, time does not pass or change; time is constant. It only appears variable and appears at all against the backdrop of human circumstances. The example of cause and effect of the power and the will helps to corroborate his declaration of the eternity of the Son, in spite of the

cause of the Son being the Father. The principle of the will and the power, two divine attributes and personifications, is parallel with the reality of the eternal co-existence of the Father and the Son in spite of the fact that logically it would seem impossible with the temporally imposed limitations of human circumstances. In *Divine Substance*, Stead maintains that "Origen interprets the version [Wisdom 7: 25] in a strongly subordinationist sense. . . . It seems that God's glory, light, and power are conceived as attributes which in some way mediate between the Father and the Son."<sup>51</sup> Concentrating on the immaterial and personal nature of the Son's generation from the Father, Stead adds: ". . . Origen condemns all materializing notions of the Son's generation, preferring to speak of 'will from mind', though in fact there is a substantive reality, *virtus altera in sua proprietate subsistens*, not a mere act of will. . . ."<sup>52</sup>

In opposition to the proposition that the will, fully developed and completely free, has not always existed, Origen responds: "For if anyone is inclined to describe it as being non-existent at first but coming into existence afterwards, let him tell us why the Father who caused it to exist did not do so before."<sup>53</sup> Origen asserts that "since God always had both the power and the will, there was never the slightest reason or possibility that he should not always have had this good thing that he desired."<sup>54</sup> Origen cites I Corinthians 1:24 to correlate Christ with power, in fact, to personify power. The verse says: "Christ is the power of

God", and Origen responds that "this power must be called not merely a breath of the power of God but a power proceeding from a power."<sup>55</sup> Just as the will proceeded from the power, so does the personality from power, that is, Christ proceeded from the power of the Father. Actually understanding various traits to be names or titles for a person may seem unlikely at first, because human beings are sometimes said to possess these characteristics, but not actually to be them. Christ, however, more than possesses such characteristics; he is them. In him the characteristics cease to be characteristics; they become divine personifications. The Father possesses the same characteristics, although he is not normally associated with some of them; for it is not through him, but through Christ that they are manifested. In addition, just as the Son always existed, although he found his source in the Father, so these characteristics always existed and were always associated with him. Origen does allow for the emanations of characteristics and attributes from one person of the Godhead to another, for he introduces the next section by saying: "Let us now look into the saying that wisdom is 'an effluence', that is, an emanation, 'of the clear glory of the Almighty'. . . ."<sup>56</sup>

Certainly the attributes and functions of the persons of the Trinity are most easily perceived by man when he observes God's responses to human decisions and circumstances. Origen addresses the effect of the potentiality and reality of human circumstances on the

functions of the persons of the Godhead, that is, the effect of man's decisions on God's decisions. If divine attributes had no object on which to act and as a result were not in operation, can they be said not to have existed at one time?

Origen responds:

Now as one cannot be a father apart from having a son, nor a lord apart from holding a possession or a slave, so we cannot even call God almighty if there are none over whom he can exercise his power. Accordingly, to prove that God is almighty we must assume the existence of the universe.<sup>57</sup>

Origen does not recognize the overriding fallacy of this argument. The fallacy is that the attributes of God require the existence of man, in short, that God is required to create to prove that he is God. Such an assumption denies the integral essence of deity, namely complete self-sufficiency. Surely, however, Origen does not argue that God is dependent on the existence of man, but rather that God's existence is proved by the fact of creation. Moreover, Origen adds: If "God was not almighty, but . . . afterwards became almighty from the time when he began to have creatures over whom he could exercise power", God would "apparently have experienced a kind of progress."<sup>58</sup> Not only would movement from a state of lack of almightiness to almightiness make God dependent on the existence of man, but there would also be a change in deity. Deity is not a relative state, however; it is absolute. One cannot become more divine. God cannot become more divine, for moving from a state of less divinity to a state of more divinity contradicts the definition of divinity.

A corollary to the divine attribute of omnipotence is creativeness. Creativeness combined with omniscience indicates that the Father always possesses the thought of creating mankind. The thought is infinite, but its execution is finite. God, then, is not dependent on the finite act of creation, even though the thought of the creation of man was with him always. In this respect, he was not simply dependent on this thought; it has eternally been a part of his being.

The next section appears in both the Greek from Justinian and the Latin version.<sup>59</sup> As usual, the Latin version is more verbose than the Greek version. The topic continues to be the almightiness of God. According to Justinian, Origen says: ". . . there must always have existed the things in virtue of which he is almighty; and there must always have existed things under his sway, which own him as their ruler."<sup>60</sup> Origen's clarity of thought is not as thorough here as it could be. The actual, physical existence of creatures does not create almightiness in God. It might provide an obvious verification, but creatures do not and cannot create or elicit even one attribute of God by virtue of their existence. In the text of the paragraph before this one, Origen has admitted God's total independence upon anyone or anything outside himself. The Latin version contains essentially the same information except that it specifies what God must have always ruled to make him almighty, namely creatures, not just a physical universe without man.<sup>61</sup> Either way, however, God cannot be

dependent on that which is physical, material, tangible, or corporeal. That which is uncreated cannot be governed by that which is created. God does not receive the title of almighty because man, by virtue of existing, bestows it. For God actually to make the decision to create the universe including man, he had to be almighty already. It is apparent, then, that God, while not always exercising his almightiness, has always possessed the potential for exercising his almightiness. It is true that God responds to man, his existence and decisions and actions, but it is untrue that God's potential for response depends on the reality of man's existence.

This section in Origen emphasizes the thought of creation precedent to the actual act of creation and generally focuses on the almightiness of God, without specifying the Son's specific use and personification of omnipotence. In his discussion of the attributes of God as personifications of God, Origen has drifted away from the specific discussion of Christ; he now returns to it.

#### The Interaction of the Divinity of the Father and the Son

Just as power executes the will, so omnipotence executes wisdom. When Origen ascribes omnipotence to God (he does not specify any particular person in the Trinity), he also introduces the function of the Son as wisdom. One could say that wisdom is the motive behind the power which God executes. This is not to say that the Son does not possess omnipotence, for as God he obviously does. But as

far as the expression of it to the world is concerned, like the angle of the statue that is viewed by man, the emphasis on the general concept of God, as opposed to the Son specifically, is his omnipotence. Wisdom is an alternative title for the Son, which God makes real to man by the use of his omnipotence. Origen agrees that ". . . it is through wisdom, which is Christ, that God holds power over all things. . . ."62 In this instance, then, wisdom serves as the cause to produce the effect for the benefit of mankind and is activated, energized, and made real to man by means of power. Wisdom itself is even powerful.

Origen affirms the omnipotence of the Son specifically. As the image of the Father, the Son possesses identical attributes. Origen adds:

And to prove to you that the omnipotence of the Father and the Son is one and the same, just as God and the Lord are one and the same as the Father, listen to the manner in which John speaks in the Apocalypse [the canonicity of which Origen, it seems, accepts]: "These things saith the Lord God, which is and which was and which is to come, the Almighty".63

Origen identifies the one "to come" as the Son. The Father, the Son, and the Almighty are seen to be one and the same. While the Father and the Son do not share all the same titles when interacting with man, they share the same essence. They simply have different emphases and functions. While the Father is the authority, the Son is the mediator, the one subject to authority, between God and man. Stead remarks: ". . . Origen's theological method permits him to use complementary expressions which by

later standards appear inconsistent. . . . At the other extreme he can permit himself to say, *Unus et idem est cum Patre deus et dominus. . . .*"<sup>64</sup>

Origen emphasizes the unity and similarity of the Father and the Son. He cites John 27:10, which says: "All things that are mine are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them."<sup>65</sup> He responds: "Now if all things which are the Father's are Christ's, and among all that the Father is, he is Almighty, then undoubtedly the only-begotten Son must also be Almighty, that the Son may have all that the Father has."<sup>66</sup> Origen also cites Philippians 2:10, 11: ". . . 'in the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth; and every tongue shall confess that Jesus is Lord in the glory of God the Father.'"<sup>67</sup> Origen acknowledges the joint position of the Father and the Son, which the Father has bestowed on the Son. The Son is not only worshipped as the one who mediates between man and God and reflects the Father's glory, but he is also worshipped on his own merits. As God he deserves just as much worship from man as the Father.

Origen wishes to clarify "what the glory of omnipotence is."<sup>68</sup> In the following statement, Origen pays tribute to the authority of the Father as creator:

God the Father is almighty because he holds dominion over all things, that is, over heaven and earth, sun, moon and stars and everything contained in them. This dominion he exercizes through his Word. . . . Now if every knee bows to Jesus, then undoubtedly it is Jesus to whom all things have been subjected to the Father through him.<sup>69</sup>

Christ has two roles, while the Father has only one. Christ is the presenter of the Father's plan as the mediator between God and man, as well as the object of worship. The Father is the object of worship and relies on the Son to make his message and purposes known to mankind. Origen concludes that the glory of the Father lies in his creation and his subsequent possession of it. He says: "His glory, therefore, lies in the very fact that he possesses all things; and this is the purest and brightest glory of omnipotence, that the universe is held in subjection by reason and wisdom, and not by force and necessity."<sup>70</sup> Origen implies that man possesses a will that is free. Man's possession of a will so free further affirms the glory belonging to omnipotence. The ultimate authority of the Father and of the Son, as the free divine executor of the Father's will under the Father's authority, appears even more balanced and fair when viewed in light of man, who is not forced into loving and respecting God, but if he does, does so from his own choice.

Embellishing and distinguishing what he means by describing this glory as "purest and brightest", Origen discusses the immutability of wisdom.<sup>71</sup> Surely what is "alterable", unstable, or inconsistent "cannot be said to possess of glory that is sincere and bright."<sup>72</sup> Such a high degree of fluctuation, even to the extent of absence, as opposed to being potential or not presently overt, cannot be said to be the integral component or core of such a nature. By contrast, the wisdom of such perfect intensity and

quality can never be said to fluctuate in quantity or quality. The essential orthodoxy of Origen's theology is apparent when he says:

But since the wisdom of God, which is his only-begotten Son, is in all respects unalterable and unchangeable, and since every good quality in him is essential and can never be changed or altered, his glory is on that account described as pure and sincere (*Sapientia vero dei, quae est unigenitus filius eius, quoniam in omnibus inconvertibilis est et incommutabilis, et substantiale in eo omne bonum est, quod utique mutari aut converti numquam potest, idcirco pura eius ac sincera gloria praedicatur*).<sup>73</sup>

The perfection of divine wisdom, specifically of the Father's wisdom, can be understood to be perfect from two perspectives. First, since any attribute belonging to the Father must be perfect, wisdom is perfect. Second, since the personification, even the person of wisdom begotten from the Father, is the Son, this wisdom must be perfect. Here again the Son can be seen as a model, though certainly not limited to being a model, to clarify and to reinforce the whole perfection of wisdom. No matter how much human beings understand an idea intellectually, the truth of the principle becomes most real and immediate when they actually meet the person who embodies the truth. The humanity of Christ makes real the persons and truths of the Trinity.

A third aspect of the wisdom of Christ which Origen discusses is "the brightness of the eternal light".<sup>74</sup> Referring to his previous discussion on brightness, he emphasizes the importance of the everlasting quality of the

brightness, in contrast to the source of brightness. It is a brightness neither begun nor formed in a temporal setting and foundation. He says:

Now God's wisdom is the brightness of that light, not only in so far as it is light, but in so far as it is everlasting light. His wisdom is therefore an everlasting brightness enduring eternally. If this point is fully understood, it is a clear proof that the Son's existence springs from the Father himself, yet not in time, or from any other beginning except, as we have said, from God himself.<sup>75</sup>

Affirming the co-eternity and co-divinity of the Father and the Son, Origen describes the effect, the actual practical essence of divine brightness, to be divine wisdom. He even equates the two.

Origen's next description of wisdom identifies wisdom with operation. Like brightness and wisdom, wisdom and power are complementary. Wisdom is not power but the thought behind the power of God. Wisdom justifies the existence and exercise of power and energizes it with reason. It subtracts any whim or emotion that might exist in power if wisdom were not present. This is not to say that wisdom could not possibly be absent from divine power, for then that power would certainly not be divine. But, for purposes of discussion, it is useful to see what God would be like if he were without them. Quoting Wisdom 7:25, Origen calls wisdom the "unspotted mirror of the *energy* of working of God."<sup>76</sup> He next defines this "working" of God's power. "It is a kind of strength . . . by means of which the Father works, whether in his acts of creation, or of providence, or of judgment, or in the ordering

and superintendence of every detail of the universe at his own appointed time."<sup>77</sup> This controlled, productive, creative energy belonging to God the Father, the Son certainly possesses and, in fact, is. When it is in action, it effects goodness, the effects of which are visible to man and not confined to the Trinity itself. When it is specifically directed to creation, the Son appears as God. The Son is the instrument and the representative of the Father. Being also himself God, the Son possesses and is the same wisdom as the Father. The individuality of these two persons of the Trinity lies in the distinction of their functions, not in the identity of their persons.

### The Analogy of the Mirror

The identity of their persons Origen emphasizes when he likens the relationship of the Father and the Son to an object and its reflection in a mirror. He says:

And when wisdom is called the "unspotted mirror" of the Father's power and working, she would have us understand her nature to be like the image reflected in a mirror, which moves and acts in correspondence with the movements and actions of him who looks into the mirror, not deviating from them in any way whatever.<sup>78</sup>

This image which is reflected in the mirror is the image of the person, not of function or work or production. Because the reflected image is unspotted, it is without sin and perfect. Thus Origen subtly implies the humanity of Christ. As Origen continues, he stresses the same identity

of the Father and the Son in their persons and essences, citing John 5:19 as evidence. He says: "So too the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the wisdom of God, speaks of himself when he says, 'the works which the Father doeth, these also doeth the Son in like manner'; and again, 'the Son can do nothing of himself, but what he hath seen the Father doing'."<sup>79</sup> What Origen does not distinguish are the motivation of and the authority over the Son which cause him to execute the desires of the Father. The identical essences of the two provide the identical potential for the two to execute the same functions. Rather than both executing functions, or alternating executing functions, one alternative is that the Father commands and the Son obeys. Rather than grouping and uniting the Father and the Son into one person, rather than the two that they are, the Trinity, both model and reality, is composed of a system with leadership, with delegation of responsibility, and with efficiency. The functional advantage of this kind of system for man's benefit is that man possesses a model by which to understand his own soul and personal design. Obviously God did not form himself according to a design to help man out, but God formed man according to a design which would help man. This design is called "the image of God". Just as the deity of the Son reflects the deity of the Father, so the humanity of man reflects the humanity of the Son, who was created in God's image as well. In function, in truth, and in reality, the system by which the Trinity operates is the pattern by which mankind should operate.

Origen develops the coordination, unity, and harmony which permeate the interaction and relationship of the Father and the Son. Origen comments: ". . . nor is his [the Son's] work anything other than the Father's work, but there is one and the same movement . . . in all they do. . . ."80 Not at the expense of either one of their individualities, the Father and the Son possess the same identity in purpose, harmony in desire, and unity overall. Origen's Platonizing tendency appears in his comparison of the functions of the Son with the Father's. He correctly rejects the notion that the activities of the Father precede the Son's or that the Son has learned from the activities of the Father, which education would, of course, mean the progression from ignorance, to cognizance, to perfect omniscience of the Son and, therefore, the progression and lack of eternity of his deity. Origen says:

Some indeed have said that the Son's acts are to be compared with a pupil's work in likeness to or imitation of his master, or that such things as the Father has first formed in their spiritual essence are made by the Son in bodily material; yet how can these opinions be reconciled with the Gospel, which says, not that the Son does like things, but that he does the same things "in like manner [from John 5:19]"?81

To human perception, the Father's authority over the Son may seem unnecessary or, practically speaking, non-existent. That the Son has opted for such harmony coincides with his essence, which naturally chooses it. It is important to understand the reason for such divine unity. It is not as though the persons of the Trinity do not have any choice in their responses and initiations. They possess

perfect oneness because they choose to, because of the perfection and integrity of the essence they share.

Once again, in response to John 5:19, Origen clarifies "that there is absolutely no dissimilarity between the Son and the Father."<sup>82</sup> He continues that "the Son does [not do] like things, but that he does the same things 'in like manner'." Just as an image is an exact reflection of the object, so the Son is the perfect, flawless reflection of the Father.<sup>83</sup> In essence and in motive for subsequent actions, the two are the same. Only in function do they differ; and as a result, they are distinguished as distinct persons.

Origen responds to the phrase "image of his goodness" when he says: "The original goodness is undoubtedly the Father; and from this is born the Son, who is in every respect an image of the Father, and who may also without any doubt be properly called an 'image of his goodness'."<sup>84</sup> In contradiction to Rufinus' text, Justinian's version explains that the Son "is the image of the goodness, and yet not, as the Father is, good without qualification."<sup>85</sup> In *Pronoia und Paideusis*, Koch distinguishes the different kinds of goodness. He says: "Ἀὐτοαγαθός oder ἀπαραλλάκτως ἀγαθός, wie es auch heisst, ist nur der Vater, nicht einmal der Sohn."<sup>86</sup> In *A Greek Patristic Lexicon*, Lampe defines ἀὐτοαγαθός as "essentially good, absolutely good" but applies it to the Son "as not the absolute principle of goodness, but [as the] image of goodness of God."<sup>87</sup> Lampe defines ἀπαραλλάκτως as "in relation to something else,

*without any difference*".<sup>88</sup> It would seem that in his version, Rufinus has deliberately removed any controversial remarks by Origen. It is possible that his version lends an emphasis, rather than introducing possible heterodoxy. While, according to Rufinus' version, Origen attests to the identity of the Father and the Son, he does not deny their different functions; he simply does not address function in this section. He addresses person. The goodness of the Father is identical with the goodness of the Son. Their identity in essence includes identity in goodness, here used as an aspect of perfection. The Son must both be and possess such perfect goodness to be perfect and to be God. Perhaps as a matter of reverence, Origen acknowledges the supremacy of the Father in the hierarchy.

Aside from the short text that remains from Justinian, the text from Rufinus finishes the chapter on Christ. Origen, continuing his discussion on the goodness of the Son, affirms the primary goodness of the Father. He says:

For there is no other second goodness existing in the Son, besides that which is in the Father . . . [H]e [the Son] neither springs from any other source than from original goodness itself . . . nor has the goodness that is in him any dissimilarity or divergence from that of the Father.<sup>89</sup>

Worded in a more complete style, Origen's statement acknowledges the existence of the Father's goodness as the source of the goodness of the Son, with the Father's. He then defends his orthodoxy:

Accordingly we ought not to imagine that there is

some kind of blasphemy, as it were, in he saying that "none is good save one, God the Father" [from Mark 10:18] as if these words were to be taken as a denial that either Christ or the Holy Spirit is good; but, as we said before, the original goodness must be believed to reside in God the Father, and from him both the Son and Holy Spirit undoubtedly draw into themselves the nature of that goodness. . . .<sup>90</sup>

These remarks coincide with the doctrine of procession. Stead concludes: "The unity of substance in the Trinity is its derivation from the Father, who is its single source."<sup>91</sup> Origen describes the importance of interpreting the text of any writer, whether it be one of the authors of Scripture or himself, in its given context and in the spirit in which it was written.

#### The Difference Between Man's Goodness and God's Goodness

Having discussed at length the goodness of the persons of the Trinity and having maintained that the goodness of the persons of the Trinity is equal and perfect, Origen finally concludes that the goodness of the Son and the Spirit, although not subject to alteration and change, is derived, and therefore not equal with the Father's. Origen next contrasts the goodness of God with the goodness of man. In contrast to God's goodness, man's goodness is not innate, but acquired. Origen continues: ". . . all these are so called by an inexact use of the word, since the goodness contained in them [creatures] is accidental and not essential."<sup>92</sup> The contrast between God and man and the corresponding goodness of both show the goodness of the

persons of the Trinity in a more balanced light. No comparison between the Son's goodness and man's and between the Father's and man's can exist.

## Chapter 5

### The Holy Spirit

#### The Spirit in a Context with the Father and the Son

In Chapter 3 of Book 1, entitled "The Holy Spirit", Origen introduces the Holy Spirit in a context with the other two persons of the Trinity. He declares the Father to be "the parent of the universe (*parens universitatis*)" and the Son to be inexplicable to the human race except by the function and power of the Holy Spirit.<sup>1</sup> The ministry of the Son is shown to be dependent on the power of the Spirit. The Spirit enables man to recognize Christ as incarnate and reveals the meaning of Scripture, which is Christ as wisdom. Origen says: ". . . there is no possible way of explaining and bringing to man's knowledge the higher and diviner teaching about the Son of God, except by means of those scriptures which were inspired by the Holy Spirit. . . ."2 The Son not only depends on the Spirit to be revealed himself, but the Son also provides the Spirit a medium for revealing himself in Scripture. Origen says: "But no one except those who are familiar with the law and the prophets . . . could have even a suspicion of the personal existence of the Holy Spirit."<sup>3</sup>

While the Son is humanly discernible apart from the Spirit, the Spirit is only discernible from his function as he works in and through Scripture, circumstances, and people. Having recognized the natural ignorance of the Spirit apart

from the revelation of himself in Scripture, Origen explains the discernibility of the Father and the Son in terms of their human equivalents. He says:

For although no one is able to speak worthily of God the Father, still it is possible to gain some notion of him from our experience of the visible creation and from the instinctive thoughts of the human mind. . . . And in regard to the Son of God . . . yet again from the divine scriptures the mind of man is directed how to think of him too; and this not only from the New, but also from the Old Testament, through those deeds done by holy men which allude figuratively to Christ, and from which we can learn both his divine nature and the human nature which he assumed.<sup>4</sup>

From natural human instinct as well as from the descriptions and confirmations from Scripture, the Father and the Son are both perceived and discerned. From viewing the external world and considering the source of its creation and its beginning, man can intelligibly ascertain the existence of the Father. To general human perception, the description of the Father in Scripture confirms and surpasses the preceding natural perception. Scripture reveals God apart from and together with man, effecting more on his behalf than the physical universe could ever reveal. Likewise with the Son, the idea of whom is readily appropriated by the human mind since the parallel with a human son is obvious, Scripture introduces and reveals more about him than the human mind could hope to ascertain and develop on its own.

### The Necessity and Divinity of the Spirit

Just as the Father and the Son are revealed in Scripture, so is the Holy Spirit, who while not readily comprehensible on the human plane, in circumstances supposedly devoid of any spiritual element, is an elemental and distinctly necessary component of the idea and reality of God. Origen cites several passages from Scripture which imply that the Spirit is on a level to be worshipped as God along with the other persons of the Trinity. From the Old Testament passages cited, it is clear that the Spirit has an important function, but it is vaguely presented. In the New Testament passages, the equation of the Holy Spirit with deity is not yet specifically stated.<sup>5</sup> Origen derives from the evidence that the Holy Spirit has good reason to be worshipped because of his function toward man in addition to his place in the Trinity.

Origen explains that the ritual of baptism demands the name of the Holy Spirit to accompany the Father and Son.<sup>6</sup> Since the Spirit is necessary for baptism, he is seen to be a necessary person of the Trinity. The Trinity and the concept of God would not be complete without his person and function. Origen adds:

Who, then, is not amazed at the tremendous majesty of the Holy Spirit, when he hears that "he who shall speak a word against the Son of man" may hope for forgiveness, but "he who shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost has no forgiveness, either in this present world or in the world to come"?<sup>7</sup>

Just as in the previous chapter on the Son, Origen when setting apart the Father from the Son seemed to exalt the Father over the Son, making the Son inferior to the Father,

so it is in this section on the Holy Spirit. Using these two verses from Scripture, it seems that Origen, or even Scripture, considers the Spirit as more important than the Son of man. If rejecting the Son is less a spiritual crime than rejecting the Spirit, then it would seem that the Spirit is more important than the Son. Looking at this section at first glance, it could appear that Origen felt constrained by certain texts of Scripture to make the Son inferior to the Spirit. Perhaps even Scripture could be construed in the same way. The Son and the Holy Spirit seen in these contexts, however, are not acting independently of man. They each have different functions within the context of the Trinity alone and in a context with man. Where one's person and function show precedence in a certain context, such as within the context of relating to man, the others take deference. Although Rufinus' version does not develop the harmony between the Son and the Spirit, it is nevertheless true that a harmonious, complementary relationship between them does not demand or even allow inferiority. When one exercises authority or functions in one area, the other's deference and lack of exercise of authority does not indicate inferiority and subservience overall.

The Possible Subordinationism of the Spirit and the  
Importance of Comparing Origen's Heretical Statements  
with His Orthodox Statements

The next section on the Holy Spirit addresses the

possible creation of the Holy Spirit by the Father. According to the Latin translation, Origen says: ". . . we have been able to find no passage in the holy scriptures which would warrant us in saying that the Holy Spirit was being made or created (*ad praesens nullum sermonem in scripturis sanctis invenire potuimus, per quem spiritus sanctus factura esse vel creatura diceretur*). . . ."8 The contradiction to this statement lies in the short section from the Greek translation which follows: ". . . we believe that everything whatever except the Father and God of the universe is created (ὅτι μὲν οὖν πᾶν, ὅ τι ποτὲ παρὰ τὸν πατέρα καὶ θεὸν τῶν ὅλων γενητόν ἐστιν, ἐκ τῆς αὐτῆς ἀκολουθίας πειθόμεθα)."9 According to Butterworth, "Justinians's letter contains also the following sentence: 'that he (i.e. Origen) called the Holy Spirit a created being, as well as the Son, and included them in the number of other created beings. . . .'"10 Butterworth concludes that "Rufinus has omitted the heretical statements."11 While these last statements from Origen by way of the Greek version are seemingly heretical, one must question his intent. It is possible that he tries to set apart the Father, specifically, or even God, generally. At the same time, however, it is probable that he intended his words to be taken literally, especially since they are written with such authority and dogmatism. It is essential to balance Origen's apparently heretical statements with his completely orthodox ones. From the bulk of these it is possible to derive his true intent and meaning.

## The Permissibleness of Using the Word "Spirit" for the Holy Spirit

The next issue Origen addresses is the terminology used for the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures. In addition to "Holy Spirit", "the Spirit" and "Spirit" are also used.<sup>12</sup> Without developing an unnecessary argument, Origen concludes that the name Spirit without the prefix of Holy is an abbreviated form of the title of this person in the Trinity.

## The Identity of the Two Seraphim in Isaiah 6 and the Two Living Creatures in Habakkuk 3

The Greek version preserved by Justinian and the Latin version of the following section reveal the identity of the two seraphim in Isaiah 6:2 and following. The difference between the two versions is not great, and as usual, Rufinus' version is more verbose. Origen identifies the two seraphim as the Holy Spirit and God the Son. The Greek version reads: ". . . the two six-winged seraphim in Isaiah . . . [are] the only begotten Son of God and the Holy Spirit."<sup>13</sup> The Latin version reads: ". . . the two seraphim, which are described . . . as having six wings each . . . [are] understood to mean the only-begotten Son of God and the Holy Spirit."<sup>14</sup> Butterworth comments that the passage "seems to suggest that the Son and the Spirit are creatures" and cites

Antipater of Bostra who also criticized this passage.<sup>15</sup> Certainly seraphim are creatures, for they are angels. Perhaps if Origen is correct in identifying these two persons of the Trinity with angels, the Son and Spirit are angels in a representative, non-literal sense.

Another controversial passage which Origen seems to use to confirm the creaturely status of the Son and the Spirit is Habakkuk 3:2. The Greek version reads: ". . . the expression . . . 'In the midst of the two living creatures thou shalt be known' is spoken of Christ and the Holy Spirit."<sup>16</sup> The Latin version reads: ". . . the expression . . . 'In the midst of the two animals' (or the two living creatures) 'thou shalt be known', should be understood to refer to Christ and the Holy Spirit."<sup>17</sup> Once again, perhaps, the Biblical reference to the Son and the Spirit as creatures is an analogy or a metaphor for their function toward man as messengers of the Father. These two minor passages must not alone be used as evidence for Origen's subordination of the Son and the Spirit.

### The Revelatory Function of the Holy Spirit

Origen returns to the topic of the revelatory function of the Holy Spirit which does not necessarily imply a hierarchy in the persons of the Trinity, but in their functions. He says: "For all knowledge of the Father, when the Son reveals him, is made known to us through the Holy Spirit. So that both of these . . . are the cause of our

knowledge of God the Father."<sup>18</sup> While the Son reveals the Father through the incarnation, through living on earth, the Spirit reveals the Father through word and through power. The Spirit has not only recorded the events of the Son on earth and the person of the Son both prophesied and manifested on the earth, but also the deity of the Son. The Spirit, by the media of thought, word, and the printed page, reveals himself and the Father, and how the Trinity functions individually and wholly toward man and apart from man.

### The Perfect Divinity of the Holy Spirit

Origen rejects the possible inferiority of the Spirit to the Son and, therefore, to the Father. He says:

We must not suppose, however, that the Spirit knows God as we do, through the revelation of the Son. For if the Holy Spirit knows the Father by this means, he passes from ignorance to knowledge, and it is certainly as impious as it is foolish to confess that he is the Holy Spirit and then to ascribe ignorance to him.<sup>19</sup>

Origen has clearly detected the inherent, unavoidable illogic of the Spirit coming to know the Father as man does. For the Spirit as God is always omniscient, never beginning to become so at one time. The Holy Spirit to be God must always have possessed his attributes. They can never have increased because they are total and whole and perfect at the beginning, even though there never was a beginning. In short, the Holy Spirit to be God must have always been God,

with the complete and perfect attributes of God.

When Origen establishes the perfect eternal divinity of the Holy Spirit, he unites the divinity of the Spirit with the Father and the Son and, therefore, by implication, does not question the Son's eternal divinity. Origen elaborates:

For even if we grant that something else existed before the Holy Spirit, yet it was not by a process of development that he came to be the Holy Spirit, as if one should dare to say that at the time when he was not yet the Holy Spirit he did not know the Father, but after that he had gained this knowledge he became the Holy Spirit. That could not be, for the Holy Spirit would never have been included in the unity of the Trinity, that is, along with God the unchangeable Father and with his Son, unless he had always been the Holy Spirit.<sup>20</sup>

Origen discusses the human temporal limitation, that is, that man's perception of matters within a given time, place, and date, even if unknown. He adds:

Of course, these terms that we use, such as "always" or "has been", or any similar ones that bear a temporal significance, must be interpreted with reservations . . . ; for they relate to time, but the matters of which we are now speaking, though described in temporal language for the purposes of discussion, in their essential nature transcend all idea of time.<sup>21</sup>

Origen has recognized the temporal foundation and reference on which the human mind operates.

### The Necessity of the Spirit as the Trinity Interacts with Man

Origen addresses the reason that both the person and function of the Holy Spirit are necessary to constitute the

Trinity and, accordingly, to impart salvation to man. He stresses that all three persons of the Trinity are necessary to insure the salvation of man and that "it will undoubtedly be necessary to describe the activity which is peculiar to the Holy Spirit and that which is peculiar to the Father and the Son."<sup>22</sup> Origen has begun to interweave these three divine persons as equal in nature and complementary in function with the result of a smoothly co-existing and functioning triad.

### The Relationship Between the Father, Son, and Spirit

According to Justinian, Origen summarizes the authority relationship between the three, among themselves and apart from the human race. He reestablishes the various functions of each:

The God and Father, who holds the universe together, is superior to every being that exists, for he imparts to each one from his own existence that which each one is; the Son, being less than the Father, is superior to rational creatures alone (for he is second to the Father); the Holy Spirit is still less, and dwells within the saints alone. So that in this way the power of the Father is greater than that of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and in turn the power of the Holy Spirit exceeds that of every other holy being.<sup>23</sup>

At first reading it would seem once again that Origen is involved in blatant subordinationism. He not only subordinates both the Son and the Spirit to the Father but even the Spirit to the Son, the opposite of an earlier context in which he subordinates the Son to the Spirit. It is

essential, especially in this context, to analyze this description of the relationship between the Father, Son, and Spirit. As always, it is important to distinguish between person, or more specifically, between essence and function. Very often when one generalizes about the Trinity, function and person are equated, rather than differentiated.

The function that Origen discusses in this context is power, or authority. The context in which power is discussed is in the context of the Trinity itself, apart from man and in participation with man. Certainly, the person of the Trinity who is identified with sovereignty in Scripture is the Father. The Father ordered the creation of man and the universe. By contrast, the Son is identified with more specific sovereignty in executing the plans of the Father. For example, in the Gospels, the Son teaches his disciples and the masses who have congregated to watch and hear his ministry. When the Son exercises authority more universally, he acknowledges the authority of the Father. The best example of this acknowledgement is on the cross, when Christ submits his will to the Father's will and ascends to the cross. Likewise, however, even when addressing the crowds in his short ministry, Christ acknowledges the authority of the Father. He consistently refers to the one who has sent him. He consistently acknowledges that knowing him is not an end in itself, but the means to the end of knowing the Father. So while the Son, active in his ministry, exercises a firm, completely confident authority in his conversation and discourses, he also recognizes the authority of the Father over himself and

over the rest of the human race. He dogmatically acknowledges that the Father's authority is final and that his own authority is only as final as it mirrors the Father's authority, purposes, and desires.

To be even more specific, the authority of the Father and the authority of the Son when used in the context of exercising authority are functional usages. While the Father and the Son both possess sovereignty in their essences, the exercise of it manifests two different persons. These two persons are complementary, so much so that they are perfectly harmonious. They are so perfectly harmonious that they are the same, that is, their purposes, functions, and motivations are perfectly synchronized. As a result of infinite harmony, the distinct design of each does not need to change. The overriding, if necessary, authority of the Father does not cease to have its own potential. The initiating and catalyzing component of the Father's authority does not cease to be, just as the responding, adhering component in the personality of the Son which effects his own unique authority does not cease to be.

The same principles of interaction between the Son and the Father apply to the Holy Spirit. While the Son executes the Father's wishes orally in commencing truth to the crowds, so the Holy Spirit provides power which enhances and is coordinated with the Son's ministry. Obviously, there never exists any contest between the Son and the Spirit over which of them possesses the authority in a given situation with people or in the divine realm. When the Son commands the Holy Spirit, he only does so in

the sphere of his own authority. To overgeneralize, the Spirit's ministry is exclusively internal, while the Son's is both internal and external. The indwelling of the Spirit within man can only take place after the Son's redemptive work and message have been accepted and appropriated by man. The work of the Son is said to be external on account of the mental and physical labour of the Son during the incarnation, in teaching, performing miracles, and finally dying on the cross. His work is said to be internal because of the effects of his external work and for which his external work was purposed. It was his external work on the cross, for instance, which made the promise of salvation for man possible. In the sequential sense, then, the Holy Spirit is dependent on the Son; for the Spirit cannot begin his ministry in the soul of the Christian until the person has first become a Christian by appropriating the ministry of the Son. The sequence of authority Origen confirms. Before either the Son or the Spirit can act in their ministries, the Father had to desire to create man.

Origen explains the particular functions of the Father and the Son which precede a particular ministry of the Spirit. He says:

I am of the opinion, then, that the activity of the Father and the Son is to be seen both in saints and in sinners, in rational men and in dumb animals . . . ; but the activity of the Holy Spirit does not extend at all . . . to be found in those who, though rational, still lie in wickedness and are not wholly converted to better things. Only in those who are already turning to better things and walking in the ways of Jesus Christ . . . is the work of the Holy Spirit, I think, to be

found.<sup>24</sup>

Kraft responds, comparing the limitations of the ministries of the Son and the Spirit:

This ["doctrine of the Holy Spirit"] does not really fit into his scheme; indeed, it cannot really fit into any Platonic scheme. Origen limits the work of the Holy Spirit to the "holy ones", that is to Christians, and among them even to good Christians, who manifest sanctity in their lives. No such limitation is ascribed to the Logos, of whom it is said that all things were made through him. . . .<sup>25</sup>

Origen's description of the Holy Spirit continues in his description of the distinct functions of the persons of the Trinity. Once again he begins with the activities of the Father and the Son before contrasting these two persons with the Holy Spirit. Before the truth imparted by the Spirit is available to man, unregenerate man naturally appropriates truth from the Father and the Son. Origen says:

That activity of the Father and the Son is to be found in saints and in sinners is clear from the fact that all rational beings are partakers of the word of God, that is, of reason, and so have implanted within them some seeds, as it were, of wisdom and righteousness, which is Christ. And all things that exist derive their share of being from him who truly exists, who said through Moses, "I am that I am"; which participation God the Father extends to all [Platonic participation thoroughly Christianized]. . . .<sup>26</sup>

Elucidating this principle of the sequence of authority further, Origen describes how even unregenerate rational man naturally, without necessarily and essentially setting out to do so, possesses an amount of truth by virtue of

possessing reason. Without consciously acknowledging the source, which is ultimately the Father, man possesses reason. Origen concludes the paragraph by saying: ". . . Christ is 'in the heart' of all men, in virtue of his being the word or reason, by sharing in which men are rational."<sup>27</sup> Origen does not say that the rational nature in man is the complete fulfilment of Christ being "in the heart" of all men. It is only the beginning, the potential for a personal relationship with God.

"Thus, therefore, the working of the power of God the Father and God the Son is spread indiscriminately over all created beings, but a share in the Holy Spirit is possessed . . . by the saints alone."<sup>28</sup> This Origen writes in partial response to "the gospel [which] teaches that no men are without communion with God. . . ."<sup>29</sup> And he explores the levels of communion with God available to man. He says:

If this breath of life is understood to have been given to men in general, then all men have a share in God. But if we are to understand the expression as referring to the Spirit of God, . . . then the breath of life may be regarded as given not universally but only to the saints.<sup>30</sup>

While Origen does not finally resolve to which of the meanings this Biblical reference refers, he has already set forth that each of these options is part of the sequence man goes through, parallel with the sequence of authority among the persons of the Trinity. As man chooses a closer relationship with God, he submits himself to the authority of each person in the Trinity. When he is unregenerate, he is under the authority of the Father as planner in creation

and the partial authority over the Son as executor of creation. When he becomes regenerate, he has responded to the fulfilled goal of the incarnate Christ, salvation, and has accordingly humbled himself to the authority of the Son and aligned himself to the purpose of the incarnation. Before he acknowledges Christ's ministry on earth and work on the cross, he only has relationship with the Son in the sense that the Son performed that act of creating man and the universe in conformity to the wishes of God.

### The Relationship Between Man and the Spirit

Origen discusses the result of the regenerate man turning away from God and the subsequent breakdown in the sequence of divine relationships that has been initiated. While the authority of the Son finds a response in the unregenerate man becoming regenerate, the authority of the Spirit is rejected in the regenerate man who engages in sin. The result of such rejection is the Spirit's partial departure. Origen firmly states that ". . . God's spirit is taken away from all the unworthy."<sup>31</sup> He also cites Psalm 103:29, 30 [Psalm 104 in the English version]:

"Thou wilt take away their spirit and they will die, and return to their earth; thou wilt send forth thy spirit and they shall be created, and thou wilt renew the face of the earth", which passage [Origen adds] clearly points to the Holy Spirit . . . after sinners and the unworthy have been taken away and destroyed. . .

.32

In this verse, "thou" refers to the Father and his authority

over both man and the Holy Spirit. In keeping with the Father's integrity, the Holy Spirit's presence, wisdom, and guidance are not permitted in the life of the sinful regenerate and certainly not in the life of the unregenerate. Thus, as previously mentioned, Origen asserts that ". . . the working of the power of God the Father and God the Son is spread indiscriminately over all created beings, but a share in the Holy Spirit is possessed . . . by the saints alone."<sup>33</sup>

Because man's conscious, mature, and reciprocal relationship with the Holy Spirit is alone reserved for the believer, one might suppose that the relationship with the Spirit is superior to the believer's relationship with the Father and the Son or even that the Holy Spirit is in some way superior to them. Origen anticipates such conjecture when he says:

. . . while the blessings and activities of the Father and the Son extend to both good and evil, just and unjust, [one might imagine] that we are hereby exalting the Holy Spirit above the Father and the Son or claiming . . . that his dignity is greater than theirs. . . . What we have been describing [however] is the peculiar grace and work of the Holy Spirit. But more, nothing in the Trinity can be called greater or less, for there is but one fount of deity. . . .<sup>34</sup>

In anticipation of interpreters of Scripture exalting the Spirit over the Father and the Son because of the distinctly spiritual, intimate, and personal relationship that exists between the believer and the Spirit, Origen assertively maintains the perfect and total equality of nature between the persons of the Trinity. Each person in the Trinity has his own specific, dynamic function. While that function is

in operation, he may seem to subtract from the functions of the others. The function of the Spirit may temporarily distract from the functions of the others. Origen combats the idea of inferiority of the those persons who happen not be actively, visibly functioning at a given time. Each of these three is both distinctive and equal. If each were not distinctive, with his own specific function, all three might not be necessary. Moreover, the distinctiveness of each of them does not interfere with the distinctiveness of each other. They obviously do not obstruct the operations of each other. While the title of this chapter is "The Holy Spirit", Origen's method for explaining the Spirit's functions includes further development of the entire Trinity. As the chapter has unfolded, it has become obvious that the integrity of each person of the Trinity is perfect and its system for operation infinitely harmonious. Prestige comments on Origen's insistence on the individuality in the Trinity and on the not necessarily subsequent subordination in the Trinity. He says:

Origen insisted most emphatically on the distinct and concrete individuality of the Son, and stressed no less emphatically the gulf which separates the triad of the godhead from all created beings. He nevertheless permitted himself to utter some extraordinarily strong statements of the subordination of the Spirit and the Logos. He says, it is true (*de prin.* 1.3.7), that his theory of the Father showering His benefits on all creation, of the Son extending His operations only to the world of rational beings, and of the Holy Spirit confining His grace to the sanctification of the righteous, must not be taken as implying that a higher worth attaches to the Holy Spirit than to the Father and the Son. It merely represents the special method

adopted in the administration of grace.<sup>35</sup>

Origen repeats the hierarchy within the Trinity and recognizes the Father as the source of the Spirit's authority and the Son as the means of his ministry in the life of the believer. He says: "There is yet another grace of the Holy Spirit bestowed upon such as are worthy, a grace ministered indeed through Christ, but put into operation by the Father in proportion to the merits of those who become capable of receiving it."<sup>36</sup> It becomes clear that the Father initiates the harmony between the persons of the Trinity in their functions toward the believer. Origen attests to this supreme harmony as it is manifested in the harmonious spiritual gifts of believers, which are designed by God to create unity in the body of Christ and with God himself.<sup>37</sup> Origen concludes that "there is no separation in the Trinity, but that which is called the 'gift of the spirit' is ministered through the Son and worked by God the Father. . . . This then, is the testimony we bear to the unity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit."<sup>38</sup> In spite of the distinctions which Origen recognizes, he above all recognizes the Trinity's unity and identity in essence and in perfection. Without such oneness, the threeness could not be so harmonious in its diversity of function. Thus while Origen may be a subordinationist in dignity of persons, he is not a subordinationist regarding the nature of those persons.

Origen specifies the ministry of the Holy Spirit as one which imparts grace to believers so that they may become more worthy to partake of Christ and genuinely appreciate

his sacrifice for man. He says:

Accordingly there is also available the grace of the Holy Spirit, that those beings who are not holy in essence may be made holy by participating in this grace. When therefore they obtain first of all their existence from God the Father, and secondly their rational nature from the Word, and thirdly their holiness from the Holy Spirit, they become capable of receiving Christ afresh in his character of the righteousness of God, those, that is, who have been previously sanctified through the Holy Spirit; and such as have been deemed worthy of advancing to this degree through the sanctification of the Holy Spirit obtain in addition the gift of wisdom by the power of the working of God's Spirit.<sup>39</sup>

The ministry of the Holy Spirit is only partially worked in the believer's life at initial sanctification. The Holy Spirit imparts wisdom, as well, and the more the believer matures spiritually, the more wisdom the Holy Spirit is able to impart to him. Then the cycle has begun, for wisdom, in turn sustains the believer, aiding his spiritual growth. With this spiritual growth, comes the believer's appreciation for the working of each person of the Trinity in his life. As a part of this cycle, the more he appreciates the Trinity individually, the more he receives spiritual blessings from God. Origen describes the process:

Thus the workings of the Father, which endows all with existence, is found to be more glorious and splendid, when each one, through participation in Christ in his character of wisdom and knowledge and sanctification, advances and comes to higher degrees of perfection; and when a man, by being sanctified through participation in the Holy Spirit, is made purer and holier, he becomes more worthy to receive the grace of wisdom and knowledge, in order that all stains of pollution and ignorance may be purged and

removed and that he may make so great an advance in holiness and purity that the life which he received from God, shall be such as is worthy of God, who gave it to be pure and perfect, and that that which exists shall be as worthy as he who caused it to exist.<sup>40</sup>

In confirming the necessity of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life and as a person in the Trinity to complete the work of the Trinity, Origen speaks of "the strengthening and unceasing sanctification of the Holy Spirit, through which alone they can receive God."<sup>41</sup> The process and result of such constancy and harmony and dedication by the Trinity on the behalf of man who is eager to know God, Origen describes as follows: ". . . through the ceaseless work on our behalf of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, renewed at every stage of our progress, we may perchance just succeed at last in beholding the holy and blessed life. . . ." <sup>42</sup>

### A Summary of the Holy Spirit

In this chapter on the Holy Spirit, Origen's tone and style are readable as in the previous chapters, where such development of the Trinity was only beginning to be complex. Using few analogies in contrast with Chapter 4, he has addressed the most obscure person of the Trinity with clarity, although his investigation is incomplete, only partially focusing on the function and purpose of the Holy Spirit as a part of the Trinity interacting with man. He has only discussed the Spirit's interaction with the Father and the Son regarding the hierarchy of authority and leadership

inherent to the Trinity and regarding the harmony it possesses because of each person's acceptance of this hierarchy. Origen's language on the individuality and hierarchy in the Trinity certainly affects the subordination issue. Fairweather comments:

. . . it is very apparent on the one hand that Origen does all he can to eliminate every idea that savours of the created, and on the other hand that in passing from the consideration of the concept of God to that of the other two divine Persons, he experiences extreme difficulty in avoiding the use of language which tends to reduce the Son and the Holy Spirit to the rank of creatures.<sup>43</sup>

The contexts of the Trinity interacting with itself alone and apart from man, ultimately concern Origen, for without the completion of God apart from man, the perfection of God could not exist when God directly interacts with man. Only the Spirit's interaction with man against the arena of human circumstances can begin to clarify the person of the Holy Spirit who, unlike the Father and the Son, possesses no human equivalent. While Origen can both intellectually and personally see the effect of the Spirit, to know him apart from the human context is quite a more difficult matter.

## Chapter 6

### An Addendum to Origen's Description of God, Especially in Contrast to Man

#### God as Blessor and Creator

Chapter 4 in Book 1, which remains for the most part in the Latin version, is entitled "Loss, or Falling Away" and introduces Origen's discussion of creation, especially man, and offers a further explication of the Trinity from the point of view of man.<sup>1</sup> Origen discovers more about the Trinity's interaction with man as he compares man's nature and existence with God's.

Regarding man's blessing, Origen speaks of his "desire to explain the . . . blessings which are bestowed upon us by the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, that Trinity which is the fount of all holiness. . . ." <sup>2</sup> God is both the source of man's existence and the source of his blessing. God can only himself be blessing for man and provide blessing for man because of his perfect integrity. Because God is "the fount of all holiness", God is also the source of man's blessing. Blessing actually finds its source in God's integrity. The idea of God as a creator can, therefore, be expanded. God is more than the creator of man's existence, he is the creator of man's blessing as well. Origen does not distinguish man's blessing in terms of what God provides directly through himself or indirectly through people or circumstances, but Origen's indirect recognition of God's

importance in the daily life of the believer, specifically his blessing, provides a practical orientation to a theoretical, abstract description of God. Moreover, it is important that Origen specifies all three persons of the Trinity, not just God, as participating in this function.

In exploring the idea that God, to be God, must have eternally possessed all of his characteristics and attributes, Origen uses the idea of God as creator to illustrate the eternity and the eternal manifestation of every aspect of his person. There must never have been a moment when God could not rightly be called creator. Although Origen does not make the direct correlation, the eternal creative capacity of God coincides with the general category of God's omnipotence. More precisely, God as creator can be seen in terms of a coordination of his omnipotence and sovereignty, both of which attributes separately exist eternally. Therefore, the potential for their coordinated function is likewise an eternal reality. Origen says:

. . . it is absurd and impious to suppose that these powers of God have been at any time in abeyance for a single moment. Indeed, it is unlawful even to entertain the least suspicion that these powers, through which chiefly we gain a worthy notion of God, should at any time have ceased from performing works worthy of themselves and have become inactive. . . . It follows plainly from this, that at no time whatever was God not Creator, nor Benefactor, nor Providence.<sup>3</sup>

Origen does not distinguish between having the power to create and the reality of actually creating. Just as all of the divine attributes do not always function and are not

always directed toward man because human circumstances do not demand them all at all times, so it is that all the characteristics of God did not always have to function, but were eternally present in potentiality. This is not to say that any of the characteristics of God are ever "inactive", for their eternal presence in the mind of God, whether God or man initiates their function, verifies their eternal activity.

