



Deus per
solum
Christum

Deus per
solum
Christum

(God only through Christ):

An Essay Concerning the Preeminence of
Christ as the Sole Earthly Nexus of God ~
A Trinitarian Proposition.

FRANK ARUNDELL

Deus per solum Christum

Wading into the deep waters of the Trinitarian mystery is a daunting task. The dangers involved with such an attempt are obvious, since its goal will be to concretize the conflicting idea of *three in one* and *one in three* regarding the Godhead, the ground of all being for Christian believers. The words of Jesus are very plain: *“I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”* (*John 14: 6*) Must one take this statement literally?

In a secular world both of these concepts for many non-believers, are thought of as pure delusion while they try to secure for themselves a belief system of some sort to guide them; to offset the blank pages in the book of life without an author, or the existence of imperial matter without a Creator. The “good” is mostly an arbitrarily justified decision, and all intents and purposes proceed from what is strictly temporal and spacial. Nothing can be “spiritual”. Individual goals are achieved when one gains what one seeks materially or emotionally; and with respect to others, by not leaving out consideration of family and the community regarding ethics and morality.

From about the seventeenth century on, proponents of Natural Science has been leading the way to replace religion with a “joyful nihilism,” as the true path to “freedom” and “liberation.” A path where science is seen as providing the answers to virtually all the puzzling questions mankind continuously asks, i.e., Why is there something rather than nothing? What is reality? What is life? Why is there evil? etc, questions that were formerly answered by religious

understandings and convictions as far back as pre-historic times. The killing of Christ, his resurrection, and the proliferation of his church, for many, does not satisfactorily solve the problem of mankind's liberation. It was and is the very same Church which opened the western world to science in the first place. In his *Atheist Delusions*, David Bentley Hart put it very well:

*“Christian scientists educated in Christian universities and following a Christian tradition of scientific and mathematical speculation overturned a pagan cosmology and physics and arrived at conclusions that would have been unimaginable within the confines of Hellenistic scientific traditions. For, despite all vague talk of ancient or medieval “science,” pagan, Muslim, or Christian, what we mean today by science—its methods, its controls and guiding principles, its desire to unite theory to empirical discovery, its trust in a unified set of physical laws, and so on—came into existence, for whatever reasons, and for better or worse, only within Christendom, and under the hands of believing Christians.”*¹

Since those days Science, for many, has become a substitute religion, an alternative “true” faith, carrying with it similar rituals, rules, laws and regulations, along with its “high-priests” and councils. A coterie of “educated” enthusiasts continuously mount attacks against Christians and Christianity, or all organized religion for that matter, preaching instead the “religion of science” in the halls of higher education. They promote the doctrines of scientism, agnosticism, atheism, hard determinism and other “isms,” ostensibly to “free” young minds from a natural hesitancy in a world preoccupied with recreational sex, drugs, violence, etc. Since all things are relative in this environment, a contrarian ideology, suited to the

fashions of the times rather than known traditional values is promoted. Any traditional religiously oriented lifestyle may be suspect of intolerance and bigotry towards those in the secular-humanist world; those who chose not to believe in God.

The very nature of Christianity is tolerance, that is not to say there are those who call themselves Christians, willingly revise the teachings of Jesus and act intolerant toward those who simply think differently. Those who are intolerant would in fact be acting contrary to Christian tenets. However, that does not mean we shouldn't defend the gift of faith that comes through the grace of God. The old adage: Love the sinner— hate the sin, has an application here. Since every individual human being is a creature of God, Christians are all bound by that fact. So a Christian must love the iconoclast and hate iconoclasm. Christians are Christians simply because they were, for some reason, called to follow Christ, when they stray from the Way, the Truth and the Life, they become lost sheep who need to be found again by the Good Shepherd who knows them. They may hope to hear his voice calling them back to the truth of the fold. In scripture, when Jesus drove the money changers out of the temple precincts to the sidewalks and bye ways, it was not the individuals, but what they were doing in the House of God that riled him. In much the same way many insincere churchmen together with the royalty of former times caused a great wound in Christendom which only now is slowly being healed.

