

“To Devote Ourselves to the Blessed Trinity”: Andrew Fuller and the Defense of “Trinitarian Communities”¹

Michael A. G. Haykin

INTRODUCTION

It is a curious fact that although the concept of the encyclopedia has its origins within the ideological matrix of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, when it comes to conservative expressions of theology, this era was not really conducive to encyclopedic or systematic

summaries of the Christian Faith. In this regard, a work like John Gill’s (1697–1771) *A Complete Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity* (1769–1770) was definitely out of sync with conservative theological trends. The other great Baptist theologian of this era, Andrew Fuller (1754–1815), was more typical. Though he was entirely capable of drawing up a systematic theology, he resisted doing so until it was too late. When he finally began

to write something in this vein, he had about sixteen months to live, and he never got beyond writing down his thoughts on the prolegomena of theology, the being of God, the necessity of revelation along with the inspiration of the Bible, and the doctrine of the Trinity.² Fuller was well aware of his era’s aversion to systematizing theology, for as he noted in a sermon he gave at the annual meeting of the Baptist churches of the Northamptonshire Association in 1796: “systematic divinity ... has been of late years much decried,” and that because such a way of going about doing theology was regarded as “the mark of a contracted mind, and the grand obstruction to free inquiry.”³ In other words, the Enlightenment exaltation of rational inquiry unfettered by such external authorities as divine Writ or holy Church had made a significant imprint upon the world of Christian writing. Fuller went on to note, however, that only in the realm of religious thought was such an attitude acceptable. In other spheres of thought and action, such as philosophy, agricul-

Michael A. G. Haykin is Professor of Church History and Biblical Spirituality at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He is also Adjunct Professor of Church History and Spirituality at Toronto Baptist Seminary in Ontario, Canada.

Dr. Haykin is the author of many books, including *“At the Pure Fountain of Thy Word”: Andrew Fuller As an Apologist* (Paternoster Press, 2004), *Jonathan Edwards: The Holy Spirit in Revival* (Evangelical Press, 2005), and *The God Who Draws Near: An Introduction to Biblical Spirituality* (Evangelical Press, 2007), and *Rediscovering the Church Fathers: Who They Were and How They Shaped the Church* (Crossway, 2011).

ture, or business, it would be regarded as folly to dispense with a foundational system of first principles.⁴ Fuller was convinced that there is a system of truth to be found in the Scriptures, even though that truth is not arranged systematically.⁵ But the same was true of the world of nature, Fuller argued. There one sees a “lovely variety but amidst all this variety, an observant eye will perceive unity, order, arrangement, and fullness of design.”⁶ Whatever difficulties might therefore attend the discovery of the systematic interlocking of biblical truths, it was vital to recognize that, from God’s perspective, there was a unified body of truth. As Fuller noted in another context, to simply abandon the idea of theological truth because key aspects of it were disputed is, at best, absurd and, at worst, “infinitely ... pernicious,” for “if all disputed subjects are to be reckoned matters of mere speculation, we shall have nothing of any real use left in religion.”⁷

Now, one of the most disputed theological *loci* in the eighteenth century was also one that had been absolutely central to the Christian tradition, namely, the doctrine of the Trinity. The Trinitarianism of the Ancient Church had remained basically unchallenged until the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Even during the Reformation, a most tumultuous theological era, this vital area of Christian belief did not come into general dispute, though there were a few, like Michael Servetus (1511–1553) and the Italians, Lelio Francesco Sozzini (1525–1562) and his nephew Fausto Sozzini (1539–1604),⁸ who rejected Trinitarianism for a Unitarian perspective on the Godhead. However, as Sarah Mortimer has argued in her ground-breaking study of seventeenth-century English Socinianism, in the century after the Reformation the Socinian understanding of human beings as “inquiring, reasoning and active individuals who must take responsibility for their own spiritual lives” did come to play a critical role in

undermining the way that “Trinitarian communities” in England had established theological boundaries for themselves.⁹ This was part of a growing tide of rationalism in the seventeenth century and the one following that led to a “fading of the trinitarian imagination” and to the doctrine coming under heavy attack.¹⁰ Informed by the Enlightenment’s confidence in the “omnicompetence” of human reason, increasingly the intellectual *mentalité* of this era either dismissed the doctrine of the Trinity as a philosophical and unbiblical construct of the post-Apostolic Church, and turned to classical Arianism as an alternate, though admittedly odd, perspective, or simply ridiculed it as utterly illogical, and argued for Deism or Socinianism.¹¹ Of course, this re-tooling of theological perspectives did not happen without significant conflict. Contrary to the impression given by various historical overviews of the doctrine of the Trinity, the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were actually replete with critical battles over Trinitarianism. And some of these involved the Trinitarian community of which Andrew Fuller was a member, the Particular Baptists.