### The Father, the Son, and Wisdom as Participants in Creation

Different from the argument for the eternity of the idea of man in the mind of God (which is itself an aspect of the eternal, omnipotent aspect of God as creator, although a distortion), is the argument for the eternity of the Son. That the Father eternally had an idea of humanity in his mind before actual creation is not the same as the Father eternally and actually possessing the Son. Nevertheless, Origen recalls the eternity of the Son in the context of the eternity of the idea of creation. He says: ". . . God the Father always existed, and . . . always had an only-begotten Son . . . ."4 Origen does not limit the eternity of the Son to his title in relation to the Father, but includes the Son as wisdom, specifically in relation to the creative function of the Father. Just as God possesses a creative function, so obviously does the Trinity. While it may be obvious that the Son, as the Son, participated with the Father in the creation of man, it is less obvious that the Son as wisdom

participated in man's creation. "In this Wisdom, therefore, who ever existed with the Father, the Creation was always present in form and outline, and there was never a time when the pre-figuration of those things which hereafter were to be did not exist in Wisdom."<sup>5</sup> Origen, therefore, clarifies that creation always existed in the mind of God, before he actually willed it into existence. In fact, the thought of creation, in contrast with the act of creation, eternally existed in the minds of each person of the Trinity, including each of their titles appropriate to creation. Origen does not clarify the idea that God's finite act of creating man, including creating man's blessings perfectly, although not exclusively, fulfills God's infinite capacity to create.

#### The Possibility for the Eternity of the Creator and the Creature

Another argument against the eternity of man which Origen does not accept, partially because of his Platonic adherence to the pre-existence of the soul, is that the eternity of God the Son does not coincide with the eternity of man, but coincides with the eternity of God the Father. While Origen certainly recognizes man as created and therefore subsequent to God, the absoluteness of that subsequence he does not fully appreciate. He does not distinguish between the infinity of omnipotence, specifically in creation, and the finitude of the creature,

for infinity is capable of finite acts. Applying the word "creation" to both the Son and man reflects Origen's lack of clarity on the relationship between the Son's deity and humanity, and the Son in his deity in relation to the Father. He emphasizes the Father's authority over both the Son and man, but Origen does not distinguish between the extent and the effect of this authority either in man, in the humanity of the Son, or in the deity of the Son.

Origen concludes this chapter from Justinian's letter to Menna by saying: ". . . it is clear that God did not begin to create after spending a period in idleness."<sup>6</sup> In this statement, he is dogmatic that at least the thought of animate and inanimate creation has always existed; he is dogmatic that God's creative nature has never been idle. Even after the literal, physical creation of man and the universe, the creative process within the Trinity does not stop. While the Father is responsible for tangible, physical creation, the Holy Spirit is responsible for the intangible, spiritual creation which the Son commenced in his salvation ministry and the Spirit embellishes after man appropriates the ministry of the Son in representing the Father. This development Origen does not make. The relationship between the giver and the recipient in creation, whether the relationship is physical or spiritual, helps to clarify the practical capability of God and the functions of the persons of the Trinity.

The Unnecessary Goodness of Man in Contrast with the

## Necessary Goodness of God

Chapter 5, entitled "Rational Natures", remains essentially only in Rufinus' version and contains little content on the Trinity, or on the interaction of God with his creation; but it does address the problem of divine accountability for evil in the world.<sup>7</sup> Origen says: ". . . it certainly is absurd that the cause of their ["the bad and opposing powers"] wickedness should be separated from the determination of their own will and ascribed, as something unavoidable, to their Creator. . . ."8 In coordination with the acknowledgement of free will which chooses evil, instead of a will which is unfree and on which evil is imposed, Origen maintains the necessity of the goodness of God. A divine attribute which God possesses and which man cannot possess is infinite goodness. This is not to say that man cannot strive for pure goodness and that his motivation to do so is not in itself good. For no purer human motivation can exist, except the desire of maximum appreciation of God and for relationship with him. While man can strive for goodness, he is not born with goodness, certainly not with a wholeness that even approaches God's wholeness and goodness. With God, these characteristics are both necessary and natural. With man, they are not. The more man cultivates them, however, the more like God he becomes and the closer becomes their relationship.

Acknowledging the equal and perfect goodness in the persons of the Trinity, Origen says, "Essential goodness is

found . . . solely in Christ and the Holy Spirit and of course in the Father also. . . . We conclude, then, that the position of every created being is the result of his own work and his own motives, and . . . [has] gained superiority . . . , not by some privilege of creation but as the reward of merit."<sup>9</sup> As Origen later states, ". . . holiness is in every created being an accidental quality (*sanctitas in omni creatura accidens res est*)", in contrast to the essential holiness in each person in the Trinity.<sup>10</sup> Origen has verified his belief in human free will. According to Fairweather, "Nothing is more distinctive of Origen's system than the doctrine of free will. This constitutes its ethical basis."<sup>11</sup> Origen cannot ascribe to God direct responsibility for human evil, for perfect goodness cannot give birth to evil. The Trinity, then, both individually and as a united whole, embodies perfect goodness. Just as the Trinity necessarily chooses to embody such goodness, so mankind acquires goodness from his free choice. This contrast between God and man emphasizes the superlative nature of God.

Chapter 6, the Latin title of which is "The End or Consummation", also stresses the goodness of God which is only essential in him. The Greek title is given by Photius and reads as follows: "Ὁ δὲ δεύτερος [λόγος] περὶ κόσμου καὶ τῶν ἐν αὐτῷ κτισμάτων, καὶ ἔτι ὅτι εἰς θεὸς νόμου καὶ προφητῶν, καὶ ὅτι ὁ αὐτὸς παλαιᾶς καὶ καινῆς διαθήκης θεός".<sup>12</sup> Origen says:

. . . for in them [creatures] goodness does not reside essentially, as it does in God and his Christ and in the Holy Spirit. For only in this Trinity, which is the source of all things does goodness reside essentially.

Others possess it as an accident, liable to be lost, and only then do they live in blessedness, when they participate in holiness and wisdom and in the divine nature itself.<sup>13</sup>

Origen's terminology for the Trinity is not new. The Father is implied as distinct from the Son and the Spirit. Christ and the Spirit are specified by their names, and it is implied by the pronoun "his" that Christ finds his source in the Father. The perfect divine goodness of the Son and the Spirit is confirmed.

Origen's reaffirmation of essential divine goodness introduces another idea. Instead of specifying integrity, love, or any other attribute, Origen uses goodness in this chapter as he did in the previous chapter, as a standard or goal for man. Origen emphasizes the goodness which God necessarily possesses and man definitely does not necessarily or naturally possess, but must choose to possess if goodness is to belong to him.

While goodness may be thought to include other divine attributes, such as integrity and love, it is a concrete term and relatively simple for man to understand, since man naturally thinks in terms of right and wrong and good and bad. However good, even once a Christian, man may become, Origen rightly maintains that man never sheds the limitations of his humanity, most obviously of his human body, and transcends to a higher order of goodness. He says: ". . . we believe that to exist without material substance and apart from any association with a bodily element is a thing that belongs only to the nature of God, that is, of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (. . . *quomodo tot et*

*tantae substantiae vitam agere ac subsistere sine corporibus possint, cum solius dei, id est patris et filii ac spiritus sancti naturae id proprium sit, ut sine materiali substantia et absque ulla corporeae adiectionis societate intellegatur existere).*"<sup>14</sup> More than simply a technical limitation, the human body is part of what distinguishes man from God and prevents him from becoming God, although Origen does not state this obvious point. The human body, then, limits the freedom of man's will, but God, as the creator of the body, remains only an indirect cause in limited free will.

It is also interesting to note in the previous quotation, that appositional to the word "God" are the names of each person in the Trinity. Much as Origen has discussed the hierarchy in the Trinity, especially the subordination of the Son and the Spirit to the Father, which he reinforces frequently in calling the Father "God", he does not doubt the divinity of the Son and the Spirit. Even though the hierarchy itself within the Trinity is not the subject for discussion in this chapter, if goodness varied between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, their divinity would also vary.

#### An Affirmation of the Function of Christ

Chapter Seven, entitled "Things Corporeal and Incorporeal", makes little reference to the divine hierarchy in the Trinity or to its functions except those of Christ.<sup>15</sup> The original text of the following statement has not

survived, but Origen says in the Latin version: "For all things were made by God through Christ. . . ."16 He confirms that Christ is not just the messenger between the Father and the human race, but the messenger of the Father and the executor of his will as well.

### The Goodness of the Trinity

A section of Chapter 8, entitled the "The Angels", reiterates that God, according to the Latin version, "is the source of all good. . . ."17 In "Das Verständnis des Bösen in neuplatonischer und frühchristlicher Sicht", Mühlenberg includes even reason itself to be good, for its source is God. He says:

Wenn Gott das Gute ist, dann ist alles, was er schafft, gleich gut und deswegen ihm wesengleich. Die Vernunftwesen als Gottes ursprüngliche Geschöpfe stehen also Gott gleich nah. Denn aus dem Gedanken, daß Gottes Wesen das Gute ist, läßt sich nach Origenes nicht begründen, daß es Seinsstufen mit unterschiedlicher Nähe zu Gott gibt.<sup>18</sup>

As Origen continues, he emphasizes Christ's wisdom, righteousness, rationality, and light, which, like the person and attributes of the Holy Spirit, is eternally incorruptible.<sup>19</sup> Origen again stresses the perfect and equal goodness of the Son and the Spirit with the Father's. He has listed theonyms of several of Christ's titles to emphasize the immutability of every attribute Christ possesses, which would include goodness. In contrast to earlier chapters on the Trinity which emphasize the

distinctions within the Trinity, Origen emphasizes, more than their similarities, their genuine equality in perfection and goodness. While each person's perfection and goodness within the Trinity is manifested or emphasized in different areas with different labels, the intensity and totality of each is unified and harmonious in their mutual, reciprocal interaction with each other and with the human race.

### The Incarnate Christ

Book 2, Chapter 1, entitled in the Greek version "The World and the Creatures in It" and in the Latin version "The World", introduces the subject of the incarnation of Christ.<sup>20</sup> While until now Origen has concentrated his discussion on the deity of the Son, he begins to compare the deity of the Son with his humanity, and his humanity with the humanity of the rest of mankind. Introductory to a later section on the incarnate Christ, the following statements from Origen are important, for they imply the freedom of Christ's will in his humanity.

Origen speaks of the divine power to transform creation from inadequate and imperfect to acceptable in the sight of God. He describes the usefulness and "the unspeakable skill" of God's wisdom which sets out to transform, restore, and harmonize creation "so that, diverse though the motions of their souls may be, they nevertheless combine to make up the fulness and perfection of a single

world, the very variety of minds tending to one end, perfection."<sup>21</sup> It is necessary to remember that God's all-consuming transformation of man does not preclude or override human free will, even in consideration of the humanity of Christ. In contrast to the perfection of God, Origen emphasizes the imperfection of man. Yet Origen does not just state the contrast between the goodness of God and lack of goodness of man. Seeking to resolve and unite this dichotomy between the creature and the creator, Origen emphasizes man's potential to succeed spiritually.

Origen has already laid the foundation for understanding the diversity and the capability of the Trinity in ministering to man and especially to the Christian on various levels. While the persons of the Trinity, by virtue of being God, have always possessed their individual potential to minister to man, the personal fulfillment which comes to the persons of the Trinity through their individual and collective ministries to man depends first, on the actual existence of man from creation and second, on man's desire for relationship with God.

The human race naturally possesses from God the potential to grow spiritually and to fulfill the potential with which God has endowed it. That potential resides in man's inherent essence: he is formed in the image of God and he possesses free will, a corollary to the divine pattern. In spite of the imperfect state in which man finds himself, such imperfection is correctable, within the limitations of his humanity and within his soul specifically

endowed to him by God. That Origen tends not to specify which person of the Trinity is involved in which function or action directed toward man does not contradict Origen's purpose in this passage. He has already clarified which person of the Trinity interacts with man at which stage of man's existence and spiritual odyssey. The emphasis here is to show man's potential, rather than hopelessness and helplessness, which evaporate and are replaced with divine help when man chooses for relationship with God. Origen's discussion of man and man's potential is directly related to this study: the humanity of Christ was undoubtedly the supreme person in the human race, and man's potential for relationship with God reveals something not only about man, but about God as well. The reciprocal and mutual relationship between God and man never becomes more intimate and harmonious than between the humanity of Christ with the deity of Christ, the Father, and the Holy Spirit.

#### The Incorporeality of God in Contrast with the Effects of Man's Corporeality

Chapter 2, entitled "The Perpetuity of Bodily Nature", addresses yet another aspect of the dilemma of man relating to God.<sup>22</sup> In spite of the advantages man's soul naturally possesses to counter-balance the incompleteness and imperfection which man also naturally possesses, an obvious and necessary disadvantage of man, until physical

death, is his physical body. While the body physically protects the mind and thus the soul, including helping to stabilize life and absorbing various distractions and impairments, the body also limits the soul. Origen introduces this concept with a restatement of the co-eternity of the Son and the Holy Spirit with the Father. He describes the Father begetting the only-begotten Son and bringing forth the Holy Spirit, "not as beings who did not exist before, but in the sense that the Father is the origin and source of the Son or the Holy Spirit and no thought of before or after can be entertained in respect of them. . . ."23

Origen affirms that the supposedly comparable human relationships are ultimately not at all comparable because of the pervasive authority and repercussions of time in human life. Origen explains that some ask whether "some similar kinship or close connexion may not be understood to exist also between rational natures and bodily matter."24 He also speaks of the positive effect of "this bodily nature, which supports the lives and upholds the movements of spiritual and rational minds. . . ."25 Origen recognizes that the Trinity alone "can live apart from a body. . . ."26 As a result,

. . . logical reasoning compels us to believe that, while the original creation was of rational beings, it is only in idea and thought that a material substance is separable from them, and that though this substance seems to have been produced for them or after them, yet never have they lived or do they live without it; for we shall be right in believing that life without a body is found in the Trinity alone (. . . *necessitas consequentiae ac rationis coartat intellegi*

*principaliter quidem creatas esse rationabilis naturas, materialem vero substantiam opinione quidem et intellectu solo separari ab eis et pro ipsis vel post ipsas effectam videri, sed numquam sine ipsa eas vel vixisse vel vivere: solius namque trinitatis incorporea vita existere recte putabitur).*<sup>27</sup>

Although Origen does not conjecture the specific limitations of the body on the soul and on the spiritual nature, potential or activated, in man, he recognizes the body as a prime component of and cause for identifying, preserving, limiting, but also helping man as man. Origen realizes that man's rational ability is both stabilized and limited by its residence in a body, but it is also distinctly separate from the body. Origen does not develop the idea that the spiritual nature in man cannot ultimately be frustrated by a physical nature, but this principle seems obvious. God's interaction with man is not ultimately stifled by the existence of the body. It works with it and in it and around it. After all, when God assigned a body to man, he obviously foresaw the limitations that would result and, therefore, did not create the physical body to be everlasting. God has not determined to perpetuate the dichotomy between physical and spiritual, between corporeality and incorporeality, but finally to unite them in himself.

The Contrast Between the Soul and the Body, Which Is  
Subject to Both Sin and Death, and the Freedom of the Soul  
Apart from the Body

Chapter 3, entitled in the Latin version "The Beginning of the World and Its Causes", addresses in part the eventual state of the saint who ultimately possesses a body that is unthreatened by the sting of death or of disease.<sup>28</sup> Origen identifies death with the original body. Death cannot affect the soul. Citing I Corinthians 15:55, 56, Origen comments that there will come a time when death will be unable to affect the believer when he leaves his body. Origen quotes: "O death, where is thy victory? O death where is thy sting? The sting of death is sin'. If therefore these conclusions appear logical, it follows that we must believe that our condition will at some future time be incorporeal. . . ."29

Origen has introduced a new concept as a challenge to both the body and the soul: sin. Just as death challenges the physical condition of the body, so sin challenges the spiritual condition of the body, or the soul. Sin links the body and the soul. Without the use of the body, the soul cannot commit sin tangibly or overtly. Without an instrument for sin, sin cannot be carried out, although the thought and the desire of sin are present. As for death, death has no authority where there is no body. Death has no victim where there is no body. Origen, however, speaks of a body that is impervious to death. He does not understand its actual, physical form (if it can be said to possess a physical form), but he believes that there will exist an intermediate body, which is part of the transformation from corporeal to incorporeal, as death loses its effectiveness. He describes the final state of the soul,

presumably for believers as "capable of receiving and . . . thereby proved itself worthy of obtaining 'incorruption' and 'immortality'."<sup>30</sup> While Origen does not understand the detailed mechanics and relationship between the body in life and the body in death, he recognizes a link. The more incorporeal and less conventionally corporeal the saint actually becomes, the less power death and sin have over him.

Origen relates this decreased power of death and sin over the believer to the hierarchy in the Trinity which replaces this hold of death and sin on mankind. He says in the Latin version: ". . . it is necessary that this incorporeal condition shall be the privilege of all who come within the scope of this subjection to Christ, since all who have been subjected to Christ will in the end be subjected also to God the Father. . . ."<sup>31</sup> It may seem that Origen reverses the sequence of authority within the Trinity by putting Christ first and the Father second, but he refers to the Father's authority with a different perspective. The authority of the Father here does not refer to his authority in creation, but rather to his authority in an ultimate purpose and desire for man. When man submits himself to the authority of Christ in both salvation and spiritual growth, he submits himself to the Father, whose desire it is for man to submit himself to Christ. When the body ceases to house the soul, the spiritual nature of man has superseded the physical, temporal nature, and further effective submission to the authority of Christ ensues. As long as the body houses the

soul, man's free will is limited in execution. It can wholeheartedly choose for God and desire to supersede the limits of the body. This desire comes to fruition in death. Just as the body, on the one hand, hinders the soul from the overwhelmingly intimate relationship with God that man may desire, so, on the other hand, death, opposed to life as its nature is, actually releases the soul of man to commune with God on that otherwise unattainable level. While death kills the body, it cannot hurt the soul. Disease and physical pain hurt the body and retard the positive, productive function of the soul; for the soul is not released from the body, as it is with death, but is further hindered and distracted from higher purposes.

According to Jerome's version, however, the same passage reads very differently as follows:

. . . if these opinions are not contrary to the faith, perhaps we shall one day live without bodies. And if he who is perfectly subjected to Christ must be understood to be without a body, and all are to be subjected to Christ, then we too shall exist without bodies, when we have become perfectly subjected to him (*Si haec non sunt contraria fidei, forsitan sine corporibus aliquando vivemus. Sin autem qui perfecte subiectus est Christo absque corpore intellegitur, omnes autem subiciendi sunt Christo, et nos erimus sine corporibus, quando ei ad perfectum subiecti fuerimus*).<sup>32</sup>

This version obviously reinforces the importance Origen places on the believer's future incorporeality, requisite for what Origen conceives to be the ultimate and eternal relationship with Christ. Perhaps the implication of deification resides in this excerpt, but only in the sense of

the believer becoming as much like God as possible, for the purpose of relationship with God, and only through the power and permission of God.

Origen offers a possible description of this other world in which the incorporeal saint will eventually dwell. He says: ". . . whether, as seems to me more likely, it excels in quality and glory but is nevertheless contained within the limits of this world, is uncertain. . . ."33 What is certain, is that this future world is not tainted with the corruption of this present world; but what is uncertain is whether it is a world which contains or imposes any corporeal restrictions. This future world provides the environment for man to interact with each person of the Trinity to the degree that the present world never allows. In such an environment, man's interaction with God will never be more sublime. Man will also have a much greater appreciation for the interaction between the persons of the Trinity, than with a frame of reference, spiritual imagination, and vision which are limited on and by earth. Man's relationship with God and his understanding of God in the eternal state will surpass his earthly capacities. Origen summarizes that the purpose of living on earth is to concentrate on "the hope of passing on, when they have made the requisite progress, to the inheritance of the 'kingdom of heaven'."34 Having been released from his body into the realm of an incomposite spiritual world, the believer will have reached the pinnacle of his relationship with God.

Although believers on this physical earth can only intellectually appreciate the environment in which saints will at some time dwell, which is heaven, the reader's appreciation for the heavenly environment of the Trinity and for the interaction between the incarnate Christ and the Trinity has increased. The more the believer's spiritual state and actual existence travels vertically, so to speak, the closer he gets to the world of God, although man can never become God, if for no other reason than God could never have been man before being God. However good man can become, he can never become as good as God. Likened to a mathematical asymptote, spiritual maturity and perfect relationship with God can never be finally reached on earth. Not until heaven will a state ever exist when there is no more to learn and when there is no way closer to God. Man's goal is to imitate Christ, not to be Christ. Similarly, man can approach the ultimate, the perfect relationship with God, but he can never actually arrive, at least as one subject to corporeal, earthly limitations.

#### The Same God of the Old and the New Testaments

Now that Origen has at least intellectually described the ultimate and best world for the believer, he at last begins a more detailed discussion of the Father and the Son with more perspective from Christ's humanity than from his deity. The Greek title of Chapter 4 given by Photius reads, "That There Is One God of the Law and the Prophets and That

the God of the Old and New Covenants Is the Same (Ὁ δὲ δεύτερος [λόγος] περὶ κόσμου καὶ τῶν ἐν αὐτῷ κτισμάτων, καὶ ἔτι εἰς ὅτι θεὸς νόμου καὶ προφητῶν, καὶ ὅτι ὁ αὐτὸς παλαιᾶς καὶ καινῆς διαθήκης θεός)", and the Latin title reads, "That the God of the Law and the Prophets, and the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Is One".<sup>35</sup> The distinction between these two titles is one of emphasis. The Greek title emphasizes the unity and identity within the Trinity, while the Latin title emphasizes its diversity.

In the first paragraph, Origen states that his purpose is "to refute those who think that the Father our Lord Jesus Christ is a different God from him who gave Moses the sayings of the law and sent the prophets, and who is the God of the fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob."<sup>36</sup> Origen pertinently confirms the importance of God, specifically the Father, as the person after whose rules and guidelines man should pattern his behavior. He says that the incarnate Son "is putting before his disciples as a pattern for imitation no other God than the maker of heaven and the giver of the rain."<sup>37</sup> Man's imitation of God even makes sense as a fulfilment of man's creation in God's image, but Origen does not mention this. Origen cites several verses from the Gospels which identify the Father as the same God of the Old Testament, who carries the same authority and is the creator as well. To this end, Origen concludes: "that the Saviour knows no other Father except God the founder and creator of all things."<sup>38</sup> From II Timothy 1:3, Origen concludes that Paul believed the Father of the New

Testament to be identical with the God of the Old Testament. Origen says: "And when Paul says, 'I give thanks to my God, whom I serve from my forefathers with a pure conscience', he shows with perfect clearness that in coming to Christ he did not come to any new God. For what other 'forefathers' of Paul can we think of except those of whom he says, 'Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I.'"<sup>39</sup>

### The Visibility of God

Having established that this God of the Old Testament is the same as the Father of the New Testament, Origen begins his reconciliation of the ultimate incorporeality of God with his occasional visibility. Origen quotes John 1:18: "No man hath seen God at any time" and repeats the arguments of heretics, who refuse to identify the God of the Old Testament with the God of the New, when they say, for example: ". . . yet the God whom Moses proclaims was seen by Moses himself and before that by his fathers, whereas the God who is announced by the Saviour has been seen by no one at all."<sup>40</sup> Accordingly, from this comment, it is clear that Origen does not maintain the existence of two Gods, but one. What he addresses is what seems to be visible rather than what is actually visible. Rather than interpreting God as occasionally, physically visible, Origen maintains the spiritual visibility of God. He identifies the visibility of God with the one who is close to God. He

acknowledges this visibility of God to both Christ and Moses. Regarding Moses, he declares: "It is in this manner then that we must suppose Moses to have seen God, not by looking at him with eyes of flesh, but by understanding him with the vision of the heart and the perception of the mind. . . ."41 Regarding the visibility of the Father to the human race, Origen cites John 14:9, which says: "'He who hath seen the Son hath seen the Father also'."42 In this case, certainly the Son links man and the Father. Men in Christ's day saw the humanity, not the deity, of Christ. Since God is incorporeal, only certain of his functions and his manifestations are visible or can be translated into a physical form. While Origen in this passage does not elaborate on the inconsistency of the physical invisibility of any person of the Trinity, he alludes to it. On the one hand, he speaks of the invisibility of the Father, and on the other hand, of the visibility of the Son, that is, of his humanity and of the deity of the Son, who is spiritually visible. The spiritual visibility resulting from knowledge of the persons of the Trinity really matters, for the real, yet incorporeal, person of God profits mankind.

### Reconciling the Good God with the Just God

In Chapter 5, entitled "The Just and the Good" in the Latin version, Origen concentrates on reconciling the good God with the just God and directs his argument against Marcion.<sup>43</sup> Rather than addressing the various persons of

the Trinity and comparing their various functions, Origen compares two of the functions of one person of the Trinity, implied to be the Father, as both blessing and disciplining. He harmonizes the Old Testament and New Testament portrayals of God and, in so doing, harmonizes the representative function of two of God's attributes. Origen concludes ". . . that the just and good God of the law and the gospels is one and the same, and that he does good with justice and punishes in kindness, since neither goodness without justice nor justice without goodness can describe the dignity of the divine nature."<sup>44</sup>

Having reconciled goodness and justice as complementary attributes within God the Father, Origen cites Mark 10:18 in which Christ maintains the singular goodness of the Father, for "None is good save one, God the Father."<sup>45</sup> Rather than automatically dismissing the possibility of Christ's goodness, Origen explains Christ's goodness from Scriptures which call both the Father and the Son just, thus equating their attributes. What Origen does not explain is the possibility that in such statements the Son emphasizes the Father as the source, as the pinnacle of the Trinity, rather than excluding himself from perfect goodness. Throughout the gospels, Christ presents himself as the messenger of the Father, not as an end himself. When he solicits salvation from the masses, he solicits belief in himself as the Son of God and especially as the representative of the Father. Constantly recognizing that hierarchy which partially constitutes the Trinity, Christ

introduces himself under the authority of the Father, presenting the Father as the source of deity, perfection, goodness, and justice, without which source the Son of God would not be God.

## Chapter 7 The Incarnation

### A General Description

Chapter 6 in Book 2 is entitled in the Greek version from Photius "The Incarnation of the Saviour" and in the Latin version "The Incarnation of Christ".<sup>1</sup> The difference in these two titles emphasizes titles specific to a particular function on behalf of man in the first case and to the person himself in the second. The discrepancy is minor. Origen states his purpose:

. . . to resume our inquiry into the incarnation of our Lord and Saviour, how he became man and dwelt among men. We have considered . . . the divine nature, from a contemplation from his own works rather than from our own feelings (*nostris sensibus*). . . . Our next task is to inquire about him who stands midway between all these creatures and God, that is, the Mediator. . . .<sup>2</sup>

Having described the function of the incarnate Christ, Origen sets out to describe his person. After citing several passages which establish the deity of Christ and Christ's respect for the system of authority within the Trinity, Origen concludes about the Son as God that "none else save the Father alone knows this Word. . . ." <sup>3</sup> Reason, confined to the human mind, cannot fully appreciate the titles of God, along with their implications. Origen adds: "For it is impossible to put into writing all that belongs to the Saviour's glory."<sup>4</sup> In *Origen*, Daniélou offers an explanation for the comparatively little discussion of the incarnation in

all of Origen's writings, with the exception of this chapter in the *De Principiis*. He comments:

The reason is that there never was a time when the Word was not acting on the human race. But at any rate . . . the Incarnation does represent the pre-eminent instance of the Word's intervention in human affairs. Origen begins by reminding his readers of the Word's remarkable attributes and then shows what an extraordinary thing that he should come down and live among men.<sup>5</sup>

### God Becoming Man

Origen's amazement with the incarnation lies in the humbling of the Son from the high position of divinity to the low position of humanity. He says:

When, therefore, we consider these great and marvellous truths about the nature of the Son of God, we are lost in the deepest amazement that such a being, towering high above all, should have 'emptied himself' of his majestic condition and become man and dwelt among men. . . .<sup>6</sup>

The world was prepared for this humbling and coming by prophecy. Origen says: "And before that personal appearance which he manifested in the body, he sent the prophets as heralds and messengers of his coming. . . ." <sup>7</sup> Once Christ did arrive, the miracles he performed validated that he was indeed the God-man. After his departure, "he caused the holy apostles . . . filled with his divine power, to travel throughout the world, in order to gather together out of every nation and all races a people composed of devout believers in him."<sup>8</sup>

As is the logical, not uncommon, method of validating the incarnation of the Son, Origen's method is no different. He establishes the presence of Christ on earth, prophetically announced before his arrival, verified during his presence by supernatural power, and verified after his departure by his authority, which remained for the use of the disciples and apostles. Before attempting to distinguish humanity from deity in various works and sayings of the Son, if indeed such a distinction can be made, Origen verifies that both persons constitute the incarnate Son of God.

#### The Similarities and the Differences Between Man and God

Origen's approach to resolve the seemingly incompatible co-existence of God and man in one person is to accept it and to describe the problem in detail. He says:

But of all the marvellous and splendid things about him there is one that utterly transcends the limits of human wonder . . . , namely, how this mighty power of the divine majesty, the very word of the Father, and the very wisdom of God . . . can be believed to have existed within the compass of that man who appeared in Judaea; yes, and how the wisdom of God can have entered into a woman's womb and been born as a little child and uttered noises like those of crying children; and further, how it was that he was troubled . . . in the hour of his death . . . ; and how at the last he was led to that death which is considered by men to be the most shameful of all, -- even though on the third day he rose again.<sup>9</sup>

Origen has cited some of the major complexities and seeming contradictions with God becoming man. To Origen,

the dichotomies between man and God are so vast, so opposite, that he adds:

When, therefore, we see in him some things so human that they appear in no way to differ from the common frailty of mortals, and some things so divine that they are appropriate to nothing else but the primal and ineffable nature of deity, the human understanding with its narrow limits is baffled. . . .<sup>10</sup>

It is important to notice that when contrasting the Son's deity and humanity, Origen does not even hint at the Son's deity not being as divine as the Father's. When confining his discussion to the Trinity alone, Origen naturally distinguishes between the functions of each of its persons, including their individual authority. Some have interpreted such distinction as heretical, perceiving distinct functions to mean the subordination of person at the expense of perfect deity. Yet when Origen examines the incarnation, he does not imply that the deity of the Son is not completely deity. He discusses the godly quality of Christ's humanity and the human quality of Christ's deity. He says: "If it [the human mind] thinks of God, it sees a man; if it thinks of a man, it beholds one returning from the dead with spoils after vanquishing the kingdom of death."<sup>11</sup> Trigg comments that Origen "was aware how seemingly paradoxical was the doctrine that Jesus Christ was both God and human."<sup>12</sup> To Origen the contrast is clear, but the dichotomy mysterious. Whether or not it is possible to ascribe the acts and sayings of the incarnate Christ to his deity, humanity, or an interaction of both remains open to question. Fairweather remarks:

. . . his [Origen's] teaching upon the Incarnation takes rank with his best work. . . . , for never until he did so, through an able analysis of its constituent parts [deity and humanity], had the completeness of the *human* nature of the Redeemer been adequately set forth. But obviously the dogma of the Incarnation does not fit well into his speculative system, one of the root principles of which is the immutability of the divine life.<sup>13</sup>

Origen specifies his purpose in discussing the incarnate Son:

. . . we seek to prove how the reality of each nature exists in one and the same person, in such a way that nothing unworthy or unfitting may be thought to reside in that divine and ineffable existence, nor on the other hand may the events of his life be supposed to be the illusions caused by deceptive fantasies.<sup>14</sup>

Fairweather explains the perfect union of deity and humanity in the incarnation: "Real and intimate as this union is, however, it does not amount to actual intermingling of the soul and the Word; rather does the former cleave inseparably to the latter by a constant exercise of will."<sup>15</sup> Origen prefaces statements preceding his purpose as "suppositions (*suspiciones*) rather than any clear affirmations", for he questions how much his own mind can accurately discern.<sup>16</sup> Origen does not wish to discuss the interaction of Christ's deity and humanity if he begins to subtract from deity or add to humanity in order to reconcile their co-existence. Furthermore, he adheres to the belief in the literal natures of both. While Origen is well-known for allegorizing and spiritualizing Scripture, he does not do so with the humanity of Christ and its co

-existence with the deity of Christ in order to force a reconciliation.

### The Creation of the Humanity of Christ in the Image of God

Origen applies the creation of man in the image of God to the Son's humanity and modifies the principle to exemplify the creation of the Son's humanity in the image of his deity. Origen has correctly not identified any one person of the Trinity, such as the Father, to be the image after whom man has been created; for the humanity of the Son, like all other men, has been created in the image of the one God. But Origen does establish a loosely parallel relationship between the Father and, presumably, the deity of the Son. To oversimplify, what the Son is to the Father, so man is to God. This analogy cannot be taken so far, however, as to say that the Son is created, but the analogy is meant to establish a hierarchy. While it is accurate to say that the Son in his deity is a reflection of the Father, it is inaccurate to liken this reflection to the limited reflection of creatures, who possess the potential to be godly, but who will eternally not be God. Origen explains:

For since he is the invisible "image" of the "invisible God", he granted invisibly to all rational creatures whatsoever a participation in himself, in such a way that each obtained a degree of participation proportionate the loving affection with which he had clung to him.<sup>17</sup>

Aside from Christ, man partakes of God in that he has the capability of being similar to God; he was made in God's

image. Christ's influence over the man who seeks a divine relationship furthers this bond with God, for Christ gives of that part of himself which mirrors the Father. That part in the Son is identical with the part in man's soul which mirrors the Father. From Origen's earlier comments on the nature of the deity of Christ, it can be inferred that both the deity and the humanity of Christ mirror the Father. The person of the Son mirrors the Father in deity and perfection. For the Father is the source of the Son; and the Son's existence, which always was and had no beginning, depends on the Father's existence, on the exercise of the Father's desire for a Son, and on the act of eternally willing that Son into existence. (Once again, in explaining the hierarchy in the Trinity, words with temporal limitations are the most precise words. Because these words do possess a temporal limitation, however, they are not ultimately accurate.) Just as the person of the deity of Christ was eternally formed and eternally exists the same as the person of the Father, so the person of the humanity of Christ, in the form of a soul, was made the same as the soul of every other human being. The similarity between the person of the deity and the soul of the humanity of Christ is just as similar and just as dissimilar as any other human being's with God. A precise and accurate comparison between the person of God and the soul of man is just as impossible as a perfect comparison between God and man, for man's finite mind is incapable of perceiving the infinite aspects of the infinity of God. It is imperative to recognize this same quality of soul between the humanity of Christ

and all other human beings. For if the two do not possess identical types of souls, then in some way the co-existent deity of Christ altered the human soul of his humanity. The deity of Christ, when ministering to man, including the humanity of Christ, does not alter man's basic soul essence. It builds on it; it does not change the foundation. The humanity of Christ could not have died on the cross in place of the rest of mankind, had his soul not been identical with the rest of mankind's. In *The Christian Platonists of Alexandria*, Bigg notes that Origen "is the first to speak at large of the Human Soul of Jesus."<sup>18</sup>

#### The Soul of Christ's Humanity

Origen continues his discussion of the soul, specifically Christ's soul at the incarnation. The following passage helps to explain Origen's understanding of the union of the divine and human natures of Christ, a union essentially of soul with deity. Origen says:

But whereas by reason of the faculty of free-will, variety and diversity had taken hold of individual souls, so that one was attached to its author with a warmer and another with a feebler and weaker love, that soul of which Jesus said [in John 10:18], "No man taketh from me my soul", clinging to God from the beginning of the creation and ever after in a union inseparable and indissoluble, as being the soul of the wisdom and word of God and of the truth and the true light, and receiving him wholly, and itself entering into his light and splendour, was made with him in a pre-eminent degree one spirit, just as [in I Corinthians 6:17] the apostle promises to them whose duty it is to imitate Jesus, that "he who is joined to

the Lord is one spirit".<sup>19</sup>

Jerome preserves Origen as saying: "No other soul, which has descended into a human body, has revealed in itself so pure and genuine a likeness to its former condition as that which the Saviour says, No man taketh my soul from me, but I lay it down of myself."<sup>20</sup> Origen's allusion to the pre-existence of the soul is obvious from Jerome's version. In "Euhemerism and Christology in Origen", Gamble admits: "Origen's Christology receives a distinctive twist from his conception of the pre-existence of souls, a conception which includes the human soul of Jesus."<sup>21</sup> Assuming that Rufinus' version represents the entirety of Jerome's version, one recognizes that Rufinus has embellished, although not significantly altered, Origen's original remarks. From the Scriptures Origen has quoted, he has acknowledged the free will of the humanity of Christ, who chose to conform to the Father entirely and immediately and has confirmed the free will of all other men. Most significantly, this characteristic of the soul of Christ's humanity confirms the equality of one component of the soul of the humanity of Christ and the souls of all other men. This free will in Christ may appear not to be free in its subordination to the will of God, especially to the will of the Father to which even the Son subordinated himself. (All free will is free according to its inherent nature. That is not to say, however, that when free will chooses wrongly, there will not be negative repercussions; there will be.) It is a common flaw among theologians' assessment of the free will of Christ's humanity that, since

humanity is or should be subordinate to the authority of deity, Christ's humanity was subordinate to his deity to the exclusion of his free will being truly free. This flaw in thinking primarily results from the perfect flawlessness, even impeccability of Christ's humanity. However, Christ's humanity was free to sin, for his will was perfectly free. Although no need obviously ever existed to protect the deity of the Son or the other persons of the Trinity from any responsibility for sin in the humanity of Christ, Babcock's discussion of Origen's emphasis on the freedom of the human will is applicable to Christ's humanity. In "Origen's Anti-Gnostic Polemic and the Doctrine of Universalism", Babcock reinforces the importance of even the will of Christ's humanity being free when he says: "Origen's doctrine of free will must be understood in light of his attempts to remove the responsibility for evil from God; for Origen, free will is involved as much for the defense of God as for the benefit of the creatures."<sup>22</sup> Whether Christ's humanity is functioning, whether his deity is functioning, or whether it is difficult to distinguish between the two, it is useful to compare the activity of other men with each of these manifestations of the incarnate Christ.

God does not tamper with human free will. In fact, even if God's integrity allowed, one person of the Trinity would not tamper with the free will of another person of the Trinity. Divine integrity does not allow this, however, for divine integrity is directly linked with divine unity, so that only one will in the Godhead exists. While the deity of

Christ did not have the potential for sin, his humanity did. Too often theologians only consider the outcome of Christ's consistently right decisions and conclude that his free will must not have been totally free. The outcome, however, does not determine the beginning. The beginning allows an outcome to exist at all, and the beginning of having totally free will (as free a will as a created being can ever have) allows for a larger variety of potential outcomes. While free will belongs to man's essence, consistently right choices belong only to God, because the total and perfect knowledge which he embodies, adheres to, personifies, and gives birth to disallows wrong choices. The possibility of wrong choices is not even in God's vocabulary, so to speak. They are not an option for him. He has chosen, out of his sovereignty, not to allow this option, so in this sense God can never be thought to be a non-thinking automaton. Any limitations God possesses, he has imposed on himself, not that they at one time did not exist; for God's nature never changes. But, for want of better terminology, God's limitations are self-imposed, in keeping with his integrity and perfection as God.

### The Perfection of the Soul of Christ's Humanity

Origen describes the perfect function of the soul in the incarnate Christ, whose soul remained perfect by its perfect choices in accordance with the will of God.

This soul, then, acting as a medium between God and the flesh (for it was not possible for the nature of

God to mingle with a body apart from some medium), there is born, as we said, the God-man, the medium being that existence to whose nature it was not contrary to assume a body. Yet neither, on the other hand, was it contrary to nature for that soul, being as it was a rational existence, to receive God, into whom, as we said above, it had already completely entered by entering into the word and wisdom and truth.<sup>23</sup>

Origen does not define the soul in this passage; nevertheless, it is important to understand it to be not the biological life of a person, but the person himself, the life which enables him to be a person, to have a personality, and to possess various attributes and characteristics as a person. Soul life is the real life of a person, not that biological life is not real. The living body supplies overt visible characteristics and internal functions which, to varying extents, comply with the purposes of the mind, which is the instrument of the soul. Just as man has a soul, so the humanity of Christ had a soul. Just as man has a body, so the humanity of Christ had a body. In spite of the fact that the deity of Christ did not possess a body, the humanity of Christ did. The corporeal limitations which normally contribute to human imperfection in thought and behavior did not similarly affect the humanity of Christ. The perfection of his humanity was comparable to the perfection of a person without corporeal limitations, even God. Such perfection, some would argue, transcends the capabilities of a person without corporeal limitations.

In fact, the immaterial element common to both man and God is often specified as the soul. It is logical that the

soul of man is made in the image of God, which is God's life, essence, character, and heart. At the same time, it is obvious from creation, that the soul of man is natural to and potentially harmonious with his body. The two are meant to work as a team. One protects; the other gives purpose to the first. The element contained within the divine person, after whom the human soul is patterned, is individuality and personal essence, which, in man, are designed to be compatible with the body. The environment for the divine person differs from the environment of the human soul. The one lives in an environment free from the physical world, including a physical body, the world's accompanying hindrances, frustrations, and annoyances. The other lives in a world of corporeality and finitude. As a result, the protectors which the soul innately possesses are not formed or inclined to protect themselves and the body from the petty distractions of the physical world. The protections of the body are necessary to protect the soul from the intangible effects of such physical injuries. There are several flaws with this reasoning, however, if other factors are not taken into account. God as omnipresent dwells in this world, in spite of the fact that, in anthropomorphic terms, his natural, real home is heaven. As creator, he is not subject to any of his creation, animate or inanimate. Because of his omnipresence, he exists in his created universe, not only in influence, but also in person. Because of his perfect creativeness and continued sovereignty over his creation both at the moment or process of creation and perpetually after it, God cannot be

influenced by his creation, at the expense of his own person, or subjected by it, or subject to it. He certainly adapts his responses to man's decisions, but in so doing he does not change his essence. God, with his unlimited resources and creativity in adaption, is able to withstand the incalculable, yet finite influences of the universe. Man, with limited resources for adaption, and as part of the created universe, possesses only limited authority over the universe. God is not subject to the laws of nature, for example, while man is subject to them.

Returning to Origen's discussion of the soul as the link between God and man, one sees that the soul of Christ alone does not link God and man, but the soul of man is also linked with the person of the Father apart from Christ. In the hierarchy of the Trinity, man relates to each person of the Trinity on a succession of levels. Man relates to the Father in terms of and as a part of the created universe. Man relates to the Son in terms of the incarnation in which the deity of the Son chose to take an essential part by becoming man, thus as the introduction of the believer's relationship with the Father. Man relates to the Holy Spirit primarily to further that spiritual relationship with God, with himself, and with others. When Origen emphasizes the importance of the soul of Christ's humanity as a mediator between man and the Father, Origen speaks of one level of man's relationship with God.

The Harmony Between the Deity and Humanity of Christ

To emphasize further the harmony between the divine and human natures in the incarnate Son, Origen applies the one-flesh principle from Genesis 2:24 which is normally applied to sexual union in marriage, to the two natures in the Son, as representative of soul union. He says:

Moreover the Son of God is said to have died, in virtue of that nature which could certainly admit of death, while he of whom it is proclaimed that "he shall come in the glory of God the Father with the holy angels" [from Matthew 16:27, Mark 8:38, and Luke 9:26] is called the Son of man.<sup>24</sup>

Butterworth understands this passage in terms of "*Communicatio idiomatum*, by which qualities that are in strictness only applicable to the divine nature are sometimes predicated of the human, and *vice versa*."<sup>25</sup> In *A History of the Christian Church*, Wand also explains the relationship between the two natures of the incarnate Christ in terms of *communicatio idiomatum*. He says:

The incarnate Christ, while being one Person only, undergoes both human and divine experiences in virtue of His two natures. These are held in unity by the *communicatio idiomatum*, that is, the capacity of each nature for sharing in the experiences of the other. The Logos, however, did not take on a human personality, but rather humanity itself.<sup>26</sup>

Origen continues:

And for this reason, throughout the whole of scripture, while the divine nature is spoken of in human terms the human nature is in its turn adorned with marks that belong to divine prerogative. For to this more than anything else can the passage of Scripture [Genesis 2:24, quoted in Matthew 19:5, 6] be applied, "They shall both be in one flesh, and they are no longer two, but one flesh". For the Word of God is

to be thought of as being more "in one flesh" with his soul than a man is with his wife. Moreover what could more appropriately be "one spirit" with God than this soul, which joined itself firmly in love to God as to be worthy of being called "one spirit" with him?<sup>27</sup>

The natural affinity which God has for himself and which the persons of the Trinity have for each other stirs up a closer union than the affinity between a man and a woman, each of whom is external to the other, each of whom has a soul under the sovereignty of corporeal limitations, and each of whom, above all, does not obviously approach the capacity of God for love, in loving themselves or each other.

Even before Origen applies the one-flesh principle to the God-man, he has emphasized unity in the incarnate Christ by showing how certain Biblical titles for the Son connect human and divine functions. Through the physical death, resurrection, and ascension of the humanity of Christ, the deity was released to the level of the Father and the Spirit and the title that accompanies is "Son of man". The human and divine natures of the Son are harmonious and complementary. They served each other; they helped in the fulfilment of each of their purposes and destinies. While the human nature serves man, the divine nature served the Father. Also, conversely, the human nature served the Father, and the divine nature served man. Since the purposes of each fall into a hierarchy that leads to the same effect, the actual outcome of the spiritual and physical deaths of Christ's humanity complete each other. Without one, the other would not be complete in its fulfilment. Both deaths are necessary for the salvation of

man and the glorification and respect of the Father. It is essential that the nature of the divine person and the human person be alike. That man is created in the image of God not only facilitates God's interaction with man, in general, but also makes possible such harmony in the soul of the God-man. Although patterns of reasoning and processes of thinking in human beings are certainly undeveloped and primitive in contrast with the perfect and unlimited mind of God, the basic style, pattern, and logic is the same.

#### The Perfection Chosen by Christ's Humanity in Light of Its Close Relationship to Deity

The following section is preserved in both versions, and both versions will be examined. The Greek version begins: "It was on this account also that the man became Christ, for he obtained this lot by reason of his goodness. . . ."<sup>28</sup> The Latin version embellishes this statement, but does not detract from the central meaning when it says: ". . . the perfection of his love and the sincerity of his true affection . . . gained for him this inseparable unity with God, so that the taking up of his soul was neither accidental nor the result of personal preference, but was a privilege conferred upon it as a reward for its virtues. . . ."<sup>29</sup> In *Das Vollkommenheitsideal des Origenes*, Völker emphasizes the importance of the genuine and perfect goodness of Christ's humanity in order to obtain perfect unity with God, even with his own deity: "Daher erhebt Origenes fast an allen

eben zitierten Stellen die Forderung, Christi Seele zu folgen, damit auch die Pneumatiker der göttlichen Natur teilhaftig werden."<sup>30</sup> What Völker does not clarify is that the physical birth of the humanity of Christ, the incarnation of the Son was not a process, which eventually reached perfection with Christ's death, resurrection, and ascension. What Völker says, however, may be used as a model for the Christian in his relationship with God and with the individual persons of the Trinity, for certainly the beginning of a person's life as a Christian is not synonymous with spiritual maturity.

The humanity of Christ gained full benefit from the deity, because of the right choices he made from birth, both for God and against sin and evil. That the humanity of Christ made free choices, Origen confirms here. The humanity of Christ was under no obligation to do so; his free will was not made to coincide with choices and decisions preferable to deity. Psalm 65:7, quoted in both versions, verifies this completely free will of Christ's humanity when it says: "Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity; wherefore God hath annointed thee . . . with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."<sup>31</sup> As shown in this passage, because of the choices of the Son's humanity, God blessed him. First the humanity acted, and then God did. Origen continues his explanation in the Greek version: "It was appropriate that he who had never been separated from the Only-begotten should be called by the name of the Only-begotten and glorified together with him."<sup>32</sup> While this

statement honours the humanity of Christ by acknowledging his share in the title of "Only-begotten", it is also ambiguous. Origen says that the humanity of Christ had "never been separated" from the deity. If Origen means this literally and temporally, Origen's belief in the pre-existence of the human soul, in its eternity, is being proposed. On the other hand, if Origen uses the word, never (*μηδέποτε*), as a manner of speaking, he emphasizes the perfection of the humanity of Christ who never strayed from goodness and from his relationship with God. Whatever the case may be, it is certain that Origen pays tribute to the perfection of humanity which harmonized perfectly with perfect deity.