“If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you for ever. This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you.”

Here, Jesus by and large explains the Trinity, the face of God, if you will. Not entirely in a physical sense, but clearly in a spiritual sense which our minds vaguely know through grace and faith. First there is the Father, the ground of all being; the Creator of all that is. Second is Jesus, the Son, the one who is doing the asking, *seen* in history as the Messiah of Israel. Then there's the Holy Spirit, the soul of the church, the giver of life and the Spirit of Truth. Finally, the sacramental home and "mother" to all Christians is the Church, a unity of the "Mystical Body of Christ." Where the Spirit is, there is Christ, where Christ is, there is the Father; where the Father, Son and Holy Spirit is, there is the Kingdom of God; the church militant, the church triumphant, and those who have died trusting in God's mercy— with Jesus adored and glorified in their midst under the veil of bread and wine. Catholic Christians believe that through the Spirit, bread and wine, by the power of God, become the body and blood of Christ, the Eucharist, instituted by Jesus at the "Lord's Supper" on Holy Thursday, the day before he was crucified.

Briefly then, from the brain to mind transformation, early man knew of the Creator in his heart and worshiped him in rocks, trees and animals etc.; the earliest civilizations imagined the Creator in the sun and the stars and later in the mythological, larger than life, heroic figures who were said to cavort with humanity. When the great pantheon of gods faded out, Abraham had already introduced us to monotheism, having been covenantally taught by God. Finally, at the "fullness of time" when animal sacrifice had run its course and the Temple was about to be destroyed by the Romans, God visited his people, "emptying himself" by the Incarnation of the promised Messiah of the Prophets. By the Spirit, and through the Virgin

Mary, Christ was born in the Jewish year of about 3758, BCE 7-4. An approximate date would have been April 17, 6 BCE when the “Christmas Star” was in Aries. After three years of a demonstrable, miraculous public life in which he announced a New Covenant, “the Kingdom of God,” Jesus was crucified, died and was buried. He rose from the dead in the approximate Jewish year of 3788-92, CE 29-33. Of all those who claimed to be God after Jesus’ resurrection, none have been witnessed returning in a glorified state after death by the followers. After his conversion, St Paul wrote this to the people in Corinth:

“Now if Christ is preached, that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, not even Christ has been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain. Moreover we are even found to be false witnesses of God, because we testified against God that He raised Christ, whom He did not raise, if in fact the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied.”

Regardless of the fact that we say hope springs eternal, the question asked today is “hope in what?” If we are strictly made of matter, what was it that caused this matter to think enough in advance to have hope? From whence did we acquire enough mind to hope for future satisfaction, and again, if we are only matter, does it really matter? If hope, even in Christ, is structured “in this life only” our hopes would need to be founded only on material things, or on certain self satisfaction.

If Jesus came simply as another prophet to teach us how to enjoy life by doing good, it's possible we may have missed the message completely. There is a reason why the "golden rule" came out of the Judeo-Christian paideia. Abraham, although he had great hope, became our "father in faith" of the three great monotheistic religions, his hope resulted in his decisive faith and trust in God. For Christians, Jesus is the fulfillment of the "primal law" brought forward in space/time with the solemn promise of life everlasting in the Father, Son and Spirit, begun on earth with the very first understanding that the cause and ground of all being and non being *is* God the Creator—worshiped, through Jesus, in the Spirit. The Trinity is not a creation of man, but a clear and concise understanding of a sharing in the life of God brought to humanity by God in Jesus Christ, the Word of God, and sustained by the Spirit of God in his Church. The economy of salvation, as Christians know it, doesn't work any other way. We are all enveloped in hope. The hope is that we have enough grace to make a leap of faith and express ourselves with love for each other to secure the promised goal.