THE PARTICULAR BAPTISTS: A TRINITARIAN COMMUNITY

Through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the Particular Baptists in the British Isles tenaciously confessed a Trinitarian understanding of the Godhead and so, while other communities, such as the Presbyterians and General Baptists largely ceased to be Trinitarian,¹² the Particular Baptists continued to regard themselves, and that rightly, as a Trinitarian community. Their earliest confessional document, *The First London Confession of Faith* (1644/1646), had declared this about God:

In [the] ... Godhead, there is the Father, the Son, and the Spirit; being every one of them one and the same God; and therefore not divided, but

distinguished one from another by their several properties; the Father being from himself, the Son of the Father from everlasting, the Holy Spirit proceeding from the Father and the Son.¹³

B. R. White has argued that this confession gave these early Baptists an extremely clear and self-conscious sense of their community's distinct identity and *raison d'être*.¹⁴ And yet, as this specific paragraph also reveals, these Baptists were desirous of declaring their complete solidarity with the mainstream of classical Christianity that was rooted in the fourth-century Trinitarian creedal declarations and that also included the medieval Western Church's commitment to the *Filioque*. The other major Particular Baptist confession of the seventeenth century, *The Second London Confession of Faith* (1677/1689), was equally forthright in its Trinitarianism—in the words of Curtis Freeman, its “words ... resonate with Nicene orthodoxy”¹⁵—and firmly linked this core Christian doctrine to spirituality. The “doctrine of the Trinity,” it affirmed, “is the foundation of all our communion with God, and comfortable dependence on him.”¹⁶

Throughout the long eighteenth century this community unhesitatingly maintained that this doctrine is, in the words of Benjamin Wallin (1711–1782), the “first and grand principle of revealed truth and the gospel.”¹⁷ In 1690, the London Baptist layman Isaac Marlow (1649–1719), for example, published a treatise on the Trinity in which he stated his conviction that of those elements of divine truth that redound most to the glory of God and best further the fellowship of believers, “the blessed doctrine of the holy Trinity is the chiefest.”¹⁸ Nearly fifty years later, the renowned preacher Joseph Stennett II (1692–1758) similarly affirmed that “the doctrine of the ever blessed Trinity, is of the greatest importance to his [that is, God's] glory.”¹⁹

Typical of the Particular Baptists' grip on the doctrine of the Trinity during this era was a major defense of this doctrine by the voluminous John

Gill. His *The Doctrine of the Trinity Stated and Vindicated*—first published in 1731 and then reissued in a second edition in 1752—proved to be an extremely effective defence of the fact that there is, as Gill put it, “but one God; that there is a plurality in the Godhead; that there are three divine Persons in it; that the Father is God, the Son God, and the Holy Spirit God; that these are distinct in Personality, the same in substance, equal in power and glory.”²⁰ Gill was especially concerned in this treatise to affirm the eternal sonship of the second person of the Godhead. As he explained in a letter he wrote to John Davis (1702–1778), the Welsh pastor of the Baptist Church in the Great Valley, Devon, Pennsylvania, in March of 1745:

Jesus Christ is the Son of God by nature and not office, ... he is the eternal Son of God by ineffable filiation and not by constitution or as mediator in which respect he is a servant, and not a Son. And of this mind are all our churches of the particular Baptist persuasion nor will they admit to communion, nor continue in communion [with] such as are of a different judgment. ... I have some years ago published a treatise upon the doctrine of the Trinity, in which I have particularly handled the point of Christ's sonship, have established the orthodox sense of it, and refuted the other notion, which tho' it may be held by some, as not downright *Sabeleanism* [*sic*], yet it tends to it.²¹

The heart of this treatise was later incorporated into Gill's *Body of Doctrinal Divinity* (1769), which, for most Baptist pastors of that day, was their major theological reference work. As John Rippon (1751–1836), Gill's successor at Carter Lane, noted in a biographical sketch of his predecessor:

The Doctor not only watched over his *people*, “with great affection, fidelity, and love;” but he also watched his *pulpit* also. He would not, if he knew it, admit any one to preach for him, who was either cold-hearted to the doctrine of the Trinity; or who *denied* the divine filiation of the Son

of God; or who *objected* to conclude his prayers with the usual *doxology* to Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, as three equal Persons in the one Jehovah. Sabellians, Arians, and Socinians, he considered as real enemies of the cross of Christ. They *dared* not ask him to preach, nor *could* he in conscience, permit them to officiate for him. He conceived that, by this uniformity of conduct, he adorned the pastoral office.²²

Gill's defence of the Trinity did far more than adorn the pastoral office; through it he played a key role in shepherding the English Particular Baptist community along the pathway of biblical orthodoxy.