#### The Interaction of Christ's Humanity with the Holy Spirit

Continuing to address the perfection of Christ's humanity, Origen, according to the Latin version, explains how "the soul with the word of God is made Christ" and how the humanity of Christ accepts the ministry of the Holy Spirit to the same effect as with any other man.<sup>33</sup> Origen says: "As a reward for its love, therefore, it is anointed with the 'oil of gladness' . . . ; for to be anointed with the oil of gladness means nothing else but to be filled with the Holy Spirit."<sup>34</sup> More than the usual intensity given to any godly man, such as to the prophets, "the grace of the Spirit was not given to it [the humanity of the Son] as to the prophets, but . . . the essential 'fulness' of the Word of God

himself was within it, as the apostle said [in Colossians 2:9], 'In him dwelleth all the fulness of the godhead bodily'."35 Regarding the sinless perfection of Christ's humanity, which was coincident with the Spirit's ministry, Origen succinctly states: ". . . no consciousness of sin existed in him. And the prophet, in order the more clearly to point out this fact, that the consciousness of iniquity had never entered his mind, says [from Isaiah 8:4 and 7:16], 'Before the boy could know how to call for his father or mother, he turned himself from iniquity'."36

### The Mystery of Christ's Perfection

The human abilities, including the perspicacity, which Origen assigns to Christ hardly coincide with a description of the average, even above average, individual. The ability of an infant or small child to make choices, in fact one choice, never to sin, is not an inclination and an ability held by even an intelligent or a purely motivated child. Origen does not fantasize in his description of Christ's steadfastness to grow to perfection from birth. The Old Testament passage he cites corroborates the dedication of Christ's humanity to divine standards from infancy. Herein lies one of the mysteries of the incarnation. As Origen has acknowledged, there are moments when the humanity of Christ seems so divine and, at other times, his deity so human. The delicate balance of these two natures of Christ has already been established as distinct, yet participating

in each other, deity not overpowering and detracting from the free will of humanity. Perhaps without enforcing its wishes and desires on the humanity, the deity, as a part of its own nature and apart from humanity, provided an environment, a spiritual protection from the forces of evil, and as a part of the omnipotent integrity of the deity of the Son, exerted an influence on the humanity. This influence was not exerted to persuade convincingly until humanity would succumb, but rather as a part of deity being strong and properly selfish for its own protection and from its own perfect integrity. Perhaps the environment provided by deity created a stimulus for humanity to which humanity constantly, consistently responded, without deity tampering with human free will. If that is true, the inevitable question is: Why is only one person of the human race surrounded by such a blessing, such a perfect and wonderful opportunity to pursue a relationship with God and to pursue a matchless destiny to such an extent that not only does perfect goodness exist in the life, but also that complete goodness exists because of the total lack of involvement in sin and evil? This question leads to another question: On what basis does God replace his normal attribute of justice with his unusual behavior of grace? Is it fair that the humanity of Christ received, as it seems, extra grace from the Father that no other person of the human race has received?

Origen does not pose these questions so poignantly or directly, but he hints at the apparent inconsistency of grace. He seeks to resolve the matter by emphasizing the

genuine freedom of free will. He adds: "It cannot be doubted that the nature of his soul was the same as that of all souls; otherwise it could not be called a soul, if it were not truly one."<sup>37</sup> Origen equates the soul of the humanity of Christ with the soul of any other man's and the free will of Christ just as free as any other man's. Perhaps too, the range of free will seems much more stark and obvious than with what one usually associates the range of free will, that is, with imperfect man. With a message not unlike Pelagianism, Origen elaborates the results of such consistently positive choices toward God:

But since the ability to choose good or evil is within the immediate reach of all, this soul which belongs to Christ so chose to love righteousness as to cling to it unchangeably and inseparably in accordance with the immensity of its love; the result being that by firmness of purpose, immensity of affection and an inextinguishable warmth of love all susceptibility to change or alteration was destroyed, and what formerly depended upon the will was by the influence of long custom changed into nature.<sup>38</sup>

Rather than expanding, altering, even questioning the fairness of the grace of God in providing the humanity of Christ with such a positive environment as Christ's deity, Origen delves further into the nature of human free will. As has already been noted, God, like man, has free will. Yet one is inclined not to think of God's will as being so free because of his constancy, dependability, and predictability in constantly making the exceedingly right, perfect decisions for himself and his creation. Just as God's integrity demands such constancy in rightness and

righteousness, so man's integrity demands the corresponding quantity and quality. Because of the nature of man's soul, the more accurate, truly right decisions he makes, the more integrity he builds. The more integrity he builds, the less freedom he comes to possess to make wrong decisions. The application of the principles of inertia in the scientific world to the spiritual world establishes this. A unique perspective about this analysis is that the traditional responsibility for the decrease in human decision-making ability to change from habit to conscious right or wrong decisions has been ascribed to God. When one usually considers the issue of free will, one considers how much free will God allows or overrules. In reality, though, as with God's soul, so with man's soul, as with the laws of nature, decisions tend to go in the same direction as previous decisions. Origen, in fact, takes this principle further when he says that "the influence of long custom changed into nature."<sup>39</sup>

Because God's integrity has always been the utmost, he obviously possesses the affinity for making the best decisions. Although it has always been a part of God's nature to make right decisions, right decisions are certainly not a part of man's original nature. After a period of time, right decisions become habit and after habit, nature. And, as that process continues, free will becomes increasingly ruled by integrity until integrity holds full sovereignty and only allows those decisions to be made that are completely right and righteous. Origen concludes his

comments: "Thus we must believe that there did exist in Christ a human and rational soul, and yet not suppose that it had any susceptibility to or possibility of sin."<sup>40</sup>

### The Problem of Distinguishing Between Christ's Deity and Humanity

As the passage continues, Origen uses his now famous illustration to illustrate how a man, so perfect as the humanity of Christ, could actually appear as God. As Origen has noted earlier, the humanity of Christ does seem to appear as the deity; but as has just been explained concerning the nature of free will, the intensity of the humanity of Christ's desire for God is far more pronounced than that of any other man's. When his humanity is compared with other men, he can seem divine. When his humanity is compared with his divinity he appears very much human. Good and righteous and glorious as he was, his soul was human. In the humanity of Christ, his spiritual attributes far outshone his physical appearance, manner, or speech, each of which he used as the medium to convey that exceedingly developed human nature and to share its spiritual blessings with the world. Origen's illustration of the heated metal iron demonstrates how two distinct, yet complementary, natures within the Son can co-exist. Yet Origen does farther than saying that each maintains their distinctive identities and that the deity seems to blend with the humanity by empowering, teaching, and guiding it.

Fairweather describes the following statement as "an illustration of epoch-making importance in the history of dogma. . . ."41 Origen says:

. . . the metal iron is susceptible of both cold and heat. Suppose then a lump of iron be placed for some time in a fire. It receives the fire in all its pores and all its veins, and becomes completely changed into fire, provided the fire is never removed from it and itself is not separated from the fire. Are we then to say that this, which is by nature a lump of iron, when placed in the fire and ceaselessly burning can ever admit cold? Certainly not; it is far truer to say of it, what indeed we often detect happening in furnaces, that it has been completely changed into fire, because we can discern nothing else in it except fire. Further, if anyone were to try to touch or handle it, he would feel the power of the fire, not of the iron. In this manner, then, that soul which like a piece of iron in the fire, was for ever placed in the word, for ever in the wisdom, for ever in God, is God in all its acts and feelings and thoughts; and therefore it cannot be called changeable or alterable, since by being ceaselessly kindled it came to possess unchangeability through its unity with the word of God. And while, indeed, some warmth of the Word of God must be thought to have reached all the saints, in this soul we must believe that the divine fire itself essentially rested, and that it is from this that some warmth has come to all others.<sup>42</sup>

In *Early Christian Thought and the Classical Tradition*, Chadwick describes "the incarnate Lord" as "one which inflexibly adhered to the divine love without wavering."<sup>43</sup> In his chapter entitled "*Der Logos in Jesus*", Gögler comments: "In vollkommener Weise hat sich der göttliche Logos mit dem menschlichen Leib und der Seele Jesu vereinigt. . . . Wie Eisen im Feuer das Feuer ganz in sich aufnimmt und völlig feurig wird, so besitzt die Seele Jesu,

die 'immer . . . . Feuer', welches Gott ist."<sup>44</sup> Because not even the humanity of Christ in all of its sinlessness, purity, and complete righteousness can outshine the deity of Christ, the humanity may appear masked by the deity or even appear as deity itself. Perfect as humanity can be, the humanity of Christ understood the hierarchy both within the Trinity and outside its context in the authority of God over man. As such, it paid God deference, gave God the glory, did not try to supplant divine solutions and wisdom with human actions, no matter how right these actions might have been. The sinless humanity of Christ always paid respect to the deity of Christ. With such total harmony, goodness, and perfection, it is natural and seemingly apparent that deity was the source, when deity may not have always been the source. Just because Christ's humanity willingly deferred to his deity, that attitude of deference does not always connote actions of deference. Origen does not realize this. The humanity of Christ did not lose his identity to his deity. Although Völker appreciates the truly unique closeness of the Christ's two natures, he does not fully appreciate their separate identity when he says: ". . . spricht Origenes von einem ἡνωσθαι, so daß man beide Größen nicht mehr voneinander trennen kann, und er bedient sich bei dieser Gelegenheit eines zweiten, ebenfalls bei Mystikern sehr beliebten Bildes, um diese Einheit zu veranschaulichen, des Bildes von der Ehe. . . ." <sup>45</sup> Although God does not demand that man lose his identity to God, he does require respect. Just as each person of the Trinity possesses his own

unique, special function, so does each person of the human race. God does not preempt that function in any man, especially one for whom God grants such respect as one who has perfectly risen to God's standard. The reasons for the occasional, or frequent, confusion of which person appears, Christ's humanity or his deity, are: the deference of the humanity to the deity and the supreme goodness of the humanity as an instrument in good works for the deity. Although this study does not include a discussion of which of Christ's deeds and sayings originated from his humanity as an instrument for his deity, such an analysis would be valuable.

#### The Humanity of Christ as the Model for Man

Origen speaks of the importance of Christ, in his humanity, as an example for the rest of the human race. Although Origen does not emphasize the close relationship between Christ's deity and humanity as a model for mankind, it is, nevertheless, incumbent on the human race to imitate him. Quoting Lamentations 4:20, Origen emphasizes the potential harmony between body and soul, which harmony certainly existed in Christ, and he emphasizes the existence of his perfectly free will, which makes him like the rest of the human race and, as such, possible to learn from and to imitate. Origen reaffirms the free will of Christ's humanity. He says: ". . . the action and movement of Christ's soul . . . was inseparably attached to him and performed everything in accordance with his own

movement and volition . . . [I]t was this which he called the 'shadow' of Christ the Lord, under which shadow we were to 'live among the nations'."46 Origen has compared the reflection or shadow of man's body, which is the soul, with the reflection or shadow of Christ's body, also the soul. The positive influences from Christ's soul are exerted on the human race, just as the deity of Christ exerted an influence on his humanity. More than making reference to the soul, the shadow represents the outline of the soul. The shadow establishes the guidelines for the follower by example, yet the detail of the human soul varies from one person to another. For each person has his own style and personality. Understanding how the soul of Christ is the example for the soul of man helps to clarify how the deity of Christ was the example for his humanity. Understanding the average man, or at least identifying with him, is certainly more accessible to the mind than understanding the one exceptional man of history, the Lord Jesus Christ. Whether or not the fulfilment of man's right choice for relationship with God was prompted by or itself prompted the existence and ministry of Christ is not yet understood. Whether or not Christ's perfect desires, which resulted in human perfection, were initiated by or themselves initiated the simultaneous existence of the deity of Christ remains unanswered as well. Not inconsistent with what Origen has discussed is the principle that God, bound by his supreme integrity, must provide a standard for the man who seeks a divine standard in his life, desires God, and wants a way to

enter into relationship with God. Neither God, nor man, nor the God-man can act freely and rightly without consideration of his counterpart. The integrity and the conscience which permeate both the human and the divine persons exercise the final authority.

## Chapter 8

### An Addendum of Miscellaneous Information on the Holy Spirit, the Soul, and the Eternal Activity of God

#### A General Description of the Holy Spirit

Chapter 7 in Book 2 is entitled "The Holy Spirit" in the Latin version and "That It Was the Same Spirit Who Was In Moses and the Rest of the Prophets and in the Holy Apostles" in the Greek version from Photius.<sup>1</sup> Probably Rufinus thought it unnecessary to include the description of the Spirit since it is restated in the body of the chapter. First of all, Origen maintains that the Spirit of the Old Testament is the same person as the Spirit in the New Testament. Secondly, he returns to the theme of the hierarchy of the Trinity and explains that the Holy Spirit and his ministry were released only to a few select men before the coming of the incarnate Christ. In comparison with the previous discussion of the hierarchy in the Trinity and the harmony and respect which each of its persons has for each other, such a conclusion by Origen makes sense. Furthermore, Origen's excitement over the ministry of the Spirit is evident, for in contrast to the pre-advent days of Christ, when few were enlightened with truths revealed by the Holy Spirit, he says:

. . . now there are innumerable multitudes of believers who, although unable to explain logically and clearly the process of their spiritual perception, have yet almost to a man the firm . . . [understanding of spiritual matters]; and there is no doubt that this

discernment is suggested to them all by the power of the Holy Spirit.<sup>2</sup>

### The Ministry of the Spirit in Contrast with the Ministry of Christ

Origen contrasts the ministry of Christ with the ministry of the Holy Spirit, especially the self-revelation of each of them. He intimates that the functions of the Holy Spirit are dispersed as various spiritual gifts individually bestowed to believers. He says:

But just as there are many ways of apprehending Christ, who although he is wisdom, does not exert or possess the power of wisdom in all men, but only in those who apply themselves to wisdom in him; nor, although he is called a physician, does he act as such towards all men, but only towards those who have realised their feeble and sick condition and fly to his compassion in the hope of obtaining health; so, too, I think, is it the case with the Holy Spirit, in whom is every manner of gift. For to some is granted by the Spirit the word of wisdom, to others the word of knowledge, to others faith; and thus to each individual man who is able to receive him the same Spirit becomes and is apprehended as the very thing of which he, who has been deemed worthy to partake of him, stands in need.<sup>3</sup>

Once again Origen portrays a God who does not impose himself on man, either by presenting such a positive stimulus as to overpower human free will which did not initially seek for relationship with God apart from an external stimulus for such relationship, or by blatantly overruling human free will. Origen portrays the ministry of the Holy Spirit as more diverse and more specific than the

Son's, whose ministry at various phases applies to all people. Furthermore, Origen contends "that the Paraclete is the Holy Spirit, who teaches truths . . . which are, if I may say, 'unspeakable', and which 'it is not lawful for a man to speak', that is, which cannot be indicated in human language."<sup>4</sup> Yet another contrast between the ministries of the Son and the Spirit is the concreteness of the Son's ministry and the mystery of the Spirit's. A ministry which cannot be accurately described in words, except generally speaking, would certainly appeal to and involve the more emotive, intuitive, intimate, and personal relationship with God. Origen summarizes his comments on the Spirit in this chapter: ". . . the word 'paraclete' ought to be understood as 'comforter (*consolator*)', because he provides comfort for the souls to whom he opens and reveals a consciousness of spiritual knowledge."<sup>5</sup>

### The Soul of the Incarnate Christ

Chapter 8 in Book 2, entitled "The Soul (*Περὶ Ψυχῆς*)" according to Photius, retains the same title in Rufinus' version.<sup>6</sup> While much of this chapter concentrates on the origins and design of the human soul, there are a few important references to God as a soul. Origen begins the chapter with a general description of the soul. "For the soul is defined thus, as an existence possessing the imagination and desire (*substantia φανταστική ἐι δρμητική*), which qualities can be expressed in Latin, though the

rendering is not so apt as the original, by the phrase, capable of feeling and movement."<sup>7</sup> Certainly imagination and desire in part constitute the real person and contribute to his life. Later on in the paragraph Origen recognizes that the soul and life are very much connected, for God gave Adam life. He quotes Genesis 2:7: "God breathed into his face the breath of life, and man became a living soul."<sup>8</sup> As with Adam, so with the rest of the human race, including the humanity of Christ, God gives life, and the result is a soul that lives. Regarding the soul of the deity of Christ, however, Origen is vague and hesitant, when he says:

But all question about the soul of Christ is removed when we consider the nature of the incarnation. For just as he truly had flesh, so also he truly had a soul. As for that, indeed, which is called in the scriptures the "soul of God" [in Isaiah 1:14 and 42:1], it is difficult both to think and to state how it might be understood; for at the same time we declare that the nature of God is simple and has no intermixture of any additional substance. Still, however we are to think of it, the fact remains that it is apparently called "the soul of God". In regard to Christ, however, there is no doubt.<sup>9</sup>

Perhaps in the last sentence, Origen means that the soul in Christ's humanity assumed a soul in which his deity could participate. Origen's difficulty in distinguishing the soul of Christ's humanity from the person of his deity coincides with one of the more difficult aspects of the incarnation to understand, namely whether deity and humanity are two separate self-consciousnesses, thus two distinct souls, or one. By implication, Origen accepts one soul and, therefore, one self-consciousness. The details of how deity and

humanity can have a share in the same soul and retain their separate identities Origen does not address here, for he has already given his explanation in the analogy of the red-hot iron.<sup>10</sup>

While Origen does not plainly state here that real life is inextricably associated with the existence of a person, he certainly recognizes that both deity and humanity are personal. Whether each has its own identity or whether there is one collective person, Origen does not specify. For Origen, the concept of the soul, and the life which accompanies it, is clearly linked with man. God possesses eternal life, and this divine life is distinguished from soul, or human, life. Recognizing the Biblical usage of the term "the soul of God", however, Origen admits to the validity of this expanded idea of the soul with reservation. The harmonious combination of such opposite elements of finite and corporeally limited man with infinite, incorporeal, and limitless God, Origen does not clearly understand. His more specific definition of the soul which follows, as "an existence which is rationally capable of feeling and movement" technically includes God, because God does not have a soul but is a soul.<sup>11</sup>

Later on in this chapter, Origen discusses the Biblical terminology used when Christ is suffering and when he is free from pain. He says:

. . . of the passages in the gospels which concern the soul of the Saviour, it is noticeable that some refer to it under the name of soul and others under the name of spirit. When scripture wishes to indicate any suffering or trouble that affected him, it does so

under the name soul, as when it says: "Now is my soul troubled [in John 12:27], and "My soul is sorrowful even unto death" [in Matthew 26:41], and "No one taketh my soul from me, but I lay it down myself" [in John 10:18]. On the other hand he commends "into his Father's hands" not his soul but his spirit [in Luke 23:46]; and when he says the "flesh is weak" he does not say the "soul" is "willing" but the "spirit" [in Matthew 26:41]; from which it appears as if the soul were a kind of medium between the weak flesh and willing spirit.<sup>1 2</sup>

Distinguishing the soul of the incarnate Christ from his spirit demands further clarification of his soul, for the soul comes into existence when God bestows life. The soul contains individual, personal life. Thus while the soul is the source of life for the body, the soul itself receives life from God. When the flesh, or body, is challenged by a force opposing the life given to the soul, the flesh is said to be weak. When the life of the soul alone is challenged and when the liveliness of the body is not challenged, then the soul is said to be suffering. Just because the liveliness of the body is challenged, the liveliness of the soul is not necessarily challenged. The same principle is true in the reverse. The challenge to a soul does not necessarily overflow to challenge the body. It is clearly stated that the soul binds the spirit and the flesh, terminology used to indicate the activities of the body resulting from natural weakness in the soul. While Origen does not directly associate flesh with this weakness, he associates strength in the soul with the term "spirit". While technically from Scripture it could be argued that the soul and spirit are two separate entities, Origen uses the spirit to emphasize the

soul at its best, in harmony with God. Origen's approach to the soul is certainly applicable to the humanity of Christ, not the deity. Since the humanity of Christ suffered, only the soul of his humanity can be said to suffer.

### The Relationship Between the Soul of Christ to God as a Soul

Origen introduces the soul into the context of the hierarchy of the Trinity. Just as Christ is the wisdom of God, so in this context Origen clarifies him to be the heart and soul of God. (He does not clarify whether he is using God in the general sense or specifying the Father.) In addition, Origen recognizes that this soul is not constrained by the limitations of the human soul, for it became incarnate. In identifying God, as a soul, with the person of the incarnate Christ, Origen both clarifies how God works and thinks; he makes the thinking of God real and perceptible. While Christ was human in thought and action, his divine person functioned simultaneously, in thought and action, and in perfect harmony with his humanity, in both design and reality. Origen says:

But perhaps someone may meet us with those objections of which we ourselves have given warning in our own arguments, and may say, "How then is mention made even of God's soul?" To him we shall reply as follows. Just as in all bodily expressions that are applied to God, such as his fingers or hands or arms or eyes or mouth or feet, we do not mean these parts of the human body, but we indicate by such bodily terms certain of God's powers, so also we must suppose that there is some other object which

is indicated by this term the soul of God. And if it is lawful for us to dare to say anything further on such a subject, the "soul of God" may perhaps be understood to mean his only-begotten Son. For as the soul, implanted throughout the whole body, is the source of all movement and directs every operation of the body, so also the only-begotten Son of God, who is his word and wisdom, is in close touch and association with every power of God, being implanted in him. And perhaps it is an indication of this mystery that God is spoken of or described in the scriptures as a body.<sup>13</sup>

He gives further evidence for equating the soul of God with the Son of God:

We must consider, indeed, whether perhaps there may not be this additional reason for understanding God's soul to mean his only-begotten Son, namely, that it was he who came "to this place of affliction" and "descended into the vale of tears" and into the place of our humiliation. . . .<sup>14</sup>

Origen has spoken of the soul of the humanity of Christ in terms applicable to other human beings. He has also discussed God as a soul, in general, as transcending any of man's ideas of what the divine soul does, in reality, constitute. He treats God's soul as he does any member of the physical body which has been assigned to God as representative for an action or attribute of God. Origen treats the Son as the soul of the Father and more specifically the humanity of the Son as the reflection of God in the form of a soul. Yet he does not address the possibility of the deity and humanity of Christ having one soul each because God technically does not have a soul. He does not go into detail about the interaction of these possibly co-existent souls. What is clear is that Christ can in no way be thought of having some sort of split

personality, which could be said to involve two souls and one person. In the incarnate Son, there exists one soul, yet two natures. In addition, when the soul is applied to God, Origen includes it in comparison, in relationship, or functioning with man and his soul.

#### A General Description of the Eternal Activity of God

It is not until Chapter 5 of Book 3 that Origen significantly speaks of the Trinity. The chapter is entitled, according to Photius, "That the World Is Originated and Subject to Decay, Since It Took Its Beginning in Time" and in Rufinus' version "That the World Took Its Beginning in Time".<sup>15</sup> It seems Rufinus considered the longer version unnecessary to the chapter's content. Applying the principle that God cannot be idle, Origen contends in the Latin version "that God did not begin to work for the first time when he made this visible world, but that just as after the dissolution of this world there will be another one, so also we believe that there were others before this one existed."<sup>16</sup> Part of Jerome's text reads: "This testimony proves the existence not only of past but also of future worlds, not all existing side by side at the same time, but one after another."<sup>17</sup> This contention Origen upholds from Isaiah 65:22 and Ecclesiastes 1:9, 10 which confirm a previous earth and a future earth to the present earth. Origen does not consider that activity and lack of idleness in God do not necessarily involve the act of

creation as man knows creation. Whether or not Origen's application of these verses is accurate is not the point. Even if there existed an earth before the present one, such an earth does not alone verify the activity of God. As Origen says, "For it is alike impious and absurd to say that God's nature is to be at ease and never to move, or to suppose that there was a time when goodness did not do good and omnipotence did not exercise its power."<sup>18</sup> While God reveals and explains to man at least some of the activities involving man, such as creation, the entire expression of God's omnipotence remains a mystery to man. In addition, all of the activities and desires of God cannot be known to man, for they transcend man's limited intelligence. If God and his activities could be thoroughly described and perceived in human language, God's activities would not be activities of infinite, transcendent God, but of someone less than God or only partly God. For God and the fundamental foundation of all of his activities ultimately transcend the human imagination in perspective and design. Kraft observes:

For, on Origen's view, everything that exists, the whole intelligent universe, participates in the being of God. But in God there is no change, no history, no beginning and no end. And this perpetual alternation of falling away and redemption is in reality no more than a movement within the being of God Himself; what we might call the breathing of the godhead. . . .<sup>19</sup>

### The Need for a Savior

Later on in this chapter, Origen explains the need for a Savior. He places the timing of the appearance of the incarnate Christ at a stage in the history of the world, when, because of its degeneracy, man had rejected basic God-given tenets, for order and happiness and corruption abounded. Man was, therefore, unable to function in the world in even a basic orderly manner. Although not providing the historical evidence in the Roman Empire, for example, Origen holds to the pervasive barbarity of mankind, in general, which precluded any recall, knowledge, and application of such knowledge of the order in the Trinity as a model for sequence, rationality, and order in human interaction. While the Roman Empire was hardly powerless or itself destroyed during the time of Christ, certainly the seeds of its eventual demise and destruction co-existed with the incarnation and flowered in conjunction with the persecution of Christ and subsequently of Christians and Christianity. Trigg comments:

Origen's stress on the absolute transcendence of God, sharpened by Platonism, made it all the more necessary to postulate some sort of mediator between God and the world. Here again Origen's philosophical background enabled him to present coherently and systematically the nature and role of that mediator, whom he naturally identified as Christ.<sup>20</sup>

The Title of "The Word" for the Deity and Humanity of Christ

In describing the process, the transformation, the

event of God the Son becoming man, Origen uses the term, the Word, in two distinct ways: for the deity of Christ on the one hand, and for the humanity of Christ on the other. In the first instance, God the Son in his deity reflects the Father, and one description of the final result of this reflection is "the Word", which is said to be pre-dated by "the Word" as deity. Thus functions and descriptive titles for God the Son are applied separately to both aspects of the God-man. Origen says:

But just as we said that all souls that have dwelt in this world have stood in need of many ministers and rulers and helpers, so in the last times, when the end of the world was near at hand and the whole human race was hastening towards its final destruction, and when weakness had overtaken not only those that were ruled but those also to whom the care of ruling had been committed, then there arose the need not of such help as this nor of defenders like these, but the aid of the author and creator himself was demanded in order to restore to the first the capacity to obey and to the second the capacity to rule, which in both cases had been corrupted and profaned. And so the only-begotten Son of God, who was the word and wisdom of the Father when he lived with the Father in that glory which he had before the world was, emptied himself, and taking the form of a servant became obedient even unto death in order to teach them obedience who could in no other way obtain salvation except through obedience; and also restored the corrupted laws of ruling and of reigning in that he "subdues all enemies under his feet" [in I Corinthians 15:27]; and by the fact that he must reign till he puts his enemies under his feet he teaches the rulers themselves the arts of control.<sup>21</sup>

In the paragraph which follows, Origen restates the necessary timing and the necessary purposes of the Son

coming to earth:

Because then he had come, as we have said, to renew the capacity not only for ruling and reigning but also for obeying, he first fulfilled in himself what he wished to be fulfilled by others and not only became obedient to the Father "even unto the death of the cross" [in Phillipians 2:8], but also at the consummation of the age, by his including in himself all those when he subjected to the Father and who through him come to salvation, he himself with them and in them is also said to be "subjected" to the Father, when "all things" shall "subsist in him" and he shall be the "head of all things" and in him shall be the "fullness" of those who obtain salvation.<sup>22</sup>

It is clear from this quotation that one of the purposes of the Son in coming to earth as man is to set an example for the hierarchy of the authority that naturally exists on earth. The reality of the Trinity in originating this principle of hierarchy also applies to the human race, for the human race functions most smoothly and harmoniously when levels of authority and responsibility are in operation. The descent of the Son on earth satisfies more than a soteriological purpose; it also provides an exemplary model for man, whether or not he opts for relationship with God. Just as the Son obeyed the Father in coming to earth, so it is incumbent on man to recognize authorities over him. Obedience and responsibility did not, for the Son, end with his moment of descent to earth. Christ's perfection lay in his constant, consistent, persistent obedience to the Father's direct desires and principal commands. For the man whose only relationship with the Trinity is his relationship with the Father, the principle of compliance

with authority is confined to natural law and to the natural laws of the universe. For the man who opts for the personal relationship with God, the authority of the Son will rule over him by his very own wishes. Thus the soteriological purpose of the incarnation is hardly secondary to a general pattern for the governing and being governed in the universe. Whether or not a man accepts the soteriological purpose of the incarnate Christ and whether or not man accepts Christ's exemplary purpose as one submissive to authority, the message of submission on both levels of authority remains. The degree to which man responds to each is the degree to which his relationship with God is intimate and fulfilled, even from God's perspective.

Origen further explains the relationship between these two levels or patterns of order and the subsequent blessing for both the Son and man, when he responds to divine authority. Origen says:

. . . the subjection of Christ to the Father reveals the blessedness of our perfection and announces the crowning glory of the work undertaken by him, since he offers to the Father not only the sum total all ruling and reigning which he has amended throughout the entire universe but also the laws, corrected and renewed, of the obedience and subjection due from the human race. If therefore the subjection by which the Son is said to be subjected to the Father is taken to be good and salutary, it is a sure and logical consequence that the subjection of his enemies which is said to happen to the Son of God should also be understood to be salutary and useful; so that, just as when the Son is said to be subjected to the Father the perfect restoration of the entire creation is announced, so when his enemies are said to be subjected to the Son of God we are to understand this

to involve the salvation of those subjected and the restoration of those that have been lost.<sup>23</sup>

The pattern for order in the universe and its maintenance among men is not complete without the natural succession of the spiritual order, standard, and direction God has provided for man. The order of the physical universe and the order which establishes the free interaction among men coordinated with their respective ranks finds its consummation in the spiritual order which God has also designed and provided for man and to which these natural orders naturally flow. By implication, Origen defends the authority of human free will which the authority of God does not override. The essence of human free will means that the divine standards of any level of order can be appropriated or not. Just as God's standards demand compliance to his authority, so his standard overflows to himself; that is, he respects the authority, the right of human free will and neither denies nor violates it. The details of God's preservation of free will, however, Origen entrusts to divine wisdom.

## Chapter 9

### A Summary of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

#### The Indivisibility of the Father

The final chapter of the *De Principiis* is Chapter 4 in Book 4, entitled in the Greek as a conjecture by Koetschau, "Summary of Doctrine Concerning the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit", and by Rufinus, "Summary of Doctrine Concerning the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and of Other Matters Discussed in the Foregoing Chapters".<sup>1</sup> Origen's first subject in this chapter attests to the indivisibility of the Father in forming the Son. Such a conclusion of the Father's indivisibility rightly denies the corporeality of God. Rufinus' version, which includes a restatement of previous remarks and embellishes the Greek text, taken from Marcellus of Ancyra and quoted by Eusebius, reads as follows:

God the Father, since he is both invisible and inseparable from the Son, generated the Son not, as some suppose, by an act of separation from himself. For if the Son is something separated from the Father, and if this expression signifies something resembling the offspring of animals and human beings, then both he who separated and he who is separated are of necessity bodies. For we do not say . . . that a part of God's substance was changed into the Son, or that the Son was procreated by the Father out of no substance at all, that is, from something external to God's own substance, so that there was a time when the Son did not exist; but setting aside all thought of a material body, we say that the Word and Wisdom was begotten of the invisible and incorporeal God apart from any

bodily feeling, like an act of will proceeding from the mind. Nor will it appear absurd, seeing that he is called the "Son of his love", that he should also be regarded in this way as the "Son of his will". . . .<sup>2</sup>

A parallel portion of the Greek version, as usual, more succinct than the Latin version which has been preserved by Marcellus, reads as follows:

In regard to the Father, though he is whole and indivisible yet he becomes the Father of the Son, but not by an act of separation as some suppose. For if the Son is something separated from the Father and an offspring generated from him, of the same kind as the offspring of animals, then both he who generated and he who was generated are of necessity bodies.<sup>3</sup>

Origen has reiterated the absence of the temporal limitations and embellished the incorporeal process which apply to the Father begetting the Son and link the Son as the spiritual offspring of the Father. Just as the mind gives birth to thought, so the mind of the Father has given birth to the Word of the Son. This spiritual process of the Father begetting the Son is not merely a mental process; it is very real, although immaterial. Immateriality certainly does not negate reality, or the whole existence of God would be questionable. The thought of begetting and God's desire for the thought to be executed demands the actual begetting of the Son. Because God the Father is limitless in his intangibility and incorporeality, such a begetting does not mean separation from him, either mentally or actually. Origen here does not contradict the eternity of either the Father or the Son; but this is not to say that he believes the process itself to be eternal, for then the Son would never be fully begotten. In addition, the Son would have been started

to be begotten at some precise moment in the past, and the Son would be finished being begotten at some precise moment in the future. The begetting of the Son from the Father cannot be considered in temporal and finite terms. The dichotomy between the temporally infinite perspective and the infinitely temporal perspective in this process Origen does not investigate.

From Justinian's version (Rufinus' is missing in part), Origen next likens this divine begetting to the essence and function of a mirror. As Origen has previously stated, the Son is the reflection of the Father. Just as a son usually bears some resemblance to his father in physical, human life, so this divine Son, more than ordinarily, spiritually resembles his spiritual and real Father. He is identical with him. Origen corroborates the origination of the Son from the Father both in terms of a mirror and its reflection and in other terms, namely creation, with Scripture. He says:

Now this Son was begotten of the Father's will, for he is the "image of the invisible Father [from Colossians 1:15]" and the "effulgence of his glory and the impress of his substance [from Hebrews 1:3]", "the firstborn of all creation [again from Colossians 1:14]", a thing created [an illusion to Proverbs 8:22], wisdom. For wisdom itself says [in Proverbs 8:22]: "God created me in the beginning of his ways for his works". . . . If he is an "image of the invisible God [in Colossians 1:15]", he is an invisible image. . . ."4

The analogy of a mirror and its reflection is obviously more palatable than statements attributing the origin of the Son to creation. However, it is essential to note that Origen

alone does not attribute creation to the deity of the Son; Scripture also attributes creation to the Son. Butterworth compares Origen's usage of the terms "creation" and "begetting" and contrasts the creation of man and the world with the eternal generation of the Son by the Father:

The word used is *κτίσμα*. Origen obtained it, as the context shows, from Proverbs VIII. 22. The later Church regarded it as heretical to call the Son *κτίσμα*, and allowed nothing but *γέννημα*, a thing begotten. Origen's use of *κτίσμα* must, however, be taken in conjunction with his doctrine of the Son's eternal generation. The creation of the visible world, and of souls, would have been to him very different things from the eternal generation of the Son, although he held strongly that the Father is first, and the fount of all being. Arius called the Son *κτίσμα*, but rejected Origen's compensating doctrine. See Athanasius, *Orat. II. con. Arian. c. 57*. "The Word has his essence not in any other beginning, but in the Father, who as even our opponents (i. e. the Arians) admit is without beginning; in order that the Son also may exist without beginning in the Father, being his offspring and not his creation (*γέννημα καὶ οὐ κτίσμα*)." Origen's opinions were reproduced by Theognostus of Alexandria (middle of 3rd cent. A.D.), an epitome of whose work is found in Photius *Bibl. cod. 106*. "He demonstrates that the Son is a thing created (*κτίσμα*) and has charge of rational beings. Like Origen, he says other similar things of the Son."<sup>5</sup>

Therefore, for Origen the options for classifying the Son are not just created or uncreated, but eternally generated or begotten as well. In light of previous statements in which Origen affirms the eternal generation and begetting of the Father, his statements of the creation of the Son should be seen in contrast to the Father who is unbegotten, not as similar to the origin of created beings. In *God and Patristic*

*Thought*, Prestige disagrees with this generous conclusion, yet he admits the problem of creation introduced by Scripture. He says:

Unfortunately the tale of Origen's indiscretions is not yet complete. It appears from a fragment . . . that Origen positively called the Logos a created being (κτίσμα). This Son, he says--and it is obvious why Rufinus softened the passage with a judicious paraphrase--came into being out of the will of the Father. . . . The texts chosen were sometimes convenient in certain respects for the work of supporting orthodox arguments, while in other respects they presented decided difficulties, and if Scripture said the Lord created Wisdom, and ecclesiastical tradition identified Wisdom with the Logos, his bold speculative intellect was quite prepared to assert that the Logos was indeed created. This admission, however, would need to be taken in conjunction with other statements made elsewhere, of which the effect would be enormously to qualify the seriousness of the assertion. Origen might not flinch from admitting that the Scripture called the Logos a created being; but what the Scripture really meant by that expression is a highly complicated question, and what Origen thought the Scripture meant must be deduced from a general survey of the substance of his thought.<sup>6</sup>

Returning to this specific passage, Prestige then readily admits:

. . . Origen in a passage of not undoubted authenticity, expressly refers to the divine Son as a creature. The expression, however, if it is genuine, quite certainly did not arise from a theologian's own speculation, but was forced upon him by an inconvenience of Biblical interpretation. The term which he does in fact employ, with reference to the Son and the Holy Spirit, when his thought is independent of Biblical presupposition, is not creature (κτίσμα) but "genetos".<sup>7</sup>

Origen states the importance of the objective of the process of begetting, namely the infinite and eternal conformation of the deity of the Son to the Father's essence. He says:

. . . as he is a likeness of the Father there is no time when he did not exist [ἐγὼ δὲ τολμήσας προσθείην ἂν ὅτι καὶ ὁμοιότης τυγχάνων τοῦ πατρὸς οὐκ ἔστιν ὅτε οὐκ ἦν]. . . . Let the man who dares to say, "There was a time when the Son was not" [ἦν πότε ὅτε οὐκ ἦν, the Arian formula], understand that this is what he will be saying, "Once wisdom did not exist, and word did not exist". . . .<sup>8</sup>

Bigg responds to this statement: "Nothing can be stronger than Origen's language on the coeternity of the Son. . . ."<sup>9</sup> Not only, Origen continues, did these characteristics, such as word and wisdom, always exist but

. . . we must believe that in all these the substance of God exists in perfection. For these cannot be taken away from him or ever be separated from his substance. Although in our mind they are regarded as being many, yet in fact and substance they are one, and in them resides the "fulness of the godhead". . . .<sup>10</sup>

This last quotation from Rufinus' version supplies what no longer remains from the original Greek text. Rather than looking at the Trinity from the perspective of God possessing certain characteristics, these characteristics define God. A subtle element in Origen's method is apparent: the human mind grapples with perceiving person and attribute as one. In order to associate firmly in his reader's mind the wholeness with which God possesses, and, in fact, is these attributes, Origen has reversed the process, almost to the extent of personalizing qualities and attributes, or explained another way, depersonalizing God at

the expense of emphasizing his attributes. Yet Origen's aim is to show how completely and perfectly these attributes constitute God and how God constitutes his attributes. He both composes and is composed of wisdom, to name but one. Since the relationship is reciprocal, simultaneous, eternal, and mutually dependent from the standpoint of God's attributes eternally co-existing with and necessary for the person of God, Origen approaches another of these characteristics, the Word, as eternally existing, as well. It has already been established that God's characteristics eternally exist, so the Son, as the Word, must eternally exist. Perceiving God as a unit, as one rather than three, makes it clear how he must always possess all his characteristics to remain God since there are no imperfections and incompleteness in him. Perceiving God as three, to be consistent with the first model, God must have always existed. For it is the personification of these attributes which constitute the three persons. More than personification and more than model, they are real, living, personal beings.

From Rufinus' version, Origen concludes this section with the problem of ascribing temporality to any person in the Trinity, which includes the problem of language even when denying temporality in the Trinity. He says:

This phrase that we use, however, that there never was a time when he did not exist, must be accepted with a reservation. For the very words, when, or never, have a temporal significance, whereas the statements that we make about the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit must be understood as

transcending all time and all ages and all eternity.<sup>11</sup>

Bigg praises Origen for his clarity on the eternity of the Son. He says: "Further, as if this were not enough, Origen warns his reader that when we say the Son 'never' had a beginning we are speaking not of Time but of Eternity. . . ."<sup>12</sup>

Origen affirms the impossibility of the deity of the Son having corporeal definition, and therefore boundaries and limitations, for the Son is completely incorporeal. He says:

The fact, therefore, that the Word is God, and was in the beginning with God, must not lead anyone to suppose that this Son of God is contained in any place, nor must the fact that he is wisdom, or truth, or righteousness, or sanctification, or redemption; for all these need no place in which to act or work, but each of them must be understood as referring to those who receive a share of the Word's power and effectiveness.<sup>13</sup>

As with God in general, so with the Son specifically, each characteristic both helps to form and contribute to the divine character and person and, in fact, is that person.

#### The Absolute Incorporeality of God and the Corporeal and Incorporeal Components of Man

Origen discusses the meaning of Biblical phrases which describe the believer's relationship with Christ in physical terms, thus seeming to ascribe, by implication, corporeality to God. As he shows, words which appear in the New Testament for partaking of the spiritual nature of

Christ, not the physical (which would be absurd), are often words, used for physical appropriation. He says:

But if anyone should maintain that through those who receive a share of God's Word, or of his wisdom or truth or life, the Word himself and the wisdom appear to exist in a place, we must answer him by saying that undoubtedly Christ, in his character of Word and Wisdom . . . was in Paul, according to Paul's own statement [in I Corinthians 13:3]: "Or do ye seek a proof of him who speaks in me, even Christ?"<sup>14</sup>

Origen has posed the problem not only of the partaking being physical but also of the ascribing of boundaries to the person of Christ himself so that he can be partaken. He solves the controversy by stressing that

. . . the divinity of the Son of God is not confined in any place, otherwise it would be present in that place and not present in any other; but that while, in virtue of the majesty of its incorporeal nature, it is confined to no place, in no place, on the other hand, can we think of it as being absent.<sup>15</sup>

Origen has once again stressed the total incorporeality of God, which infinitely supersedes corporeality at its highest and best. This incorporeality is not to be confused with the corporeality belonging to the incarnate Son whose humanity was visible, finite, and distinct from his deity. It is absurd to contemplate the possibility of spiritual nourishment from that which is physical. It is likewise absurd to apply a physical nature to God, whose limitations preserve integrity, perfection, and wholeness in the divine character. Just as Christ, while whole in himself, participates in the Father and the Father's manifold blessings to him, so the believer partakes of Christ. The lack of any temporal

limitation on God, which would make him unwhole or incomplete, insures that each person in the Trinity is always partaking of the spiritual blessings and functions of each other and for each other. Developing the concept further, one could suppose that Christ spiritually is incomplete before partaking of the Father; this supposition is non-sensical and implausible. The Son, as God, never began to take part in the Father. He has always participated with the Father and the Spirit, and this participation has been as God. He is only subsequent to the Father in rank, because of a unique function, not in knowledge, truth, or spirituality.

Origen addresses the concept of man's capacity to partake of each of the Trinity, depending on man's spiritual state. Concentrating on the presence and function of the Son's presence in man's life, Origen says:

. . . although he is present in various individuals, . . . he is not present in all beings whatsoever in the same degree. For he is more fully and clearly and . . . more openly present in the archangels than in other saints. . . . It is clear . . . that Christ becomes present in each individual in such a degree as is warranted by the extent of his merits.<sup>16</sup>

A more detailed hierarchy, then, exists than that of which Origen first made mention. There are levels of the Trinity, within its hierarchy, of the Son ministering to the believer on his appropriate level. The adaptability of each person of the Trinity to mankind without compromise of divine essence attests to the perfection of God.

## The Composition of the Incarnate Christ

Having reestablished the Son as the executor of the creation of the universe, exercising the authority that the Father has given to him, Origen returns to the topic of the incarnate Christ and the necessary incorporeality of the deity of the Son which could not be confined to a body. He says:

. . . we must not suppose that all the majesty of his godhead was confined within the limits of a tiny body, in such a way that the whole of God's Word and his wisdom and essential truth and life was either separated from the Father or forced and imprisoned within the tiny compass of that body, so that it is not to be thought of as operating anywhere else. The reverent confession of piety should rather be between these extremes, neither admitting that any quality of the godhead was lacking in Christ, nor yet supposing that there took place any separation whatever from the essence of the Father, which exists everywhere. Some such truth is indicated by John the Baptist, when with Jesus in the bodily sense absent he thus addressed the multitudes [in John 1:26, 27]: "There standeth one among you whom ye know not, who cometh after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose." Certainly it could not be said of one who so far as his bodily presence went was absent, that he stood "among" them with whom he was not bodily present. This shows that the Son of God was both wholly present in his body and also wholly present everywhere.<sup>17</sup>

While Origen's natural explanatory style is full of contrast to the point of often setting two ideas apart as opposites, in this section he has harmonized the omnipresence of the deity of the Son with the presence of the Son's humanity on earth. Although the human body of Christ's humanity also

contains his deity, it does not limit his deity or confine it, for the sense in which the deity of Christ indwells any believer in him is a spiritual indwelling. Origen describes this association, even indwelling, of the deity and the humanity of Christ:

Let no one imagine, however, that when we say this we are asserting that one part of the godhead of the Son of God was in Christ while the other part was elsewhere or everywhere. . . . For it is impossible to speak of a part of what is incorporeal or to make any division in it. It exists rather in all things and through all things and above all things, . . . in the way in which it is understood as being either wisdom or word or life or truth. . . .<sup>18</sup>

The permeation of the Son's humanity by deity thus describes the co-existence of the two, infinitely opposite in design and essence, yet infinitely compatible persons. Origen has specified a willing co-existence of deity with humanity and of humanity with deity. The harmony of these two natures, time after time, sets the standard for man in his interaction with God. In order to show man the superlative possibilities of a relationship with him, God actually became man. In becoming man, the Son was incorporeally permeated with his own deity. This permeation is not limited to the body of the believer or to the body of Christ's humanity, but includes interaction with other people to the extent of having impact on the history of the world. For spiritual power and supernatural impact is not governed by time or by physical boundaries. To the extent that this spiritual power is real in a believer's life, it has impact on the world. To the unparalleled extent that

it was real in the life of the humanity of Christ, it has permanently and infinitely had impact on the world, even before the actual incarnation.

### The Motive for the Incarnation

Origen discusses the motive of the deity of Christ in becoming man as related to, even insuring, the salvation of mankind. To insure man's salvation, Origen speaks of the necessity of Christ's humanity retaining the perfection of deity. Not accounting for the will of man which is distinctly free to make decisions harmonious or disharmonious with the will and purposes of God, Origen claims the humanity of Christ's soul as accompanying his incarnate human body. This simultaneous assertion of the humanity of Christ's human soul without discussing the necessarily free will which all men possess according to other of Origen's statements are included in the following passage:

The Son of God, therefore, because for the salvation of the human race he wished to appear to men and to dwell among them, assumed not only . . . a human body, but also a soul, in its nature indeed like our souls, but in will and virtue like himself, and of such a kind that it could unswervingly carry into effect all the wishes and plans of the Word and Wisdom. . . .<sup>19</sup>

Following "Word and Wisdom", according to Butterworth, "Koetschau suspects an omission at this point, containing Frag. 35 from Justinian, *Ep. ad Mennan* (Mansi IX. 506); 'that the soul of the Lord pre-existed, and that God the Word was

united to it before he took flesh of the Virgin'."20 The Platonic issue of the pre-existence of the soul, even applied to the humanity of Christ, does not directly contribute to the subordination issue or to the relationship between God and man. In Origen's development of the lack of sovereignty of that which is corporeal over that which is incorporeal, he blends divine free will with human free will, and in so doing, removes freedom from the human will. For, as has already been discussed, divine free will is naturally limited by divine integrity. Divine free will is self-limited. Human free will is not naturally self-limited. The more integrity and desire for relationship with God grows, the more self-limited human free will becomes. The more right decisions human beings make, the more they will tend to make. As with the physical, inanimate universe, so with physical, animate creation. If the two natures of the incarnate Christ were indeed distinct, mutually respecting the levels of life of them both, then neither did the humanity of Christ even attempt to change his deity to adapt to human wishes and a human, earthly environment. Nor did the deity of Christ superimpose desires based on omniscience and truth in the humanity of Christ. Humanity does not possess the authority or the power to superimpose desires on deity. Deity possesses the power, but not the authority or right. For divine will is based on divine integrity. While the influence of the deity of the Son certainly shows in his humanity, that influence was no more than an influence. It did not deny or overrule the free will of Christ's humanity.

If the humanity of Christ really was identical in structure with the soul and body of all other human beings, then the free will of the humanity of Christ would be treated with as much respect as any other man's. Christ as the God-man had to be, and was, each of those two totally, if he were to represent one to the other. This is not to say, however, that it would have been permissible, according to the divine standard for Christ, in his humanity, to be any less than perfect. Human perfection was required to make possible the salvation of the rest of the human race.