That does not mean, of course, that those who do not know Christ, or who cannot nor will not accept Christian understandings are without hope. We have all been born free to determine our own way of life and our own fate made available to us within the confines of a peaceful social order and cooperative political power. All of us, regardless of our spirituality or absence thereof, must be respected and show respect for one another simply because of our unique existence as a human being. We are, after all, the care-takers of this planet and must share it's bounty by promoting fair trade and a free market, eschewing oppression and greed, rejecting those who foster it, otherwise all progresses to chaos. Special

consideration must always be made available to the very poor among us simply out of natural compassion, those who have meager or no means of sustenance, must be rehabilitated in mind and body enabling them to fully contribute to the common good. For most people, the seemingly secular-human objectives are completely and entirely the same as those espoused by thinking Christians. The big difference is “belief” in the initial cause, in God.

The scientific age has provided mechanisms to “prove” things by repeated experimentation, where a secularist faith is placed in the “unequivocal” documentation science appears to provide. Things can get testy when Christians, or religious of other faiths, decide to evangelize – and secular-humans are determined to stamp out “superstition,” i.e. religion. Though there are some incorrigible zealots in both camps, most people slide by one another without much friction even though they have diametrically opposed opinions about the existence of God, no less the mysterious Trinity. Many are convinced, for their own private reasons, that it is surely not a serious argument, until some catastrophe strikes and uncovers certain questions and doubts when the ever popular “hope for the best” appears.

Generally human beings are restless. They are and have always been inquisitive about what’s happening that will affect their lives and what the future will hold for them. They usually oppose any imposition put upon them that will incumber their short and long term plans. What is important to them is to maintain control of the “self.” Most of us find out that things get out of control when we make bad decisions that appear irreconcilable with our rational nature; choices that are in opposition to our “good conscience” which we wish we hadn’t

made. Hopefully, others are not seriously hurt by them. It may take a while to get over those bad decisions or judgements but it is possible that some may never get over them, particularly if they become habitual and cause great damage.

It takes a bit of maturity to understand that there is no such thing as perfection in this world, and that our future depends on making a concerted effort to make things better than they are if at all possible— not perfect, just better. This is not always easy, habits become second nature, we may often habitually become what we really don't want to become. This happens by moving forward yet clinging to ill placed repertoires of past bad decisions. It is obvious that habits, like the proverbial coin, have two sides. They can be developed from either repeated good choices and judgements or bad choices and judgements over a period of time. These harmless observations are not exactly Neurophysiology or Quantum Physics, or Rocket Science, but in a way they do have certain scientific applications. There are so many misunderstood notions of human motivations and perturbations of the human mind that scientists and philosophers are trying work out, it's hard to tell all the hypotheses that are flying around without a score card. However, there are things about us that are essential for us to be human, or for that matter, simply for us to *be*. Let us set aside here all the other mammals and just stick with the human variety.

The two essentials are: 1. We are physical; we are metabolic and are capable of reproduction. Our wounds heal and our vital organs are generally on autopilot. 2. We are mental; we are conscious; we can perceive, comprehend and communicate. We can reason, and regardless of John Calvin's predestination free and able to decide (after a certain age) independently. Does that

mean that we are bifurcated, made up of two independent parts, the physical and the mental, body and soul? Some believe so, while others believe that we are *strictly* matter, and all thinking is by and large a product of the brain and its connection to the nervous system. These are the strong determinist, bottom up thinkers linked primarily to neo-Darwinian evolution. In the old days there were also people who thought that the body was “nothing,” that everything was mind, “gnosis,” particularly when concerned with spirituality, that we are all just “spirits” in a worthless envelope called the body. The mind body dilemma has been going on in earnest from the time of Socrates and no one has yet come up with a definitive answer. Theologians, Philosophers, Physicists, Physiologists, Psychologists, Psychiatrists, the famous and infamous, have all been contributing premise after premise to solve what through the centuries has been known as the “mind body problem.” For a comprehensive understanding of this issue we would recommend Professor Daniel N. Robinson’s *Consciousness and Mental Life*, (Columbia University Press, 2008).