### The Soul of the Incarnate Christ

Origen verifies from Scripture that the incarnate Christ indeed possessed a soul and later distinguishes to which person of Christ it belonged, to deity or to humanity. He says:

Now that he possessed a soul, the Saviour himself most clearly proves in the gospels [specifically in John 10:18] when he says: "No one taketh from me my soul, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again". And again [from Matthew 26:38]: "My soul is sorrowful even unto death"; and also [from John 12:27]: "Now is my soul troubled".<sup>21</sup>

Origen has thus established that Christ possessed a soul, from his actual words, and has used these Scriptures to verify various of Christ's functions within the realm of that soul. From the Greek text preserved by Theophilus of Alexandria and translated by Jerome and in the original by Theodoret, he clarifies the sorrow of Christ as a function of

his soul in his humanity.<sup>22</sup> He says: "For the soul that was 'troubled' and 'sorrowful' is certainly not the 'only-begotten' and the 'first-born of all creation', nor God the Word, who is superior to his soul. . . ."<sup>23</sup> For Origen, the sorrow that accompanies the human soul in the human body is not likewise present in the divine soul which permeates, but is not limited to, the body it indwells. If there is any doubt that Origen identifies the sorrowful soul with the humanity of Christ, not the deity, the Latin version of the same passage sums up as follows: "The soul that is 'sorrowful' and 'troubled' must not be understood to be the Word of God, because with the authority of his godhead he says: 'I have power to lay down my soul' [from John 10:18]."<sup>24</sup> Just as God possesses the authority to remove life from the physical body and from earth, so the deity of Christ possessed the authority over the physical and soul life on earth of his humanity, the authority for the soul life to leave the body or to remain in it. However, Origen next delves into the blending which, he says, occurred between the deity and the humanity of the Son. In Rufinus' version he continues: "Nor do we say that the Son of God was in that soul in the same way as he was in the soul of Paul or of Peter and the rest of the saints, in whom we believe that Christ spoke just as he says in Paul."<sup>25</sup> Origen prepares for a statement later in which he defends the spiritual perfection of Christ in his humanity which perfection united with divine perfection. Origen states:

But the soul that was in Jesus "chose the good, before

it knew the evil [as it says in Isaiah 7:15, 16]"; and because it "loved righteousness and hated iniquity, therefore God anointed it with the oil of gladness above its fellows" [from Psalm 45:7]. Now it was anointed with the "oil of gladness" when it was united in a spotless partnership with the Word of God and thereby alone among all souls became incapable of sin.

...26

What is vague about this statement is the time of the union of the deity and humanity of the Son. For the process of it will not interfere with the function of human free will. The deity cannot impose itself on the humanity; it does not violate human free will; it can only unite with the humanity when the humanity chooses. Once this partnership emerges, naturally the humanity is incapable of any transgression. Origen, however, places partnership with the deity of Christ prior to the humanity's sinless perfection and then accounts for the humanity of Christ's incapability of sin prior to the capability of that partnership with the humanity of Christ. Origen adds in the Greek preserved by Theodoret and translated by Jerome from Theophilus of Alexandria: "As the Son and the Father are one [from Psalm 45:7], so also the soul which the Son assumed and the Son himself are one."<sup>27</sup> With this last statement and the ones immediately preceding, Origen has stated the ultimate human dilemma in comprehending not only the unity, the equality, and the sameness of the Trinity, but the union and resultant unity of the deity and the humanity of the Son as well. In other passages, Origen has stressed the absolute freedom in human free will. If any limitations on human desire exist, man places those on himself, by the very function of his

free will. On the other hand, the humanity of Christ is more than a sinless man; he is perfect. He is not simply a man who has become God. He is a man who is sinless and perfect and infinitely whole. He not only lacks and has shunned every thought, motive, and action which would seek to thwart the purposes of each person of the Trinity, but he has also risen above the usual human expectations of the divine expectations of human spiritual growth and has fulfilled actual divine standards in an undiluted and untampered fashion. As Origen says, "It was of this soul, since it had received into itself the whole wisdom of God and his truth and life, that . . . the apostle spoke when he said [in Colossians 3:3, 4]: 'Your life is hid with Christ in God; but when Christ, your life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory'."<sup>28</sup> This perfection inherent to Christ's humanity, according to Origen, is the same perfection to which the saint aspires and will be ultimately perfected himself. Origen does not view the perfection of Christ's humanity as a process, however. It is implied that from the moment of the Son becoming a human being, this perfection in his humanity was there and fully, infinitely mature.

### The Humanity of Christ as a Model for Man

Origen expatiates how Christ, in his humanity, is an example, the supreme standard for all saints. He says:

This is why Christ is set forth as an example for all believers, because as he ever chose the good, even

before he knew the evil at all, and loved righteousness and hated iniquity, wherefore God anointed him with the oil of gladness [from Isaiah 7:15, 16 and Psalm 45:7]; so, too, should each one of us, after a fall or a transgression, cleanse himself from stains by the example set before him, and taking a leader for the journey proceed along the steep path of virtue, that so perchance by this means we may as far as is possible become, through our imitation of him, partakers of the divine nature. . . .29

Perhaps Origen lends the key to understanding the flawless series of right choices made by Christ's humanity when he states that even before the humanity knew of the existence of evil, he began opting for good, and he did so eternally in the past. Unlike the rest of the human race who engage in sin even before consciously labelling such actions as sin, the humanity of Christ never even unconsciously sinned. He always thought and acted rightly. Perhaps the environment of being under the influence of the deity provided such a potent and appetizing picture of reality as good, that even unconsciously and in his youth, the humanity of Christ chose never to stray.

Although the fairness of God is not an issue to Origen, one may, nevertheless, question the fairness of God in not providing such a stimulus to do good for the rest of mankind. God, however, always at least offers enough of an environment of goodness, no matter how remote, even a glimpse of himself, appropriate to a person's even unconscious, nevertheless persistent and real, desire to know God. Who is to say that he could not have provided other equally divine environments for people who were that interested in God? Then the question is posed: Which

preceded which, the desire or the opportunity? At the beginning of a human life, one could reply that the desire and stimulus are simultaneous, for they are built into the soul of every person. As Romans 1 establishes, every man possesses a conscience and every man knows of God's existence. The satisfaction with this knowledge resides in man's soul. Thus both the knowledge of God and the potential subsequent desire to discover more about him resides in every human soul.

Origen does not develop the divine environment in the soul of Christ's humanity, but this is not to say that it did not exist. Christ responded to knowledge about and of God so potently and so honestly that the Father was obligated to provide him with even more truth and with even more of a knowledge of God. Just as God's integrity requires that he not tamper with human free will, so God's integrity demands an appropriate response to human free will. In the case of the humanity of Christ, the Father chose to match the intense positive volition of the humanity of Christ toward the divine will for his life with the deity of the Son. In so doing, the Father fulfilled his own purposes and requirements. The humanity of Christ was surrounded with that intensely divine environment and communion which a profound relationship with God demanded. The deity of Christ thus possessed a medium through which to carry out his functions and present his person and the other persons of the Trinity, especially the Father. Following this logic, however, makes the physical birth of the humanity of Christ precedent to the deity of the Son indwelling the humanity,

not simultaneous. Although Origen does not offer this solution, the problem can be resolved with the application of the doctrine of grace. Grace, while possibly appearing as injustice, in that it allows and bestows the individual a greater blessing than what is merited, could provide the solution. One could suggest that grace in combination with the Father's foreknowledge, bestowed the blessing of the divine environment and direct interaction and communion with God before the humanity of Christ merited such. To fulfil the Father's purposes, however, in providing a Savior and the resultant benefits for mankind, God chose to bless Christ in advance and to use the physical body and soul that indwelt it directly as a service to the Father. The humanity of Christ performed physical functions of use to the deity of Christ (and the Father's plan) rather than the usual bestowal of spiritual compliments and blessings of the saint directing him toward the Father. While, for the rest of the human race, bestowing blessing before it is merited would either insure enjoyment of the blessing and the shunning of God or overrule free will because of the potency and desirability of the stimulus, with the humanity of Christ neither of those options were options according to divine foreknowledge. In the first case, Christ's choice for the good was for God himself aside from the blessing that would ensue from such relationship. In the second case, his humanity had already responded positively to the stimulus in his soul. Over the response to this stimulus, God does not have authority, although he certainly placed the stimulus there in the beginning. Origen, not using the

preceding reasoning, ultimately resolves the issue of the supreme goodness of the soul of the humanity of Christ by his Platonic adherence to the pre-existence of the soul which was already perfected by the time the humanity of Christ was physically born.

### Man's Participation with and Understanding of the Trinity

The progression of this section leads to Origen's statement yet again, of the hierarchy of the Trinity and man's participation with each of its persons. ". . . for every rational creature needs to participate in the Trinity."<sup>30</sup> Origen shows how participating in each of persons includes participating in and being blessed by various functions of God. He says:

But as by participation in the Son of God a man is adopted among God's sons, and by participation in the wisdom which is in God he becomes wise, so, too, by participation in the Holy Spirit he becomes holy and spiritual. For this is one and the same thing as to receive a share of the Holy Spirit, who [*quod*, which should be translated "which", referring to "share"] is the Spirit of the Father and the Son, since the nature of the Trinity is one and incorporeal.<sup>31</sup>

The various persons and functions of God to which the person favorably responds merely attest to the ultimate unity, even oneness, eternally inherent in the Trinity.

Later on in this chapter, Origen discusses the final incomprehensibility of God except to God. He comments: "For that nature is known to itself alone. The Father alone knows the Son, and the Son alone knows the Father, and the

Holy Spirit alone searches out even the depths of God."<sup>32</sup> From Justinian's Greek in an earlier paragraph, however, Origen attests to the superior knowledge of the Father and the inferior knowledge of the Son to the Father's. He says:

But someone will inquire whether it is true that God is known by himself in the same way in which he is known by the only-begotten, and he will decide that the saying [from John 14:24, 28], "My father who sent me is greater . . . than I", is true in all respects; so that even in his knowledge the Father is greater, and is known more clearly and perfectly by himself than the Son.<sup>33</sup>

The inferior knowledge of the Son, however, could imply less than perfection. What Origen confuses is the distinction between function and person. The function of the Father is one of authority and one of creator and one of ultimate thinker. The function of the Son is one of obeyer, one of executor, and one of verbalizer for man. Just as God knows himself, so each person of the Trinity knows both himself and each other. Unlike the man who anticipates that power accompanies knowledge, each person of the Trinity, while being perfectly omniscient, does not pursue power to overrule a function or prerogative of another person of the Trinity.

## Part Two

### The Trinity in the *Contra Celsum*

## Introduction

In accordance with the apologetic nature of the *Contra Celsum*, Origen focuses on the perfect correlation between the Old and the New Testament. The historical records of the New Testament verify the accuracy of the Old Testament prophecies, specifically regarding the incarnation. From the historical accuracy of both, a consistent body of doctrine can then be constructed. Since the incarnation is the initial doctrine which a man believes to qualify and to identify him as a Christian, the incarnation receives Origen's concentration. In this work by Origen, God, the presentation of himself as the Trinity, and the functions of the persons of the Trinity contribute to the presentation, preservation, and ministry of the incarnation. Therefore, while the *De Principiis* concentrates on the persons of God and their functions within the context of the Trinity, the *Contra Celsum* concentrates on the Trinity's ministry to man, which comes together in the person and work of the incarnate Christ. Origen's presentation of the eternal Word in terms of the incarnation predominates. His dissertations on various subjects in this work are generally shorter than in the *De Principiis*, often focusing on one particular aspect of a subject or, conversely, combining several subjects in one discussion. In "Origen and the *Regulae Fidei*", Outler also understands the contents of the *Contra Celsum*, in terms of the incarnation and its effects on man. He says: "In the *Contra Celsum*, Origen points proudly to the widespread

acquaintance of the whole world with the distinctive Christian tenets and specifies the Virgin Birth of Jesus, His crucifixion, death, resurrection, and the general judgment which is to come."<sup>1</sup> The format for Origen's discussions constitutes responses to Celsus' allegations which are not limited to or organized around the Trinity. As a result, the organization of the *Contra Celsum* in terms of the functions of the persons of the Trinity is a more difficult matter to ascertain. Unlike the *De Principiis*, "On the whole the text is remarkably well-preserved", according to Chadwick in "Notes on the Text of the *Contra Celsum*".<sup>2</sup> The pertinent subjects will once again be evaluated sequentially as they appear in the text.

## Chapter 1

### Origen's Hesitancy to Compose the *Contra Celsum*, a Comparison of Moses and Christ, and the Power of the Trinity as a Divine Ministry to Man, Especially Through Scripture and the Incarnation

#### Origen's Reservations in Defending Christianity

In *Against Celsus*, Origen defends Christianity against a written argument by Celsus, no longer in existence, which contends that Christianity is not merely illogical; it is also injurious to the state. Although Origen fundamentally rejects such an inane, yet injurious, premise and does not wish to lend it any credence by discussing it, he reluctantly proceeds with this defense of Christianity at the bidding of his patron Ambrose. As a precedent for a lack of defense of his faith, Origen cites Christ, who chose not to defend himself or his position to Pilate. In the opening lines to the Preface, Origen interprets Christ's silence as an opportunity for Pilate, even for all men, to remember the genuineness of Christ's life. His actions provide the proof that words could only claim. Pilate has all the evidence he needs for Christ's innocence, if he will only examine the evidence.<sup>1</sup> Origen continues to describe the conscious, deliberate silence of Christ, who could have exonerated himself "by expatiating on the fine quality of his life and showing that his miracles were done by God", but chose to challenge the integrity of his accusers to examine the

evidence for themselves.<sup>2</sup>

Acknowledging the potency of Christ's silence, Origen questions the efficacy of a defense of Christianity and a defense of the person of Christ. Origen acknowledges that he "will weaken the force of the defence that is in the mere facts, and detract from the power of Jesus" by proceeding with this apologetic for Christianity.<sup>3</sup> Origen concludes the reason for his defense to be "for those entirely without experience of faith in Christ, or for those whom the apostle calls 'weak in faith'. . . ."4 In contrast to the weak man is the strong one whom Origen lauds, for the strong man needs no logical defense of his faith. He says: "Yet better is the man who, even if he meets with Celsus' book, has no need of any answer to it at all. . . ."5 As will be shown, however, Origen's refutation of Celsus far exceeds a mere refutation. The truths on which he expounds are far more thorough and more enlightening than Celsus' frequently meager and often preposterous arguments require. Fairweather confirms that "the main point in the controversy between Celsus and Origen" is "the doctrine of the Incarnation."<sup>6</sup>

### The Power of the Spirit

Book 1 establishes the pattern for the *Contra Celsum*, for Origen does not discuss the Trinity in purely systematic terms and in a setting exclusive of man. He describes the Trinity in practical terms, for the most part, coinciding with the concrete and practical arguments necessary to an

apologetic work. Origen's appeal to the functions of various persons of the Trinity to provide proof for the gospel, for example, emphasizes the practical rather than systematic nature of this work.

When Celsus challenges the logic, validity, originality, legitimacy, and proof of Christianity, Origen replies "that the gospel has a proof which is peculiar to itself, and which is more divine than a Greek proof based on a dialectical argument. This more divine demonstration the apostle calls [in I Corinthians 2:4] a 'demonstration of the Spirit and of power'. . . ."7 Trigg observes: "The 'demonstration of the Spirit and of power' is the backbone of the *Contra Celsum*."8 Recognizing, but not developing, the depth of Greek philosophy, Origen maintains the surpassing depth of the Spirit. He appeals to power released from the Spirit which endows man with undoubtable knowledge of the gospel's absolute truth. The power of the Spirit, therefore, provides knowledge for both the writers and readers of Scripture. The Spirit inspired "prophecies . . . which are capable of convincing anyone who reads them. . . ."9 This power which is available "among those who live according to the will of the Logos" is not limited to knowledge, for it even produces miracles.<sup>10</sup> This particular function of the Holy Spirit emphasizes that the functions of God in and through the Trinity affect history, affirm the gospel, and perfectly reveal that it is the truth. As in the *De Principiis*, so in the *Contra Celsum*, Origen acknowledges the Bible as the source of truth. Referring to

both the *Contra Celsum* and the *De Principiis*, Outler comments: "By the same token he rejects the idea of a secret or esoteric tradition, transmitted by privileged initiates."<sup>11</sup> Origen acknowledges the Holy Spirit as the practical source of information and inspiration for the writers of Scripture because of the function of his power, which avails itself not only to the writers of Scripture, but also to its readers and, he implies, to believers who desire to live according to the will of God. Origen also identifies the Son by the title of Logos.

### The Power of the Son

Origen explains what he means by the power of the Son when he discusses Christians who acknowledge the name of Christ and resultantly possess power. Origen says: "For they . . . *get the power which they seem to possess . . .* by the name of Jesus with the recital of the histories about him."<sup>12</sup> While not specifically comparing the power of the Spirit with the power of Christ, Origen implies that the two powers are complementary. In contrast to the function of the power of the Spirit which is directed toward the believer in the dissemination of knowledge and his resultant spiritual growth, the source of the power of Christ is emphasized in this context. Christ is said to find his power in in the power of the Spirit. The more one knows about Christ from the divine written Word, the more he is overtly effective in combating hindrances to the

execution of the divine will for himself. It can be concluded that the Father has designated the Son as the written verbalization of truth and, therefore, as the instrument and part of the substance of knowledge which protects the believer. The power of the Son as the written Word depends on the power of Spirit which insures the accuracy and the truthfulness of its contents.

### The Appropriateness of Logos as a Title for Christ

Origen's use of Logos to describe the Son expands both his person and function, even as wisdom, which the Son embodies, possesses, and manifests. When Celsus denies the validity and logic of Christianity, Origen associates logic with wisdom, in the sense of a quality which the Son possesses, maintaining the goodness of wisdom and maintaining that the acquisition of it is a mandate of Christianity. While the "wisdom of this world", as expressed in I Corinthians 3:18, 19, "is foolishness with God", Origen explains how, even apart from the Son's direct function in disseminating wisdom, the Christian's acquisition of wisdom from his own thinking and questioning is good.<sup>13</sup> Origen explains: "Moreover, it is in harmony with scripture to say that it is far better to accept doctrines with reason and wisdom than with mere faith. . . . [I]t was only in certain circumstances that the Logos wanted the latter. . . ." <sup>14</sup> Even faith is an act of wisdom, just as it is an act of wisdom to desire and to

acquire the reason, objectives, and motives behind the intentions and truths of Scripture. The acquisition of this knowledge is, in itself, wisdom as is the act of wisdom in faith.

By using the Biblical equation of Christ with Logos, Origen emphasizes the wisdom of the Son in an even more practical light. While wisdom may imply esoteric knowledge applicable to unique, intricate circumstances, Logos implies specific, practical, immutable, veracious knowledge. The practicality of Logos lies in its meaning from the Greek, which is "word".<sup>15</sup> Word is the foundation of objective human communication. While wisdom may imply comprehension which transcends what can be expressed by the conscious mind, or superior comprehension which may be verbally expressed, Logos specifies ideas, intuitions, unconscious thoughts, or even feelings as thoughts. Origen has thus expanded the ministry of the Son to man. The Son's ministry is not merely directed toward the believer, but to man, who naturally learns to think and to express those thoughts in words. The Son's ministry to mankind blossoms, however, when man becomes a Christian. The initial ability to reason and the accompanying vocabulary which finds its source in the Son is transformed into the wisdom of God. The Son, then, both saves and teaches; that is, he has given to mankind the tools with which to think, to question, to conclude, and to become wise.

## A Comparison Between Moses and the Humanity of Christ

Origen implies a comparison between Moses and Christ in describing Moses as a conveyor of wisdom from the Father. As the Son personally teaches mankind in the Gospels, so Moses teaches man in the Pentateuch. Both, as instruments of the Father, have instilled information and resultant power into the readers of Scripture. Origen describes the persuasiveness of "the writings of Moses [which] have moved many . . . to believe . . . that the God who first made these laws and gave them to Moses was the Creator of the world."<sup>16</sup> The persuasiveness of these writings, which Origen attributes to divine power, makes sense, given their content.<sup>17</sup> Recognizing the veracity of Moses' writings, Origen establishes the Father as the creator of the world, of the laws which allow it to operate and to function, and of the words which describe it.

Even though the Son is Logos, he alone does not give vocabulary to man, but is the instrument of the Father. The Son is not the final source of this power, but the Father is. The attribute of the Father which empowers words is his perfect integrity, "the unchangeable and unalterable nature of God (τὸ ἀτρέπων καὶ ἀναλλοίωτον τοῦ θεοῦ)"; for integrity gives foundation and momentum to language.<sup>18</sup> Similar to Christ who identified himself in terms of the Father as recorded in the Gospels, Moses conveys power to the readers who appropriate what Scriptures he wrote, as from the Father. Christ conveys the power and the message, in

the form of words, as the Father's emissary to man. Moses, in his writings, does the same, by way of the power of the Holy Spirit in his ministry of inspiration. Yet Christ is the God-man, and Moses is only a man. Christ, as a man, was perfect and righteous. Moses was imperfect and became righteous. These distinctions do not affect the truthfulness of what Moses wrote in Scripture and whom Christ revealed himself to be as recorded in Scripture, however. The application of Origen's description of the power of the Spirit to the equal veracity of all of Scripture, no matter the subject for discussion, such as the incarnate Son, or the writer himself, such as Moses, verifies the thoroughness and practicality of the Spirit in insuring the consistent thoroughness of Scripture. Although not distinguishing Christ's humanity from his deity in comparing him with Moses, who personally contained wisdom and was the instrument of the Holy Spirit in authoring wisdom, that is, Scripture, Origen has, by implication, applied the power of the Spirit to the perfect veracity of Scripture, regardless of the speaker, the subject matter, or the writer.

#### The Oneness of God in Light of the Distinction Between the Unity of God and the Diversity in the Universe

Origen implies the authority of the Father in the Trinity when he correlates the unity in the universe with one person, not several, who designed and created it. In Origen's mind, the order, the harmony, and the unity of the

created universe attest to a singular creator.<sup>19</sup> This implication of the unity in the Trinity, although the word Trinity (*τριὰς*) is not mentioned, is overshadowed, however, by one of its persons, namely the Father, who serves a pre-eminent function in creation and in the order of the universe. Trigg notes that "Origen discussed only briefly what we call the doctrine of the Trinity. Actually the word 'Trinity' is anachronistic when speaking of Origen's doctrine since it implies a more fully developed doctrine than the church in his time proclaimed. 'Triad' is the word Origen used."<sup>20</sup> Origen emphasizes the unity of the three, rather than their diversity. He sets apart the differences between God and the world. While the world is made of many parts, God is not. He is completely unified and one without contradicting his threeness. God cannot be explained in terms of the whole either. God is greater than the whole. He created the whole, for he is infinite. Origen says: "All things are parts of the world; but God is not part of the whole. For God may not be incomplete as the part is incomplete. And probably a deeper inquiry could show that . . . just as God is not a part, so also He is not the whole, since the whole is made up of parts."<sup>21</sup> Much as Origen has tried to compare God and the world, he dissociates the Greek word for whole (*τὸ ᅓλον*), when speaking of the whole of creation, from God. He establishes that the creator of the world is entirely different from, even greater than, the world itself and that the unity of the world attests to one designer, God, and more specifically, to the Father.

## The Effect of Christ's Utilization of Divine Power

When Celsus attacks the legitimacy of Christ as the Son of God and questions the effectiveness of the short and recent ministry of his humanity, Origen responds that the shortness of Christ's ministry does not detract from its effectiveness. The quantity of people, even from a variety of cultures, who have been willing to sacrifice their lives for their beliefs and for the preservation of Christianity further attests to the potency of the person of Christ.<sup>22</sup> Origen supplies some results of conversion, such as the good, moral effects of Christianity on converts. Origen says that conversion has stabilized new Christians and has exchanged morality, including asceticism, for immorality in their lives, even though much of this immorality, such as sexual sin, is permissible by law.<sup>23</sup> It is obvious that morality and sensibility alone do not attest to the supremely penetrating spiritual quality of Christianity. From the facts empirically perceptible to unregenerate Celsus, Origen can at least establish the good, moral effects of Christianity.

It is certain that an effect that large, an impact so vast and so stable, could have found its power and its principle only in God. Origen, therefore, appeals to the empirical evidence for Christianity which the incarnate Christ personally provided. Origen verifies the reality of spiritual power in the messenger and in the message of

Christ and notes that Christ himself verified the Father as the source of this power. He concludes: "Anyone who examines the facts will see that Jesus ventured to do things beyond the power of human nature and that what he ventured to do he accomplished."<sup>24</sup> The humanity of Christ drew on the power of his deity; and the power of the divine living and written Word, in compliance with the Father, was not finally prevented in the verbal dissemination of truth and the tangible expression of it.

Origen recounts more facts and evidence for the effectiveness of divine truth, wisdom, and omnipotence: "From the beginning every one opposed the spread of his doctrine over the whole world. . . . Yet it conquered, since as the word of God it could not be prevented. . . ."<sup>25</sup> The message and the power of the Son from the Father overpowered leaders, not just the masses; the evidence is history. No matter how many attacks Celsus brings against the factual background of Christ's upbringing and ministry, Origen proclaims that ". . . all these things are in harmony with the fact that Jesus was worthy of the proclamation that he is son of God."<sup>26</sup> Even the moral aspect of Christianity, in Origen's mind, attests to the deity of Christ, for morality would never have had its impact in the world were it not for the power of the person of Christ behind those spoken truths. Origen, therefore, recognizes the truth of God which transcends morality. While he illustrates it in the life of Christ, he does not illustrate it in the life of Christians.

## The Power of God in Sustaining the Life of Christ and in Insuring the Development of His Humanity

Origen proceeds with a development of the facts of Christ's life on earth, that is, the circumstances in which the humanity of the Son was born and raised which, by all odds, would not only hinder but also prevent any kind of leadership and authority, even spiritual respect. Origen appeals to divine intervention when he contrasts the poverty into which Christ was born and, consequently, the formal education which he did not receive, with his effectiveness in personal interaction. Without the customary means to nurture human potential, necessary to establish fame, Jesus overcame the odds against his success.<sup>27</sup> He was the most famous person in his day and is the most famous person in the history of the world. The power of his words and the miracles he performed from love established his claims as the messenger of the Father, who wanted to help mankind. Christ's wisdom, purity, love, and power are the messages which the Father wanted delivered to man.

Origen alludes to the perfect harmony of Christ's deity and humanity when he concludes this majestic profile on Christ confirming that "he [Christ] has been able to shake the whole human world (*σεισαι τήν πᾶσαν ἀνθρώπων οἰκουμένην*). . . ."<sup>27</sup> Indeed, as Origen has outlined and extolled the successful efforts of the humanity of Christ in

overcoming the limitations of human circumstances, it becomes clear that the humanity acted in complete harmony with the deity of Christ.

### The Power of the Father as the Source of the Effectiveness of Christ's Ministry

As Origen continues elaborating on the highly motivated and gifted Christ, he notes that "Jesus . . . is admired for his wisdom, for his miracles, and for this leadership."<sup>29</sup> Any laws which Jesus inspired people to break did not originate from arrogance, but from a desire to serve the higher laws of God which are intended to bring man into a closer relationship with God.<sup>30</sup> Origen has presented Christ as one in need of the Father and the Father's support, power, and security, even resultant blessing. For magnificent as the God-man appears in Origen's writing, it was not the Son's power without help from the Father or the magnificent human abilities of the humanity of Christ which insured the Son's portrayal of himself to man and guaranteed the effectiveness of his ministry. Just as the Son needs the Father, so man needs the Father. The Christian utilizes the power of the Father through the Son, and the Son is the model for man so that man can be effective in the world. Logic alone does not attest to this chain of command in the Trinity; the history of the incarnation does as well.

## The Utilization of Divine Power in the Lives of the Followers of Christ

In addition to the paternal power Christ utilized in making his earthly ministry effective, is the genuine, positive response with which so many people met his claims. They did not believe him without good reason; he encouraged their consciences and their humility and love for God in confirming his legitimacy and his supernatural, even divine, nature. In addition to identifying his own unique function as Savior, he repeatedly said that he was the mere representative of the Father. Before men, Christ openly and dogmatically acknowledged the authority of his Father and declared that the Son's function included representing his Father.

Origen specifically addresses the genuine belief of his disciples, in discussing the spiritual impact of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection on them, not to mention the impact of his teaching before he was crucified. By associating with Christ, their fates could have been death as well. Origen maintains that knowledge of Christ's divinity inspired men to die for their faith. Not only willing and often yearning to suffer the same fate as their Savior because they loved him, these Christians were convinced of the profound and ultimate truth of his person, his message, and his life. They were inspired to sacrifice their lives because of the reality of truth of his life. Certainly if any destiny could dissuade people from embracing a belief and from following its leader, that

destiny would be death. Yet the possibility of death did not dissuade the followers of the Son of God who were committed to a relationship with the Father.<sup>31</sup>

These people were known for clinging to their faith with fervency and for declaring it to others. Origen explains that these Christians wanted to show the world the genuineness of their faith. They were not interested in proclaiming their faith for the Jews only, but also for all other nations.<sup>32</sup> Christ's disciples found content and dogma from the teachings of Christ directly and indirectly from the Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah. They accepted his deity and humanity as united, yet distinct, in one body. While not all of them fully understood the philosophical implications, nuances, and explanations of the Son of God becoming man, others did in part. Their knowledge came from their desire, perceptiveness, and divine revelation.

### The Functions of the Trinity in Terms of Human Benefit

The application for today lies in the application of the principles used during the incarnation. Certainly the workings of the Trinity, the various functions and purposes of each of its persons, do not have to be believed or understood by man to be true. To the man who believes and desires to understand the functions, purposes, and persons of the Trinity, these mysteries will be revealed as God sees fit. God, by reason of his integrity, is self-obligated to

reveal information about himself and the universe when man desires to know and is capable of understanding at his given level of perceptiveness. The belief in and understanding of the incarnate Christ by these followers bear important historical significance to the faithfulness of the Father in revealing himself to the man who seeks him. What God was faithful to reveal then, he is faithful to reveal now. The importance of the testimony of these disciples lies not just in their attestation to the deity of the Son and the various functions of the Trinity, but in the impact of each person of the Trinity in their own lives as well. They believed in the functions of the Trinity, and reciprocally, each divine person blessed and ministered to them. Other recorded Biblical testimony by men and for men helps supply the historical evidence for the humility of God in seeking a relationship with man without forcing man to comply. Just as the mind of God is composed of balance, harmony, and perfection, so the soul of man naturally possesses affinity for the same unless his volition opts for imbalance and disharmony, even for evil. The embodiment of ideal balance between God and man was in the historical Jesus, the God-man.

**Details on the Person of the God-Man: The Historical  
Evidence for the Harmony Between the Deity and the  
Humanity of Christ**

In contrast to Celsus' lies which have distorted and maligned the truth behind the virgin birth and the other

miraculous and supernatural events associated with the incarnation, Origen continuously appeals to the purposefulness, purity, and perfection of the Father's desire in willing the Son to become incarnate. He concentrates on the perfection of the incarnate Son and the absolute harmony required between body and soul in the humanity. If the humanity was inharmonious within itself, it could not possibly function in harmony with the deity of the Son. Origen concludes that "It is therefore probable that this soul . . . needed a body which was not only distinguished among human bodies, but was also superior to all others."<sup>33</sup> Origen distinguishes not only the soul of the humanity of Christ which was inherently superior to the souls of all other men, but distinguishes the superiority of his physical body as well. He explains this proposition as follows: "Why . . . should there not be a certain soul that takes a body which is entirely miraculous, which has something in common with men in order to be able to live with them, but which also has something out of the ordinary, in order that the soul may remain uncontaminated by sin?"<sup>34</sup> While he adds that "all bodies conform to the habits of their souls", Origen has confirmed the divine influence from deity on the body of the humanity. In this statement, the "something out of the ordinary" could refer to deity and its effect on the body. If deity, this would mean that the deity prevents sin in the humanity, including physical actions and activities which obviously involve the body, and that the conformation of the body to the soul would be necessary, but not

necessarily resulting from the soul's free choice. Although Origen does not clarify the soul's lack of total free choice in the humanity of Christ, he more than suggests it. The distinctive and constant interaction between deity and humanity, is the final element of the incarnation which theologians find difficult to resolve. If one suggests the deity's sovereignty over the humanity's free will, the will has lost its freedom. The soul of the humanity of Christ is then seen to possess the will of the deity which can do no wrong and which possesses perfect, timely judgment and discretion, this discretion belonging to omniscience alone. If on the other hand, one suggests the humanity's total sovereignty over his own human free will, then the humanity's compliance, insight, and resultant harmony with the deity seem too fantastic not to be coincidental. The situation of deity which has combined with a sinless humanity seems to be the responsibility of the Father. As Origen's discussion of this dilemma progresses, his final resolution will become clear, yet with possible contradiction.

#### The Miracle of the Incarnation as a Natural Expression of God's Ability

In defense of the Father's will of a virgin birth for the humanity of Christ, Origen questions: "Why, therefore, is it incredible that if God wished to send some divine teacher to mankind He should have made the organism of him that was to be born come into being in a different way instead

of using a generative principle derived from the sexual intercourse of men and women?. . . ."35 He replies: "To . . . [those] who disbelieve in the virgin birth of Jesus I have to say that the Creator showed in the birth of various animals that what He did in the case of one animal, He could do, if He wished, also with others and even with men themselves."36 To Origen, the supernatural activity of God in his creation's propagation of itself is not incredible, but natural for God. Origen would expect such activity from God. If the activity of God were less than supernatural, God would not be acting in accordance with who he is.

Someone may respond that miracles (man's term for divine power which supersedes the laws of nature) do not always occur when they are needed. Although Origen does not develop this line of thinking, the corresponding reply is that God continues to act on behalf of man, but with purposes for him which he had not considered. To demand behavior from God compatible with human ideas and human behavior would be to dishonor him. Whether divine behavior is associated with the incarnation or with the creation of the universe, including everything animate and inanimate, divine behavior is natural to God. The human perspective is most limited when it denies or questions the right and the ability of God in acting as God. If God created natural laws, he can certainly supersede them. In a more general sense, the miracle of the incarnation provides, for Origen, further evidence for the omnipotence of God, for the person of God, and for the objective of God.<sup>37</sup> When man considers the

wonder of the incarnation, he is overwhelmed with the perfection and the effectiveness of the Father's plan in creating a Savior for man and with the perfection of the incarnate Son. The purity of the Father and the accompanying love for man in providing the possibility for relationship with him become more apparent. Moreover, every act of the Father, whether directly or indirectly through the Son or the Spirit, is to bring himself glory. The man sensitive to divine purposes perceives this.

#### The Difficulty in Verifying Historical Fact Even in Light of the Holy Spirit's Inspiration of Scripture

Much as Origen has relied on historical fact to validate the authority of the Son and the genuineness of his disciples' adherence to his teaching, he finally admits the difficulty in validating the historical facts of Jesus' life or of anyone else's.<sup>38</sup> Origen appeals to the fairness of the readers of these accounts of Christ's life in Scripture. Substantiating fact is not simply a matter of believing fact. He hopes that they will show discretion in interpreting an event literally or allegorically. As Origen clarifies,

Anyone who reads the stories [of ancient Greek history] with a fair mind, who wants to keep himself from being deceived by them, will decide what he will accept and what he will interpret allegorically, searching out the meaning of the authors who wrote such fictitious stories, and what he will disbelieve as having been written to gratify certain people.<sup>39</sup>

Origen accordingly reveals several of his ideas on inspiration and on the interpretation of Scripture. A story's appearance in Scripture does not necessarily imply the occurrence of a literal event. Origen would deny that the Bible contains lies or falsehoods. The Bible, inspired by God, specifically by the Holy Spirit, must be interpreted and evaluated on what level of truth it is meant to be perceived. Fact is one level, and spiritual insight is yet another. By implication, when Origen discusses Biblical inspiration and interpretation, he comments on the Holy Spirit's ministry of inspiration. A forerunner to many modern beliefs on inspiration, Origen emphasizes the element of human influence in recording select and selected events to the specific writer, the allegorical method of writing, and the possibility of the Spirit's decreased supernatural influence on the knowledge and aptitude of these writers. While on the one hand, Origen eagerly ascribes supernatural activity to the Father in desiring the Son both to become and to exist incarnate and perfect in his humanity, on the other hand, Origen refrains from ascribing such activity to the Holy Spirit, at least in his ministry of inspiring the writers of Scripture. The invisible guiding ministry of the Spirit is of greater importance than his directly authoritative or obviously miraculous ministry. Origen neither claims that the language and style of Scripture is the Spirit's own, nor does he insist upon the Spirit's direct dictation to these men. As a result, both the words and the style of Scripture are, for Origen, more human and more in accordance with man's thinking and with God's anthropopathic pattern of

thinking and distribution of knowledge. In this light, Origen interprets the facts and events of Christ's ministry and the portrayal of the functions and interactions of the Trinity. The final proof for the validity and for the literalness of the events of the incarnation, though, is not purely logical. The evidence transcends philosophical method alone. The best evidence comes from faith in the perfection of God and in the revelation of himself in Scripture and wisdom in deciphering on what level to perceive events and stories.

### The Holy Spirit's Appearance as a Dove

Origen defends the Biblical portrayal and the factual event of the Holy Spirit's appearance as a dove. He defends its literalness and the supernatural purpose behind this appearance to aid the Spirit's ministry and function toward man. Nardoni elaborates the role of the prophet in communicating truth from God to man, from Origen's description as follows: "Under this divine illumination the prophet gains insights into divine and human realities, discovers the motivation to convey either orally or by writing the divine will he perceived, and finds energy to implement this communication."<sup>40</sup> Expanding the idea of the hierarchy in the Trinity, Origen includes the written Word. The accounts of Jesus are more important than the accounts of other men and their deeds, except as these people reveal Jesus. The account of the Spirit appearing as a dove takes precedence over the accounts of the prophets.

Origen explains that the power of Jesus is seen in its residual effects after his death, that is, in the continued response to his person and to his divine purpose which both exemplifies and inspires goodness in men who want to know God.<sup>41</sup>

### The Holy Spirit as the Connection Between the Divine Living Word and the Divine Written Word

The divine written Word is indeed a part of the hierarchy of the Trinity, for it is the person of the divine living Word in words. It is his verbal message and his and the rest of the Trinity's explanation of God and man in recorded language. A hierarchy within the Word and without the Word exists. The hierarchy within the Word establishes some passages as more important, more authoritative than others which do not address, for example, the ministry of God to man as directly. Origen's understanding of Biblical inspiration and his resultant interpretation based on that understanding reveal how the reader should perceive the contents of Scripture as truth, that some passages should be interpreted literally and others figuratively, and that the workings of the Trinity and the purposes of each of its persons should be interpreted in that light.

The balance between literal and figurative interpretation is established by the balance which the Holy Spirit's ministry of inspiration established, that is, the

extent to which he overruled the message, style, and general human imperfections in man's recording of historical events and purposes behind those events. Origen's theory of inspiration addresses the topic of discussion and the speaker in a given passage. For example, Origen considers the subject of God more important than the subject of man, but he combats the idea that a passage has more validity if Christ is the speaker than if Paul or the prophets are. Christ is never the immediate speaker, however; for the author of the book has quoted Christ directly or at least phrased his quotation as direct. Origen maintains that the Holy Spirit compensates for human error, imperfect knowledge, and limited analysis and perceptiveness. Even when the authors are not direct witnesses to the events they record, the Holy Spirit bestows greater knowledge and directs them to record truth. Referring to the example of the Holy Spirit's appearance as a dove, Origen discusses the thorough teaching of the Spirit as a part of the Spirit's ministry of inspiration. He links the power of the Spirit in the inspiration of Scripture with the power of the Spirit in becoming like a dove.<sup>42</sup> Surely a power which loses none of its potency over the centuries in inspiring the writers of Scripture, inspiring the readers of Scripture to respond to the truth they read, and inspiring those who came into contact with the incarnate Christ possesses the intricate coordination to appear as a dove, and still maintain its fundamental incorporeality and omnipresence. When the

Gospel writers received their information from the incarnate Christ, the Holy Spirit did not need to compensate for the validity of his perfect message, but the Spirit did aid the writers' memory in the process of recording. The Spirit's ministry of inspiration is not independent of the other persons of the Trinity, for all three persons of the Trinity act in the operation of any one of them. The Trinity works in the preservation of Christ's message as relayed to the Biblical authors in both word and action. Not distinguishing any one person of the Trinity in illumination, Nardoni develops Origen's theory of inspiration, saying:

The divine illumination operates in a double way. On the one hand, it energizes the natural faculties of the prophets, providing them with a "divine sense" that enables them to see and to hear in a divine way, to taste and smell with a sense that is not sensible, and to touch the Word by faith. On the other hand, it operates by offering an apprehensible aspect of the divine mystery that God wants to convey to the prophet. The communication involved is made by "a spiritual impression" on the spiritual sense of the prophet's mind. This impression stimulates the spiritual sense and determines the character of whatever the prophet has perceived.<sup>43</sup>

### The Importance of the Divine Inspiration of Scripture in the Accurate and Truthful Description of the Persons of the Trinity

It becomes obvious that the Spirit's ministry of Biblical inspiration is imperative for the authority which Origen ascribes to Scripture in general and to the events

and characters contained in them. The complete truth in all of Scripture sets a standard for God's commandments for man and for his revelation of himself. When Abraham is called a friend of God and David a man after God's own heart, the reader, according to Origen, can accept such statements as true without doubt or question. Similarly, the standard of Moses for a potentially positive relationship with God historically helps set the stage for the infinitely, potentially positive relationship with God in the actual descent of the Son to earth in the form of the God-man. One can see the progression of revelation of God himself and of divine standard for man. The ministry of the Holy Spirit in preserving historical facts, in using great men as ministers of the Father, and in recording doctrines and truths, finds its peak in recording the ministry of Christ on earth. The ministry of the Spirit, specifically in Biblical inspiration, is essential, for the Father uses it to reveal truth, to reveal the Son as his representative, and to reveal the hierarchy and various functions of the Trinity. The consistency of God's system for himself and for man unfolds in the pages of Scripture.

### The Miracles of Christ as Identification of Both His Divine Nature and the Reality of the Persons of the Father and the Spirit

Origen does not challenge supernatural and miraculous activity on earth, and he even defends its often essential purpose. He links the power which presented the Holy Spirit

as a dove with the power of Jesus' miracles. Although he does not develop this connection, the power behind both events is divine and hints at the oneness of God. Moreover, Origen determines the necessity of these events of the Spirit and of the Son in inspiring the followers of Jesus even to risk their lives.<sup>44</sup> Origen repeats his appeal to historical facts as evidence, and his source as Scripture. He says: "But as God is witness of our good conscience, we want to lend support to the divine teaching not by any false reports, but by definite facts of various kinds."<sup>45</sup> By implication, Origen's source for such facts is Scripture. As for personal evidence that Christ is indeed the Son of God, apart from historical verification in Scripture, Origen maintains that "His divinity is testified by great numbers of churches, which consist of men converted from the flood of sins and who are dependent on the Creator and refer every decision to His pleasure."<sup>46</sup>

#### The Spirit's Inspiration Not Only of the Writers of Scripture But Also of the Lives of All Men Who So Desire

Origen hints at the Spirit's inspiration of men, whether or not they composed books of Scripture, thus distinguishing between inspiration strictly for the authorship of Scripture and inspiration in the life of the individual. He describes spiritual wisdom acquired by men proportional to the depth of their relationship with God. He says:

. . . there is, as the Scripture calls it [in Proverbs 2:5 according to the Septuagint], a certain generic divine sense which only the man who is blessed finds on this earth. Thus Solomon says: "Thou shalt find a divine sense". . . . The blessed prophets found this divine sense, and their vision and hearing were spiritual; in a similar way they tasted and smelt, so to speak, with a sense which was not sensible. And they touched the Word by faith so that an emanation came from him to them which healed them. In this way they saw what they record that they saw, and they heard what they say they heard, and their experience was similar when, as they recorded, they ate the roll of a book which was given to them [according to Ezekiel 2:9 and 3:3].<sup>47</sup>

The Spirit used the divine wisdom already possessed by these writers in combination with a specific ministry which compensated for their lack of wisdom. While Origen does not develop inspiration in this way, he attests to the role and to the importance of personal contact with the humanity of Christ by the writers of Scripture. In Christ, they found a verbal, conscious source of truth who actually taught them. They had the opportunity to witness Christ's various activities, such as teaching and performing miracles, as historical events themselves which repeatedly validated his claims.

### The Authority of Christ Portrayed in the Prophecies About Him

In opposing Celsus' denial of Christ's authority, Origen defends such authority from the attestation of the prophets in Scripture. In so doing, he testifies to the authenticity of

Scripture. Origen claims that the Old Testament prophecies are "the strongest argument confirming Jesus' authority. . . ."<sup>48</sup> Fulfilled prophecy of the historical event of the incarnate Christ and his earthly ministry is the strongest argument for the authenticity of the Old Testament. The fulfilment of prophecy adds "proof" to the truthfulness of Scripture on the subject of Christ and on all other subjects. The credence of Scripture means that its presentation of God in a setting apart from man and in interaction with man is honest, and more importantly, wholly true. The presentation of God to the world is also actually, even physically, true. Origen comments: "Accordingly I may say . . . that many prophets foretold in all kinds of ways the things concerning Christ, some in riddles and others by allegories or some other way, while some even use literal expressions."<sup>49</sup> Whatever the style or method of the writer, Scripture is established as truth; and a purpose of the incarnation becomes clear: Christ's literal fulfilment in coming to earth establishes the Word of God as the Word of God, as the truth, and as truth.

As Origen continues to cite prophecies of Christ's coming and their fulfilment, he repeats the certainty that Christ, not some other messiah, is the subject of these prophecies, and that Christ is the path, the means of man to the Father. He says: "The Christ of God . . . has come, the ruler of whom the promises of God speak. He was obviously the only one among all his predecessors and . . . among posterity as well who was the expectation of the nations.

People from all nations have believed in God through him. . . .  
."50 In person, function, and message, the historical incarnate Christ fits the description of the prophecies. This historical accuracy even verifies the claim of the Word of God to be the Word of God. For Origen, the inerrancy of Scripture, especially when the subject is Christ, is impeccable. Scripture may only appear flawed when not understood in the way it was intended. The impeccability of the content of Scripture reinforces Origen's own rationality and projected empiricism, that is, what he perceives his response to Christ in person would have been. If man is going to possess an objective standard by which to evaluate his own life and an objective, truthful, clear understanding of God, the source of his information must be dependable. The inerrancy of Scripture produces dependability and, therefore, practicality.

#### The Distinction Between the Functions of the Deity and the Humanity of Christ

As Origen's defense of the co-existent deity and humanity of Christ continues, he leaves the topic of Biblical inspiration and inerrancy and distinguishes the humanity and deity of Christ according to their functions. Addressing the two advents of the Son, Origen distinguishes between the purpose of the God-man in whom the person and function of humanity dominated and whose impeccability was perpetually under scrutiny, and the

wholly divine, sovereign function of the Son's presence on earth and return to earth. He says:

In the first [advent] he is subject to human passions and deeper humiliation, in order that by being with men Christ might teach the way that leads to God and might leave no one living this life among men an opportunity of defending themselves on the ground that they were ignorant of the judgment to come. In the second he is coming in glory and in divinity alone, without any human passions bound up with his divine nature.<sup>51</sup>

Origen repeats that "Jesus the Christ was truly God's son."<sup>52</sup> Origen never disputes the deity of Christ in the first advent. What he emphasizes is the humanity, but the humanity is easier to distinguish than the deity which is invisible and incomprehensible. He refers to the incarnate Christ as "him who was, so to speak, a combination of God and mortal man (συνθέτω πινὲ ἐκ θεοῦ καὶ ἀνθρώπου θνητοῦ)."<sup>53</sup>

Retelling and explaining some of the events of Christ's life on earth, Origen describes Christ's kingdom and the threat it produced for Herod, who misunderstood and reacted to the incarnate presence, even set out to murder him. Origen defends Christ's escape from death, an escape not out of cowardice in his way of life as a man (more than his escape from Herod as an infant), but out of a desire to fulfil the Father's plans for his life and the Father's timing for his death.<sup>54</sup> Origen's description of Christ's spiritual kingdom and the purposes which the humanity of Christ effected for his deity is clear. By concentrating on the contents of the facts from the Gospels, which are fulfilments of Old Testament prophecies, he has acquired

the facts and the purposes for the facts of Christ's earthly ministry.

### The Purpose of Christ's Earthly Ministry for Christians

Origen envisages Christ's earthly ministry as including the dissemination of divine power to men who thirsted for God. Christ's choice of the apostles indicates wisdom and sensitivity to the effectiveness and visibility of divine power. The authority which the apostles wielded and their effectiveness throughout the known world at that time evidenced a power not their own but one which was divine. Origen explains the wisdom of Christ in not choosing apostles who were philosophers skilled in "Greek dialectical or rhetorical arts".<sup>55</sup> Trained philosophical minds would have detracted from the power of God's wisdom, which Christ endeavored and succeeded in conveying. Paraphrasing Scripture, Origen concludes what would have been the outcome, had Christ chosen skilled philosophers to be his apostles. "And the faith, like the faith of the philosophers of this world in their doctrines, would have been in the wisdom of men, and not in the power of God."<sup>56</sup>

### Christ's Earthly Ministry in Accordance with the Father's Wishes

Thus was the wisdom of Christ in selecting men in whom the power and message of God would shine. The deity

of Christ could be nothing but wise in his selection. In harmony with his person and function, the incarnate Son perfectly carried out the Father's wishes and purposes for himself on behalf of man. In this light, Origen comments on ". . . both the foreknowledge of our Saviour about the preaching of the gospel, which is obviously divine, and the strength of the Word which without teachers conquers those who believe by the divine power of its persuasion."<sup>57</sup> Both the divine written Word and the divine living Word are effective in carrying out the Father's will. The deity of the Son could do no less. Therefore, the ministry of the incarnation was based on living wisdom, not selfishly possessed by him alone, but delegated to disciples who gladly received both this wisdom, as a person and as a principle, and who applied it to their own ministries.

#### Origen's Affirmation of the Existence of the Deity of Christ During His Earthly Ministry

Celsus attacks the deity of Christ by asserting the one-time existence of Christ's humanity to the exclusion of deity. What Celsus sees he believes; he sees humanity and not deity. For him, there is no possibility of the co-existent deity and humanity of the Son. Origen makes his own assertion, to the contrary, establishing that man and God not only could, but did exist simultaneously. He describes the co-existence of deity and humanity as "a sort of composite being (*σύνθετόν τι χρῆμα φαμεν αὐτὸν γεγονέναι*

)".<sup>58</sup> Origen does not claim to understand the precise interaction of deity and humanity, but he definitely accepts the existence of them both in the God-man. Affirming his belief in Christ's claims about himself, Origen maintains the literal truth of the existence of both deity and humanity. Origen explains that the humanity served the deity by avoiding danger that would result in physical death before the Father's timing. More than coordination, this harmony of deity and humanity attests to the genuineness of deity and implies the unique intimacy which existed between the two natures. Origen speaks of the importance of Christ's humanity being sensitive to the plans of the Father, specifically the timing and events of his death. Origen believes in the freedom of the human will, for he explains the efforts of Christ's humanity to preserve his own life, in accordance with the will of God and with the freedom of the will of men, especially Herod, who wanted to kill Christ. The execution of the Father's will demanded that the humanity of Christ avoid circumstances that would demand the Father's usurping other men's free will to insure his own timing for the events of Christ's life. Although Origen does not elaborate to this extent, the intimacy between the humanity of Christ and the persons of the Trinity was absolutely necessary.<sup>59</sup>

The Free Will of the Humanity of Christ and Thus of All  
Other Men

Origen defends free will, not affirming or denying that the deity of Christ and, therefore, that the entire Trinity whose plans are one, motivated his humanity. For humanity to act freely in accordance with the plans of the Father and for the Father, or any other person of the Trinity, to usurp Herod's or any other man's will who deliberately set out to thwart the purposes of God are contradictory possibilities. The will of the Father did not overrule the free will of the humanity of Christ, just as he does not overrule the free will of any other man. A purpose in deity assuming humanity was to aid deity on earth, in a foreign environment, to accomplish the Father's goals for the benefit of mankind and in a manner discernible to mankind. An inevitable result of this co-existence and union, of course, has given to mankind a pattern for unity and perfect harmony with God.

#### The Coordination of the Human Will and the Divine Will of the Son in Light of the Free Will of Christ's Humanity

Origen affirms that the visible humanity of Christ was different from the humanity of other men, for "within the visible man [of Christ] he possessed something more divine. . . ."60 Origen identifies Logos as this divine element, thus clarifying that Logos is a title for the incarnate Christ. At the same time, he admits in the same passage that this "is not the right time to explain the composite nature and of what elements the incarnate Jesus

consisted, since this is . . . a matter for private investigation by believers."<sup>61</sup> Just as in man, the real person is invisible, so it is in the incarnate Christ. Origen does not elaborate on the interaction of the soul of his humanity with his deity. Whether he understands it and does not explain it here or whether he believes it really is a matter for the individual to decipher will become clearer as his discussion on Christ continues. Origen seems to think that certain functions and attributes of deity are easier to label as such than certain aspects of humanity. The subject of the perfection of Christ's humanity, either apart from deity or in conjunction with deity, he does not address here.

#### An Example of the Perfect Coordination of the Wills of Christ's Deity and Humanity in the Miracles

When Celsus ascribes sorcery to the miracles of Christ, Origen responds that as God, the Son of God would never resort to the whimsical, senseless manifestations of his power. Neither would he trick or give the illusion of power. Origen discusses the purposes of the miracles in persuading people of the divinity of Christ by the power and goodness of his actions. Having drawn people by his goodness and having impressed them by his power, Jesus might then tell them of the mission of his humanity and of the persons of the Trinity who deeply care for them.<sup>62</sup>

## The Impact of the Miracles and the Free Response of the Human Will

That even with strong evidence for the ministry of the Son and the divine power he visibly used before the masses, people reject the message and the person of Christ, provides some evidence for the reality of human free will. Human rejection of God is evidence that neither the Father nor the Son overrules human choice. What Origen still has not clarified, though, is the free will of the humanity of Christ. God not overruling the will of Christ's humanity has truly set the precedent for God not overruling the rest of the human race. Great as the odds may seem against the total free choice of the humanity of Christ (since Christ always made right, knowledgeable choices in his humanity), free choice must have predominated. The Father's will did not and does not extend to violating or overruling man's will, including the will of the humanity of Christ.

### The Divinity and Perfect Truthfulness of the Word

Origen ends Book 1, having defended the truth of Scripture, for he maintains that it preserves accurate historical facts and portrays Christ perfectly as the Father's personal emissary to mankind. In defending the truth of the Word, he has defended the harmonious co-existence of deity and humanity by the definition of incarnate when applied to the Son. He maintains the existence of literal and allegorical contexts in Scripture.

With correct labelling and accurate classification of passages in the Word, the believer is able to ascertain truth and the Father's message of hope by way of the Son. In addition to seeing each passage of Scripture in its proper light, the believer gains a more precise picture of God and of the Trinity. Each passage of Scripture contains the very words and thoughts of Christ in his deity. Scripture contains precisely what the Trinity wants it to contain.

## Chapter 2

### The Incarnation in Light of the Relationship Between Judaism and Christianity; the Nature of Christ's Humanity; and the Incarnation as the Model for Man and God's Relationship

#### The Connection Between the Old and New Testaments

Origen began Book 1 by defending attacks on the genuineness of Christianity, and he begins Book 2 by defending regenerate Jews. Celsus has apparently claimed that regenerate Jews have rejected their tradition and their spiritual heritage. Daniélou describes "the last of the fundamental objections made by Celsus to Christianity, viz., that Christianity was revolutionary."<sup>1</sup> To the contrary, Origen argues, and he examines the ministries of the Son and the Spirit in his stance that Christianity is an extension of Judaism. In Book 1, Origen compared Moses and the humanity of Christ and, more importantly, the Old Testament prophecies of the Messiah with the historical record of their fulfilment in the Gospels, thus establishing the connection between Christianity and Judaism. Daniélou continues: "The object of those things [Old Testament accounts] is to prepare the mass of men, who are not yet capable of searching into the mysteries, to come to the knowledge of them one day."<sup>2</sup> Here Origen distinguishes between the letter and the spirit in the Mosaic Law and proposes that classic Judaism taught the letter of the Law,

whereas Christ expanded the traditional teaching of the Law to include the spirit. What the Son began during the incarnation, the Spirit concludes, for Origen describes the Old Testament ceremonies as "a type (τύπος), while the ultimate reality was that which the Holy Spirit was to teach them. . . ."<sup>3</sup> Origen sees Christ as the bridge between the rituals of the Old Testament and the true reality of these rituals, which the Spirit taught through Christ during the incarnation. He acknowledges that the Holy Spirit's role as teacher helps to explain his title of "the Spirit of truth".<sup>4</sup> Thus Origen acknowledges the real and tangible effects of the Son and the Spirit on mankind. These effects constitute Fairweather's description of the strength of Origen's defense of Christianity, for he says: "While Origen recognises the value of the evidence of prophecy and miracle, he bases his apology chiefly on moral grounds. To him *the* proof of the truth of Christianity is the power which it exerts over the hearts and lives of men."<sup>5</sup>

#### The Harmonious Ministries of the Teaching of Christ and the Revelation of the Spirit

Just as Christ expanded and liberalized the Law, in his own sensitivity to the guidance of the Spirit in his humanity, so the Spirit explains the teachings of Christ for all believers. Just as Christ took men to the source of the Law, who is God, so the Spirit reveals the source of the Word, who is a person, to the individual believer. God

reveals himself gradually to the individual man and gradually throughout history. Origen describes this progressive revelation even in terms of the life of the individual Christian. For Origen, the Old Testament prophecies of the Messiah and the truth disseminated by Moses introduces the purpose and the reality of Christianity. He describes "the next stage of progress for beginners . . . [as] interpretation and exegesis of these" passages. The mysteries not revealed in the Old Testament which "kept silence through times eternal" appear in the incarnate Christ.<sup>6</sup> It can be seen that God's system for interacting with man is one of harmony and sensitivity. The persons of the Trinity adjust to each other in communicating knowledge and love. God adjusts to man and requires, not to the exclusion of human free will, that man adjust to him. Part of God's adjustment and sensitivity to man includes revealing himself little by little, as man is able to comprehend such knowledge and appreciate such corresponding interaction.

Just as God's system is motivated by personal harmony with men, so the expression of God's message, standards, and purposes in writing conveys and reflects that harmony and is internally consistent. When Christ responds to the unbelief in his person and message, he maintains that he alone is not rejected, but Moses and the other prophets are rejected as well. Even Christ acknowledged the continuation of Old Testament doctrine in the New Testament, for Origen notes that he linked the

unbeliever's rejection of himself as Savior with the rejection of the truth communicated by Moses. He says:

Why is it absurd that the law is the origin of our doctrine, that is, the gospel? Even our Lord himself says to those who do not believe in him [in John 5:46, 47]: "If you had believed Moses, you would have believed me; for he wrote of me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words?"<sup>7</sup>

The Old and New Testaments are naturally contiguous and homogenous. The unidentified Messiah from the Old Testament literally comes to life in the New, and the expansion of his function during the times of the Old Testament reaches its peak in the New.

### The Humility of Christ

When Origen addresses the humility of the incarnate Christ, he passionately attacks Celsus' assertion of Christ's arrogance. He develops:

I challenge anyone to show where there can be found even a suggestion of a saying uttered by Jesus from *arrogance*. How was he arrogant when he says [in Matthew 11:29]: "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart, and you shall find rest in your souls"? Or how was he arrogant who, during supper, took off his clothes among his disciples and, girding himself with a towel, poured water into a basin and washed the feet of each one; and he rebuked the one who was unwilling to offer his feet to be washed. . . . I challenge anyone to prove what *lies* he told, and let him give an account of great and small lies, that he may prove that *Jesus told great lies*. . . . Was it profane to abandon physical circumcision, and a literal sabbath and literal feasts, literal new moons,

and clean and unclean things, and rather to turn the mind to the true and spiritual law, worthy of God? In this respect the ambassador for Christ knows how to become a Jew to the Jews that he may gain Jews, and to those under the law as to one under the law, that he may gain those under the law.<sup>8</sup>

The incidents Origen uses to combat the assertion that Christ was arrogant show the confidence of Christ. His boldness in repudiating Jews who obeyed the Law for the sake of the Law, rather than as worship of God, took the form of showing all Jews the purposes behind Jewish rituals. Jesus did not want the Jews to concentrate on the form and overt activity of the Law which, in many cases, proved to be the excuse for distracting them from God himself. Jesus wanted the Jews to concentrate on God and, specifically, on the truths and attributes of God which present him as he really is, not as the ritual itself perceived literally, which had been distorted from its original purpose.

### The Example and Ministry of Christ

Origen juxtaposes arrogance and confidence, and measured against Christ's actions, the only possible attribute is confidence. Both confidence and authority the humanity of Christ acquired from the Father, and this acquisition sets an example for the believer. Origen concentrates on Christ's insight and effectiveness. His insightful ministry, not at the expense of ignoring sin or ignorance of truth or even any slight imperfection, introduced an exemplary pattern of living and profound

mandates to affect the thinking of man, which, in turn, effected a quality of life unique in the history of man. The cases which Origen cites from Christ's life on earth include Christ at his worst and at his best. For Christ, they are the same, of course, for Christ has no worst. From these instances, too, the juxtaposition of deity and humanity in one person, appears clearly effective. The Father's experiment, so to speak, since he had not done so before in sending his Son to earth with such a vast, yet intricate, purpose, has been overwhelmingly effective, no matter what Celsus thinks. The incarnate Christ was the perfect embodiment of God, his purposes, and his system. As Origen declares: ". . . Jesus, . . . by the power within him introduced a system and doctrines which benefited the life of mankind and converted men from the flood of sins."<sup>9</sup>

#### The Distinct Persons and Purposes of the Deity and Humanity of Christ

No matter how perfect the humanity of Christ, Origen rigidly maintains that the humanity of Christ, including his body, was not God. He distinguishes between the two levels of life and accepts each as possessing its own purpose. He says: ". . . not even we suppose that the body of Jesus, which could then be seen and perceived by the senses, was God. And why do I say the body? For not even his soul was God. . . . He was using the soul and body of the prophet [Isaiah, in Isaiah 43:10] as an instrument."<sup>10</sup>

Confirming the lack of arrogance in the humanity of Christ and the perfect confidence in both deity and humanity, Origen identifies the speaker of the following verses. He says: ". . . it was the divine Logos and Son of the God of the universe that spoke in Jesus, saying [in John 14:6, 10:7, and 6:51]: 'I am the way, the truth, and the life', and 'I am the door', and 'I am the living bread that came down from heaven', and any other such saying."<sup>11</sup> Humanity never claimed that it was deity, and deity never claimed that it was humanity. These passages themselves, however, do not distinguish between the deity and the humanity of Christ. Since arrogance could never be applied to the deity of Christ, Origen uses these passages to exonerate Christ's humanity of any possibility of arrogance. He does not specify whether or not he interprets the speaker in these passages as Christ's humanity or as the union of Christ's deity and humanity.

#### The Failure of Unbelieving Jews to Recognize the Connection Between the Old and New Testaments

As Origen discourses on the fault of the Jews in not accepting the person and ministry of Christ, he summarizes the progressive revelation the Jews did receive. God not only does not force man to choose for God against his will, but he also specifically provides the information and the opportunity to give the unbelieving Jews, and all unbelievers for that matter, the opportunity to believe in

Christ. Origen does not develop the idea that if man did not have free will, it would seem ridiculous for God to provide so many opportunities for man to choose for God. Even with such an abundance of opportunities to choose for God, some Jews never did. Nevertheless, the sovereignty and authority of God never usurped their free will, even at the end. For part of God's integrity is his consistency and faithfulness, his immutability and dependability. That God does not provide an influence so potent that he, in effect, manipulates free will so that they would, at some time, opt for relationship with God, is true. No matter how much God yearns for relationship with man, he allows man freedom. Only God knows what influence and what stimulus would tempt man too far and would manipulate or even destroy human volition so that he must choose for God. Man must trust God's integrity, for one man differs from another and only God knows how and to what extent to regulate the truth, in all kinds of forms, with which he confronts man. This is not to portray God mechanically, but sensitively.

Origen summarizes the information, the knowledge of God the Jews received and subsequently rejected, as revelatory of God and sufficient for relationship with him. Origen maintains that the Jews had plenty of evidence for the Messiahship of Christ from the prophets and from the miracles. He describes Christ as "a God like the God and Father of the universe. . . . And when the Logos was commanded, he made everything that the Father enjoined him."<sup>12</sup> Origen thus points out two levels of divine

revelation to man: from the universe and from the Word of God, which recorded the message of the prophets. The revelatory nature of God is part of the function of the Father as the overseer. The functions of the Father that man perceives are usually geared toward man, on man's behalf, with the ultimate purpose of uniting man in relationship with God. Gögler, however, emphasizes the relationship which Origen establishes between the Father and the Son in creation. He says: "Zuerst äußert sich der Logos in die Schöpfung hinein. Die Worte des Schöpfungsberichts 'Es werde' und 'Lasset uns machen' faßt Origenes als auftraggebendes Zweigespräch zwischen Vater und Logos, der das Gebotene ausführt."<sup>13</sup>

#### The Authority of the Father and the Responsiveness and Humility of the Son

The Father's desire that the Son humble himself in assuming a human body and a human nature is certainly directed toward man's benefit and happiness. Operating under the Father's authority and in accordance with his wishes, the Son created the universe. Origen implies another title for the Holy Spirit, for he describes "the spirit of the prophecy" with whom the Son, "the living Logos and truth", acted in harmony in executing the plans of God who is identified as the Father.<sup>14</sup>

#### The Unique Closeness Between the Deity and the Humanity

## of Christ and Man's Potential to Be Close with God

Origen cites John the Baptist prophesying that the Messiah would come and that his true nature, his divine nature would be invisible. He says: "John the Baptist . . . [was] prophesying that the Son of God would presently stand among them, not existing in a particular body and soul only but also extending to every place. . . ."15 Origen distinguishes between deity and humanity, humanity potentially being the corporeal instrument of many divine functions but limited to being at one place at one time, and deity being omnipresent. Just as believers today function under the influence of each person of the Trinity, so the humanity of Christ functioned under the deity.

Origen does admit that the unity between the deity and the humanity of Christ was a unique oneness, and man has yet to experience this unique intimacy with God. He says:

. . . after the incarnation the soul and body of Jesus became very closely united with the Logos of God. According to Paul's teaching [in I Corinthians 6:17] "he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit", and every one who . . . has actually been joined to him is one spirit with the Lord. If so, then how much more is it true that in a superior and more divine way that which was at one time a composite being in relation to the Logos of God is one with Him? Jesus, in fact, showed himself among the Jews to be "the power of God" [from I Corinthians 1:18, 24] by the miracles that he did. . . .16

In *Origen and His Work*, de Faye comments:

And yet, however independent of the man Jesus

the Son of God may be, he forms one single being with him. Origen distinctly affirms the organic unity of Christ Jesus. This is not the Logos and Jesus in juxtaposition; it is one personality. . . . The result of this is that the man Jesus becomes transformed by contact with the Logos. Origen goes so far as to say that this mortal body and his human soul become transmuted into divinity.<sup>17</sup>

A difference, then, exists between the influence of God over man in general and the influence of the deity over the humanity of the Son. It could be argued that a closer relationship exists between the created and the uncreated aspects of Christ because the humanity of Christ is the human counterpart to his deity, while man is not the human counterpart to God. Christ's humanity, so closely interacting with his deity, seems even inseparably interwoven with his deity, from the quantity of miracles he performed, the quality of which remains unsurpassed in the history of man. While certainly some believers are reputed to have "performed" miracles, through the power of God, neither their relationship with God, nor their function in life have been so closely allied with the Father's as was the humanity of Christ's with his deity and with the Father.

Just as the miracles Christ performed were made possible by the power from the Father, so was the message he spoke. Origen stresses the principle and the reality of the authority of the Father, over both the Son and mankind. Regarding Christ, Origen says: ". . . he said these things because he had received great authority from God with a view to implanting this doctrine among mankind and was convinced that he would be successful."<sup>18</sup> He then

emphasizes the effectiveness of such authority. "For the word that is spoken with power has overcome men of all sorts; and it is impossible to see any race of men which has avoided accepting the teaching of Jesus."<sup>19</sup> There is a purpose to the system of authority that the Father has established as a natural manifestation of his person and authority. It is effective in clarifying his message to man, for it contains a force unique to truth. The potency of truth is incomparable, and to detract from its potency would be to detract from truth. To deny its potency would be to deny its global impact.

#### The Sovereignty of God and the Free Will of Man

Origen addresses the link between the authority and foreknowledge of God and the free will of man. When Celsus attacks the foreknowledge of God in determining future events, Origen responds that prediction neither limits nor overrules free will. When God exercises his authority in granting Christ his authority in the execution of Christ's ministry, God does not exercise his authority to ensure the positive reception of that ministry. As Origen explains, "We say that the man who made the prediction was not the cause of the future event . . . ; but we hold that the future event, which would have taken place even if it had not been prophesied, constitutes the cause of its prediction by the one with foreknowledge."<sup>20</sup> Just as the Father does not usurp human free will, neither does the Son,

in his deity. The Son does not overrule the free will of his humanity or of any other person of the human race. Origen defends human free will and, by so doing, defends the free will of the humanity of Christ.

The Adaptability of Christ's Deity and Humanity and,  
Therefore, Characteristics Common to the Humanity of  
Christ and to All Men

Having distinguished between Christ as a man and all other men in terms of their relationship with God (Christ with his own deity and man with the Trinity), Origen describes the characteristics which the humanity of Christ shared with all other men, including physical pain. Origen explains the deliberate choice of God the Son to become exactly like all other human beings, even possessing vulnerability to physical pain, and exemplifies this pain with the pain of bearing the sins of the world. Origen does not distinguish between the physical pain and the spiritual pain of Christ's humanity, nor does he discuss the possibility of the pain of the deity of the Son, if even an anthropopathism, in Christ's bearing the sins of the world. He says:

Accordingly, just as he *intentionally* assumed a body whose nature was not at all different from human flesh, so he assumed with the body also its pains and griefs. He was not lord of these so that he felt no pain; this was in the power of the men who were disposed to inflict the pains and griefs upon him . . . [I]f he had not been willing to fall into the hands of men he would not have come. Yet he did come, since

he wanted to do so . . . that his death for men would benefit the whole world.<sup>21</sup>

Although Origen does not discuss the interaction of the soul of the humanity of Christ with the deity, he emphasizes the importance of the free will of Christ. It has already been established as an extension of Origen's concept of the complementary freedom and responsibility within the Trinity that each person of the Trinity indeed possesses free will and that these wills simultaneously and eternally constitute the oneness of their will as God. As a part of man being made in God's image, man possesses free will. Just as the Father desires the Son to carry out his wishes and the Son to accept this title and unction readily and responsibly, so the Father desires the humanity of the Son to execute his wishes. In both cases, the Father is glorified because the executor is a free agent. The physical suffering, the sensitivities of Christ's humanity, and glorification which the Father receives from the positive free choice of his executor affirm the freedom of Christ's humanity, that is, his option to obey or to disregard the Father's plans for him. In light of the freedom of deity to assume a human body and of humanity to be the instrument of execution, Origen summarizes: ". . . the firstborn of all creation assumed a body and a human soul and . . . God gave command about the vast things in the world and they were created, and . . . he who received the command was the divine Logos."<sup>22</sup>

Origen develops the concept of the Son becoming man as useful not just for the Father but for man himself. When

Celsus seems to deny the humanity of Christ, Origen defends it, describing the model and flawless behavior of Christ's humanity. As a result, both Christ's message from deity and his example from humanity benefit mankind. Origen recalls that "Jesus inspired confidence in his promises by . . . teaching . . . his adherents", for "events . . . [were] fulfilled of which he spoke", such as the preaching of the gospel "in all the world", his disciples' proclamation of the Word "to all nations", and the reception of his disciples before the rulers of nations.<sup>23</sup> Yet this inspiration of Jesus' ability to inspire people to hold on to, develop, and proclaim their faith, Origen sees as a confirmation of his humanity, who, as a perfect human being, served as a model for all other men, even in the endurance of pain and hardship. Origen maintains Christ's desire for his humanity to be an example for other men. He says: "Perhaps . . . he [Celsus] did not understand the doctrine that Jesus was a man, and did not want him to have any human experience, nor to become a noble example to men to show how to bear calamities."<sup>24</sup>

Origen makes practical and applicable the non-interference of any person of the Trinity with human volition. He maintains that the suffering Christ endured motivated other men to endure suffering and "to accept courage as a virtue".<sup>25</sup> The endurance of suffering reminds one of the hope of eternal life, which ultimately overcomes the "calamity" of "'this present world'".<sup>26</sup> Just as Christ was able to develop virtue in his humanity from the options

inherent to free will, so man with his own free will possesses those options. The Trinity and the humbling of one of its persons to become a man provide man the perfect model for his own life.

More than the perfect model, the Son possesses sensitive, flexible relationships. Such language may seem to concentrate on his humanity, but the principle applies to his deity as well. Whether during the incarnation or at another time, the Son as God has maintained an adaptability that is integral to his divine nature and necessary to his divine function. During the incarnation, he made use of humanity to express this adaptability and flexibility. Just as Jesus tailored his power and ability to physical needs, so to spiritual growth, and he explained his parables to those who wanted to understand them and those who wanted a relationship with God through him. Accordingly, Origen launches into a discussion of the aspects (*ἐπίνοιαι*) of the incarnate Christ, especially his sensitivity, flexibility, and adaptability resulting from his sense of purpose. Origen begins:

Although Jesus was one, he had several aspects; and to those who saw him he did not appear alike to all. That he had many aspects is clear from the saying, "I am the way, the truth, and the life", and "I am the bread", and "I am the door" [from John 14:6, 6:35, and 10:9 respectively], and countless other such sayings. Moreover, . . . his appearance was not just the same to those who saw him, but varied according to their individual capacity. . . . [H]e did not appear the same to those who were ill . . . as he did to those who . . . were in good health.<sup>27</sup>

The benefit of Christ having many aspects is indisputable

for man. Focusing on the theological rather than the practical substance and explanation of Christ having more than one aspect, however, depicts Christ in terms of seemingly non-eternal and humanly introduced attributes. It would appear that the presence of man elicits these aspects and that without man, these ἐπίνοιαι would not exist. In *Origène et la "Connaissance Mystique"*, Crouzel discusses the tendency of man to attribute artificiality to the ἐπίνοιαι of Christ. Man perceives an apparent contradiction to the necessary eternity of the Son and therefore of all of his attributes, some of which seem to exist because of the incarnation. He says:

Ces mots [ἐπίνοια and ἐπινοεῖν] ont une importance très grande dans la théologie d'Origène. La signification fondamentale du premier est celle de vue de l'esprit, de manière humaine de considérer les choses, en insistant souvent sur l'aspect artificiel que cela comporte. Si les ἐπίνοιαι ont un fondement dans le réel, elles n'y sont pas séparées comme dans l'intelligence humaine: il y a donc opposition entre l'ἐπίνοια et la réalité, désignée soit par ὑπόστασις, soit par πρᾶγμα. . . . Origène ne s'attarde guère sur les noms divins, ce sont surtout les dénominations du Christ qui l'intéressent: intermédiaire entre Dieu et les hommes, il est un par la substance, multiple par l'ἐπίνοια, comme en témoignent les divers noms que la Bible lui donne. Cette doctrine est un des points essentiels de la christologie origénienne. . . . En effet les attributs du Christ n'ont pas le Verbe pour origine puisqu'ils s'identifient à lui et ont été engendrés par Dieu avec lui: bien qu'ils ne se distinguent pas dans la personne unique du Logos, ils ont cependant une vraie réalité.<sup>28</sup>

Bigg summarizes the ἐπίνοιαι of the Son as follows: They

are "His economic functions, His relations to the world. In this sense the Father is One and Simple, while the Son is Many."<sup>29</sup> Thus, despite appearances, the deity of Christ has always been what he is, namely God and all of the attributes which constitute deity. His humanity merely served as the vehicle for expression. Man needed to understand God and the persons of the Trinity in parts, so to speak, rather than as a whole, because the human mind is incapable of, certainly at first (if not finally), perceiving God as he absolutely is, without distinctions, comparisons, analogies, or a collection of attributes.

Origen perhaps extends the influence of the deity on the humanity too far when he attributes supernatural changes to Christ's physical body after the crucifixion. The resurrection was a resurrection of Christ's humanity in distinction from the Son's appearance as a man as recorded in the Old Testament. He says:

Accordingly, as we hold that Jesus was such a wonderful person, not only as to the divinity within him which was hidden from the multitude, but also as to his body which was transfigured when he wished and before whom he wished, we affirm that everyone had the capacity to see Jesus only when he had not "put off the principalities and powers" [from Colossians 2:15] and had not yet died to sin; but after he had put off principalities and powers, all those who formerly saw him could not look upon him, as he had not longer had anything about him that could be seen by the multitude. For this reason it was out of consideration for them that he did not appear to all after rising from the dead.<sup>30</sup>

Such a physical transformation seems purposeless, and since Christ's descent to earth was for ministry, the

spectacular or supernatural was only "valid" when fulfilling that end. It is probable that Origen means that the test of the perfection of Christ's humanity was over after the crucifixion. The sinlessness of his humanity had to be maintained before the crucifixion to ensure the validity of his sacrifice. The sinlessness of his humanity after the crucifixion was no longer relevant.

### The Incarnation's Clarifying Portrayal of God

Origen speaks of the increasing glory and majesty of Christ's deity which appeared to increase overtly as the events and purposes of the ministry of his humanity became fulfilled; however, he does not distinguish deity and humanity so thoroughly in the following statement: "After he had accomplished the work of his incarnation his divinity was more brilliant."<sup>31</sup> Certainly the mutability of deity is an impossibility, for deity is immutable. As the humanity of Christ grew spiritually, his humanity and deity more harmoniously interacted, with the result that deity became more apparent. In addition, the more those people who encountered the incarnate Christ grew spiritually, the more they appreciated both his deity and his humanity and the more their spiritual vision was able to appreciate and appropriate the brilliance of deity. Once the work of the incarnation had been accomplished, attention was focused on the deity of Christ and the perfect fulfillment of the purposes of humanity to glorify deity.

## The End of the Incarnation

Origen distinguishes between the time Jesus physically appeared to people and when he ceased to do so. He develops the timing of Christ who not only tailored his message to the needs of the masses, but who also chose to appear or not to appear to them, for their benefit. This sensitivity of the humanity of Christ to the will of God coincides with the manifestations and appearances of God in the Old Testament and in all of recorded history.<sup>32</sup> After the cross, the Son's ministry changed, for the ministry of his humanity on earth ceased to be. The cross effected the hope which was attributed to Christ before the cross. When Christ spoke of knowing the Father through himself, he was in a sense prophesying his own destiny on the cross. Once that destiny came about, the need for Christ to establish himself as the God-man, as a man in the presence of men, vanished. In addition, the Father's intended ministry for him on earth was ending after his death on the cross.

### The Discriminatory Nature of Christ's Humanity in Consideration of the Higher Purposes of His Deity and of the Other Persons of the Trinity

Origen further develops the revelatory nature of Christ. Just because the Son had assumed humanity, he did not necessarily reveal himself to everyone. Origen

maintains that just because Christ had several aspects does not necessitate that he always revealed himself; sometimes he did not at all. He says:

For when he was sent into the world he did not merely make himself known; he also concealed himself. For his whole nature was not known even to the people who knew him, but some part of him escaped them; and to some he was entirely unknown. But he opened the gates of light to them that were in darkness and were the sons of night, and to those who devoted themselves to becoming sons of the day and the light.<sup>33</sup>

Certainly the simultaneous revealing and concealing of and by Christ is difficult to understand. Even those who knew him to be the Savior did not understand all the implications of his person. Henry Chadwick responds to Origen's statement remarking on the incarnation as a whole: "In Origen's view the incarnation concealed God as much as it revealed Him. . . ." <sup>34</sup> Certainly to all who lived during the time of Christ, to all who wanted truth, and to all who sought to enhance their relationship with God, Christ revealed himself as the Savior. While Christ would never attempt, in his deity or in his humanity, to usurp human volition and change an attitude of rejection to acceptance, it seems illogical if not impractical to suppose, that every person who possessed an attitude of rejection was spared total contact or even knowledge of Christ. Certainly the spiritual nature of his humanity and the trueness of his deity remained a mystery to the unbelieving. This is not to say that no unbelieving person had any contact with the body or physical appearance of humanity or knew of Christ's

message of salvation. Rather, the benefit of believing and appreciating his message was spared them.

### A Comment on the Physical and Spiritual Natures of Christ's Humanity

Origen describes the birth of Christ from an ascetic standard. The purity of the birth and burial of Christ attests to the impeccability of his life for Origen when he says:

. . . just as his birth was purer than all other births in that he was born not of sexual intercourse but of a virgin, so also his burial had the purity which was symbolically shown by the fact that his body was put away in a newly made tomb; this . . . consisted of one rock all of one piece which was cut and hewn.<sup>35</sup>

While the humanity of Christ was surely as human as other men, Origen's emphasis on his absolute purity, even as a human being, sets Christ apart. He adds: ". . . it was consistent with his determination to be hanged on a cross that he also kept to the results of his decision, so that as he had been killed as a man and had died as a man, he might also be buried as a man."<sup>36</sup> The consistency in Christ's humanity of his human, physical birth and his human, physical death reinforces his genuine humanity. More importantly, the consistency of his purity from birth to death reinforce his genuine purity. The circumstances surrounding his birth and death and the supernatural decision to surpass the laws of nature in the beginning and ending of Christ's human life, distinguish him from all

other men. His life began and ended with a miracle. It began with a miracle in that genetically he had no human, physical father. If one is to interpret the Scriptural rendering literally, the Father indeed superseded the natural laws for Mary to conceive a child and give birth without the genetic contribution of Joseph. Likewise after the physical death of Christ, resurrection, ascension, and session miraculously occurred. These supernatural phenomena and events surrounded the temporal boundaries of Christ's life on earth. The purposes of the Father for the life of the humanity of Christ determined its beginning and ending.

Origen contrasts the visibility of Christ's humanity with the invisibility of his deity. He says: ". . . his human characteristics were visible to all, while the divine characteristics could not be seen by all. . . ."37 The visibility of the deity of Christ, like the visibility of the spiritual nature of Christ's humanity, depends on the spiritual perceptiveness of the observer.

Not denying that "*the reasons why the Father send him are innumerable,*" Origen acknowledges the ministry of the incarnate Son in revealing God to man when he says: "He revealed to his true disciples the nature of God and told them about His characteristics."<sup>38</sup> Performing miracles, leading an impeccable life, and teaching comprise the methods the incarnate Son used to reveal God to man. Of Christ's teaching, Origen acknowledges the "greatness of his teaching" when he comments: ". . . the eloquence of Jesus

consisted not in words but in facts. And it is clear from the Gospels that 'his word was with power', at which they even marvelled."<sup>39</sup> The factual veracity of Christ's messages certainly gave more credibility to their spiritual veracity which, even apart from any factual credibility, contained an unusual and persuasive truthfulness from the divine power with which the spiritual content was associated.

Emphasizing that the Son is begotten from the Father, Origen distinguishes between these two persons of the Trinity in the context of man wrongly wanting to have a relationship with each of them apart from the incarnation. Origen defends one of the persons of the Trinity becoming a man as an expression of God's perfect knowledge of man's real need, which could not be satisfied apart from the incarnation, for relationship with God in human terms, that is, in terms of the incarnation. He says:

Perhaps . . . you want God, or him who shares in the divine nature, in addressing mankind to consider only His real nature and what is worthy of Himself, and no more to consider what is suitable for proclamation to men who are under the care and guidance of His Logos, and what may be appropriately addressed to each individual according to his fundamental character.<sup>40</sup>

Defending the deity of the incarnate Son, Origen appeals to the unparalleled effectiveness of his ministry in all of human history. He says:

If he was a mere man, I do not know how he ventured to spread his religion and teaching in all the world, and was able to do what he desired without God's help and to rise above all the people opposing the spread of his teaching--kings, governors, the Roman Senate,

rulers everywhere, and the common people. How is it possible for a natural man with nothing more than that about him to convert such a vast multitude? It would not be remarkable if only some of the intelligent people were converted. But there are also some of the most irrational people and those most subject to their passions, who on account of their lack of reason are changed to a more self-controlled life with greater difficulty. However, as Christ was the power of God and the wisdom of the Father, on this account he accomplished this, and is still doing so, even if neither Jews nor Greeks are willing to accept him because they disbelieve his word.<sup>41</sup>

When Origen defends the deity of the incarnate Son, he appeals to the empirically measurable accomplishment of the incarnation. The truly unique impact, not only in his day, but also in all previous and succeeding generations, of the two natures of Christ acting in complete harmony with each other attest to the divine affirmation, even purposes, of the life of Christ. Consistent with the apologetic nature of this work, however, Origen does not develop the impact of these supernatural events on the spiritual life and motivation of Christ's humanity.

### Chapter 3

#### The Accuracy of Old Testament Prophecies; the Impact of the Incarnation; and the Perfection of Christ's Humanity in His Relationship with the Trinity

##### The Importance of the Identity of the Messiah in Light of the Accuracy of Old Testament Prophecies

While Origen set out to defend Christianity as the logical and real fulfilment of Judaism in Book 2, in Book 3 he combats Celsus' belief that unregenerate Jews and believers in Christianity have no coherent dispute, if their only difference is the identity of the Messiah. As in Book 2, so in this book, Origen produces one historical event after another and presents the effectiveness of Christ's ministry as factual evidence for the Messiahship of Christ. In so doing, Origen naturally discusses ministeries of both the humanity and deity of Christ he has already mentioned and includes new viewpoints as well. Hanson remarks: "This double appeal to the Scriptures and to logic or common sense, and to nothing else, is highly characteristic of Origen. We find it occurring over and over again."<sup>1</sup>

Origen's first appeal is to the superior prophetic power of the Jews who lived in Old Testament times, in contrast with the inaccuracy of prophets of other nations, who also prophesied before the incarnation. Origen refers to previous examples which cite locations and circumstances for prophesied events of the Messiah's life

which identically correlate with actual events in Christ's life. Origen here does not discuss the ministry of the Holy Spirit in providing uniquely accurate prophecies to the Old Testament prophets and their hearers, but from other passages, it is clear that Origen's understanding of the Spirit's ministry to the prophets and to the writers of Scripture included an unparalleled emphasis on accurate prophecy.<sup>2</sup>

Origen cites the amazing communicative gift of Christ in persuading men, women, children, fathers, and mothers of his identity. Origen says that these people "were led on by his divinity so that some divine seed might be implanted in them."<sup>3</sup> Origen's appeal to "such a charm in Jesus' words" is actually an appeal to the content of Christ's message. Origen's description of the prophecies of Christ and the hope of a Savior which has existed since the first prophecy of Christ, as "a divine action" emphasizes the divine initiative of the incarnation for which men had awaited since the first prophecy. Origen describes the soteriological, thus hopeful, optimistic, and comforting message of the prophets, who advised "to wait for the advent of Christ who would save men."<sup>4</sup> The actual event of the incarnation does not confine Christ as the Savior only during the presence of Christ's humanity on earth; however, Origen does not distinguish between the deity and humanity of Christ. He implies the eternity of Christ's humanity when he says: "Jesus is proved to be Son of God both before and after his incarnation."<sup>5</sup> The prophetic descriptions of

Christ supply the events of the incarnation and details of the interaction of Christ's deity and humanity. Reciprocally, Origen sees Christ as establishing the veracity of Judaism and, on this basis, as introducing Christianity.<sup>6</sup>

Christ as Hope: The Old Testament Ministry of the  
Prophetic Incarnate Son in Contrast with the Ministry of  
the Incarnate Son

The reciprocal verification of Old Testament prophecies and their fulfilment in the life of Christ constitutes the hope which man has needed and which God has initiated throughout human history. The combination of faith with acquired spiritual wisdom provides proof of the deity of Christ, and the Biblical record of Christ's ministry confirms the believer's own spiritual insights. This wisdom acquired by the believer includes the continuity between Judaism and Christianity, in both of which the subject of Christ obviously possesses the dominant role. In Judaism, his person, his Judaic title of Messiah, and many of his deeds are prophesied, but his name is unknown. In Christianity, he is revealed in the flesh and his identity obviously clarified. Origen has thus discussed another of Christ's ministries. Before the incarnation, he possessed a divine ministry as discussed by the prophets in the Old Testament. He was, during the times of the Old Testament, a dream and a hope for salvation and a link to communion

with God. During the incarnation, his divine function became revealed through the instrument of his humanity. His ministry developed, and the general and specific prophecies about him were precisely and accurately fulfilled. Every detail in his life coincided with general prophecies. Every detailed prophecy was perfectly fulfilled. Thus, in a broader sense, the ministry of the Holy Spirit also appears in the accuracy of the prophecies themselves. It seems that the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the inspiration of Scripture adds validity and provides a foundation for effectiveness to the ministry of the incarnate Son.

Origen speaks of the many sides to Jesus. He speaks of "the changes of Jesus", that is, the adaptability, the range, and the capability of Christ conveyed from the prophetic truths communicated on the Mount of Transfiguration to the acts and words of encouragement for the physically and spiritually weak.<sup>7</sup> Origen alludes to the various titles of Christ which describe the various aspects of his ministry toward man because of the Father. He also again mentions the natural human limitations of his humanity: ". . . the body born of a virgin consisted of human substance, capable of suffering wounds and death like other men."<sup>8</sup>

The Purpose and Effectiveness of Christ's Ministry in  
Providing the Foundations of Christianity

Origen ascribes credibility, reasonableness, and legitimacy to Christ's earthly ministry. Although Origen does not mention the importance of the humanity of Christ in terms of the necessarily human substitute man needed in his place on the cross, he mentions the importance of divine truth being clearly presented before men. The omnipotence and love of God, for example, unite in the form of miracles. The uniqueness of the God-man, even if not consciously and verbally discerned as such by his observers, was necessary in communicating divine truth. The purpose and the capability of the prophets did not include the presentation of Christianity. Once Christ verbally and overtly introduced the truth of Christianity, the apostles were enabled to develop these "foundations" of Christianity, which Christ "was beginning to build".<sup>9</sup> Origen's recognition of God as the source of prophetic information implies the motivation of divine love, for God chose to give man hope in the Savior even before his birth. He says: "But are you not moved by the commendations of the supreme God . . . uttered through prophets . . . before he [Christ] came to live among men. . .?"<sup>10</sup>

### The Importance of the Exemplary Life of Christ's Humanity to Man

Origen confirms the complete humanness of Christ's humanity and stresses the importance of the human race in having an example like itself, in addition to the inanimate

truth which establishes a standard for relationship with God. The truth which God has always provided for man does not distract man from appreciating Christ's humanity, for the presence of an actual person on earth composed of not one, but two, natures, which function perfectly in harmony and are capable of performing divine phenomena which transcend the laws of nature, can distract man from the genuine humanity of Christ. While Christ's humanity "combined with the divine characteristics, to bring salvation to believers", Christ's humanity first endured temptations designed for a human being and proved himself perfect in that unique endurance. Origen realizes that the existence of Christ's humanity lay in the decision of his deity to become human. This decision Origen emphasizes as "power", for divine omnipotence is a necessary ingredient in the provision of salvation for man. He explains:

Both Jesus himself and his disciples did not want people who came to them to believe only in his divine nature and miracles, as though he did not share in human nature and had not assumed the human flesh which lusts against the Spirit; but as a result of their faith they also saw the power that descended into human nature and human limitations, and which assumed a human soul and body, combined with the divine characteristics, to bring salvation to believers. For Christians see that with Jesus human and divine nature began to be woven together, so that by fellowship with divinity human nature might become divine, not only in Jesus, but also in those who believe and go on to undertake the life which Jesus taught, the life which leads everyone who lives according to Jesus' commandments to friendship with God and fellowship with Jesus.<sup>11</sup>

For Origen human perfection and total intimacy with

God, which he calls "fellowship", lead to the divinity of man. While the human imagination is spiritually limited so that it may have difficulty comprehending a totally majestic relationship with God, it is inaccurate to believe that the pinnacle of such a relationship coincides with man's divinity. Just as the human nature of the incarnate Christ did not become divine, so man does not become divine, no matter how close he becomes to God. It seems that Origen's blending of the humanity and deity of Christ is inconsistent with his system. It is impossible for man's knowledge and man's capacities ever to become as complete as God's. God's knowledge and capacities never were incomplete and are immutable. Completion and perfection accompany immortality. Perfection is eternal, and, however close man may get to perfection, he never quite achieves it. When Origen speaks of the combination of divine and human characteristics in Christ to accomplish the option for salvation for man, he is incorrect if he blends such characteristics in the incarnate Christ at the expense of deity being tainted or lessened or changed in any way by the humanity of Christ and at the supposed benefit of his humanity being elevated to a level beyond humanity, even to deity. Chadwick, however, clarifies deification: "So salvation is deification. This means the annihilation not of individuality but of the gulf between finite and infinite. Nor does it mean that the believer, following Christ as example, can find his mystical way to God independently of Christ."<sup>12</sup> Thus although a potentially

misleading term, deification does not mean that man becomes God, but that man becomes perfectly united with God. Origen's application of deification to the humanity of Christ does, however, seem to include becoming what he was before the incarnation, namely God.

### The Problem of Distinguishing the Perfection of Christ's Deity from the Impeccability of His Humanity

This possibility for man's perfection, even divinity, results in part from Origen's lack of distinction between Christ's deity and humanity. If believers are commanded to imitate Christ, then surely they are responsible to imitate him in his assumption of divinity, Origen assumes. Moreover, the deity of the Son always existed; it did not come into existence because of the humanity of Christ's close relationship with the Father. Origen believes that the deity of the Son became human, but he overlooks that the humanity of Christ did not become divine. He describes Christ ". . . as Son of God, as God come in a human soul and body. . . ."13 Furthermore, he admits that ". . . in Jesus . . . the divine element was exceptional. . . ."14

The distinction between Christ's deity and humanity continues to be confused when Origen describes Christ's authority over himself: "My Jesus said of his own soul that it was not separated from his body by the compulsion of men, but through the miraculous power given to him also. . . . He took his soul again when he manifested himself among

his disciples. . . . "15 Origen does not clarify whether this is Christ's deity or his humanity, although it would seem that he is talking about Christ's human soul, endeavoring to depict him as a real human being. There would be no reason to ascribe the soul of the deity of Christ as having authority over itself. Deity naturally possesses such authority. At the same time, Origen may seem to deny the total divinity of the Son in making that one statement on the exceptional quality of the divine element. He does not speak of the exceptional quality of deity by name. Thus while Origen totally distinguishes between humanity and deity most of the time, he is occasionally vague in blending the two persons. While Origen never doubts the Son's ministry on earth, he struggles with the separate, yet simultaneous and harmonious, function of each. Theoretically, the existence of one seems to limit the existence of the other. The existence of the other seems to expand the possibilities of the one.

Origen combines another description of the function of the eternal Son communicating truth throughout human history, with a recollection of some of the truths Christ preached and expounded in his earthly ministry. He describes Christ as raising man to a level of thinking which no longer considers corruptible matters. Christ stressed the importance of prayer, and he exemplified the importance of respect for God. Christ frequently acknowledged the supremacy of God, specifically the Father, in contrast to himself, whenever his own

credentials were questioned. He presented himself as the Father's emissary to mankind and as the living and eternal hope amidst pain and suffering. As Origen develops the object and the means of prayer in terms of the individuals in the Trinity, he specifies the Father as the object of prayer and the Son as the means of prayer. In not distinguishing between the deity and the humanity of Christ, he unconsciously allows the humanity to take precedence, thus subordinating the deity of the Son to the Father.<sup>16</sup> Origen seems to think of the deity of the Son in the temporal limitations of the incarnation because he recognizes the supreme importance of the incarnation, not only for the salvation of man, but also for the fulfilment of the Father's plan and the Son's function as deity becoming humanity. The deity of the Son, however, must be thought of as eternally functioning in his deity, not as latent in either person or function, before and after the incarnation.

Origen describes the incarnate Christ as functioning on behalf on man with an effectiveness and an intimacy without which deity alone would have left man unfulfilled. That the Son's deity became humanity means that Christ is "midway between uncreated nature and that of all created things; and he brings to us the benefits of the Father, while as our high priest he conveys our prayers to the supreme God."<sup>17</sup> This statement is exactly the Platonic position. Daniélou relates the eternal generation of the Son to creation, specifically of "spiritual beings", of which man is one. He says:

Hence there must be an intermediary between him and the multiplicity of the world. This intermediary is the Logos. . . . It thus becomes evident how closely the generation of the Word is linked with the creation of spiritual beings. And the fact that this creation is regarded as an eternal process--and hence that the generation of the Logos too is considered to be eternal --does not destroy its connection with the cosmos.<sup>18</sup>

In fact, the irreplaceable repercussions of the incarnation have an eternal impact; they even had an impact before Christ's physical birth, before his genuine and personal entrance into the human dilemma as a human being.

### The Relationship Between the Father and the Incarnate Christ

When Origen says that Christ "came from God to visit the human race", he is ambiguous.<sup>19</sup> He partially clarifies "from" in the following quotation: "But the Creator of the universe Himself, by means of the persuasive power of His miraculous utterances, showed Jesus to be worthy of honour" to good and to evil people and angels.<sup>20</sup> Origen only specifies Christ as the object of honor; he does not clarify whether this is human honor. He does not distinguish between the deity and the humanity of Christ. While in other sections Origen distinguishes between the humanity and deity of the Son, here he distinguishes between the incarnate Christ and the Father.

Origen emphasizes the authority of the Father over the Son and the Father's purposes for his Son on earth. Origen says: "But Christians have learnt that their eternal

life consists in knowing that only true supreme God, and Jesus Christ whom He sent."<sup>21</sup> It is certainly open to debate whether Origen, or the Bible in John 17:3, excludes Christ from deity in this statement. But, as is not uncommon in referring to God, his statements sometimes emphasize authority. While Christ possesses authority over mankind, Christ is, at the same time, subject to the authority of the Father.