What this controversy is doing in an essay on “*God Only Through Christ*” is simply because from the seventeenth century onward, during the so called enlightenment, this issue was used to disprove the existence of God, though no “proof” has ever arrived. How such learned men continually tried to prove a negative is puzzling. There can be no empirical proof of either the existence or non-existence of God. In fact, 2005 data shows that about eighty eight percent of the worlds population believes in God in one way or another, so one may conclude that this is a “godly” planet. If this is the case there can only be three concepts concerning an Almighty God as The Creator. Either God made the world; the world made God; or something else *initially* made the world, since a cyclic

hypothesis would imply a beginning. Further, if a multi-verse concept were correct, it would matter little to current or future earthlings. The universe poses unanswered boundary questions. Does it go on forever or does it reach equilibrium and return to its primordial quanta, thence to nothing— or perhaps, another “big bang?” We shouldn’t get too far into astrophysics, since that isn’t the purpose of this paper, but some of these questions have a bearing on the subject if God is Spirit and “not *of* this world,” but is believed to have created it.

We understand that the world was being formed billions of years before the the first biological creatures showed up, so we can’t say that the world made God, but we can say that the world made the creatures which developed a *human mind* that created the concept of God. Man, a former ape, through an extra natural linkage to evolution, imagined a being who became known as God. Here again, there are hundreds of hypotheses to show exactly how this happened, none proven well enough to satisfy scientific determinism. Even Darwin was dubious about this scenario. If one assumes this story to be true, it still doesn’t solve the causality problem, i.e. the creation of the world “*at the beginning.*” That leaves the cycle and multi-verse scenarios open for deliberation. For the last fifty years or so, a huge amount of scholarship has been directed towards, and added to these basically ancient Eastern ideas.

As the work goes on, funded by many private and public grants, the scientists have come up with precarious mathematical formulas such as the “string theory” and others, which can be called cursory “theories;” but no where near proof per se.

We each have an individual history that goes back as far as our personal memory can take us. We all can vaguely recall some

of the earliest moments of our lives. In modern times, some of these moments have been saved or recorded with photographs, film, tape or on micro chips. When we see them, or hear sound recordings of those moments, we can think back and vividly re-live the the scenes of the past. Humanity has it's history as well. In almost the same way we can visit the past with the use of the records that were kept as soon as pictographs and writing was invented. History: *Middle English* *histoire, historie, from Anglo-French estoire, histoire, from Latin historia, from Greek, inquiry, history, from histōr; istōr knowing, learned; akin to Greek eidenai to know First Known.*

There are, of course, history revisionists as well as history deniers. Skepticism is a very common human trait. People tend not to believe things without personal, sensual experience. It's hard for them to take some ones word for something. Perhaps they themselves are prone to exaggerate what they offer as truth or "the facts," so that *all* offers of truth for them is suspected of exaggeration or outright lies. It is possible that many believe they have been lied to so often that "truth" escapes them completely. Truth becomes irrelevant and only personal conviction, from whatever source is the only comforting conclusion one should draw. The individual human will is all that really matters. In this way "trust" is very hard to come by. It could be that that's why the divorce rate is so high, and the world is being choked by litigation; or why people do not trust their leaders and why leaders make fools of the people by presumption and insolence. In a world of advertising claims, fictional entertainment and political posturing, truth tends to gets lost. When Polonius advises Laertes in Shakespeare's Hamlet, he tells him:

"To thine own self be true, and it must follow, as the night the day, thou canst not then be false to any man."

Truth was once considered sacred. The whole truth and nothing but the truth, was sworn before God. Without it, Justice does not hold-up. Humanity is only free in the truth. When Pilate saw Truth staring him in the face, he didn't recognize it. The Apostle Thomas has got to be the patron saint of all skeptics. He needed to touch Christ's wounds to finally say: "*My Lord and my God.*" We may ask, is this episode true, is this verified history or is it just made up by some follower of John the Evangelist? We have to read John's epilogue to decide for ourselves, since we may very well not believe the witnesses with the extremely weak argument that we weren't there to see it happen.