Origen discusses some men's relationship with God and reveals more on the relationship between the Father and Son. He says: "They believe a profound doctrine about God and about those beings who through the only-begotten divine Logos have been so honoured by God that they participate in the divine nature, and for this reason are also granted the name."<sup>22</sup> By participating in the Logos, such people "participate in the divine nature", that is, the Father. The term "Logos" emphasizes the mind of the Father, the doctrines, dogmas, standards, and principles which govern man and which contain truth on the person of God. The Logos is more than a participation "in the divine nature". The Logos is another name for the second person of the Trinity, the Son. It emphasizes the communication between man and God which God initiated when he created man.

#### Man's Benefit from Christ's Authority

Origen addresses Christ's authority over man and function on behalf of man. ". . . Jesus Christ . . . rules over

all like an arbiter. For he both perceived these very profound truths and passed them on to a few."<sup>23</sup> Attributing perception to Christ hints at a past ignorance which has been overcome with knowledge and wisdom. If Origen is speaking of Christ's humanity, his description is correct. The humanity of Christ was not omniscient but grew to a state of profound depth, wisdom, and perception. Perception can never apply to an activity of God in the sense of rectifying even partial ignorance and acquiring knowledge.

#### The Incorruptibility of the Deity of Christ

If God were capable of perceiving (in the sense of leaving ignorance and entering cognizance) and if the humanity of Christ were to blend with deity and become divine, then God could be said to be corruptible. In the second case, the immutability of God's perfection would be violated because he would have begun in a state of imperfection and changed to a state of perfection. Yet Origen affirms that he does "not think of God as corruptible matter at all. . . ." <sup>24</sup> While the context addresses the subject of idolatry as unrepresentative of him, the concept of the incorruptibility of God is easily expanded to include man representing God or even achieving deity. Just as idols neither represent God nor are the physical manifestation of God, neither is man. Idols cannot achieve deity and neither can man. That man is animate does not insure that he can

become divine any more than the fact that idols are inanimate guarantees them a state of animation or divinity. Both man and idols have been created. Idols are creations of man, and man is a creation of God. Origen concludes: "That is why Christians . . . maintain that created objects such as these are not comparable with the Creator. . . . And the rational soul, which at once recognizes that which is, so to speak, akin to it, discards the images . . . and assumes its natural affection for the Creator. . . ."25 Origen explains this natural affection as resulting from God's revelation of himself in the visible universe which, when perceived by the human rational mind, inspires a desire to know the creator and to appropriate his message of salvation. Thus the rational soul "also accepts the one who first showed these truths to all nations by the disciples . . . whom he [the Creator] sent out with divine power and authority to preach the message about God and His kingdom."26 (Here Origen applies the term "creator" to the Son, as the instrument of creation for the Father.)

### The Perfect Union of Christ's Deity and Humanity

Origen leaves no doubt about the deity, the full deity, of the incarnate Christ. In the following description of what is essentially consistent with *communicatio idiomatum*, Origen overlooks the distinction of the two natures in the incarnate Christ and ascribes a union applicable to the oneness of persons of the Trinity.

Chadwick describes *communicatio idiomatum* as follows:  
"By this union the properties of the humanity of Christ may be ascribed to the divine Logos and vice versa."<sup>27</sup> Origen says:

Nevertheless, let our critics know that he, whom we think and have believed to be God and Son of God from the beginning, is the very Logos and wisdom and truth itself. We affirm his mortal body and the human soul in him received the greatest elevation not only by communion and intermingling, so that by sharing in His divinity he was transformed into God.<sup>28</sup>

In "Eucharist and Christology in the Nestorian Controversy", Chadwick evaluates Origen's understanding of the relationship between deity and humanity in a historical light. He says:

The Apollinarian-Monophysite tradition . . . could not think of Christ's humanity as existing in its own right. In the third century Origen had affirmed that the union in Christ was not merely a *κοινωνία* but an *ένωσις καὶ ἀνάκρασις* of such effect that even his mortal body and soul were transformed into God (*εἰς θεὸν μεταβεβληκέναι*).<sup>29</sup>

Gögler emphasizes the identity of wisdom and truth with the Logos, although he does not actually designate these particular attributes, easily perceived by man, to belong to both deity and humanity. The attributes of wisdom and truth are, however, seen as the unifying factor in the incarnate Son when Gögler says: "Es ist der Logos, der die in der Weisheit subsistierende Wahrheit der Schöpfung zuträgt. Er ist ja mit der σοφία und ἀλήθεια real identisch. . . ."<sup>30</sup> Because the two natures of Christ shared all their attributes, Origen believes that the humbling of the deity of

Christ in assuming a human body also effected the deification of the humanity of Christ. The result was perfect harmony and the absence of human interference to execute the ministry of the Son as deity which the Father had purposed and planned for him to execute.

Origen continues discussing the human body of the Son:

If anyone should take offence because we say this even of his body, let him consider what is asserted by the Greeks about matter, that properly speaking it is without qualities, but is clothed with qualities such as the Creator wishes to give it, and that often it puts aside its former qualities and receives better and different ones. If this is right, why is it remarkable that by the providence of God's will the mortal quality of Jesus' body should have been changed into an ethereal and divine quality?<sup>31</sup>

From this quotation the potency of Greek thinking in Origen is clear. Origen concentrates on the power of God to create and to change or alter what is already in existence. Certainly unlike God, man is mutable and is subject to changes wrought by God. But neither God violates human volition in effecting his wishes, nor does he violate any of his own attributes. Just as God the Father always was and always will be perfect, so the Son and the Holy Spirit. While the Son and the Spirit are subordinate to the Father in authority (that is, to the function of the Father), none is superior to the other in time or importance, even deity. In contrast with the hierarchy in the Trinity is the hierarchy composed of God and man. Unlike God, man did not always exist. Even though Origen would contradict this belief with

his assertion of the eternity of the soul (with the existence of the soul thus preceding the existence of the body), Origen always contends the real subordination of man to God. There are too many differences to equate man with God or even to allow the possible, future identification which could only result in ultimate contradiction. Gamble concludes: "Thus for Origen the proper basis for deification is the conferral of benefaction, which he finds to consist pre-eminently in the assistance of the race toward religious truth and moral virtue."<sup>32</sup>

Even when the human soul changes, it does not change its basic essence because of the immutability of divine design. Origen cites Paul in I Corinthians 1:18ff:

But when he [Paul] speaks of the wisdom of God, he means those doctrines which change the soul from the things of this earth to be concerned with the blessedness with God and with what is called His kingdom, and which teach men to despise as transitory all sensible and visible things, to seek earnestly the invisible and to look on things that are unseen [from II Corinthians 4:18].<sup>33</sup>

Even Paul, whom Origen calls "a lover of the truth", maintains the respect of God for the essence of man which was of course designed by God.<sup>34</sup> When a spiritual work is wrought in the souls of men, the change it induces is not a change in human potential and in each individual man's unique potential but rather that potential is fulfilled. Likewise, with the humanity of Christ, spiritual changes that transformed him gradually did not expand his human potential to the divine potential but simply exploited his human potential and the change from human to divine

potential.

Origen describes the spiritually healing ministry of the incarnate Son: "The divine Logos was sent as a physician to sinners, but to those already pure and no longer sinning as a teacher of divine mysteries."<sup>35</sup> As to the identity of this divine Logos, Origen says: ". . . the supposedly human Jesus . . . did no sin."<sup>36</sup> Origen seems to deny the human soul of Christ's humanity. The human body alone seems to constitute humanity and in it only dwells the deity of Christ, the divine person.

#### The Ministry of the Deity of the Son Apart from the Incarnation

Origen affirms the distinct roles of the Father and Son: "Attend to the God of the universe, and to Jesus the teacher of the doctrines about Him."<sup>37</sup> The Father is the sovereign and the creator of the universe, and the Son elucidates the thoughts and teachings of the Father. It is maintained that the use of the title of God for the Father and not for the Son emphasizes the Father's authority, not the Son's inferior, or lack of, deity.

The Word, or the Son, exerts authority allowed and bestowed on him by the Father to guide men who are lacking in wisdom, yet pursue truth. Origen says: ". . . the fear of God . . . the Word uses as beneficial for the masses to exhort those who are not yet able to see what ought to be chosen for its own sake to choose it as the supreme good. . .

. "38

Origen describes the Son in relationship to the Father, both of whom bestow blessings on the positive believer. He speaks of ". . . the blessed end with God in Christ, who is the Logos, wisdom, and every virtue. . . ."39 In this context, Christ is the verbalization of the Father, the real pattern and practical example for man.

### Man's Benefit from the Interaction of the Father and the Son

Origen concludes this book with a restatement of the general persons and functions of the Father and Son with reference to man:

. . . it is self-evident that nothing better could be conceived than to entrust oneself to the supreme God and to be dedicated to a doctrine (*διδασκαλία*) which teaches us to leave everything created and leads us to the supreme God through the animate and living Logos, who is both living wisdom and Son of God.<sup>40</sup>

Proportional, unlimited authority accompanies the preeminent authority of the Father. Man can trust the decisions and desires for himself by God fully and without reservation. The Son is the way to develop this relationship with the Father. Gögler emphasizes the personal quality of the Logos, for the Logos does not simply contain or represent inanimate truth from the Father, but also functions as the living agent for the reciprocal relationship between man and God. He says: "Der Logos Gottes ist lebendig, weil er die lebendige Sophia und der Sohn Gottes ist. Wenn sich die Sophia Gottes durch den

Logos nach außen mitteilt, so bedeutet diese Mitteilung eine Einbeziehung der Welt, der Geschichte und des Menschen in den Prozeß der Innerlichkeit Gottes."<sup>41</sup> Once again, the Son is not an end in himself but the means to an end. Perhaps within the hierarchy of the Trinity itself, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit equally and eternally established that the Father would be man's goal for the ultimate divine relationship.

## Chapter 4

Descriptions of the Son, Inclusive and Exclusive of the Incarnation; and the Evidence for God's Desire for Relationship with Man in God's Flexibility Toward Man, in the Incarnation, and in the Creation of Man in God's Image

### An Affirmation of the Accuracy of Old Testament Prophecies About Christ

Origen first states his purpose ". . . to show that the prophecies about Christ were true."<sup>1</sup> The effects of Origen's belief in the Spirit's inspiration of Scripture Origen clearly realizes in the accuracy of prophecies which Scripture contains.

### The Divinity of Christ

Among Origen's first descriptions of Christ is the affirmation of him to be the Messiah and to be divine. He says that ". . . Jesus was really the Christ."<sup>2</sup> Later on he affirms ". . . that the Christ who will come down is God or Son of God. . . ."<sup>3</sup> This last statement definitely designates Christ as God. While the title "Son of God" emphasizes person and function in the Trinity, the title of God emphasizes the ultimate nature and essence of Christ. "Son of God" distinguishes Christ from the other persons of the Trinity. "God" distinguishes him as a person of the Trinity.

Origen mentions Christ as the agent of the Father in

exercising authority over man and in delivering his message to man. He describes Christ in terms of the Word and his effect on men in all generations who want a relationship with God.<sup>4</sup> While he does not specify the Word as deity, rather than humanity, the conclusion of the Son's deity seems necessary. The availability of the Word temporally extends to the limits of human history and beyond, and the humanity of Christ obviously extends to neither.

### The Intangibility and Omnipresence of God

Origen defends the intangibility and omnipresence of God in spite of the superficial, human limitations of the Son in the incarnation. Origen includes the Father, whom he calls "the God of the universe", in indwelling the humanity of Christ, along with Christ's deity. He is not clear on whether this indwelling was something more, but Origen does liken the indwelling of the Father and the Son in Christ's humanity with their indwelling of the believer. This indwelling includes "power and divinity", not that Origen claims that, with indwelling, man becomes omnipotent and divine, but he implies that man can draw on these attributes when the incorporeal Father and Son are within him. He says:

Even, then, if the God of the universe descends with Jesus into human life by His power, and even if the Word who "was in the beginning with God", who was himself God [in John 1:1, 2], comes to us, He does not go away from where He was, nor does He leave His throne, as though one place were deprived of him, and another which previously did not possess him were

filled. The power and divinity of God come to dwell among men through the man whom God wills to choose and in whom He finds room without any changing from one place to another or leaving His former place empty and filling another.<sup>5</sup>

Although spatially God is always everywhere, his presence is only acknowledged when he has had impact on a man. Sometimes the language used to describe this process is spatially oriented, but the meaning is spiritual. Origen continues:

But if one may say that certain things change by the presence of God's power and the advent of the Word to man, we will not hesitate to affirm that anyone who has received the coming of the Word of God into his own soul changes from bad to good, from licentiousness to self-control, and from superstition to piety.<sup>6</sup>

Without explaining the effectual power of God in the following terms, Origen understands the power of God to change men in accordance with their own desire for change. Since man is not the source of truth, he must utilize what God has made available to change him. Man does not change himself; he simply allows God, through divine truth, to change him. Only with man's permission does God have the power to effect a change from bad to good.

#### The Benefit for Man from God Making Himself Knowable, Real, and Personal

Origen discusses the motive for God revealing himself to man. The purpose of the incarnation was "to make Himself known . . . because knowledge of Him delivers from

misfortune the man who knows Him."<sup>7</sup> This knowledge of God, Origen says, leads to "blessedness (*μακαριότητα*)" and to "friendship (*οἰκείωσιν*) with Him through Christ and the constant indwelling of the Word."<sup>8</sup> In other words, man receives the greatest possible happiness from knowledge, specifically knowledge of God. Apart from God making himself known and knowable, man could never know God. Origen concludes that the Father had no desire for the Son to become man because there is some blessing in being human, but because of the opportunity man would have for relationship with God, both by imitation of Christ's humanity and by receiving the gift of the person of Christ as one who took man's place in spiritual and physical death so that man could have a relationship with God. Origen concludes the section, saying: "The Christian doctrine, therefore, attributes no *mortal ambition* to God."<sup>9</sup> Thus God has nothing to gain in revealing himself to man. Only man has something to gain -- relationship with God. Discussing an aspect of the love of God directed toward the man who possesses a need which God can and wants to fill, Origen continues: ". . . He [God] has always cared for the reformation of the rational being and given opportunities of virtue. For in each generation the wisdom of God, entering into souls which she finds to be holy, makes them friends of God and prophets."<sup>10</sup> This statement answers the question Daniélou asks: "How could God's unchangeableness be reconciled with the Incarnation, which was an event?"<sup>11</sup> The event of the incarnation was an expression of God's

love. It could be argued that God is deficient when he does not have a relationship with man which God's love initiates, but this argument is easily dismissed. God is already perfect and complete, even before his act of creation. That which is perfect is not deficient. That which perfection does not possess, does not create imperfection and does not contribute to deficiency. In the process of filling man's deficiency of relationship with the Father, the Son acts as mediator. Origen describes this mediator as "some special person [who] has visited the human race, who was pre-eminent beyond those who lived before or even after him."<sup>12</sup>

#### The Preservation of the Deity of the Son in the Incarnation

Origen explains that the humbling of the deity of Christ to become man was not an act of self-contamination or of inducing self-deficiency. He describes the motivation of the incarnation to be God's love for man and maintains the constant happiness of the deity of the Savior making such a sacrifice. Origen does not distinguish between the happiness of the Son's deity and humanity. He describes the incarnate Son in terms of one entity, not two. The emphasis here is on the good and loving motive of God. Therefore, the result of that supreme motive, even in becoming man, could not be "most wicked (*πονηρότατον*)".<sup>13</sup> It is clear that Origen's description of the act of incarnation in no way detracts from or belittles the deity

of the Son. The Son was involved in an act of goodness, one which did not violate his deity. He did not have to change his essence to descend to earth and become a man. The human limitations natural to a human body did not finally and ultimately limit him. The human body did not contain the whole of deity, although the whole of deity resided in the human body. Not fully appreciating the distinction of the humanity and deity of Christ, Völker describes the lack of change experienced by the the deity of the Son in becoming a man. He, however, insightfully appreciates a function of Christ's humanity in leading mankind to his deity. He says: ". . . legt Origenes in einzelnen dar, daß nicht alle Menschen den Glanz der Gottheit sofort hätten schauen können und daß für sie der Logos Menschengestalt angenommen hätte. . . ."14

### The Availability to Man of Christ's Deity Through His Humanity

Origen stresses the genuine humanity of the Son in the incarnation. He does not stress the freedom of his will, but the object of his continual and perpetual choice for goodness, for the Father's wishes, and for helping mankind. The following description presents the incarnation as a sort of live anthropomorphism, making real and concrete an intangible and esoteric God. Origen surely emphasizes the impeccability of deity and humanity, but in admitting the perfection of them both, he does not think through the

reasons for their perfection independent of the other. He seems to indicate that the Son functioned in the form of a man, when it best suited divine purposes. Origen does not acknowledge the ultimately distinct person of the humanity of Christ. He says:

But he who heals the wounds of our souls through the divine Word within him was incapable of any evil. If the immortal divine Word assumes both a human body and a human soul, . . . the Word remains the Word in essence. He suffers nothing of the experience of the body or the soul. But sometimes he comes down to the level of him who is unable to look upon the radiance and brilliance of the Deity, and becomes as it were flesh, and is spoken of in physical terms, until he who has accepted him in this form is gradually lifted up by the Word and can look even upon, so to speak, to his actual form.<sup>15</sup>

Origen presents man as vulnerable, in pain, and obviously in need of God and of a God who communicates and cares for man. Thus this God is the Word. Because God truly and deeply cares for man, he became a man himself, vulnerable to pain and temptation like other men. As a result, man knew that God really understands what he suffers and what it is to be human, for God was one of him. The vulnerability of Christ's humanity, Origen deemphasizes, however, for he does not want to risk portraying him as anything less than perfect, especially in his humanity's reflection of the glory of his deity, even of the deity of the Trinity as a whole. Origen uses "the Word" here for the deity of Son as a general, yet all-encompassing term for the Son's function on behalf of man including the incarnation. Because the Son chose to become human and, as God, necessarily chose to

retain his divinity, Origen understands the humanity of the Son both to originate from and to return to his deity, thus ignoring the role of the Holy Spirit and the role of Mary in initiating and developing the physical life of Christ's humanity. In this text, Origen has even partially spiritualized the actual incarnation in his effort to express the superficial, therefore not real, transformation of deity to humanity in order for the deity of the Son, as the representative of the Trinity's collective function, to communicate infinite truths to finite man.

The Act of God Becoming Man as a Part of God's Infinite Flexibility and Desire to Communicate to Man by Whatever Means and on Whatever Level Man Is Capable of or Needs

God became man in order to communicate himself and his hopes and expectations for man. Origen explains that the flexibility of the Son in becoming incarnate did not degrade or deface deity, but in fact, was a natural expression of himself. Although Origen does not liken the incarnation to creation, the similarity exists. He says:

There are, as it were, different forms of the Word. For the Word appears to each of those who are led to know him in a form corresponding to the state of the individual, whether he is a beginner, or has made a little progress, or is considerably advanced, or has nearly attained to virtue already, or has in fact attained it.<sup>16</sup>

Origen has, therefore, expanded the concept behind the incarnation. The Son became a literal person, and man

acquired tangible evidence for God and for God's message. The Son of God, in his humanity, was distinctly visible to man, equally visible to all men, and perceptible to man as a man, even as any other man is. Spiritually, the Son of God reveals himself to man proportional to man's capacity to perceive, conceive of, and receive him. Accordingly, depending on man's capacity, the Son may reveal some of his attributes, yet conceal others. It is illogical to think that the Son appeared to people intermittently during the incarnation, depending on the spirituality or spiritual maturity of the viewer. Physical appearance is as perceptible to one man as it is to another.

Origen succinctly states God's motive for the incarnation, the actual physical existence of which he does not deny: ". . . because of His great love to man, God made one special descent in order to convert those whom the divine scripture mystically calls 'the lost sheep of the house of Israel' [from Matthew 15:24]. . . ."17 Although the humanity of Christ was born a Jew and God wanted in the salvation of Jews, obviously salvation is not limited to Jews of physical birth, but extends to those who desire who become spiritual Jews.

### The Identity and Flexibility of the Word

Origen discusses the identity of the Word. He speaks of ". . . the nature of the divine Word, who is God. . . ."18 He also distinguishes the Word from "the soul of Jesus",

presumably understood to be Christ's humanity.<sup>19</sup> Origen continues on the subject of the adaptability of deity to the spiritual needs of man. Origen discusses the power of truth, which power is regulated in its direction toward man to match man's needs, capabilities, and desires. He says: ". . . God changes for men the power of the Word, whose nature it is to nourish the human soul, in accordance with the merits of each individual."<sup>20</sup> Origen maintains the adaptability of the Son, as the Word, in ministering to believers at their own levels of growth. He concludes: "Surely the Word is not false to his own nature when he becomes nourishment for each man according to his capacity to receive him; in so doing he does not mislead or tell lies."<sup>21</sup>

### The Flexibility of the Soul of the Son's Deity

Origen explains the soul of the incarnate Christ in contrast with the soul of deity before the incarnation. Implying that from the deity of Christ, the humanity of Christ emanated, Origen maintains that one soul belongs to the deity and humanity of Christ and that it is infinitely, he implies, flexible, although not changing its original essence. He says:

Concerning Jesus' soul, if anyone supposes that there was a change when it entered a body, we will ask what he means by a "change". If he means a change of essence, we do not grant this, either of his soul, or of any other rational soul. But if he means that it undergoes something because it has been

mixed with the body and because of the place into which it has come, then what difficulty is there if the Word out of great love to mankind brings down a Saviour to the human race?<sup>22</sup>

Origen still does not distinguish between the soul of the humanity of Christ and the person of his deity. He fuses the two. He claims that deity adapts itself to a human body, in a physical environment, and in a tangible world. Origen clarifies that there are not two persons, one belonging to Christ's deity and another belonging to his humanity.

Exploring the maximum flexibility of the deity of the Son, and, therefore, of his person, in becoming man, Origen describes the Son as "descending of his own free will to accept the limitations of humanity on behalf of our race."<sup>23</sup> He also cites Philippians 2:5-9 as evidence:

"Have this mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death, yea the death of the cross. Wherefore God also highly exalted him, and gave him a name which is above every name."<sup>24</sup>

Thus the maximum adaptability and flexibility of the divine soul is exploited because of total divine free will and the humility of the Son to the Father, to his wishes, to his person, and to his authority, that is, his position in the Trinity.

### The Empirical Reality of the Incarnation

Origen confirms his belief in the physical reality of

the Son's humility in becoming man. He says: "But we . . . are persuaded that the advent of Jesus to men was not a mere appearance, but a reality and an indisputable fact. . . ."<sup>25</sup> The Father used the Son to bring the salvation message to man and to reinforce the spiritual reality and the truth behind that message by the physical reality of the humanity of the Son. Rather than distinguishing between deity and humanity in the incarnate Son, it is useful to see them first of all, as united, working out the wishes of the Father, and secondarily, as distinct, yet harmonious.

#### Man's Motivation for Relationship with God Which Comes from the Son's Clarifying Portrayal of God and Dexterous Communication of Truth

The expectations and resultant blessings God has for mankind are completely coordinated, harmonious, and in keeping with the ministry of the incarnate Christ and the impeccability and exemplary life of his humanity. The blessings God has intended for man, in fact, begin with the saving ministry of the Son through the incarnation. Origen says:

Moreover, He [God] exhorts us to do likewise that we may become His sons, and teaches us to extend our good works to all men as far as possible. He is also called [according to I Timothy 4:10] "Saviour of all men, especially of those who believe", and His Christ [according to I John 2:8] is "a propitiation for our sins, but not for our sins only, but also for the whole world."<sup>26</sup>

Emphasizing the unity in the Trinity and the divine

initiative in the incarnation, Origen also equates God with the Savior of man. In contrast with his usual order of equating the Son with God, Origen unites the persons and functions of the Father and the Son, these components in both persons working toward the same goal on behalf of man.

Origen then summarizes that the purpose of the incarnate Christ, whom he calls "the Christ of God", is to motivate men to "forsake their sin and entrust themselves to God."<sup>27</sup> For man to entrust himself to God, the deity of Christ came to earth and the humanity of Christ was born.

Origen discusses an aspect of the practical, yet ennobling effect of the incarnation of Christ in its unique, universal, and unifying portrayal of God. He says:

Providence changed their noble doctrine in those respects in which it was in need of change so that it would be suitable for people everywhere, and instead gave the noble religion of Jesus to those who believe in all places. He was endowed not only with intelligence but also with divine honour. . . .<sup>28</sup>

The incarnate Son's portrayal of the Christ not only extended all over the world, but also intelligibly and, therefore, successfully communicated this same truth of the Savior to the diverse spectrum of its hearers and recipients.

After Origen affirms the divine design of all of creation, including nature, he affirms the genuineness of human free will, for he explains God's dexterity in using man's wrong choices, sin, and evil for good purposes and effects. Just as the Father tailors his actions to the right

and wrong decisions of man, so the Son, in the form of the Word, has tailored the written Word to the soul of its readers to communicate to men with failings and successes, to those who have spiritual knowledge, to those who are trying to acquire spiritual knowledge, and to those who have no interest in God personally or in any spiritual matters. As Origen explains, ". . . the Logos of God seems to have arranged the scriptures, using the method of address which fitted the ability and benefit of the hearers."<sup>29</sup> He continues: "The Logos speaks like this because he assumes, as it were, human characteristics for the advantage of men. There was no need for the multitude that the words put into God's mouth, which were intended to be addressed to them, should correspond to His real character."<sup>30</sup> If the words used to describe God in finite terms do not describe him really, but superficially instead, then an inconsistency exists in Origen's previous mentioning of the perfect effectiveness of the the Son's deity to communicate his essence and purposes for man through his humanity. Perhaps the communication of the humanity of Christ through his life and through his words gives a sufficient portrayal of God for man during his life on earth which is subject to temporal limitations both in thinking and in living.

The Anger of God as an Example of God's Finite Portrayal of  
Himself to Man

Developing the idea of God's accommodation of himself to the limitations of human perception, Origen believes that the wrath of God exists because of the flexibility of God, not in spite of it. This flexibility, of course, finds its source in an aspect of the love of God. He says: "When we speak of God's wrath, we do not hold that it is an emotional reaction on His part but something which He uses in order to correct by stern methods those who have committed many terrible sins."<sup>31</sup> God's anger is not provoked from irrational emotion as man's often is. God's anger is thought, in response to thoughts and actions which set out to replace divine truth with a human counterfeit. Origen goes on to explain that wrath in itself is not necessarily wrong for man to possess. In fact, the truth in God's anger which man is right to employ and imitate is its purpose of correction which is founded on objectivity and loyalty to truth. Man's inappropriate, wrong behavior stimulates a response from God which is not founded on emotion, but on objective thought. Origen explains "That God's wrath is not an emotional reaction (*πάθος*), but . . . each man brings this on himself by his sins. . . ."<sup>32</sup> Origen does acknowledge that man is not to be angry and sin as various commandments in Scripture say. He clarifies that ascribing God's anger to man is even allegorical when applied to the man who imitates the responses and actions of God. He says: "The word would not, then, have attributed to God himself the emotion which he wants us to abandon all together. It is obvious that the statements about God's

wrath are to be interpreted allegorically. . . ."33

The Application of the Conscious and Unconscious Free Will  
in All Men to the Humanity of Christ, Who Chose to  
Sacrifice His Freedom for Man

Origen distinguishes between man's conscious and unconscious decisions, all of which are made from his free choice, but the reasons for the unconscious only the Son, as God, understands. Origen discusses

. . . the difference between actions done as a result of reason and thought and those which are the product of irrational nature and are merely natural characteristics. The cause of these actions cannot be any reason inherent in those who do them (for they do not possess it); but the supreme Son of God, king of all that exists, has made an unreasoning instinct which, as such, helps those beings not worthy of reason.<sup>34</sup>

The application of this statement to the incarnate Christ emphasizes the free will of his humanity. The unconscious, instinctive part of his soul operated within the limitations of a divinely designed human nature and soul, that was the same as any other human nature and soul. This unconscious element does not detract from the sovereignty of the conscious element which possesses free will. Thus Origen states: "And if the Son of the supreme, God suffered he did so willingly for the salvation of men. . . ."35

God's Creation of Man's Soul in His Own Image as the  
Verification for Man's Free Will

Origen explores God's creation of man in his image, hinting at the stability of soul, even the immutability, that results from both the pattern and the resultant style in God's creation of man. For the pattern is God, and since God is immutable, he is obviously stable. Thus in this case, God's style of creation is faithful and consistent both because God himself as creator is, and because man, as the object of creation or that which has been created, has been created in such a way as to be stable. Man's soul is created in God's image. Origen states:

Christians . . . have already been told that the human soul was made in the image of God, and they perceive that it is impossible for the soul that has been made in the image of God entirely to abandon its characteristics and to assume others . . . which are made after the image of some sort of irrational beings.<sup>36</sup>

Man's creation in the image of God gave man both his free will and his ability to reason. Origen views the world and its human activities from the perspective of a man who has gone to Heaven in the following statement:

. . . when he [this man] looks at the rational beings, he will see reason which is common to men and to divine and heavenly beings, and probably also to the supreme God Himself. This explains why he is said to have been made in the image of God; for the image of the supreme God is His reason (Logos).<sup>37</sup>

In this statement, Origen thus combines the function of a human being in accordance with the creation of him in the image of God, which origin he cannot escape, with the function of the Son of God, as Logos, as the original

supplier of the human mentality and capacity for reason. Gögler concentrates on the Son sharing his rational aspect with man even in creation: "Vorzüglicher als dem Kosmos teilt sich der Logos der rationalem Kreatur mit."<sup>38</sup>

#### God's Rationality Specific to Man Because of God's Desire for Relationship with Man

This last section of Book 4 is devoted to man, as the center of creation, and to God, whose standards for goodness and justice are most acutely applicable to man rather than to other types or categories of creation. Origen makes the assertion that ". . . all things have been created primarily on account of the rational being (*τὸ λογικὸν ζῷον*)."<sup>39</sup> He continues: ". . . the Creator has not made these things for the lion or eagle or dolphin, but has created everything for the rational being. . . ."40 Origen next clarifies that God's standards for justice are most particularly geared for and regulated to man, rational creation, not to the animals, which are subrational creatures. He maintains the right of God to "impose" standards "according to His will to the advantage of the whole world upon people who need healing and correction of this kind and of such severity."<sup>41</sup> It could be conjectured that the irrationality or subrationality of animals limits, if not denies, their ability to violate the principles and authority of nature. By contrast man, who is rational thus possessing the authority and the intelligence to violate his

own nature, possesses a free will, more developed and more free than that belonging to animals. With greater freedom comes greater responsibility. When man violates his nature, it is incumbent of God to respond with impunity.

The free will of man and animals bears significance to the study of God, for a greater understanding of the free will of God and of God's desire to communicate to man and be communicated to by man is gained. Man possesses greater consciousness, accountability, and free will than animals. Man can communicate using rational language and animals cannot. God obviously possesses infinite ability in these characteristics. Accountable as man is for his thoughts, decisions, and actions, God is even more accountable. These assertions about God may be obvious, but man tends to ascribe to God in practice the limited fullness of these attributes that man possesses. God's consciousness and freedom of choice are far greater than man's; in fact, they are limitless. His integrity is limitless and perfect. The greatest integrity man can ever hope for is a limited perfection, which is not true or purified or perfect perfection. When considering the possibility of God ever sinning, one must not dismiss the possibility as automatically blasphemous or unthinkable, until balancing the limitless integrity of God with his free will. His integrity wields more power than his free will; it affirms the potentiality of rightness rather than wrongness. Thus while every choice God makes is right, it is a matter of choice, not the function of a robot. In fact, God has a greater choice. The freedom of his will preceded his right

thought and perfect action, if one were to ascribe temporal limitations to God.

#### An Affirmation of the Titles and Characteristics of the Son

Origen closes Book 4 with a reminder that God's "Son . . . is divine Logos, Wisdom, Truth, Righteousness, and every other divine title which the holy scriptures give to him. . . ."<sup>42</sup> He speaks of ". . . His [God's] Logos [that is, truth in the form of reason and language] dwelling in our soul".<sup>43</sup> Having discussed further the differences between man and God and the divinely imposed, thus natural, limitations in the soul of man, Origen moves on to Book 5.

## Chapter 5

### The Trinity as a Ministry to Man; the Place of the Trinity in Prayer; God's Revelation of Himself Especially Through the Son; and the Son as an Angel and as the Logos

#### The Persons of the Trinity as Ministers to Man

Origen introduces Book 5 with a reminder of the prerogative of God in ministering to man and with a specification of the Holy Spirit and the Son as partaking in the ministry of indwelling. He says: "But it is God's work to dwell invisibly by His Spirit and by the Spirit of Christ in those in whom He judges it right to dwell."<sup>1</sup> The terminology Origen uses for the Son and Spirit is useful to note, for the designations "His [God's] Spirit" and "the Spirit of Christ" may appear to distinguish God from Christ. One could then conclude that Christ is not God. Moreover, the existence of a Spirit of God and a Spirit of Christ can muddle the existence and the definition of the Holy Spirit. Origen's habit of using "God" often interchangeably for the Father and tendency to use "God" and "Christ" juxtaposed in a context which separates rather than unites the two terms, combines aspects of the oneness and threeness of God without explaining himself and reconciling the Son and the Spirit and, therefore, tends to confuse the reader. However, "His Spirit" is understood to refer to the Holy Spirit, and "the Spirit of Christ" is understood to mean the wisdom, power, effectiveness, and impact of the Son,

especially in becoming Christ in the incarnation. That the Holy Spirit and the Son do not dwell in all men, but only in those in whom they discriminately and justly determine that they should dwell, reflects the perfect wisdom which they individually and together possess as God. The perfect unity they possess by virtue of their equal and perfect divinity attests to their absolute oneness; therefore, this function of their unity is called "God's work".

### The Function of the Trinity in Prayer as Exemplary of the Hierarchy in the Trinity

Origen includes a prayer for the power of God to help guide him as he continues to refute Celsus' arguments. He wants to "receive the mind of Christ from His Father who alone gives it, and be helped to share in the Logos of God, . . . [and to] throw down 'every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God' [from II Corinthians 10:5]". . . .<sup>2</sup> The Father is, therefore, the source of Christ's mind, or thinking, from which Origen wants to acquire truth and wisdom. Origen associates this understanding with divine power, for he continues to ask that God "grant this great power so that by the word and power of God faith may spring up in those who will read this reply."<sup>3</sup> Origen ascribes the power of God to stimulate and motivate faith in man and, particularly here, in his readers. In spite of his initial reservations in replying to Celsus' insinuations against Christ, Christians, and Christianity, Origen is

hopeful that, by the revelatory function of God, readers of this work will be inspired to believe in the truth and to nourish that belief.

Having introduced this section with a prayer, Origen develops the subject of prayer, its procedure, and the involvement of the Trinity in prayer. His description of the persons of the Trinity in their function in prayer reinforces ideas he has already discussed and reveals more about his concept of the Trinity. He calls Christ "the high-priest of all angels, the living and divine Logos", and he wants to pray to Christ.<sup>4</sup> Origen sees the Father as the ultimate recipient of prayer; the Son as the means in the absolute nature of prayer. Origen adds that the Son can be the recipient of prayer as long as one realizes the authority and position of the Son as subordinate to the Father. (This subordination is one of function and not of person, however.) Surely where prayer consists only of a kind of conversation, what he has said makes sense. The believer would prefer not to be limited to any one person of the Trinity. The more intimate the believer's relationship becomes with each person of the Trinity, the more, naturally, he would like to praise and thank each one directly, rather than by way of the Father alone.

As before, Origen describes the Father, who is "the supreme God, who is sufficient for all things (*τῷ πρὸς πάντα ἐπὶ παντι θεῷ*), through our Saviour, the Son of God."<sup>5</sup> Origen, therefore, describes the Son's function in making the Father sufficient. The Father can only be understood to be

dependent in function, of course, not in person. He continues with his previously stated description of the Son: "He is Logos, Wisdom, Truth and every other title which the scriptures of the prophets of God and the apostles of Jesus give to him."<sup>6</sup> The titles for the Son which the Old Testament uses completely coincide and sometimes are identical with the titles used in the New Testament.

Origen, in the following excerpt, exalts both the Father and the Son, yet sees the Father as more distinguished: ". . . we perceive the superiority of the divinity of God which is beyond description and also that of His only-begotten Son who is far above all things."<sup>7</sup> The description of the Father as "beyond description" and the Son as "far above all things" seems to subordinate the Son to the Father. The subordinationism of this section is only in rank, in authority, and in function, not in divinity. Subordinating the function of the Son to the Father does not subordinate the person of the Son. The divinity of the Son, Origen does not describe as "beyond description", for its function and essence became more clear to man with the incarnation. The Son becoming man did not, however, detract from his position, indeed his essence, as God. Even with the incarnation, he remained "far above all things". In this context, interpreting God to include the persons of the Trinity would then distinguish subsequent references to the Son as referring either to his incarnation, especially to his humanity alone, or to his function as God.

Origen further explores the believer's participation in

prayer by combining it with the concept of the image of God. Origen says that it is illogical to pray to persons who pray to someone else. One should pray to a truly worthy recipient of prayer. He says: ". . . we consider that we ought not to pray to beings who pray themselves, since even they wish to refer us to the God to whom they pray rather than to bring us down to their level or to take the power of answering prayers away from God and arrogate it to themselves."<sup>8</sup> Not only does one pray to the Father, the true source of answers to prayers, but one also recognizes the legitimate role of an intermediary recipient of prayer, namely the Son, to answer prayer. The existence of an intermediary in prayer coincides with the person of the Son in relationship to the Father and in his own terms. Origen provides evidence for this function of Christ as he explains the very words of Christ himself:

When our Saviour and Lord once heard the words "Good master", he referred the man who said this on to his Father, saying "Why do you call me good? There is none good but one, God the Father." If the Son of the Father's love was right in saying this, he being the image of God's goodness, how much more would the sun say to its worshippers [in Matthew 4:10]: "Why do you worship me? For 'thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and him only shalt thou serve'. I and all my associates worship and serve Him." And if someone is less exalted than the sun, such a man should no less pray to the Logos of God who is able to heal him, and far more to his Father who also to the righteous men of earlier times "sent forth his Word and healed them and delivered them from their distresses" [from Psalm 106:20].<sup>9</sup>

The Son of God, as the image and emissary of his Father,

surely is a sufficient intermediary both in conveying the Father's messages and plans for man and in conveying man's requests and comments to the Father. Not because the Son, even in his humanity, is less divine than the Father, does the Father function as the real and ultimate addressee in prayer. The Son is neither less divine than the Father, apart from the incarnation, by reason of possessing less authority than the Father; nor is he less divine than the Father even with the incarnation and his self-humbling in becoming man. Origen does not contradict his earlier statement on the absolute and relative components and levels of prayer; he merely clarifies its absolute nature. When one understands prayer as a means of communication and as a function of worship between the believer and God, one understands more fully how the part of each one in this situation is harmonious with each of their functions in other circumstances and functions. The Son executes and presents a mysterious and largely imperceptible Father. The Spirit reveals truths and the energy and power behind such truths to man.

#### God's Omnipresent Revelation of Himself to Man

Origen explains the literal and spiritual presence of God among men: "God in His goodness comes down to men not spatially but in His providence, and the Son of God was not only with his disciples at that particular time, but is also with them always, in fulfilment of his promise [from Matthew 28:20] 'Lo, I am with you all the days until the end

of the world."<sup>10</sup> Origen thus appeals to Scripture, which itself seems to confirm the Son's subordination to the Father. Origen does not distinguish between the person and the function of the Son, just as Scripture and the words of the incarnate Christ seemingly do not. Origen verifies his belief in the omnipresence of the Son, a quality which can only apply to God, and emphasizes the spiritual omnipresence of God. Origen combines goodness and omnipresence. While Christ in his goodness at one time personally existed on earth, Christ's lack of visible, human presence on earth does not interfere with the impact, effectiveness, and power of his person and goodness for all time.

### The Son as a Created Being

Origen seems to waver from his previous assertions of the deity of Christ when he describes the Son as created. He says:

. . . even if the Son of God, "the firstborn of all creation", seems to have become man recently, yet he is not in fact new on that account. For the divine scriptures know that he is oldest of all created beings, and that it was to him that God said of the creation of man: "Let us make man in our image and likeness [in Genesis 1:26]."<sup>11</sup>

Perhaps rather than reconciling this excerpt with Origen's previous attestations to the deity of the Son, it would be more accurate to clarify this, and other passages like this which ascribe creation to the Son, by saying that Origen

here speaks of Christ's humanity. It is perhaps too much for the human mind to reconcile completely the co-existence of deity and humanity in the incarnate Son. Origen, as has been seen so far, does not thoroughly understand such a union. From time to time he muddles its issues or ascribes characteristics of humanity to deity, deity to humanity, or unites the two so far that he thinks of them in the same terms. He does not have the nuances of the incarnation in complete balance and synthesis. In this context, then, when he says "the Son of God", it can be understood that he refers to the humanity of the Son, not to the deity. The humanity was created. The humanity was not divine. When Origen calls him the "oldest of all created beings", here he muddles the issue. The humanity of Christ was created, not the deity. The age of the deity is infinity, or better stated, deity has no age. The humanity of Christ did have a beginning. His deity does not.

### The Son as the Logos

The Son as the Logos means the person of the deity who verbally reveals truth to creation, specifically to man, and who personally is, contains, and embodies truth himself. Origen expounds on the Son's title of Logos in relationship to the other titles for the Son and to the other persons of the Trinity, but especially in relationship to Christ's humanity. He says:

. . . though we may call him a second God, it should be understood by this that we do not mean anything

except the virtue which includes all virtues, and the Logos which includes every logos whatsoever of the beings which have been made according to nature, both those which are primary and those that exist for the benefit of the whole. We say that this Logos dwelt in the soul of Jesus and was united with it in a closer union than that of any other soul, because he alone has been able perfectly to receive the highest participation in him who is the very Logos and the very Wisdom, and the very Righteousness himself.<sup>12</sup>

When Origen explains what he means by "a second God (*δεύτερος θεός*)", he does not conjecture polytheism. He does not absolutely declare Christ to be the second God. Rather, he says, "we may call (*λέγωμεν*) him" this. Origen uses the subjunctive mood, not the indicative; he thus uses the term "second God" as language of accommodation, not as absolute truth. He emphasizes that the Son of God is truly God, just as much God as God the Father. As he explains what he means by the designation of "second God", it becomes obvious that he neither adds nor detracts from any other of his descriptive definitions of the Son of God.

Chadwick adds: ". . . we may even, with appropriate qualifications and explanations, describe [the incarnate Son] as a 'second God' beside the Father."<sup>13</sup> The Son of God is complete virtue, and the difference between the virtue belonging to the Father and to the Son is only a difference in aspect and in purpose. Perhaps the Father represents the virtue which contains all other virtues in the sense that the virtue which the Father is and contains provides the qualitative value of the virtues which less abstractly and more pragmatically the Son possesses and shares with man

in quantitative terms.

The Son is Logos in the general sense of giving the human race language as a form of communication. For regenerate man or for the man who seeks to become regenerate, he has provided both a message of salvation and a standard for spirituality, for both of which the Father is the source, and a language, even a vocabulary, which conveys this message. When Origen says that "this Logos dwelt in the soul of Jesus", he uses Logos for the content of truth expressed in human, rational, finite terms which finds its ultimate source in the Father, in both content and purpose. More than this usage of Logos, however, Origen especially here uses Logos to describe the manner in which the divine and human were united in the person of the incarnate Christ. The Son "has been able perfectly to receive the highest participation in him who is the very *logos*" because the humanity of the Son possesses the greatest appreciation, perception, and knowledge of truth, not only from his own free choice as a man, but also because of this humanity's truly unique relationship with his own deity. Prestige comments:

The "second being," who comes "after the being of the God of the universe," is not simply a lower grade of deity. . . . [A]s the Father is the arche of the Son, so the Son is the arche of creatures, without reference to the respective likeness and difference in substance between the source and its product in either case.<sup>14</sup>

The Son as an Angel

Origen affirms the person and function of the Son of God as a proclaimer of the Father's message, his will, and purposes. When Celsus calls Christ an angel, Origen replies that he is not an angel in the literal sense, but the term is applied to him as a title in Isaiah 9:6. In fact, it is significant that *ἄγγελος* can not only mean "angel", it can mean "messenger" as well. Origen describes the message of Christ as "the great counsel of the God and Father of the universe" and describes the outcome of faithful believers as those who "ascend to God" in contrast to "those who do not believe [and] alienate themselves from God and are on the road to destruction through unbelief about God."<sup>15</sup> Origen paraphrases Isaiah 9:6 when he calls Christ "the angel of the great counsel", emphasizing the Son's important and necessary function as a person of the Trinity. Origen summarizes the content of the message he brings which is eternal destruction. He emphasizes the positive aspect of Christ's message and ministry in changing the lives of people who want them changed. He says: "Indeed, he has manifestly become Saviour and benefactor of all who change their lives from the flood of iniquity."<sup>16</sup>

### The Incarnate Son as the Logos

As Origen traces the general events of the crucifixion, he speaks of the Logos, rather than the Son or Christ. The Logos, as the mind of Christ which contains his message, and the person of Christ, who personally

verbalizes that message, are the object of Origen's attention. In the *Contra Celsum*, Origen concentrates on what the Son and the Spirit have done for man, or at least want to do for him. The more Origen concentrates on the ministry of the Son, the more he personalizes the title of Logos for the Son, thus emphasizing the motivation and the mechanics, at least in part, of the Father's message to man. Origen says: ". . . those who conspired against the Logos and wanted to kill him and show to all men that he was dead and of no importance, did not at all desire his tomb to be opened lest anyone should see the Logos alive after their plot."<sup>17</sup> There can be no doubt of the identity of the Logos, and that the motivation of such men who sought to kill him, a personal act, was to stifle Christ's message of salvation and of God's standards for the Christian life, also personal activity. While the Logos obviously refers to the Son, Origen does not distinguish between the Son's deity and humanity; he does not clearly explain that the Logos is a title referring to the deity of the Son, just as wisdom refers to his deity. The deity of Christ obviously did not give up his life on the cross, for deity is eternal. The humanity of Christ offered his life.

Christ is depicted by Origen in this next passage as "the *angel* of God".<sup>18</sup> Coinciding with his previous application of "angel" to the deity of the Son, Origen apparently uses "angel" synonymously with Logos in this context, and he wrongly continues applying Logos to Christ's humanity. Perhaps Origen uses the description of

angel to connote an imparter and conveyer of total goodness, in contrast to Satan, himself an angel, but the embodiment of the worst evil. Origen describes the purpose of the resurrection:

. . . in order that those who had been under the impression that the Logos had died might be convinced that he is not with the dead but is alive, and that he goes before those who are willing to follow him, that he may show the truths of the next stage of progress, which follow those that he has shown before, to those who had not yet the capacity for deeper truths at the time when they were first converted.<sup>19</sup>

Thus the Son not only adapts himself to man, but to angels as well. He, along with the angel at the tomb, rolled away the stone to clarify who he really is to man, that is God as well, as man, the immortality of God, and the continued life of the human soul in spite of physical death. In accordance with his person and integrity, the incarnate Christ fulfilled the prophecies from the Old Testament to completion. The eternity of the deity of the Son and the accompanying knowledge and perfection not only possess the wisdom and the knowledge of the Father but also reflect such in both the life and the death of the incarnate Christ. The history of that reflection is found in the Gospels, and the reality of it would exist even without such a record.

### Summary and Conclusion

Origen closes Book 5 disagreeing with Celsus that philosophers express "the doctrines held by the Christians .

. . . both better and more clearly. . . ."20 Although Celsus recognizes "doctrines that in themselves are manifestly good and religious", he refuses to ascribe divine authorship to these truths.<sup>21</sup> Origen then closes this book with an affirmation of what he has already discussed and developed: that the Son is the Logos of God and that Scripture contains his thoughts, which have found their source in the mind of the Father and their inspiration from the Holy Spirit.

## Chapter 6

The Effectiveness, Flexibility, and Revelatory Nature of Truth; the Personal Revelation of the Persons of the Trinity Through Themselves and Through Each Other; the Relationship of the Son's Deity and Humanity in Revelation; God's Revelation of Good and Evil in Light of the Concept of the Image of God; the Logos as a Gift to Mankind; and Other Ministries of the Trinity to Man

God as the Reason for the Effectiveness of the Message of Truth

Origen begins Book 6 affirming the source of the Scripture as divine and that Scripture itself is not plagiarized from philosophy. He develops the importance of spiritual teachers accommodating the language of their message to the intellectual level of their hearers, without sacrificing content. This insightful method of communication men did not develop on their own; they possessed a model in the incarnate Christ. Origen says: "For our prophets, and Jesus and his apostles, were careful to use a method of teaching which not only contains the truth but is also able to win over the multitude."<sup>1</sup> Origen does not specify if this "method of teaching" is inspired and directed by the Holy Spirit, but for an effectiveness so unparalleled in human history, such a method certainly finds its source in God. Christ's method of teaching was and is, as it is retained in Scripture, designed to be

effective, yet more than his method, his power from God is what finally proved him effective. Christ not only ministered a redemptive, positive, and hopeful message to man, but he also set an example for man in his effective relaying of this message. Christ accommodated the emphasis, the language, and the style of his message to the intellectual level and cultural background of his hearers. His flexibility in the deliverance of his message affected the true core of men's souls.