We began in the world on our birthday. I suppose that's why birthdays are important to us for the rest of our lives. We came into the world fully equipped, potentially, with the power of reason and freedom of the will to deal with the present, and with the unique capability of transcendency, to think cosmically, to think outside of our selves. The human mind has evolved over the ages with an enormous capacity for both memory and forethought. It operates in that millisecond we call the present, between the past and the future. Can the body (including the brain) think without the mind, or the mind think without the body? No! There seems to be a coordinated simultaneity in the process of thought. A pre-consciousness a consciousness and a sub-consciousness— all three working together awake or asleep. If the theory of evolution is correct, and in many ways it appears to be, there has to have been a time when "animal nature" was transformed to human nature. What can be called the brain to mind transformation. As man emerged from the animal, higher thought processes emerged from an enlarged brain. The developing mind supervened, and

“man” more quickly became the special, supernatural “human” that he is. It was the interaction of the mind working with the now human body that accelerated mans advancement through time. It makes very little sense to argue the chicken-and-the-egg, i.e. the brain/mind scenario at this point, since we’re already about thirteen billion earth years in advance of the real argument, Who made the world? Question 1 of Baltimore Catechism 1.

After a few million years, when we were able to reason, rationalize and communicate, we began to try to figure out, in primordial ways, some of the questions we had mentioned earlier. Why is there something rather than nothing? Why are we here etc.? Some of the answers were creatively given by fabulous stories once human beings were able to communicate. Professor Mircea Eliade explains this phenomenon in his book *Myth and Reality*, (1963, Harper and Roe)

“Myth narrates a sacred history; it relates an event that took place in primordial Time, the fabled time of the "beginnings." In other words, myth tells how, through the deeds of Supernatural Beings, a reality came into existence, be it the whole of reality, the Cosmos, or only a fragment of reality – an island, a species of plant, a particular kind of human behavior, an institution. Myth, then is always an account of a "creation"; it related how something was produced, began to be.”

Who would disregard myth, the primal considerations of our ancestors? Perhaps the same people who would throw aside or re-write history without serious scholarship. Many of today’s scientists and scholars are simply bent on proving that God is a myth— as they understand it. There are people today who claim that the atom was not “really” known until Lavoisier and Dalton, discounting the fact that there were atomists hundreds

of years before the Christian era [CE] in Greece and India. There is a certain intransigence displayed here, a belief that nothing could possibly be truly known without today's science. This is how myth got the reputation of being nothing but fantasy, and not the legitimate conclusions of early man based on what he honestly and *truly* believed. Of the many creation myths, all have similarities suggesting that an Ultimate Spirit or Spirits set all things in motion. The book of Genesis in the Hebrew Bible is a culmination of those concepts without the idea of a negative counter-force as a Co-creator, although the pronoun "We" was used a few times by the writers describing the creation of man and woman. The great creative metaphor that Genesis is, not surprisingly corresponds very well with the cosmic timelines of today's science. From Genesis on, the "Hebrew Bible" is generally the story of the Jewish people with their God, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, whose Prophets persistently predicted the coming of the Messiah, the King and Deliverer who would free the Jewish people from their trials and tribulations. It is truly amazing how today's archeology and anthropology substantiates the Bible stories. The Dead Sea scrolls are just one of the many examples of the incredible discoveries of our day. A translation is available for all of us to read just as easily as we read Plato, or Caesar's accomplishments in Gaul or today's Wall Street Journal. The early Fathers of the Church are almost all on record attesting to the veracity of the Herodian period and of the Gospel concerning the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. To accuse these written records of being bogus or irrelevant in our time, is a direct assault on thousands of years of dedication and scholarship by very great men and women.

The words and works of Jesus in the Holy Gospel, witnessed by the Apostles, is our direct connection to the Holy Trinity. Recently, we downloaded a copy of Benedict XVI's *The*

Fathers of the Church: From Clement of Rome to Augustine of Hippo, (Eerdmans Publishing Co. 2009). As a result we decided to read much of the Fathers' original material available on <newadvent.com>. It was surprising to note how much the Church has remained as it was founded by Christ, firmly holding to his teachings. These heroic saints and sages, many of whom suffered martyrdom for the faith and the love of the Father through Jesus in the Spirit were the staunch instruments of God keeping the Church from straying from its Founder. Today, as in earlier centuries, there are those asking the "Body of Christ" to change its ways because of serious mistakes made by some of its pastors, or because of orthodox decisions made by earlier synods based on the teachings of Christ that do not suit a modern "lifestyle." Still, all Christians are members of the one Body of Christ. Only sincere prayers from *all* its members will result in a unified Christendom once again. Jesus is the Good Shepherd, the Son, who the Father sent us to *see* and *hear* during the time of Caesar Augustus and Herod the Great— and in our time by faith through the grace of God in the Spirit of Truth. [Grace: the privilege of sharing in the life of the Trinity extended to us by an incomprehensible God, through Jesus Christ the Lord.].

"God is one, and Christ is one, and his Church is one, and the faith is one, and the Christian people is joined into a substantial unity of body by the cement of concord. Unity cannot be severed. What is one by nature cannot be separated." St. Cyprian, (*From The Fathers of the Church*)

One treasures the words Saint Cyprian wrote in his time, as well as all the other great defenders of the faith, who demonstrated an enormous love of the Trinity, and supported the true findings of the early Councils based wholly on Scripture and Tradition. Yet, it is fair to say that what was considered "one by nature" has been separated. Many over the

centuries have not heard the voice of the Good Shepherd, and when the “wolf” came the sheep were scattered; the atom was split revealing smaller and smaller quanta. The unity which “cannot not be severed,” remains so into the future. Trust in the unity of the Trinity was fractured as the human *will* replaced obedience to the Father, Son and Spirit as proclaimed by Jesus of Nazareth, the Logos; the Word of God; the nexus between God and man, *as God and as Man*. There are few people in this world who do not know *of* Jesus of Nazareth. The question is, how many know of Jesus of Nazareth as their personal Savior, and the Savior of the world. I would be willing to bet that *that* number is considerably smaller. What of God? Almost all of us seem to know that God exists. As we had mentioned earlier eighty eight percent of the worlds population believe in God. This is what Cambridge University tells us. In 2005, the number was down from 2000, where ninety five percent believed in God. If history interests you at all, you know that there are a lot fewer gods today than there were in the ancient past. Thanks to Abraham, most believers have settled on the one God worshiped in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. That would account for the large percentage of believers that Cambridge gives us. What about the God who those 528b believe in? What do *they* know that Secular Humanists or Atheists don’t know?

That is not an easy question to answer, but we can suppose that all 6b people, the present residents of this planet, would agree that after Creation [no matter how you think that was accomplished] the earth was left with matter and energy that would eventually produce Homo Sapiens; the human animal who could reason and freely decide, and knew of himself/herself as selves. The human mind had been formed and our ancient ancestors were able to rationalize, by experience, what was good as opposed to what was bad. Their limbic systems in

the brain had already taught them “flight or fight” now they were learning empathy, sympathy and compassion, and that they could override the “good” at will. Saint Augustine suggests:

“We could never judge that one thing is better than another, if a basic understanding of the “good” had not already been installed in us.”

Genesis gives us some great “soap operas” that do not sound too unusual with what is going on in today’s news. Polytheism had eventually become Monotheism with Abraham, whom everyone knows and loves. Abraham’s God, Christ’s Father and Islam’s Allah, appear to be the One God of Creation. He is said to have spoken to Abraham in various ways, and spoken to Israel through the Prophets of Israel, including Moses, and spoken to Muslims through the Prophet Muhammed. Jesus called him his Father, and himself, his Son; and proceeded to tell us that he not only knew Abraham, literally, but that he and his Father were One. That God was Spirit and must be worshiped in spirit and in truth. He said that he was “the way, the truth, and the life,” and that no one could come to the Father except through him. He also said:

“If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you for ever. This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you.”