Citing I Corinthians 2:4, 5, Origen elaborates on this method, which the apostle Paul even adopted. He speaks of the necessity of not only the truthful content of the message to have such unique effectiveness, but also for the speaker to rely on the power of God. The speaker's attitude and his concentration must acknowledge his dependence on God, rather than on himself. He says:

"And my word and my preaching were not in persuasive word of wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and of power, that our faith may not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God." The divine scripture says that the spoken word, even if it is true in itself and very persuasive, is not sufficient to affect a human soul unless some power is also given by God to the speaker and grace is added to what is said; and it is only by God's gift that this power is possessed by those whose preaching is successful.<sup>2</sup>

#### God as the Reason for Flexibility in the Expression of Truth

The gospel of Jesus required flexibility in its style of delivery not only because of a variety of levels and

backgrounds of its hearers, but also because of the education of its subsequent communicators. Only the Son of God could be the perfect communicator because of the perfection of his humanity in participation with the omniscience and veracity of his deity. Origen describes the education of Christ's disciples and their appropriate flexibility in style, not in content, with communicating the message of Christ. He describes the effectiveness and the drive of the disciples to disseminate Christianity. He also describes their effectiveness in terms of the free will of their audience, the "converts [who] became far better men in proportion to the inclination of their free will to accept a good life."<sup>3</sup> The disciples, in their lack of education, did not distort the content or the truth of the message they proclaimed. If the hearer did not accept that message, it is because he chose not to. Origen places the burden of responsibility on human free will, which man received by virtue of being created in the image of God. It becomes apparent that the Father planned for his purposes for man to be conveyed in a message, the purposes including his standards for salvation and for development of relationship with himself through the Son, and the recipient of the message being capable of communicating to others, understanding himself, and receiving for himself. Only God, however, can adapt truth to man's perception without detracting from and distorting such truth.

### The Revelatory Nature of Truth

In fact, Origen continues with a discussion of the general revelation of God to man from Romans 1. Both God and his mind, both of which constitute truth, are revealed to man without diminishing the integrity of either. While the human mind is incapable of completely appreciating the persons of the Trinity and their attributes, what it does comprehend is not a distortion. Origen describes how such human knowledge is acquired. He says:

It is "holding down the truth", as our scripture testifies, when they think that *the highest good cannot at all be expressed in words*, and say that "it comes suddenly by long familiarity with the subject itself and by living with it, like a light in the soul kindled by a leaping spark, which after it has come into being feeds itself".<sup>4</sup>

Therefore, it can be concluded that the Spirit's ministry of inspiration of men and the Son's inculcation of truth into men is not sudden and immediate. It does not happen with the infinite speed of a miracle. This knowledge from the Spirit and the Son is imparted to man at a rate harmonious with his volition which, in coordination with his soul and body, has finite limitations in perception. Man is capable of understanding much more than he commonly imagines, but whether man can expand such mental limitations while on earth is questionable. The more he learns about God, the more he realizes he does not know and needs to understand. That man actually does reach an end of learning about God is doubtful, for can man ever be said to have acquired perfect knowledge?

## Man's Ability to Perceive Truth

Going into more depth about how man perceives God, Origen discusses how certain Old Testament characters perceived God. Old Testament believers occasionally experienced theophanies, or miraculous appearances in which specific persons of the Trinity appeared as men. Rather than describing the truth behind such events in words, God simply decided to have the events themselves occur. He thought the events more effective, perhaps because of the stunning effect on the recipients or because the principles behind these events were too deep to be explained in words. The recipients of these theophanies perhaps needed and utilized these events in proportion to their own spiritual growth. He says:

Our wise men, Moses who was the most ancient and the prophets who succeeded him, were the first to understand that "*the highest good cannot at all be expressed in words*", when, seeing that God manifests Himself to those who are worthy and ready to receive Him, they wrote that God appeared to Abraham, for instance, or to Isaac, or to Jacob. But who it was that appeared, and what sort of a person, and in what way, and to which of those among us, are questions which they have left for the examination of people who can show themselves to be like the men to whom He appeared. For they saw Him not with the eyes of the body, but with a pure heart. In the words of our Jesus [in Matthew 5:8], "blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God".<sup>5</sup>

That God appeared to people in the Old Testament affirms for Origen that God transcends language. His reasoning is

questionable, but it is true that sometimes only the medium of experience is able to convey a truth. A large enough quantity of words and precise enough language may not exist to convey the truth accurately and completely. The more one knows God, the less one wonders about the facts of God and realizes that the real instinct he has about God is fulfilled through relationship with God. This is not to say that the believer eventually abandons his objective, which is the reality and the truth of God, but that he learns through the rational and experiential knowledge of knowing God.

### The Methods of Divine Revelation

It becomes clear then that God reveals himself to man directly, through the universe, through academic study of his written revelation to man in Scripture, and through relationship with man. The extent to which man chooses to discover God by these three means will determine how deeply and truly he will know God. The knowledge that results from such appropriation is not bound to expression in words alone, but also in that which transcends words, including the unspoken and unspeakable aspects of relationship and love.

Origen continues with his discussion of God's revelation of himself to man both in the created universe, which man perceives about himself immediately, and through the sustained and faithful spiritual growth and personal development in his relationship with God. Origen

addresses the subject of men who have achieved a knowledge of God which few others do. Ezekiel in the Old Testament and the disciples in the New Testament, for example, God commanded not to relay or record such profound information or to describe their superlative knowledge. Origen cites Ezekiel, Paul, John, and Jesus as examples.<sup>6</sup>

The revelatory nature of God is self-limiting. The human mind is capable of receiving the whole truth neither of nor about God. God has desired that certain men throughout human history, who have attained a supreme and specialized knowledge of God, be silent. Even such knowledge belonging to them is incomplete. This is not to say, however, that the revelatory nature of God is inadequate. In fact, each person of the Trinity has a unique function in revelation. The Father, as has already been explored, first reveals himself to man by means of the created universe and secondly by means of his Son, whose purpose in the incarnation was to reveal both the character and redemptive message of God. The Holy Spirit, on the other hand, is the inspiration, the motivator, and the teacher of Christians.

#### Divine Revelation in the Person of Christ

As Origen launches into a discussion of presenting Christ to the world as the Son of God with a redemptive message for mankind, he speaks "of the self-evident nature

of the facts. . . . But, in fact, Jesus, has been preached in all the world because he is the only Son of God who has visited the human race."<sup>7</sup> The relationship between God's creation of man in his image and God's revelation of himself to man becomes clearer. One could explain the self-evident nature of the facts in terms of the Father's purpose and design of the events of the incarnation and the Son's perfect harmony with this plan. Thus the self-evident nature of the facts lies in their divine design to correspond to man's ability to perceive and assimilate them.

#### The Son as the Ambassador and the Reflection of the Father's Knowledge

In contrast with man, who can only come to know the truths and wisdom of the Father, Origen maintains that the Son has always had such knowledge. When speaking of the eternal knowledge of the Son, Origen identifies the Son as "the Logos of God, [who] shows the depth of knowledge of the Father. . . ."<sup>8</sup> Once again, the Son is described in terms of the reflection of the Father. Origen allows "that, although a derived knowledge is possessed by those whose minds are illuminated by the divine Logos himself, absolute understanding and knowledge of the Father is possessed by himself in accordance with his merits. . . ."<sup>9</sup> The knowledge potentially acquired by man equates the Father and the Son, for Origen quotes Matthew 11:27 and Luke 10:22, when he says, "No man has known the Son save the Father, and no

man has known the Father save the Son, and him to whom the Son will reveal him."<sup>10</sup> Origen does not allow that man's knowledge of God can be perfect. He says:

Neither can anyone worthily know the uncreated and firstborn of all created nature in the way that the Father who begat him knows him; nor can anyone know the Father in the same way as the living Logos who is God's wisdom and truth. By participation in him who took away from the Father what is called darkness . . . , anyone whatever who has the capacity to know Him may do so.<sup>11</sup>

The impossibility of man's perfect knowledge of God seems to contradict the possibility of the divinity of man. For if man could become divine, would he not come to possess a perfect knowledge of God?

Origen clarifies man's incomplete, unfulfilled state of ignorance of truth which he can choose to change to knowledge of truth. The Son of God, who not only was never in a state of ignorance but always had complete and infinite knowledge of truth, is both the model, the standard for acquiring truth and the source of truth for man. For the Son represents God to man, and as his representative, presents in human vocabulary the mind of the Father and the truth from the Father which the Father wishes man to possess.

#### The Son as the Ambassador and the Reflection of the Father's Goodness

Origen distinguishes two levels of goodness: that which is innate or should be called internal when referring to God; and that which is acquired, or that goodness of

which man is capable. When God the Father established certain standards of goodness for mankind, he delegated the Son to present them in language and standards compatible with man. Although Origen does not here analyze the Father's method for establishing and communicating his standards to man to this degree, it seems logical to his whole system for understanding the Trinity. Emphasizing the implicit and infinite integrity of God, Origen explains: "It was necessary for God, who knows how to use for a needful end even the consequences of evil . . . to make a school of virtue . . . for those who wished to strive lawfully in order to obtain it."<sup>12</sup> Origen, then, realizes that the omnipotence of God has the ability to turn evil consequences into consequences which effect good in the life of the Christian who so wishes. The Son, he agrees, has a part in helping Christians achieve this goal.<sup>13</sup> Origen is, however, vague regarding the details and mechanics of this function.

In attesting to the existence of evil, Origen speaks of the Son as the inherent personification of good. He says: "It was right . . . that one of the extremes, the best, should be called Son of God because of his superiority. . . ."<sup>14</sup> The Son has yet another title, then, goodness. This title would certainly make sense in light of the commandment from Ephesians 5:1 for Christians to be imitators of Christ and in light of Origen's preceding remarks on the divine standard for goodness. Origen's defense of the deity of the Son coincides with his recognition of the goodness of God. The

attribute of goodness is perceived as a personification in the person of the Son.

### The Issue of the Co-Eternity of the Father and the Son in Light of the Revelatory Natures of Them Both

Origen cites the Biblical precedent for identifying the Son as the Son in his function in creation. The hierarchy in the Trinity between the Father and the Son comes into question when Origen responds to Celsus' assertion that ". . . we [Origen] call him Son of God in imitation of what is said of the world on the ground that it originated from God and is His son and is God."<sup>15</sup> The context for this statement, which becomes clear as Origen continues, is that Christ as the Messiah was prophesied by Moses and the prophets, not vaguely by pagans. What is especially important regarding Origen's placement of the Son in the hierarchy of the Trinity, however, is that the Son is not only the Son of the Father, but is also God himself. Origen reaffirms the functional hierarchy between the Father and the Son when he adds: ". . . the Creator of this universe is God's Son and . . . the first and supreme God is his Father."<sup>16</sup> Origen has ascribed a temporal designation, a human title, to the Father here, but this reference should not be understood to deny the eternity of the Father, the Father's eternal begetting of the Son, or the eternity of the Son. As he has already discussed, temporality cannot be thoroughly or realistically applied to the Father. However, Origen's

application of "temporal" and "supreme" to the Father are here understood to emphasize the authority of the Father and the hierarchy in the Trinity, rather than the supreme divinity of the Father, over the Son.

Origen addresses the hypostasis of the incarnate Christ and considers it perfectly believable and legitimate, but he also admits that he cannot finally distinguish between the deity and the humanity of Christ. In contrast with other passages which do not clarify the dichotomy of the oneness and the separation or distinctness of the two natures of the incarnate Son, the following passage clearly states that they are indistinct. The term *communicatio idiomatum* definitely applies to Origen's understanding of the person of the incarnate Son. He says: "There is nothing amazing about if, when we affirm that the soul of Jesus [humanity] was united by a supreme participation with the majesty of the Son of God, we do not make any further distinction between them."<sup>17</sup> The legitimacy for this reality he derives from I Corinthians 6:17 and he says:

And of the perfect man who is joined to the true Lord, the Logos and wisdom and truth, it is said that "he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit". If then "he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit", who has been joined more closely than the soul of Jesus, or even to any comparable extent, to the Lord who is the very Logos, wisdom, truth, and righteousness? If this is the case, the relation of the soul of Jesus to the firstborn of all creation, the divine Logos, is not that of two separate beings.<sup>18</sup>

From Origen's assertion of the two beings becoming only one, it is clear that he does not attest to the humanity

of the Son having a soul of its own and the deity of the Son being another soul. The idea of two personalities inhabiting one body is a psychologically dangerous one; yet the idea of two souls, two personalities becoming one also blends two ultimately immiscible components. Certainly harmony between God and man, whether that man be any man or the humanity of the Son, is plausible; but unity to the point of identity or sameness is quite another matter. If Origen is correct, however, the freedom of the will of the incarnation of Christ becomes an issue. The will of the Son, as God, is perfectly free, although under the sovereignty of integrity and unable to sin. The will of the Son, as man, is humanly perfectly free, able to perform good and bad, to engage in both righteousness and evil. The will is but one component of the souls of each, yet each component of the two natures seems to verify the final limitations of man and the ultimate infinity and lack of limitations of God. If one were to compare other attributes of deity and humanity, one would find them complementary, yet finally different. In addition, the mixture of such attributes seems impossible; for one cannot mix what is relative and what is absolute. While the relative can remain relative, or even become more relative, the absolute neither can become more absolute, by definition, nor can it become relative, also by definition. The combination of two such opposite souls into someone viable and real seems theoretically illogical and realistically impossible. God is not contained in logic, however. He transcends it. The wishes of God the Father, as executed by God the Son, even in the incarnation

are not subject to human logic, perception, and perceptiveness, although occasionally they conform to it.

### The Revelatory Natures of Christ's Humanity and Deity

Origen concludes the perfect union of the deity of the Son with the humanity of the Son, confounding Celsus' reasoning:

But if the divine scripture affirms that the perfect man cleaves to the Logos himself by his virtue and is united with him, so that by this principle we go on to conclude that no separation is to be made between the soul of Jesus and the firstborn of all creation, he [Celsus] laughs at the affirmation that Jesus is Son of God, because he does not see that there is a secret and profound meaning in the words used about him in the divine scriptures.<sup>19</sup>

Origen maintains his stand on the progression of the unity and resultant perfect union of the deity and humanity of the Son becoming one. Although he does not directly state that a progression occurs, it is implied; for he compares the humanity of the Son with man, in general, who, as he has previously mentioned, is able to become divine. Regarding the mechanics and the process and the temporal element in this progress, Origen is vague, however.

### The Unity of Believers with God in Light of the Unity of the Son's Deity and Humanity

Origen compares the universal Church with this evolved unity of the humanity and deity of Christ. The

pattern for closeness between the Christian and God lies in the consummate unity within the incarnate Son. Origen also clarifies that this union ultimately had but one soul, the soul being deity. He says:

There is nothing amazing about it if, when we affirm that the soul of Jesus was united by a supreme participation with the majesty of the Son of God, we do not make any further distinction between them. For the sacred words of the divine scriptures also mention other things which in their own nature are two, but which are reckoned to become, and really are, one with each other. For instance, of man and woman it is said that "they are no longer two, but one flesh". And of the perfect man who is joined to the true Lord, Logos and wisdom and truth, it is said [in I Corinthians 6:17] that "he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit". . . . If this is the case, the relation of the soul of Jesus to the firstborn of all creation [from Colossians 1:15], the divine Logos, is not that of two separate beings.<sup>20</sup>

Gögler affirms the complete union between Christ's deity and humanity in which Origen believes: "Wenn Origenes von der gott-menschlichen Vereinigung in Jesus spricht, dann ist wiederum immer der Logos (und  $\alpha\upsilon\tau\acute{o}\lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ ) betont hervorgehoben, durch den diese Vereinigung zustande kam."<sup>21</sup>

Origen directs his discussion toward the man eager to know more of the truth of Scripture and the reality of God. He seems to describe the body of Christ's humanity, but he turns it into a metaphor, describing its components as the body of believers. The body of Christ's humanity suddenly becomes a symbol for the totality of believers in him.<sup>22</sup> Extending the metaphor further, one could argue for the

divinization of man. The analogy of the Church and the body of Christ appears plausible except for the impossibility of divine perfection by man. While the humanity is said and accepted to be humanly perfect, it is not perfect in the divine sense. Just as man can be said to be whole, God transcends wholeness; God is infinity. Ultimately, it seems, God and man are incomparable. Origen illustrates this principle with a reaffirmation of the distinction between Christ's deity and humanity. He continues:

. . . what difficulty is there in supposing that the soul of Jesus, indeed Jesus without qualification, by virtue of his supreme and unsurpassed communion with the very Logos himself, was not separated from the only-begotten and the firstborn of all creation, and was not distinct from him?<sup>23</sup>

Origen uses "Jesus" for the God-man, the human soul and the Godhead inseparably united, and concludes that the humanity's lack of distinction from and separation from the deity by virtue of the flawlessness of the humanity equates deity and humanity. Origen is not considered to be necessarily wrong in this assertion, but the logic he presents is not thorough and rigorous. Even he himself admits that Scripture contains "a secret and profound meaning", which, on this topic especially, probably cannot be confined to human logic, to the human mind.<sup>24</sup>

### The Divine Revelation of and Relationship with Evil

Origen addresses the age-old topic of the source of evil. He refutes the possibility of God being its direct

source, and distinguishes between the justified and unjustified infliction of pain on man. He considers "whether God made it [evil], or whether, if He did not, it has come into being as a by-product of the primary creations [angels and man]. . . ."25 He, first of all, establishes that "According to the divine scriptures it is the virtues and virtuous actions that are good in the strict sense, just as their opposites are bad in the strict sense."26 By contrast, he continues: "In a looser sense it would be found that in respect of both physical and external things those which contribute to the life according to nature are considered good, and those contrary to this bad."27 He finally firmly denies God as the creator of evil and to be the person accountable and responsible for it. God's integrity, perfection, and goodness appear boldly in this passage. Origen recognizes that if one only defines evil as that which is or happens which is bad, then God would be directly involved in perpetuating it. As Origen says, "For He creates physical or external evils to purify and educate those who are unwilling to be educated by reason and sound teaching."28 Thus God's integrity demands a standard of goodness designed for man and within man's capacity. God, as a disciplinarian, uses a human medium to effect a positive and right, even of a perfect change in man. To this end God acts directly when man chooses not to use self-discipline in abiding by and executing God's standards and wishes.

In this discussion of the stimulating prerogative and

actions of God to effect goodness in man, Origen affirms that the will of man is free, if and when and to what extent he chooses for relationship with God, even as a result of God's intense infliction of "evil" on him with this end in mind. He says, quoting Galatians 5:8: "And that, even if the persuasive words are given by God, yet the act of assent to them is not caused by God, is clearly taught by Paul when he says: 'The persuasion is not from him who calls you.'"<sup>29</sup>

Origen beautifully clarifies the harmony and hierarchy in the Trinity between the Father and the Son. He says: ". . . the immediate Creator and, as it were, direct Maker of the world, was the Son of God, the Logos, but . . . the Father of the Logos was the primary Creator because He commanded His Son, the Logos, to make the world."<sup>30</sup>

Origen affirms the infinite superiority of God and his attributes to man's and those belonging to a level of creation even higher than man. He says: ". . . it is not wrong that we . . . should accept the view that God has no characteristics of which we know. The attributes of God are superior to any which are known not only by human nature, but even by the nature of beings who have risen beyond it."<sup>31</sup>

#### A Comparison Between the Son, as the Image of the Father, and Mankind

Origen distinguishes between the Biblical phrases "His image" and "in His image", the first referring to the

Son and the second referring to mankind. Origen does not, however, distinguish between the deity and the humanity of the Son. He says:

He [Celsus] did not realise that the image of God is the firstborn of all creation, the very Logos and truth, and, further, the very wisdom Himself, being "the image of his goodness", whereas man was made "in the image of God", and furthermore, every man of whom Christ is head is God's image and glory.<sup>32</sup>

Thus Origen distinguishes between the two terms. When "in" precedes "image", the reflection is less direct and precise. After all, man is not God, but man, and as such is imperfect. Origen also firmly asserts that the creation of man in God's image refers to the creation of his soul, because the human body cannot mirror the divine body, for there is no divine body. Origen says: ". . . that which is made in the image of God is to be understood of the inward man, as we call it, which is renewed and has the power to be formed in the image of the Creator, when a man becomes perfect as his heavenly Father is perfect. . . ." <sup>33</sup> Origen expands man's creation in the image of God to include a likeness which increases proportionally with man's goodness, and resultant perfection. In this sense, Origen applies the mandate from Ephesians 5:1 to

"Become imitators of God" . . . [with the result that the imitator] assumes into his own virtuous soul and the characteristics of God. Then also the body of the man who has assumed the characteristics of God, in that part which is made in the image of God, is a temple, since he possesses a soul of this character and has God in his soul because of that which is in His image.<sup>34</sup>

For Origen the image of God concept does not stop with creation, or physical birth, but continues to man becoming a Christian and finally becoming "perfect (*τέλειος*)".

Origen affirms the absolute personifications of the persons of the Trinity, rather than attributes alone, which man possesses rather than is. These multiple titles do not just express attributes and aspects of God alone, but emphasize qualities and truths which, because of divine generosity, as it were, man may possess as well. He says: "For he [God] is participated in, rather than participates; and He is participated in by those who possess the Spirit of God (*πνεῦμα θεοῦ*). Our Saviour also does not participate in righteousness, but being righteous, he is participated in by the righteous."<sup>35</sup> Origen's repeated reference to participation no doubt finds its source in Plato's *Republic*, 509B, and he continues to describe God and the Logos using Platonic language.<sup>36</sup> He repeats the dilemma previously discussed and resolved regarding the complete divinity of the Son, only here discussing the Son in logical, philosophical terms, that is, whether or not the Son can be said to be a "being", an "idea", and a "beginning":

. . . there is much to say which is hard to perceive about being, and especially if we take "being" in the strict sense to be unmoved and incorporeal. We would have to discover whether God "transcends being in rank and power", and grants a share in being to those whose participation is according to His Logos, and to the Logos himself, or whether He is Himself being, in spite of the fact that He is said to be invisible by nature in the words that say of the Saviour [in Colossians 1:15]: "Who is the image of the invisible

God." That He is incorporeal is indicated by the word "invisible". We would also inquire whether we ought to say that the only-begotten and firstborn of all creation is being of beings, and idea of ideas, and beginning, that his Father and God transcends all these.<sup>37</sup>

Bigg responds to the validity of describing Christ as a being: ". . . the word *Ousia* or Essence still means at times Person or Hyspostasis; . . . it was by no means clear whether God could be spoken of as having *Ousia* at all, because He is rather 'above all *Ousia*'. . . ."38 Stead comments:

. . . Origen suggests that the Son may be compared, not to the Idea of truth, but to the Idea of the Good itself, which is the source of the being and value of all the other Ideas; while the Father is still further exalted. It is indeed possible, he says, that God is *οὐσία* though invisible. . . . In this case it is particularly clear that *οὐσία* has moved away from the sense of "definition" to that of "ideal form".<sup>39</sup>

Stead generalizes this Platonic concept as follows:

Christian writers were also influenced . . . by the Platonic dictum that the God is *epekeina tes ousias*, "beyond substance" (or "beyond being") in dignity and power. In general that phrase acted as a deterrent against applying the term *ousia* to God; but very different interpretations of it were given in our period, so that it was perhaps too ambiguous to be conclusive.<sup>40</sup>

Origen sought to use Greek philosophical concepts, imprecise and unthorough though they were, as apologetic weapons for Christianity.

The Benefit of the Logos for Mankind and the Divine Glory of  
the Logos

Origen discusses the conforming purpose and function of God the Son, that is, in conforming man to the standards of the Father. He repeats an earlier argument that the Son became a man for men, who because of sin or their own natural spiritual inadequacy, had been unable to relate to, perceive, or understand God as he ultimately is. He also restates the purpose of the Son, whom he identifies as "the Logos [who] . . . has led the mind of man who wants to be saved to the uncreated and supreme God".<sup>41</sup> A primary function of the Logos toward man is distinguishing light and darkness for him. Origen says:

But since the Logos has opened the eyes of our soul, we see the difference between light and darkness and in every way prefer to stand in the light, and do not want to enter the darkness at all. The true Light, because he is living, knows to whom it will be right to show the radiance, and to whom only light, not showing his brilliance because of the weakness still inherent in the man's eyes.<sup>42</sup>

Gögler responds, emphasizing the importance of the Son in revelation, although maintaining the Holy Spirit's contact with man, specifically the Christian, to be the most holy. He says:

Offenbarung bedeutet zuerst Mitteilung Gottes an sein Geschöpf, dann aber zugleich Einbeziehung des Geschöpfes in die Hinwendung zu Gott. Beide Bewegungen sind innertrinitarisch vorgebildet im Logos. Er setzt diese seine Bewegung fort nach außen in die Welt, und holt sie wieder zurück hin zu Gott und in ihn hinein. Immer ist es der Logos Gottes, dem Origenes die Eignung zuschreibt, den unsichtbaren Vater bekannt zu machen und zu offenbaren, und dadurch die, an die er sich wendet, zu retten und zu

Gott hinzuführen. Weil der innere Kontakt mit dem geistigen Gott ein geistiger ist, darum ist der Logos "geeignet", ihn zu vermitteln. Auch wenn wir die Wahrheit Gottes schauen sollen, ist es Jesus als der Logos, der "neue und richtige Augen dafür schaffen kann".<sup>43</sup>

Origen describes the process of knowledge and communication which the Son as a man, initiates. He says that the Logos "calls to himself those who are flesh that he may make them first to be formed like the Logos who became flesh, and after that lead them up to see him as he was before he became flesh; so that they may be helped and may advance from the first stage which is that of the flesh. . . ." <sup>44</sup> In "Conversion in Origen", John Clark Smith makes a statement which serves as a qualifier to this last remark of Origen. Smith says: "The relationship, however, between the *Logos* of God and the *logos* of the soul depends upon the condition of the soul."<sup>45</sup> Therefore, the part of man's will in the process of the Logos acting on man's soul cannot be ignored, and Origen's previous statements attesting to the free will of man would concur with Smith's statement.

In contrast to the descriptions of Christ which have emphasized the incarnation, the humbling of the deity of the Son to become humanity, as the desire of the Father, Origen presents and develops the sublime and supreme purpose of the incarnation for man. While such a description implies the graciousness and loving-kindness of the Father toward man, it also shows the effectiveness of the Logos, the term for the Son which emphasizes the presentation of God on a human level, whether that level be

in language, in the form of the written Word, or in person, in the form of the living Word, the incarnate Son. As a result of the incarnation, Origen quotes John 1:14: "We beheld his glory, a glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."<sup>46</sup>

Origen speaks of the greatness, even the beauty, of the Father who, in his graciousness, was willing to share such greatness with the rest of the Trinity. He says:

But in our opinion the God and Father of the universe is not the only being who is great; for He gave a share of Himself and His greatness to the only begotten and firstborn of all creation, that being himself an image of the invisible God he might preserve the image of the Father also in respect of His greatness. For it was impossible that, so to speak, a rightly proportioned and beautiful image of the invisible God should not also show the image of His greatness.<sup>47</sup>

Origen has established the progression: from the Father, to the Son, to mankind. The Father shared his greatness with the Son, for the Son is the image of the Father. Origen does not develop the following statements, but the following progression seems logical from what he has said: The Father, in willing that man be created in his image, initiated man into the system for greatness. Man, by virtue of the pattern of his creation, possesses the potential for imitating Christ, fulfilling his human potential in a sublime relationship with the Father through a relationship with the Father, through a relationship with the Son, and becoming mature or "perfect".

The Spirit's Incorporeal Ministry to Man

Origen confirms the incorporeality of the Spirit and the share of him given by the Father to the man who desires it. Origen says:

God is always giving a share of His own Spirit to those who are able to partake of Him, though he dwells in those who are worthy, not by being cut into sections and divided up. For the Spirit in our opinion is not corporeal. . . . All these expressions are allegorical, and are meant to show the nature of the intelligible world by the terms usually applied to corporeal things.<sup>48</sup>

Origen understands the spiritual nature of God, in general, and of the Father and the Holy Spirit, specifically, to be the core, the reality of God, in contrast with external, tangible, physical manifestations. The Bible, an obvious expression of truths for which the Spirit is the custodian, contains truths which are intangible, at least, and eternal, at best, and which have been recorded by men not entirely apart from their own relationships with God. Nardoni explains the Bible's corporeal description of spiritual and incorporeal matters to the personal experiences of the writers of Scripture themselves. He says: "When the prophet says that God spoke to him, he expresses his own spiritual experience. . . ." <sup>49</sup> Origen's implication of the graciousness of the Father, not to mention his perfect integrity, in insuring that man have opportunity and prerogative for an equal share in all three persons of the Godhead, leads to this affirmation of the invisibility and incorporeality of each of the persons of the Trinity, which includes the Son in his deity. The more one knows about

God, in general, and about the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, specifically, the more one appreciates the divine attributes as belonging to each person in the Trinity and as belonging to the Godhead as a whole and as one. The divine attributes are the components of perfection, each of them being perfection in their own right.

### The Immaterial Nature and Spiritual Impact of the Son

In philosophical terms, Origen asserts the immaterialness of the Son despite the partially material nature of creation. Man's rational ability and soul naturally constitute the immaterial nature of man. Origen says:

But in the view of us Christians, who try to show that the rational soul is superior to any material nature and is an invisible and incorporeal being, the divine Logos is not material. Through him all things were made, and in order that all things may be made by the Logos, he extends not to men only but even to the things supposed to be insignificant which are controlled by nature.<sup>50</sup>

Gögler responds, emphasizing the eternal and continuous interest and involvement of the Son in every aspect of man's existence, including the inanimate components which are often subject to the laws of nature. He says:

Der den Geschöpfen zugewandte "weltschöpferische Logos" (*δημιουργικὸς λόγος*) teilt ihnen die in der Weisheit vorgedachten und vorgebildeten Archetypen mit. Er "durch den alles geworden ist", durchdringt alles, nicht nur die vernünftigen Wesen, sondern auch die geringsten und rein naturhaften Dinge.<sup>51</sup>

Gögler summarizes the very real spiritual prerogative and

genuine spiritual impact of the Godhead through the Logos: "Die göttliche Dynamis ist pneumatisch. Sie begleitet mit ihrer Wirkkraft den Geist Gottes, der sich im Logos mitteilt."<sup>52</sup>

Origen speaks of the timeliness of the incarnation, that the incarnate Christ "should come at a time when the doctrine would be poured forth from one corner all over the world."<sup>53</sup> The Father not only manifested his perfect goodness in willing and purposing the incarnation, but he also exemplified flexibility in his timeliness. He wished the message of Christ to spread far and wide, and he chose a period in history which was at a stage of development to spread the good news. Moreover, the Father sent the Son to earth at a time when the human race most needed the physical form, the reality in the flesh, as it were. Although Origen does not mention this other determining factor, it seems logical. Thus the Father, sensitive to conditions in the world, human needs, and his own wishes and plans, sent the Son to earth, not overriding the Son's divine will, but directing and the Son responding.

#### The Father's Love for Mankind

Origen speaks of the love and the tenderness of the Father for the world: "But let the Word . . . teach us that all the time God is caring for the affairs of the world, as reason demands."<sup>54</sup> The perfection of the Father not only includes goodness and graciousness, but love as well. This

attribute the Son himself is, and confirms as belonging to the Father.

### The Ministry of the Spirit in the Perfect Portrayal and Preservation of the Son as the Logos

Origen ends Book 6 by affirming, but not developing, the accurate prophecies of the suffering of Christ on earth. He stresses his defense of the accuracy of these prophecies, and thus his trust in the perfection of the ministry of the Holy Spirit in recording and preserving them through the authors of Scripture.<sup>55</sup>

## Chapter 7

The Ministry of the Holy Spirit in Prophets and Prophecies and in Coordination with the Ministry of the Son; Man's Need for the Ministry of the Incarnate Son; the Person of Christ's Humanity as an Example for Man; and the Possibilities for Man Because of and in Relationship with God

The Ministry of the Holy Spirit in and to the Old Testament Prophets

As a continuation from Book 6, Origen begins Book 7 by responding to Celsus' criticism of "the history of Christ Jesus [which] was prophesied by the prophets among the Jews" as nothing unique to Christianity.<sup>1</sup> The mass of Old Testament prophecies about Christ constitute a history of the incarnation. Even more than a series of isolated events, however, the thoroughness of these prophecies includes an accurate portrayal of the person of Christ, not just his work.

Origen recalls the effect of the ministry of the Holy Spirit on the prophets which sets them apart from pagan prophets. The impact of the Holy Spirit on these prophets was of a potent and transforming nature which affected even how they lived their lives. While Origen does not discuss the free will of these prophets, that they yearned for this transforming and tangibly effective power of the Holy Spirit, Origen would surely agree with, in light of his previous statements on free will. To Origen, the perfect

and divine quality of their foreknowledge included wisdom which perfected not only the Scriptures they composed, but touched their own lives as well. He says: "Because of the touch, so to speak, of what is called the Holy Spirit upon their soul they possessed clear mental vision and became more radiant in their soul, and even in body, which no longer offered any opposition to the life lived according to virtue. .

.."<sup>2</sup> Nardoni responds: "The action of the divine inspiration upon the prophet is called by Origen an 'illumination,' which comes from a touch of the divine Spirit or of the Logos of God."<sup>3</sup> The ministry of the Holy Spirit in the lives of these prophets far exceeded an intellectual inspiration in the recording of what would come to be Scripture. The genuineness of the prophets' records began in their own lives where the Spirit ministered, comforted, and empowered their souls.

Origen describes the character and the knowledge of the prophets, both before and resulting from their involvement, with the ministry of the Spirit in inspiration. Some were already spiritually mature before they interacted with the Spirit in this way, while others really needed this interaction with the Spirit, especially knowledge from him, in order to grow. Whatever the case may be, the Spirit's ministry of inspiration indisputably effected the spiritual growth of them all. He says:

Of the Jewish prophets some were wise before they received the gift of prophecy and divine inspiration, while others became wise after they had been illuminated in mind by the actual gift of prophecy itself. They were chosen by providence to be

entrusted with the divine Spirit and with the utterances that He inspired on account of the quality of their lives, which was of unexampled courage and freedom; for in face of death they were entirely without terror. And reason demands that the prophets of the supreme God should be such people.<sup>4</sup>

Therefore, the lack of fear, the wisdom, and the courage of the prophets combined to establish them as more than personally undefined conveyers of divine information, but also as God's personal representatives. Nardoni interprets Origen's understanding of illumination as follows:

By the action of the divine illumination, the soul of the prophet becomes bright and radiates its light throughout the body so that some kind of transfiguration occurring in the prophet is perceivable to the believers who share in the same Spirit. Further, under the divine illumination "the mind of the flesh" is mortified, and the prophet is able to live according to the virtues and show courageous freedom in the fulfillment of his mission.<sup>5</sup>

About their spiritual vision, Origen observes: "They always looked upon God and the invisible things which are not seen with the eyes of the senses, and on that account are eternal."<sup>6</sup> The reality of what is invisible, what is eternal, and what is indeed God, properly superseded in their souls the reality of the visible, temporal, and imperfectly human. Nardoni concludes: "It follows, then, that Origen attributed to the divine illumination a wide range of efficacy that covers the entire process of the perception of the divine truth, its phrasing, and communication; and it includes action as well as knowledge."<sup>7</sup>

The Ministry of the Spirit in Coordination with the Ministry

## of the Son

Origen refers to the Son's preparation of these men before receiving the ministry of the Spirit and summarizes how widespread the Spirit's ministry was. He describes the close interaction between the Spirit and the incarnate Christ, whom the Spirit empowered in teaching and, specifically, in performing miracles. After the ascension of Christ, the obvious manifestations of the Spirit have almost totally disappeared, according to Origen. He says that "there are traces of him in a few people whose souls have been purified by the Logos and by the actions which follow his teaching."<sup>8</sup> The person and the teaching of the Son, who is often designated as the Logos when discussed in the capacity of teacher, whether during the incarnation or for all time, therefore, coincides perfectly with the ministry of the Spirit, who is able to perfect the eager recipients of doctrines and truths disseminated by the Son.

### The Distinct Divine and Human Natures of the Incarnate Son

Origen has, in Book 6, concentrated his discussion of the incarnation on the unity of the God-man; here he shows the distinct human and divine attributes which maintained their distinctness during the incarnation. Continuing his discussion on the accurate prophecies of the Son from the Old Testament prophets, Origen maintains their accuracy in foretelling the crucifixion of the humanity, not the deity, of

Christ. He says: "The prophecies did not foretell that God would be crucified. . . . [T]hey clearly say that he who suffered human sorrows was a man. And Jesus himself . . . knew precisely that it was a man who was to die. . . ."9 Origen does not say that it was a deified man who was to die.

Origen lists Christ's autobiographical statements concerning his identity, that is, autobiographical of his divinity. He says: "If there was something divine in his human nature, it was the only-begotten Son of God and the firstborn of all creation, who says 'I am the truth', and 'I am the life', and 'I am the door', and 'I am the way', and 'I am the living bread that came down from heaven'."<sup>10</sup> Stead emphasizes the Platonic sense of what Origen says: ". . . here the Son, as truth, is contrasted with the Father of truth; and 'truth' no doubt has its rather specialized Platonic sense of ideal and eternal reality."<sup>11</sup> Origen reverts to not distinguishing between the divine and human substances of the incarnate Christ, for he describes the divinity of the Son as "the firstborn" of men.<sup>12</sup> He incorrectly identifies the other descriptions of the humanity of Christ, for the death of Christ the man provided "the life", "the door", "the way", and "the living bread".<sup>13</sup> This is not to say that the deity of Christ had no involvement mission of the humanity of Christ, but its specific participation remains a subject for debate and investigation even among modern theologians. In contrast to other passages, specifically the previous passage just

noted, in which Origen emphasizes the unity, even to the point of union and oneness of the deity and humanity of Christ, Origen here does admit to the two separate natures of the incarnate Christ. He says: "Indeed, the person and essence of the divine being in Jesus is quite a different matter from that of his human aspect."<sup>14</sup>

Even once the final union of deity and humanity took place, if indeed it was a process, Origen maintains, in contradiction to an absolute union, the distinct natures of the God-man, which distinction resulted from the actual, final immiscibility of deity and humanity. Origen confirms such autobiographical remarks which follow as coming from Christ's deity when Origen says: "It was he who dwelt in the apparently human Jesus who said that he was the resurrection. . . ." <sup>15</sup> Origen thus identifies the deity of the Son as indwelling the Son's apparent humanity and as "the resurrection". Bigg clarifies: "It was real flesh. His Life, His Passion were in no sense fantastic."<sup>16</sup> The perfection of humanity is difficult to imagine, but man's finite imagination certainly does not negate the reality of any truth. Origen continues, at last describing the human nature of the God-man:

But in so far as he was a man, who more than anyone else was adorned by sublime participation in the very Logos and wisdom himself, he endured as a wise and perfect man what must needs be endured by a man who does all in his power on behalf of the entire race of men and of rational beings as well.<sup>17</sup>

"adorned" and "endured" are important words, for Origen asserts his belief in the perfection of Christ's humanity,

who was uniquely blessed "by a sublime participation" with his own deity. Christ's endurance as a man helped to qualify him as the substitutionary sacrifice for all men in his death on the cross.

In addition, the humanity of Christ has served as a model for other men to sacrifice their lives toward the furtherance of Christianity and the obliteration of evil when necessary and when such obliteration is the will of God. Origen says: "There is nothing objectionable in the fact that a man died, and in that his death should . . . be given as an example of the way to die for the sake of religion. . . ."18 In this impassioned development of the impact of the humanity of Christ on Christians who were to come after him, Origen unquestionably affirms the reality of the humanity of Christ, apart from the deity. In this description of, one could say, the martyrdom of the Son of man, Origen reinforces the reality and the significance of Christ's humanity. It no longer appears merely to aid deity and to be totally at the disposal of deity; it has a function, just as any other man's has.

### The Benefit for Man in Being Created in God's Image

Origen addresses the necessity of man being created in the image of God even to begin to understand him. He maintains that man's creation in the image of God enables him to understand God. Had God not made man in his image, man would obviously have had a very limited appreciation of

God, for he could not identify with God. Origen says of God's being in contrast to man's:

Since we affirm that the God of the universe is mind, or that He transcends mind and being, and is simple and invisible and incorporeal, we would maintain that God is not comprehended by any being other than that made in the image of that mind.<sup>19</sup>

Daniélou comments: "He [God] is above 'thought and essence'. For that reason, he can have no contact with the world of multiplicity. Yet his very nature requires that the world should exist; its existence is an essential condition for the exercise of his goodness and omnipotence."<sup>20</sup> Nardoni integrates the processes of thinking of the writer of Scripture and of God, stressing the immaterial nature of them both, when he says: "In this knowledge process, God's communication and the prophet's perception can only be of that which is incorporeal and immaterial in nature."<sup>21</sup>

Origen develops in what respect God has made man in His image and describes man in partially Platonic terms as "a soul using a body [also in Julian, *Or.* VI, 183B], the soul being called [in Romans 7:22, II Corinthians 4:16, and Ephesians 3:16] 'the inner man' . . . ." <sup>22</sup> To oversimplify, that man possesses a soul means that man has been created in God's image. Man is man, and not God or some other category of creation, because of the nature of his soul, not because he had a body. He has a body as a necessary component of inhabiting the world. As Origen has previously said, ". . . when the soul, which in its own nature is incorporeal and invisible, is in any material place, it

requires a body suited to the nature of that environment."<sup>23</sup> The soul's presence, even here, on earth demands a body to accompany and contain it. While God interacts with earth, he maintains an external interaction and never becomes dependent on or governed by the limited, although real, sovereignty of the earth. Man, who does not possess sovereignty over the earth in the sense that God does, interacts with it not as an external participant, but as an integral part. Applying what Origen has just said about both God and man in general and about some fundamental characteristics which by definition distinguish their natures, one is able to arrive at another perspective of the incarnate Son. The humanity of Christ did not simply exist because of Christ's physical body; his body existed because of the humanity of his soul. Origen has already declared the apparent contradiction that the incarnate Son did not possess two souls, but one, which is indissolubly united, without confusion of essence, with the Logos. But here, however, he clarifies that the body of the incarnate Christ did not merely exist to serve or aid deity on earth; the body provided the material evidence for his humanity, for his human soul.

#### The Ministry of the Incarnate Son in Providing Spiritual Vision

Origen discusses another aspect of the ministry of the Son in the life of the believer. Using the analogy of the

physical eyes for spiritual sight and insight, Origen recalls Christ's statement from John 9:39:

"For judgment came I into this world, that those who do not see may see and that those who see may become blind." By those who do not see he is obscurely referring to the eyes of the soul, to which the Logos gives the power of sight, and by those who see he means the eyes of the senses. For the Logos blinds the latter, that the soul may see without any distraction that which it ought to see. Therefore, the eye of the soul of any genuine Christian is awake and that of the sense is closed. And in proportion to the degree in which the superior eye is awake and the sight of the senses is closed, the supreme God and His Son, who is the Logos and Wisdom and the other titles, are comprehended and seen by each man.<sup>24</sup>

While the Son empowers the spiritual sight, his decision to share, in a sense, his omnipotence depends on the desire of the believer. The power the Son bestows is specific to the needs and godly desires of the believer, for the Son is obviously dedicated to helping the believer's spiritual maturation and to furthering the believer's relationship with each person in the Trinity. Accordingly, Christ may decide to blind areas of the believer's natural focus which would distract him from the most direct path to God. It is also important to notice from this section that Origen presents the Father as "the supreme God" and the Son as "Logos and Wisdom and the other titles".<sup>25</sup> As is customary for Origen, the hierarchy of the individual functions in the Trinity continues to be Origen's focus and emphasis.

Man's Need for God in Order to Reach God's Goals for Him

No matter how potent man's desire for knowledge and relationship with God may be, man is unable to reach those goals apart from the ministry of the Trinity. Origen explains under what circumstances God reveals himself. He says: "And He is found by those who, after doing what they can, admit that they need Him, and shows Himself to those to whom He judges it right to appear, so far as it is possible for God to be known to man and for the human soul which is still in the body to know God."<sup>26</sup> Even with the help of God, man cannot fully understand God, with all of his nuances and implications; for the totality, or rather the infinity, of God is too vast for finite man with his finite mind.

#### Man's Need for the Son in Order to Know God

Origen explains that if one perceives the Father, his perception will come through the Son. Origen affirms that the Son is the mediator and the presenter, in person and language discernible to man, of the concept of God, who is often correctly perceived to be the Father. He says: "Anyone, therefore, who has understood how we must think of the only-begotten God, the Son of God, the firstborn of all creation, and how the Logos became flesh, will see that anyone will come to know the Father and Maker of this universe by looking at the image of the invisible God."<sup>27</sup> Not only in salvation and redemption is the Son the link between man and the Father, but also in man's knowledge

and understanding of God. The events of the incarnation provide the historical basis for the Son's credentials, so to speak, and an environment in which the God-man interacts, so that man either in person or from the written record gains some insight into the incarnate function of the Son.

Although not mentioning the Spirit by name, Origen emphasizes that knowledge of the facts of the incarnation alone does not result in knowledge of the Father. Origen quotes Christ who himself claimed to be the link with the Father for real, personal knowledge of God. Origen says: ". . . he [Christ] indicates that God is known by a certain divine grace, which does not come about in the soul without God's action, but with a sort of inspiration."<sup>28</sup> When Origen speaks of "a sort of inspiration", he describes the Spirit by whom "God is known" in conjunction with the function of the Son. Certainly, the ministry of the Spirit extends to personal, not just Biblical, inspiration and is not completely separate from the Son's function on behalf of man.

Origen continues that the motive and stimulus for this divine revelation does not depend on human desire alone, but on God's foreknowledge. He says:

Moreover, it is probable that the knowledge of God is beyond the capacity of human nature . . . , but that by God's kindness and love to man and by a miraculous divine grace the knowledge of God extends to those who by God's foreknowledge have been previously determined, because they would live lives worthy of Him after He was made known to them.<sup>29</sup>

Origen makes clear that God's foreknowledge does not

determine man's desires, decision, and actions; that is, it does not overrule human free will, but rather clarifies for God individual human inclinations and decisions.

### Man's Capacity for Knowledge of the Father and the Son and for Virtue

Despite the limitations of the human mind, Origen's confidence and in the possibility for man's personal knowledge of the Father and the Son appears in this optimistic statement: ". . . it is possible to know God and His only-begotten Son and those beings who have been honoured by God with the title of God and who partake of His divinity . . . ."30 What Origen means by those "who partake of His divinity", Chadwick clarifies as angels, citing 3, 37 of the *Contra Celsum*.31 Whether Origen means man becoming God or man rising to a state of ultimate (as ultimate as man can reach) unity with God, is not clear from this passage. In omitting the Holy Spirit as a possibility for perfect knowledge, Origen reinforces his previous admission of his own lack of clarity on the person of the Holy Spirit, even though he frequently describes various functions of the Spirit.

Although he does not make the direct correlation, Origen clarifies a practical aspect of man's creation in the image of God which is a natural result of a personal knowledge of God as that which "has the capacity for virtue."32 Thus although man begins life very imperfect, he

possesses the potential to become less imperfect. He has the option to exercise his will to choose for God, an obviously virtuous choice, and to make virtuous decisions, which result from and perpetuate a direct, active, and aggressive desire for God and for relationship with him. Origen's ending of Book 7 with a discussion of demons and the assertion that only God is to be worshipped perfectly coincides with the idea that from genuine knowledge of God comes worship.

## Chapter 8

### A Restatement and Elaboration of the Relationship Between the Father and the Son; the Relationship Between God and Man in Worship; and the Goal of the Christian Life in Light of the Example of the Incarnate Christ

#### The Content of Origen's Opening Prayer

Origen opens Book 8 with a prayer for purity, righteousness, and effectiveness in the life of the Christian and, especially, for an effective refutation of Celsus' *The True Doctrine*. Origen says:

May God and His only-begotten Son the Logos be with us. . . . We pray that we . . . may be ambassadors for Christ to men, as the Logos of God beseeches them to enter into friendship with himself, desiring to make at home with righteousness, truth, and other virtues, those who before accepting the doctrines of Jesus Christ spent their life in darkness about God and ignorance about the Creator. And again, I would ask that God may give us the noble and true Word, the Lord powerful and mighty in battle against evil.<sup>1</sup>

Bigg summarizes this prayer in terms of worship, "the highest adoration, [which] is offered to God through Christ, and to Christ as He is in, as He is One with, the Father."<sup>2</sup> In this prayer, Origen has acknowledged the personal quality of the Son, even as the Logos. The Logos of God wants a relationship with man. In *Mystique de Jésus chez Origène*, Bertrand's generalization about the special importance of the incarnate Son to Origen, out of the entire Trinity, emphasizes the context of this passage in Origen: "La

Personne de Jésus est bien le centre d'Origène. Son attrait le fascine. Le désir le plus intime de son cœur est de le contempler sans cesse."<sup>3</sup> As the relationship develops between the Son and man, man's capacity for virtue extends far beyond morality, for righteousness and truth, which the believer comes to possess, express, and share, are themselves virtues. Therefore, morality alone no longer epitomizes virtue. The truly good quality of man's life has not only been enriched and expanded since his salvation, but so has the quality of his thinking. Before his salvation, man was ignorant of his creator, but as a Christian he not only appreciates the work of the Son in making salvation possible, but the role of the Father in creation as well. Origen uses "the Word" for wisdom, which comes directly from God, and equates this inanimate term with the personal Lord who combats Celsus' evil views.