Why would billions believe this in the twenty first century? Is the Spirit of Truth in the “Body of Christ,” his Church? What is unique is that the world expresses its belief in God, who they did not see, and is dubious about Jesus and his works who the world *did* see. In his first General Audience, Francis I, the new Pope of the Roman Catholic Church offered this:

“God,” Francis emphasized, “didn't wait for us to come to him. It was He who came to us. ... Jesus lived the everyday reality of the most common persons. ... He cried when he saw Martha and Mary suffering for the death of their brother Lazarus ... He also experienced the betrayal of a friend. In Christ, God has given us the assurance that He is with us, in our midst. ... Jesus has no home because his home is the people, us ourselves. His mission is to open the doors to God for all, to be the presence of God's love.”

It was the supernatural works that the Father wrought through Jesus, witnessed by thousands; it was his appearances to the Apostles after rising from the dead, where they recognized him in the “breaking of the bread,” and where they were commissioned to spread the “good news” to the whole world; it was four separate gospels and the letters of Saints Paul, Peter, James, John and Jude, plus Acts and Revelation by those who stayed with him during his ministry that teach us the grand promises of God’s plan, the words in which we are invited to make our home, all this and more, is said to be contrary to the Secular Humanism of today. The “humanism” that holds the will of the people as the highest standard of cultural activity, while approving of millions of pre-natal killings every year; the same “humanism” that removes incentive from many of its needy citizens by instruments of government. Secular Humanism as it exists today is no more than sugar-coated suicide. The blind leading the blind! This is hard to deny in many obvious ways. When God is missing, there is no force on earth to contain his estranged people in their “will to power,” generally over the meek and peaceful. This is why God was made incarnate in Jesus Christ and preached the Beatitudes on a hillside in Galilee.

It has always been our contention that the Incarnation is the major key to belief in the Trinity. Fr. Raymond E. Brown SS

with his *The Birth of the Messiah* (Yale Press) as well as Benedict XVI (retired), Vol. I, *Jesus of Nazareth* (Ignatius Press) and Fr. Gerald O'Collins SJ, *Incarnation* (Continuum Press), have all given us very special insight to the history and circumstances surrounding this belief as its presented primarily in Luke's Gospel. The Creed and the entire edifice of the Christian Confession hangs on the few words from a grace filled Jewish teenager named Mary:

"Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." (Luke 1: 38)

Rather than getting into a major rhetorical exercise supporting the legitimacy of Jesus' birth as Father Brown beautifully did, we will only say that if Mary is not believed, there is no way to believe anything of Christianity. Christianity entirely hinges on the virgin birth. If God cannot produce a human being, to be called Emmanuel (God with us), in the womb of a virgin by the Spirit, the giver of life, then there is no God. There is only a vivid imagination on the part of the Gospel writers. Further, this then calls into question the prophesy of the Old Testament references to the Messiah. Much of reformed Jewish messianism believes it to be an age rather than a person. That is not unusual in modern times. Similar Christian reformers in both ancient and modern times saw fit to rearrange the doctrinal and dogmatic decrees with regard to scriptural understanding that has kept Christianity ever new by not subscribing to the fashionable trends of any age. It was upon the "rock" of Peter that Christ built his Church, with the guidance of the Spirit of Truth known to the faithful, particularly at the epiclesis of every mass. Islamists also believe in the "virgin birth," but strangely, not in the Sonship of God. For them Jesus is just another prophet, the last one being Muhammed. If Mary were lying to cover her embarrassment, and the child in her womb was "illegitimate," there would be

no earthly way her Son would have been able to perform the spectacular, miraculous works he did, witnessed and recorded in the testaments of history. The Lamb of God had taken away the sins of the world. Love as a person triumphed over death!

“If I am not doing the works of my Father, then do not believe me. But if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works, so that you may know and understand that the Father is in me and I am in the Father.” (John 10:37)

Mary’s acquiescence reshaped the world forever. Everlasting life was offered to humanity, in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The world began anew through a Jewish teenager’s trust in God.