#### The Harmony of Function Between the Father and the Son Which Attests to One God

With this spirit of vigor, Origen proceeds to refute Celsus' exhortation that Christians serve gods, with a quotation from Paul in I Corinthians 8:6: "Now when he says, 'Yet to us there is one God, the Father of whom are all things, and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things', by the words 'to us' he refers to himself and to all who have ascended to the supreme God of gods and to the Lord of lords."<sup>4</sup> Origen distinguishes the Father and the

Son, whom he designates as the "Lord Jesus Christ", thus emphasizing Christ's humanity during the incarnation, with the prepositions "of" emphasizing the source and "through" emphasizing the means. These are two different, yet mutually dependent roles. Without the Father, life would have never been imparted to man.

### The Ultimate Consistency and Internal Harmony for a Man Who Worships the Father and the Son as One God

Origen clarifies what he means by the unity of man's ascension to God which he intends:

The man who has ascended to the supreme God is he who, without any divided loyalty whatever, worships Him through His Son, the divine Logos and Wisdom seen in Jesus, who alone leads to Him those who by all means try to draw near to God, the Creator of all things, by exceptionally good works and deeds and thoughts.<sup>5</sup>

Ascension is, therefore, defined as a unity achieved by drawing upward to God having conformed to the divine standard. This divine standard includes loving the three persons of the Trinity equally, recognizing that the Son is the particular person of the Trinity who represents the Father and the Spirit to man and who makes use of the thoughts and actions of the believer to draw him to God. In this selection, Origen does not describe ascension to God as man's acquired divinity, but rather complete and total harmony and unity. The passage which he quotes from Paul coincides with his explanation of it, and neither Paul nor

Origen directly address the equality of deity in the Father and the Son. For each of them, the Father is supreme in his possession of sovereignty and in his place in the hierarchy; and the Son functions beside him, executing the Father's wishes with the timeliness and integrity that only the Son, as God, would do.

Origen presents the Son as fulfilling his functions toward man, not only in perfect unity with the Father, but even to the satisfaction of man. Origen says: ". . . they [Christians] are content with the Lord Jesus Christ, who educates under his instruction those who serve him in order that, after they have been trained and have become a kingdom worthy of God, he may present them to his God and Father."<sup>6</sup> Origen emphasizes the didactic function of Christ. Not actually specifying the written Word, Origen describes the necessary function of teaching believers so that they are worthy to be presented to the Father. The Father is portrayed as kingly; the communion with the Father, not the Son or the Holy Spirit, therefore, is portrayed as the ultimate blessing and aspiration of man.

Origen offers a reason, from the human perspective, for man to serve one God rather than several gods. He says: ". . . we avoid serving any other deity than God, whom we worship through the mediation of His Logos and His truth. . . ."<sup>7</sup> Once again Origen emphasizes the necessity of the Son as the means to know the Father, whom he calls God. This passage could be interpreted as the Son not being God, but it can be interpreted that Origen emphasizes unity by using

the designation of God. He describes the unity of their persons which is established from the harmonious diversity of their functions. Juxtaposing Logos and truth in describing the means of the Christian's total worship and service of God emphasizes the mental, educational, even academic nature of the Son's function as mediator. As is commonly true for Origen, he thinks of God, in general, in the person of the Father and of the Son, not as someone who is not God, but as a help to the Father in clarifying the nature and person of God to man.

Origen continues with a description of the potential harm to man, which man avoids by worshipping one God, as the Father has wished, intended, and commanded: "Our intention is that we may not harm ourselves by separating ourselves from the portion of the supreme God, since we live as people akin to his blessed nature by an exceptional spirit of adoption."<sup>8</sup> Referring to the spiritual adoptions of men by God, following their spiritual birth, Origen emphasizes the importance of unity between God and man which this adoption initiates. Therefore, separation from God is harmful.

### The Son's Deity over Man

If there is any doubt in his reader's mind that Origen believes the Son to be God, Origen affirms the dignity and the deity of the Son apart from and in conjunction with man. He says: "For Christ is lord of those who are

ambassadors for Christ, whom they represent, and he is the Logos who was in the beginning, and is with God [the Father] and is God."<sup>9</sup> Origen establishes a parallel between the Son, who represents God to man, and the Christian, who presents God to the unbeliever. He affirms that the Son, as the Logos and, therefore, as verbal truth, is as eternal as the Father is, and of course, is, therefore, himself God.

### God's Unnecessary "Blessing" When Man Worships Him and the Gracious Blessing Man Receives from Worshipping God

Origen affirms God's independence from man, even in the area of worship, and God's gracious provision of worship of himself as a blessing for man. Although God is the right and proper object of worship and desires and appreciates man's respect and appreciation of him, he does not depend on man for personal fulfillment, if one may call it that. Origen says:

Furthermore, we will not worship God as though He needed it, or as if He will be grieved if we do not worship Him, but because we ourselves receive benefit from worshipping God, and become men who have no feelings of grief or emotion (*ἄλυποι καὶ ἀπαθείς γινόμενοι*) as a result of serving the supreme God through His only-begotten Logos and Wisdom.<sup>10</sup>

Origen recognizes the infinite and self-sustaining ability of God who does not depend on human approbation and adoration. He recognizes, in fact, the grace (although he does not use the terminology), the blessing of which man is the object, when he appropriates this opportunity God has

given him. Not only are man's attitude and decision of worshipping God obviously right and appropriate, worship is uniquely rewarding for the worshipper.

### The Equal Prerogative of the Father and the Son to be Worshipped

Origen progresses from honouring the Father to honouring the Son whose spiritual rank and infinite virtue certainly render him worthy of worship. Origen says:

For the prophecies before his birth were a confirmation of his right to receive honour. Furthermore, the miracles which he did . . . by a divine power foretold by the prophets, had their testimony from God in order that he who honours the Son, who is Reason (Logos), may do nothing irrational, and by giving him honour may derive benefit therefrom, and that he who honours him who is the Truth may become a better person as a result of honouring Truth, and similarly also by honouring Wisdom and Righteousness, and all the characteristics which the divine scriptures ascribe to the Son of God.<sup>11</sup>

The prophets, then, in prophecies, honoured the Son even by their foretellings. The Son is worthy of honour, just as the Father is, both for their functions within the Trinity apart from man and on behalf of and in relationship with man. The worship which Origen describes does not merely include an attitude of direct honour to God but the practical, experiential aspect of imitating the Son and abiding by his and the Father's mandates for man on earth. Thus honouring and worshipping the Trinity as a whole and individually does not reflect one or even a few areas of the

Christian life but of all, whether in direct worship or in the daily walk with the Lord. The humanity of Christ worshipped the persons of the Trinity during the incarnation and honoured the Father's will for him verbally and by his actions. Even in perfect communion with his deity, the humanity of Christ acted in complete rationality in his own worship of God. While worship is often associated with perfectly valid and intense emotion, worship is also rational, for it finds one of its divine initiators in the Son, who is the Logos.

#### The Distinctness of the Father and the Son as Persons

Origen develops even further the unity of the Father and the Son. He speaks of the "two existences (*hypostases*), Father and Son . . . ."12 That the Father and the Son are two *hypostases* means that they are two persons. Since God is a person, if he is more than one existence, then he is more than one person. Origen distinguishes their unity and distinction: "Therefore we worship the Father of the truth and the Son who is the truth; they are two distinct existences, but one in mental unity, in agreement, and in identity of will."13 The mental unity of the Father and the Son does not, in fact, detract from or negate the separateness of their persons, but confirms the perfection inherent to God and to any person who is God. Bigg likens the unity of the Father and the Son to "that of the Church: 'the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and

one soul."<sup>14</sup> Agreeing with Origen's statement, Chadwick refers to identical power and will of the Father and Son, in contrast with the difference in their *hypostases*. "For the Father and the Son are one in power and in will, but differ in their *hypostasis*. . . ."<sup>15</sup>

### The Son as the Image of God, as Equal with God, and as Subordinate to the Father

Origen sees such unity with harmonious distinction as perfectly coinciding with the concept of the Son being God's image.<sup>16</sup> While the Father is never said to be God's image, the Son is. The humanity of Christ was made in the image of God, just as all other men are. Because the function of the Son in his deity is to execute what the Father plans, he is also a reflection in the sense of complementation. Origen says: "There is nothing in the doctrine which is not fitting or appropriate to God, that He should cause the existence of an only-begotten Son of this nature."<sup>17</sup> Origen's lack of distinction between the deity and humanity of Christ muddles the issue of the eternity of the Son, which Origen has already affirmed and which logically is applied to his deity. His insistence here of the Father's causing the existence of the Son, results from a lack of distinction between the Son's deity and humanity during the incarnation. Origen realizes that the humanity of the Son played an essential role in execution of the Father's wishes, and this essential nature is normally only ascribed to deity

because of the necessity of the perfection in execution. At the expense of applying temporality to the Son, Origen defends the perfection of the will and plan of the Father even in willing a Son "into existence". Origen sees the Trinity as perfectly believable and plausible, even though it may confound human logic. Origen combats the idea that the Son possesses the authority in the Trinity or is at the top of its hierarchy. He combats the idea that "the Saviour is the greatest and supreme God. But we at least do not take that view, since we believe him who said [in John 16:33]: 'The Father who sent me is greater than I.' Consequently we would not make Him whom we now call Father subject to the Son of God. . . ."18 Origen appeals to the statements of Christ who elevated the Father above himself and who did not clearly distinguish between his own deity and humanity. Origen says: ". . . we . . . hold that the Son is not mightier than the Father, but subordinate."19 If a conclusive statement could be found for Origen's subordinationism it is this. Origen, however, does not only not distinguish between the deity and humanity of Christ, but also between the person and function of the Son. It is possible for the Son's function to follow the Father's function sequentially, thus appearing subordinate, and for the person of the Son to be neither sequential to nor subordinate to the Father's person. Origen does not clarify this.

The Allowance of the Son's Sovereignty for Man's Free Will

Origen speaks of the authority which the Son does possess over creation. Origen also verifies his belief in the free will of man. He says: "And since the Logos is not master of those who are unwilling . . . , we maintain that he is not yet made master of these, since they do not yield to him of their own free will."<sup>20</sup> The Son does not impose himself on man; he merely presents himself and his message and standard for relationship with God. The Son, like the Father and the Spirit, does not override the will of man to effect his desires.

#### The Son as the Pattern and Standard for Man's Virtue

Origen speaks of the pattern for living the Son has presented to man. He says: "Images and votive offerings appropriate for God, . . . which are made clear and formed in us by the divine Logos, are the virtues which are copies of the firstborn of all creation. For in him there are patterns of righteousness, prudence, courage, wisdom, piety, and the other virtues."<sup>21</sup> Man finds his model for behavior in the incarnate Son and honours the Son for both his practical example and the truth resident in his Word.

#### Man's Honour of the Son as the Father's Image

Origen speaks of man giving "honour to the prototype of all images, 'the image of the invisible God', the only

-begotten God."<sup>22</sup> Origen reaffirms the Son as the image of the Father, which image initiates a pattern of reflection between God and the human race. For the Son, as has already been stated, is the image of the Father in his deity, and the image of God in his humanity. Verifying the majesty of the Son which is only enhanced by his function of making truth real and practical for man, Origen adds: "But of all the images in the whole creation by far the most superior and pre-eminent is that in our Saviour who said [in John 14:10], 'My Father is in me.'"<sup>23</sup> Origen specifies the Son as a greater image of God than the rest of mankind, but he does not specify if he refers to the Son's deity or humanity. The presence of the Father in the incarnate Christ, which Christ verbally attests, provides the evidence for Origen, although Origen omits the Father's indwelling of the Christian.

#### The Goal of Complete Harmony Between the Son's Desires for Man and Man's Desires for Himself

Origen describes a goal of the Christian: his desires are to be completely harmonious with the Son's desires. Just as it has been said that the will of the Christian should eventually coincide with the will of the Father, so the will of the Christian should progressively coincide with the will of the Son. It is important to keep in mind Origen's previous remarks attesting to man's free will when he says: ". . . at some time the Logos will have overcome the entire

rational nature, and will have remodelled every soul to his own perfection, when each individual simply by the exercise of his freedom will choose what the Logos wills and will be in that state which he has chosen."<sup>24</sup> Origen here presents a balanced perspective between the aggressiveness of the Son to impart truth to man co-existent with the Son's respect for the existence and prerogative or authority of human free will. The wisdom and the truth of God, as personified and communicated in and through the Son exceeds human reason. It is as though man freely chooses to give up his own capacity for reason and replace it with a state of vulnerability to the Son who will then steadily impart himself to man, the impartation being divine and of a quality which transcends human reason and, thus, capability for choice.

#### The Power of the Son in Purging Sin and Evil from the Believer's Life

Origen develops the notion of the curability of sin and evil in the life of the believer resulting from God's perfection. Origen verifies the aggressive and effective action of God in replacing evil with the Son's goodness as the Logos when God wills. He speaks of "the Logos and the healing power within him [which] are more powerful than any evils in the soul. . . ." <sup>25</sup> While God both designed the free will of man and allows its total function, he does not stifle his own will, in keeping with his integrity and his

own effectiveness and in keeping with omnipotence, to eliminate evil from the Christian's life. The power of the Son is not limited to the dissemination of truth, but extends to the extirpation of evil as well.

**The Mandate for Believers to Acquire and Live Truth,  
Develop a Deep Relationship with God, and Thereby Have an  
Impact on Society**

Origen closes Book 8 with several discussions on the practical effects in society and on the purposes of the man who entertains and consummates an intimate relationship with God. He says:

. . . it is both necessary and right for them [Christians] to be leaders and to be concerned about all men, both those who are within the Church, that they may live better every day, and those who appear to be outside it, that they may become familiar with the sacred words and acts of worship; and that, offering a true worship to God in this way and instructing as many as possible, they may become absorbed in the word of God and the divine law, and so be united to the supreme God through the Son of God, the Logos, Wisdom, Truth, and Righteousness, who unites to Him every one who has been persuaded to live according to God's will in all things.<sup>26</sup>

A better life, "a true worship", absorption "in the Word of God and divine law", and unity with God should in part comprise the believer's goal. The source and the expression of his soul should include some of the very titles of the Son. When the Son becomes this real to the believer, so much a part of his thinking and spiritual discipline, the

believer is prepared to have a real impact on his society. Such blessed unity with the person and qualities of the Son should motivate the believer to seek unity with men. The unity is accomplished by the same desire and absorption of truth. Truth, animate and inanimate, appears in different names because of the variety of contexts and functions of the Son. Origen thus describes the ideal Christian as one who is perfectly united with God and all other men who respond to his initiation for union with Christ.

#### Origen's Own Evaluation of the Effectiveness of the *Contra Celsum*

Origen concludes that his reply to Celsus' *The True Doctrine* reflects a spirit of truth which Celsus' work does not, but adds that "It is . . . for the reader . . . to judge which of the two breathes more of the spirit of the true God and of the temper of devotion towards Him and of the truth attainable by men, that is, of sound doctrines which lead men to live the best life."<sup>27</sup> Even human reason can distinguish between falsehoods and truth about God which Celsus and Origen respectively maintain.

## Conclusion

The inseparable union of the deity and humanity of Christ constitutes Origen's general belief on the relationship of the two natures of the incarnate Son. More specifically, the oneness ascribed to the Trinity also belongs to the incarnate Word. In examining the interaction of these natures, Origen does not consistently clarify attributes belonging to deity from characteristics that are inherently human. The result is that he often unknowingly ascribes attributes of deity to humanity and humanity to deity. While the *De Principiis* concentrates on the individuality of the persons of the Trinity, the hierarchy of their functions, the superlative attributes of God, and the perfect oneness in the incarnate Son, the *Contra Celsum* integrates the hierarchical functions in the Trinity with the purpose, nature, and function of the Son in becoming incarnate. All the purposes of God are seen not only to reflect divine essence, but also to benefit man. Incomprehensible as God, the Trinity, and the incarnation seem to be, they are, nevertheless, supernaturally attainable and knowable by man. When the incomprehensibility of the Son, in the context of the Trinity or the incarnation, is the topic of discussion, the issue of subordinationism almost inevitably accompanies.

The charge of subordinationism against Origen even apart from these two works no doubt finds credibility in Origen's known adherence to many Platonic principles. Platonism was the dominant philosophical tradition in

Origen's day and, even apart from its historical setting, contained much truth in the eyes of Christian intellectuals. It differed from Christianity, however, in its idea of emanations; there is one supreme God, who might represent the Father in Christian terms, and a second God, not equal in rank with the primary God. This second God would seem to resemble the Son in Christian terms. In *The Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy*, Chadwick explains:

He [Origen] assumes the truth of the late Platonic axiom that, in the hierarchy of being, what is produced must be inferior to that which produces it, an assumption which involved him in difficulties in expounding on the doctrine of the Trinity, though his Trinitarian and Christological statements are in fact vastly more "orthodox" than his later reputation would suggest.<sup>1</sup>

Among the positive effects of Platonism, however, is, according to Louth in *The Origins of the Christian Mystical Tradition*, the

mystical strand in Platonism (which is proper and fundamental to it) [and which] develops from this notion of man's essentially spiritual nature, from the belief of his kinship with the divine. . . . Only in Christ, in whom divine and human natures are united, do we find One who is of one substance with the Father.<sup>2</sup>

Origen no doubt sought to reconcile, or was possibly influenced by, these aspects of Platonism with Christianity, as he was influenced by other principles in Platonism.

The relationship of subordinationism between these two works, the *De Principiis* probably composed in 229<sup>3</sup> and

the *Contra Celsum* probably around 248<sup>4</sup>, is consistent and progressive. Origen's lack of distinction between *γίνομαι* and *γεννάω*, which was in all likelihood symptomatic of the time in which he lived, initiates the problem of subordinationism in the *De Principiis*. Entitling the chapter on the Father as "God" perpetuates the dilemma. The famous analogy of the red-hot iron for the co-existent deity and humanity of Christ seals, so it seems, the label of subordinationism to Origen. The *Contra Celsum* only intensifies the situation. It further explores the spectrum, the nuances, and the implications of what the Son's incarnation means to his humanity and to all men, especially to Christians.

The incorporeality, infinity, and eternity of the Father, to use Origen's vocabulary in the *De Principiis*, also applies to the Son and the Holy Spirit. The Father's comparative remoteness in the Christian life encourages Origen's association of God with the Father; for the Son makes salvation available, and the Holy Spirit guides the believer in his Christian walk. While the person of the Father is no less real to the Christian, prayer and worship occupy his obvious and direct interaction with believer. To oversimplify, believers "give" to the Father in prayer and worship, but they only directly receive from the Son and the Spirit, whom the Father directs. These functions of subordination and priority in the Trinity do not alter or deny the equality and sovereignty of its persons, however. The indirect reciprocation between the Trinity and man must

not be mistaken for inequality in the Trinity.

Because the functions of the Son and Spirit toward man follow the Father's function, which planned for man's creation and established the standards by which man should live, the persons of the Son and Spirit superficially seem to exist because of and subsequent to the Father. Origen's ascription of human characteristics to the Son, whom he tends to think of only in incarnate terms, further encourages the Son's implied, subsequent existence to the Father. The physical birth of the humanity of Christ chronologically follows, and in fact is incomparable to, the eternity of the Father.

Origen's belief in the free will of man importantly releases God from all responsibility of evil and motivates the reader to seek for a superlative relationship with God. The responsibility for all decisions thus resides in man, and the only decision for which man is not responsible is his existence. These principles should apply to the humanity of Christ as well. However, Origen concentrates on the relationship between Christ's deity and humanity rather than on the similarity between Christ's humanity and the humanity of all other men.

The analogy of the red-hot iron powerfully teaches the complete and indistinguishable union of Christ's deity and humanity. The apparent contradiction in reconciling the humanity of Christ both with his deity and with the humanity of all other men is undeniable. The freedom to violate God's will or to do God's will seems not to be an option for the humanity of Christ. The impeccability of his

humanity seems too coincidental. That Origen sought to establish and describe the perfect relationship between Christ's deity and humanity is unquestionably admirable, not only because of wanting to understand the incarnation, but also because of wanting to clarify man's potential in relationship with God. Origen cannot be justifiably criticized for not distinguishing between or for inseparably uniting Christ's deity and humanity when one remembers that Christ himself did not distinguish or unite his two natures. In fact, in the Gospels when Christ repeatedly establishes the Father as his authority, he does not discuss the nuances of the co-existence of his two natures.

The deification of man, even of the humanity of Christ, provides a pattern and, therefore, expresses the goal for the absolutely highest relationship between man and God. One purpose for the incarnation, which the deity of the Son initiated by becoming incarnate, is the provision of salvation for man. A subsequent purpose, which the believer is free to initiate only because the Son first initiated the incarnation, constitutes the possibilities for man in his relationship with God. The term "deification of man" (which is not found in the Bible), however, must be carefully understood. It emphasizes the perfect harmony of will between man and God; it does not mean that man ceases to be a created creature. Perhaps a less misleading term "perfect (*τέλειος*)", used in conjunction with "partakers of divine nature (*θείας κοινωνοὶ φύσεως*)", is more literally and Biblically accurate. It is interesting to note that while

Origen especially addresses the issue of deification for the humanity of Christ and, by example, for all other men, especially in Books 3 and 4 of the *Contra Celsum*, in Book 7, he returns to a discussion of the separate natures of the incarnate Son and emphasizes that Christ as a man, whom he does not identify as a deified man, was crucified.

The reality of the person of God, especially the incarnate Christ, to Origen overshadows his subordination of the Son to the Father. The persons of the Trinity embody more than simply inanimate, objective truth. Origen does not just perceive doctrine; he perceives the persons who not only created the doctrine but who eternally are the doctrine as well. The persons of the Trinity collectively and individually function to communicate this doctrine throughout human history. The prophecies in the Old Testament, the personal and human incarnation of one of their subjects, and the development of doctrine in the New Testament, in one respect set apart the Son as unique. The comparison of the humanity of Christ with the humanity of all other men is no less important than the comparison of his deity with the persons of the Father and the Holy Spirit. Honor uniquely belongs to the Son in becoming a man, yet such honor does not inordinately subordinate the Father and the Holy Spirit to him.

Origen's love for learning, love for truth, and love for God motivated him to imagine and discuss the Trinity in a variety of contexts, one not finally excluding or contradicting any other. In exalting the incarnation, he examined the Son's self-subordination. Although not

ceasing to be divine, the Son chose to become a man. Origen does not fully appreciate, however, that Christ in his humanity was vulnerable to failure, yet free to maintain perfection. In acknowledging the various functions and roles of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Origen confirmed the infinite and perfect harmony of these functions, a logical manifestation of their equal, perfect, and individual essences.

Truly unique as Origen's capacity to know God was, he did not harmonize or complete his speculation. While in one passage he subordinates the Son to the Father, in another passage he contradicts himself, claiming their perfect equality and implying that this equality includes divinity. Origen did not reconcile all the functions of the Trinity with their persons. Awed by their majesty and not doubting the truthfulness of the concept of God as the Trinity, Origen initiated a discussion of their individual majesty as persons and included many of their functions, but he did not complete a reconciliation of their persons from their harmonious functions. Origen realized that the diversity, unity, and oneness of God are simultaneous and eternal, but the spectrum of these paradoxical dimensions he only began to investigate.

It has been said in the Introduction that the value of a theological system lies in its practical, realistic value. Origen's descriptions of the persons of the Trinity and their functions contain a personal awareness of the attributes of God that invigorates the reader. It is deduced that Origen must have had a truly intimate relationship with God for his

description of God to be so real. His tone in both works is vibrant; he earnestly wants to know and communicate truth. He wants to describe God in terms that are discernible to man, and he wants to establish a natural affinity between God and man. What could have more practical value for the Christian than the comfort which comes from knowing God? In Origen, knowing God and knowing about God meet. The reader comes to realize that he has learned about abstract qualities of God and deepened his own relationship with God at the same time. The reader knows God better and trusts him more; he does not just have a more thorough academic understanding of God from a brilliant scholar.

Practical value is measured in terms of truth. Conversely, the real value of knowing God is not just academic; it is also practical. For Origen, as for any genuine lover of God, the truth of the Word insures the practicality of God. Origen believed what he wrote and lived what he believed. The proximity and attainability of God to Origen, Origen has made available for his Christian readers.

The relevance for today, in fact for all time, means taking Origen on his own terms. Scholars have argued and discussed the benefit of Origen for centuries, often concentrating on the philosophical and historical contexts of his work. Concentrating on the historical context of a work tends to deny the possibility of its enduring impact, when the work itself contains unpolished, idiosyncratic, and doctrinally anachronistic elements. In *Early Christian Thought and the Classical Tradition*, Chadwick says:

. . . Origen [cannot] be proved to be heretical by picking out isolated points and particular flights of speculation. He was writing at a time when he had neither the Nicene Creed nor the Chalcedonian definition to assist or to restrict him. The theologians of the fourth and fifth centuries were aware that the early Christian writers had expressed themselves more loosely than later divinity could allow, and in most cases were prepared to exercise charity in interpretation.<sup>5</sup>

The temptation exists to see a work as realistically applicable only to the generation in which it was written, rather than as currently applicable as well. The profound depth of one man's relationship with God, which is inevitably reflected in his writing, cannot be overlooked, however, even in the light of supposed modern spiritual sophistication. Concentrating on the philosophical context of a work may indeed establish potent philosophical influences on the writer, but Origen hardly endeavored to explain, justify, or further philosophy. He aggressively interacted with the philosophies of his time, just as people, to varying degrees, respond to the philosophies of their day. Origen only used philosophy to help him in his Christian pursuit, not to dictate his beliefs. In "Origen Studies", Daly remarks: "No respectable scholar can any longer make the claim that Origen was primarily a Greek philosopher rather than a Christian theologian."<sup>6</sup>

Criticisms classically, almost inherently, do not preserve the spirit of a work, but what Origen says can come alive for people. Rather than an academic scrutiny of his orthodoxy and of the philosophies which fell under his spell and influenced him consciously or unconsciously, an

admission that the spirit of the man, who profoundly loved and knew God, permeated and shaped his writing introduces Origen in a refreshing light. Remembering the person, in conjunction with his writing, benefits the modern reader and potential admirer of Origen, and it even helps to clarify the content of what he wrote. The reality of God in Origen's life becomes evident in his descriptions of the Word, written and incarnate, the persons of the Trinity, and the real and practical results of the interaction of God and man, especially in the transformation which occurs in the Christian. Louth explains: ". . . in the Fathers, there is no divorce between dogmatic and mystical theology."<sup>7</sup>

Somewhere in the spectrum from the academic to the mystical lie the spiritual and the personal. Viewing Origen within his historical or philosophical framework alone can be limiting. Viewing him in a comparative light with other theologians to an extent which detracts from his rightful merit in his own terms distracts from and distorts the impact of his thought. While neither work is obviously a personal reflection or memoir of Origen's relationship with God, the fervor and the emphasis in each work cannot be overlooked, for language connotes both thought and intent. The reality of God and the Word, written and incarnate, to Origen determines how real his description of these subjects can be for the reader. Discussing, analyzing, and evaluating specific contexts in terms of Origen the man who knew God, instead of only Origen the theologian, Origen the philosopher, or Origen the academician, actually reveals

nuances and depth in his theology that would otherwise be unknown.

Origen did not just understand that God is a person; he did not just entertain the possibility of the personalness of the Trinity and that one of its persons became a man. He knew deep within that God is a person of infinite grace. He humbly believed that the Son of God became man and appreciated that God initiated the incarnation. Origen recognized the unfathomable, finite degeneracy of man on the one hand, and the infinite, restorative capability of God on the other hand. Origen believed in the possibility of perfect unity between God and man. The *De Principiis* and the *Contra Celsum* were hardly just intellectual exercises for him, then. They were expressions from his soul. The systematics in the *De Principiis* are perfectly compatible with the practical theology and empiricism, in short, with the real details, of the *Contra Celsum*. These two works certainly illustrate the capacity, the hope, and the optimism of Origen in seeing God and man as ultimately one. Perhaps this unity sometimes blurs his perception of the Son; it certainly motivates him to speak of the deification of man.

An intrinsic magnetism in Origen's writings has consumed the attention and concentration of people in all times and circumstances. The academic rigour of a work on God no more enriches its readers than the genuineness of its writer's conviction. In Origen's case, the discussion of truths and the intimacy with God complement each other even in their nuances. The result is theological literature

which is honest, real, stunning, powerful, sometimes charmingly and sometimes annoyingly idiosyncratic, but above all, spiritual.

## Notes

(All translations of the *De Principiis* come from Butterworth's edition, and the *Contra Celsum* from Chadwick's. The book, chapter, and section divisions in the *De Principiis* and the *Contra Celsum* are taken from those established by the GCS edition, which Butterworth and Chadwick have retained in their editions. All references to Butterworth come from his edition of the *De Principiis*. Where more than one work of an author has been referenced in the Notes an abbreviated title follows the author's name. Furthermore, page numbers in the Notes correspond to the most recent reference of a work listed by author in the Bibliography.)

### Introduction

- 1 Daly, 509
- 2 Trigg, 101
- 3 Trigg, 245

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- 1 Trigg, 91
- 2 Crouzel, "Actualité. . . .", 386-87
- 3 Daniélou, "Recherche. . . .", 461
- 4 Quasten, *Patrology*, 61

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- 1 Hanson, 49
- 2 Wiles, 457
- 3 Wiles, 459
- 4 1, *Praefatio*, 1
- 5 1, *Praefatio*, 3

- 6 1, *Praefatio*, 3
- 7 Outler, 138
- 8 1, *Praefatio*, 3
- 9 Bigg, 192, note
- 10 Hanson, 191
- 11 Fairweather, 129
- 12 1, *Praefatio*, 4
- 13 Outler, 134
- 14 Outler, 135
- 15 Outler, 140-41
- 16 Outler, 141
- 17 1, *Praefatio*, 4
- 18 1, 1.4
- 19 Butterworth, 3, note 4
- 20 1, *Praefatio*, 4
- 21 Fairweather, 149
- 22 1, *Praefatio*, 4

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- 1 Butterworth, xviii; *Praefatio Rufini*, 4
- 2 de Faye, 34
- 3 de Faye, 35-36
- 4 Daly, 512
- 5 Rist, 97
- 6 Rist, 98
- 7 Rist, 102
- 8 Rist, 108
- 9 Rist, 109

- 10 Rist, 111
- 11 Rist, 111
- 12 Butterworth, lii
- 13 Butterworth, 3, note 1
- 14 Butterworth, 3, note 1
- 15 Davies, 142
- 16 Bigg, 213, note 1
- 17 1, *Praefatio*, 4
- 18 1, *Praefatio*, 4
- 19 1, *Praefatio*, 4
- 20 Bigg, 213-14
- 21 1, *Praefatio*, 4
- 22 1, *Praefatio*, 8
- 23 1, *Praefatio*, 8
- 24 1, *Praefatio*, 9
- 25 1, *Praefatio*, 10
- 26 1, *Praefatio*, 10

### Chapter 3

- 1 1, 1.1; Butterworth, 7, note 1
- 2 1, 1.1
- 3 1, 1.1
- 4 Stroumsa, 345
- 5 Trigg, 95
- 6 1, 1.2
- 7 1, 1.2
- 8 1, 1.2
- 9 1, 1.2

10	1, 1.3
11	1, 1.3
12	1, 1.3
13	1, 1.4
14	Stroumsa, 346
15	1, 1.5
16	1, 1.5
17	Louth, 73
18	1, 1.5
19	1, 1.5
20	1, 1.6
21	1, 1.6
22	1, 1.6
23	1, 1.6
24	Butterworth, 10, note1
25	1, 1.6
26	1, 1.6
27	1, 1.6
28	1, 1.6
29	1, 1.6
30	1, 1.6
31	1, 1.6
32	1, 1.7
33	1, 1.7
34	1, 1.7
35	1, 1.8
36	1, 1.8
37	1, 1.8

- 38 1, 1.8
- 39 Butterworth, 13, note 3
- 40 1, 1.8
- 41 1, 1.9

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- 1 1, 2.1
- 2 1, 2.1
- 3 Trigg, 96
- 4 1, 2.1
- 5 Trigg, 97
- 6 1, 2.1
- 7 Butterworth, 15, note 1
- 8 1, 2.1
- 9 1, 2.2
- 10 Butterworth, 16, note 1
- 11 1, 2.2
- 12 1, 2.2
- 13 1, 2.2
- 14 Gögler, 227
- 15 1, 2.3
- 16 1, 2.3
- 17 Prestige, *God in Patristic Thought*, 119
- 18 1, 2.3
- 19 1, 2.4
- 20 1, 2.4
- 21 Gögler, 224-25
- 22 1, 2.4

- 23 1, 2.4
- 24 *Prestige, God in Patristic Thought*, 154
- 25 1, 2.5
- 26 1, 2.5
- 27 1, 2.5
- 28 1, 2.5
- 29 1, 2.6
- 30 Butterworth, 3, note 4
- 31 Butterworth, 3, notes 1, 4
- 32 1, 2.6; Butterworth, 19, note 4
- 33 1. 2.6
- 34 In 1, 2.6 the analogy of a mirror may be derived by  
implication.  
In 1, 2.12 the analogy of a mirror is clearly stated.
- 35 1, 2.6
- 36 Butterworth, 20, note 1
- 37 Butterworth, 20, note 1
- 38 Butterworth, 20, note 1
- 39 Kraft, 68
- 40 1, 2.6
- 41 Butterworth, 20, note 5
- 42 1, 2.7
- 43 1, 2.7
- 44 1, 2.7
- 45 1, 2.8
- 46 1, 2.8
- 47 1, 2.8
- 48 1, 2.8
- 49 1, 2.8

- 50 1, 2.9
- 51 Stead, 213
- 52 Stead, 230
- 53 1, 2.9
- 54 1, 2.9
- 55 1, 2.9
- 56 1, 2.10
- 57 1, 2.10
- 58 1, 2.10
- 59 1, 2.10; Butterworth, 24, note 1
- 60 1, 2.10
- 61 1, 2.10
- 62 1, 2.10
- 63 1, 2.10; See Grant, 285 for further reading on the  
canonicity of  
the writings of John.
- 64 Stead, 213
- 65 1, 2.10
- 66 1, 2.10
- 67 1, 2.10
- 68 1, 2.10
- 69 1, 2.10
- 70 1, 2.10
- 71 1, 2.10
- 72 1, 2.10
- 73 1, 2.10
- 74 1, 2.11
- 75 1, 2.11

76	1, 2.12
77	1, 2.12
78	1, 2.12
79	1, 2.12
80	1, 2.12
81	1, 2.12
82	1, 2.12
83	1, 2.12
84	1, 2.13
85	1, 2.13; Butterworth, 27, note 3
86	Koch, 23
87	Lampe, 267
88	Lampe, 175
89	1, 2.13
90	1, 2.13
91	Stead, 214
92	1, 2.13

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1	1, 3.1
2	1, 3.1
3	1, 3.1
4	1, 3.1
5	1, 3.2
6	1, 3.2
7	1, 3.3
8	1, 3.3

- 9 1, 3.3
- 10 Butterworth, 31, note 4
- 11 Butterworth, 31, note 4
- 12 1, 3.4
- 13 1, 3.4
- 14 1, 3.4
- 15 Butterworth, 32, note 2
- 16 1, 3.4
- 17 1, 3.4
- 18 1, 3.4
- 19 1, 3.4
- 20 1, 3.4
- 21 1, 3.4
- 22 1, 3.5
- 23 1, 3.5; Butterworth, 33, note 6
- 24 1, 3.5
- 25 Kraft, 69
- 26 1, 3.6
- 27 1, 3.6
- 28 1, 3.7
- 29 1, 3.6
- 30 1, 3.6
- 31 1, 3.7
- 32 1, 3.7
- 33 1, 3.7
- 34 1, 3.7

- 35 *Prestige, God in Patristic Thought*, 131-32  
36 1, 3.7  
37 1, 3.7  
38 1, 3.7, 3.8  
39 1, 3.8  
40 1, 3.8  
41 1, 3.8  
42 1, 3.8  
43 Fairweather, 157

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- 1 1, 4.1  
2 1, 4.2  
3 1, 4.3  
4 1, 4.4  
5 1, 4.4  
6 1, 4.5; Butterworth, 43, note 2  
7 1, 5.1  
8 1, 5.3  
9 1, 5.3  
10 1, 5.5  
11 Fairweather, 132  
12 1, 6.1  
13 1, 6.2  
14 1, 6.4  
15 1, 7.1  
16 1, 7.1  
17 1, 8.1, 8.3

- 18 Mühlenberg, 237
- 19 1, 8.3
- 20 2, 1.1; Butterworth, 76, note 1
- 21 2, 1.2
- 22 2, 2.1
- 23 2, 2.1
- 24 2, 2.1
- 25 2, 2.1
- 26 2, 2.2
- 27 2, 2.2 According to Butterworth, 81, note 4, "Rufinus has probably modified this passage"; for the "fall [of rational beings] which causes them assume bodies", Origen states elsewhere.
- 28 2, 3.1
- 29 2, 3.3
- 30 2, 3.3
- 31 2, 3.3
- 32 Butterworth, 86, note 4
- 33 2, 3.6
- 34 2, 3.7
- 35 2, 4.1
- 36 2, 4.1
- 37 2, 4.1
- 38 2, 4.1
- 39 2, 4.2
- 40 2, 4.3
- 41 2, 4.3
- 42 2, 4.3

- 43 2, 5.1; Butterworth, 101, note 1
- 44 2, 5.3
- 45 2, 5.3

## Chapter 7

- 1 2, 6.1; Butterworth, 108, note 1
- 2 2, 6.1
- 3 2, 6.1
- 4 2, 6.1
- 5 Daniélou, *Origen*, 262
- 6 2, 6.1
- 7 2, 6.2
- 8 2, 6.2
- 9 2, 6.2
- 10 2, 6.2
- 11 2, 6.2
- 12 Trigg, 100
- 13 Fairweather, 180
- 14 2, 6.2
- 15 Fairweather, 182
- 16 2, 6.2
- 17 2, 6.3
- 18 Bigg, 233
- 19 2, 6.3
- 20 Butterworth, 110
- 21 Gamble, 28
- 22 Babcock, 55

- 23 2, 6.3  
24 2, 6.3  
25 Butterworth, 111, note 1  
26 Wand, 221  
27 2, 6.3  
28 2, 6.4; Butterworth, 111, note 4  
29 2, 6.4  
30 Völker, 115  
31 2, 6.4  
32 2, 6.4  
33 2, 6.4  
34 2, 6.4  
35 2, 6.4  
36 2, 6.4  
37 2, 6.5  
38 2, 6.5  
39 2, 6.5  
40 2, 6.5  
41 Fairweather, 181  
42 2, 6.6  
43 Chadwick, *Early Christian Thought*. . . . , 91  
44 Gögler, 259  
45 Völker, 114  
46 2, 6.7

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- 1 2, 7.1

- 2 2, 7.2
- 3 2, 7.3
- 4 2, 7.4
- 5 2, 7.4
- 6 2, 8.1; Butterworth, 120, note 1
- 7 2, 8.1
- 8 2, 8.1
- 9 2, 8.2
- 10 2, 6.6
- 11 2, 8.2
- 12 2, 8.4
- 13 2, 8.5
- 14 2, 8.5
- 15 3, 5.1; Butterworth, 237, note 1
- 16 3, 5.3
- 17 Butterworth, 239, note 1
- 18 3, 5.3
- 19 Kraft, 76
- 20 Trigg, 95-96
- 21 3, 5.6 Butterworth's reference to John 17:5 in note 1, p. 242, clarifies the misprint of "word" to "world".
- 22 3, 5.6
- 23 3, 5.7

## Chapter 9

- 1 4, 4.1; Butterworth, 313, note 1
- 2 4, 4.1; Butterworth, 312, note 1
- 3 4, 4.1; Butterworth, 312, note 2

- 4 4, 4.1
- 5 Butterworth, 314, note 6
- 6 Prestige, *God in Patristic Thought*, 133-34
- 7 Prestige, *God in Patristic Thought*, 135
- 8 4, 4.1
- 9 Bigg, 208, note 1
- 10 4, 4.1
- 11 4, 4.1
- 12 Bigg, 208, note 1
- 13 4, 4.1
- 14 4, 4.2
- 15 4, 4.2
- 16 4, 4.2
- 17 4, 4.3
- 18 4, 4.4
- 19 4, 4.4
- 20 Butterworth, 318, note 1
- 21 4, 4.4
- 22 Butterworth, 318, note 5
- 23 4, 4.4
- 24 4, 4.4
- 25 4, 4.4
- 26 4, 4.4
- 27 4, 4.4
- 28 4, 4.4
- 29 4, 4.4
- 30 4, 4.5

31 4, 4.5

32 4, 4.8

33 4, 4.8

## Introduction to Part Two

1 Outler, 138

2 Chadwick, "Notes on the Text. . . .", 215

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1 *Praefatio*, 1

2 *Praefatio*, 2

3 *Praefatio*, 3

4 *Praefatio*, 6

5 *Praefatio*, 6

6 Fairweather, 117

7 1, 2

8 Trigg, 226

9 1, 2

10 1, 2

11 Outler, 141

12 1, 6

13 1, 13

14 1, 13

15 Among Lampe's explanatory definitions (807-11) is "*immanent* rationality" (808), which, when combined with its designation for the Son (808-11), comes to mean knowledge usable by man in his relationship with God.

16 1, 18

17	1, 18
18	1, 21 cf. 1, 18
19	1, 23
20	Trigg, 103
21	1, 23
22	1, 26
23	1, 26
24	1, 27
25	1, 27
26	1, 28
27	1, 29
28	1, 29
29	1, 30
30	1, 30
31	1, 31
32	1, 31
33	1, 32
34	1, 33
35	1, 37
36	1, 37
37	1, 37
38	1, 42
39	1, 42
40	Nardoni, 13
41	1, 43
42	1, 44
43	Nardoni, 14-15
44	1, 46
45	1, 46

46	1, 47
47	1, 48
48	1, 49
49	1, 50
50	1, 53
51	1, 56
52	1, 57
53	1, 60
54	1, 61
55	1, 62
56	1, 62
57	1, 66
58	1, 66
59	1, 66
60	1, 66
61	1, 66
62	1, 68

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1	Daniélou, <i>Origen</i> , 113
2	Daniélou, <i>Origen</i> , 119
3	2, 2
4	2, 2
5	Fairweather, 119
6	2, 4
7	2, 4
8	2, 7
9	2, 8

10	2, 9
11	2, 9
12	2, 9
13	Gögler, 255
14	2, 9
15	2, 9
16	2, 9
17	de Faye, 105-06
18	2, 13
19	2, 13
20	2, 20
21	2, 23
22	2, 31
23	2, 42
24	2, 42
25	2, 42
26	2, 42
27	2, 64
28	Crouzel, <i>Origène. . . .</i> , 389-91
29	Bigg, 209
30	2, 64
31	2, 65
32	2, 66
33	2, 67
34	Chadwick, <i>Origen: "Contra Celsum"</i> , 118, note 1
35	2, 69
36	2, 69
37	2, 70

38	2, 71
39	2, 73
40	2, 76
41	2, 79

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1	Hanson, 50
2	3, 4
3	3, 10
4	3, 14
5	3, 14
6	3, 14
7	3, 21
8	3, 25
9	3, 28
10	3, 28
11	3, 28
12	Chadwick, <i>Early Christian Thought</i> . . . . , 92
13	3, 29
14	3, 31
15	3, 32
16	3, 34
17	3,34
18	Daniélou, <i>Origen</i> , 256-57
19	3, 35
20	3, 36
21	3, 37
22	3, 37

23	3, 37
24	3, 40
25	3, 40
26	3, 40
27	Chadwick, <i>Early Christian Thought</i> . . . . , 91
28	3, 41
29	Chadwick, "Eucharist and Christology. . . .", 163
30	Gögler, 227
31	3, 41
32	Gamble, 24
33	3, 47
34	3, 47
35	3, 62
36	3, 62 See also 2, 25; 4, 65; 6, 45; and 7, 16. In "Origen, Celsus, and the Resurrection of the Body", Chadwick says on pages 100-01, note 30: "Origen's usual phrase for the human nature of Christ is <i>ο κατα τον Ιησουν νοουμενος ανθρωπος</i> . . . ."
37	3, 75
38	3, 78
39	3, 81
40	3, 81
41	Gögler, 250

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1	4, 1
2	4, 2
3	4, 2
4	4, 3
5	4, 5

6	4, 5
7	4, 6
8	4, 6
9	4, 6
10	4, 7
11	Daniélou, <i>Origen</i> , 117
12	4, 8
13	4, 15
14	Völker, 99
15	4, 15
16	4, 16
17	4, 17
18	4, 18
19	4, 18
20	4, 18
21	4, 18
22	4, 18
23	4, 18
24	4, 18
25	4, 19
26	4, 28
27	4, 28
28	4, 32
29	4, 71
30	4, 71
31	4, 72
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33	4, 72

34	4, 81
35	4, 73
36	4, 83
37	4, 85
38	Gögler, 257
39	4, 99
40	4, 99
41	4, 99
42	4, 99
43	4, 99

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5	5, 5
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7	5, 11
8	5, 11
9	5, 11
10	5, 12
11	5, 37
12	5, 39
13	Chadwick, <i>Early Christian Thought</i> . . . . , 92
14	Prestige, <i>God in Patristic Thought</i> , 142
15	5, 53
16	5, 55

17	5, 58
18	5, 58
19	5, 58
20	5, 65
21	5, 65

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3	6, 2
4	6, 3
5	6, 4
6	6, 6
7	6, 11
8	6, 17
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10	6, 17
11	6, 17
12	6, 44
13	6, 44
14	6, 45
15	6, 47
16	6, 47
17	6, 47
18	6, 47
19	6, 48
20	6, 47
21	Gögler, 259

22	6, 48
23	6, 48
24	6, 48
25	6, 53
26	6, 54
27	6, 55
28	6, 56
29	6, 57
30	6, 60
31	6, 62
32	6, 63
33	6, 63
34	6, 63
35	6, 64
36	6, 64
37	6, 64
38	Bigg, 221-22
39	Stead, 152
40	Stead, 161
41	6, 66
42	6, 67
43	Gögler, 254
44	6, 68
45	John Clark Smith, "Conversion in Origen", 225
46	6, 68
47	6, 69
48	6, 70
49	Nardoni, 15

- 50 6, 71
- 51 Gögler, 255
- 52 Gögler, 272
- 53 6, 78
- 54 6, 79
- 55 6, 81

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- 1 7, 2
- 2 7, 4
- 3 Nardoni, 12
- 4 7, 7
- 5 Nardoni, 13
- 6 7, 7
- 7 Nardoni, 13
- 8 7, 8
- 9 7, 16
- 10 7, 16
- 11 Stead, 152
- 12 7, 16
- 13 7, 16
- 14 7, 16
- 15 7, 16
- 16 Bigg, 234
- 17 7, 17
- 18 7, 17
- 19 7, 38
- 20 Daniélou, *Origen*, 256

- 21 Nardoni, 15
- 22 7, 38
- 23 7, 32
- 24 7, 39
- 25 7, 39
- 26 7, 42
- 27 7, 43
- 28 7, 44
- 29 7, 44
- 30 7, 65
- 31 Chadwick, *Origen: Contra Celsum*, 449, note 5
- 32 7, 66

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- 1 8, 1
- 2 Bigg, 227, note 1
- 3 Bertrand, *Mystique. . . .*, 143
- 4 8, 4
- 5 8, 4
- 6 8, 5
- 7 8, 6
- 8 8, 6
- 9 8, 6
- 10 8, 8; Chadwick, *Origen: "Contra Celsum"*, p. 458, note 4: "The phrase is remarkable as one of the few passages where Origen speaks of *apatheia* as implied in the mystical ideal."
- 11 8, 9
- 12 8, 12

13	8, 12
14	Bigg, 220
15	Chadwick, <i>Early Christian Thought</i> . . . . , 92
16	8, 13
17	8, 14
18	8, 14
19	8, 15
20	8, 15
21	8, 17
22	8, 17
23	8, 17
24	8, 72
25	8, 72
26	8, 75
27	8, 76

## Conclusion

1	Chadwick, "Origen" ( <i>The Cambridge History of Later</i> . . . . . , 189
2	Louth, xiv
3	Trigg, 91; also noted in the Introduction to Part One
4	Chadwick, <i>Origen: "Contra Celsum"</i> , xv
5	Chadwick, <i>Early Christian Thought</i> . . . . , 121
6	Daly, 518
7	Louth, xii

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