Gill's concern to uphold the eternal sonship and reject Sabellianism was not misplaced. During the late 1740s and 1750s the influential Welsh Calvinistic Methodist leader, Howel Harris (1714–1773), was pushing Patripassianism and seemed to be veering towards Sabellian heterodoxy,²³ while Gill's fellow Baptist Anne Dutton (1692–1765) was sure that she detected Sabellianism in a tract by the popular Anglican Evangelical William Romaine (1714–1795).²⁴ Among the Baptists, John Allen (fl.1740s–1780s)—“a prickly and polemic character,”²⁵ and also something of a loner who emigrated to America where he helped inflame politically radical sentiments prior to the Revolution—publicly accused Gill in 1770 of undermining the salvific work of Christ in his affirmation of the eternal generation of the Son. As Allen put it in his own peculiar style:

I wonder for my part how the Doctor [Gill] dares to die with such an idea in his heart, that he who is the glory of God, the glory of heaven, the glory of the saints, has only his personal glory and existence by generation: does the Doctor think such stuff as this will pass in Israel? ... the Doctor teaches, that a first, second, and a third person existeth [in the Godhead], the one by nature, the other by being begotten,—and the other by procession; such an idea as this of the existence of

God, we think is unworthy his name, his nature, and perfection, and contrary to the declaration of the truth of Christ, who says, “I am, I am the first” [Revelation 1:17b]; as tho' he had said, “I am of myself, and derive neither essential nor personal glory from none”—therefore it is that we believe according to the sweet simplicity of the Scriptures, that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the sacred three that bare record in heaven [see 1 John 5:7], self-exist in every glory and perfection of the divine nature, whether essential or personal as the Triune God. ... [So] if he [that is, Christ] is not self-existent in all the glories of his divine person, my soul, I think, can never be saved; for can that being (or to come close to the point) that divine person that has its highest existence by generation save another? And does not this idea cut through (as it were with the Arian and Socinian sword) all the glories of Christ's person, the merit of his blood, the conquest of his resurrection, and power of his intercession?²⁶

In other words, Gill's promotion of the eternal generation of the Son ultimately achieved what the Arians or Socinians aimed at—it fatally undermined the confession of the Son's essential deity!

THE CHALLENGE OF SOCINIANISM

Although the particular piece in which this critique of Gill appeared also contained drubbings of numerous other English Baptists,²⁷ Allen's rejection of the eternal generation of the Son gained a hearing in more than one Baptist quarter. Andrew Fuller, for instance, was given one of Allen's publications on this subject to read when he was a relatively young Christian in 1775. True to a life-long “determination to take up no principle at second-hand; but to search for everything at the pure fountain of [God's] word,”²⁸ Fuller tested Allen's views by Scripture and came to see that a number of biblical texts—namely, John 5:18; Galatians 4:4; Hebrews 1:8, 5:8–9; and 1 John 3:8—provided clear evidence that Allen was mistaken and that Christ was indeed “the Son of God anteceded-

ently to his being born of a woman, and that in calling God his own Father, he made himself equal with God.”²⁹ In the long run, Fuller was glad that he wrestled with this issue among others early on in his Christian life. It gave him the deep conviction that “everything pertaining to the person of Christ is of more than ordinary importance.” And it also provided a kind of test run for his polemical responses to Socinianism in the 1790s.³⁰

Socinianism was the leading form of heterodoxy within English Dissent in the last quarter of the eighteenth century.³¹ In large part, this was due to the vigorous campaigning of Joseph Priestley (1733–1804), whom Michael R. Watts, in his study of the early history of British Nonconformity, has dubbed the “Leonardo da Vinci of Dissent.”³² By his early twenties, Priestley was proficient in physics, philosophy, and mathematics as well as a variety of modern and ancient Near Eastern languages. During the 1760s and 1770s his reputation as England’s foremost experimental scientist was established by his publication of a weighty history of electrical experimentation and his discovery of ten new gases, including oxygen, ammonia, and sulphur dioxide. Alongside this illustrious career as a scientist Priestley was also a prolific and profound theological author. In fact, he regarded his work as a theologian as his true vocation.

After his conversion to the Socinian cause, which probably took place in 1769,³³ Priestley devoted much of his time to theological writing “with no other view,” he baldly stated on one occasion, “than to make proselytes.”³⁴ “An unflagging and often pugnacious controversialist,” Priestley sought to establish his position not on nature and human reason, as did the Deists, but on a serious and rational investigation of the Scriptures and history.³⁵ As a Dissenter he had inherited the Protestant commitment to the Scriptures as a sufficient source of religious truth. “Revelation,” as Martin Fitzpatrick has noted, “lay at the core of his religion.”³⁶ This attachment to the Scriptures,

though, was yoked to a deep-rooted conviction that the “plainest and most obvious sense of the Scriptures is in favour of those doctrines which are most agreeable to reason.”³⁷ In other words, the Scriptures do indeed contain divine revelation, but their interpretation is to be determined by what is in accord with sound reason. Priestley did not deny that there were certain affirmations of Scripture which were beyond the grasp of human reason. He admitted, for example, the historicity of many of the miracles of the apostolic era, including the bodily resurrection of Christ.³⁸ What he refused to countenance, though, were interpretations of Scripture which, to his mind, entailed a logical contradiction. This explains why orthodox Trinitarianism bore the brunt of Priestley’s theological polemic.³⁹ Priestley was convinced that the doctrine of the Trinity not only had no scriptural foundation, but it was also a mathematical impossibility, “since three cannot be one, or one, three.”⁴⁰ From Priestley’s perspective, if there is one divine being, there must perforce be one person and thus one God; if there are three divine persons, then there must be three divine beings and so three gods.

In the *Institutes of Natural and Revealed Religion*, Priestley’s earliest major theological work, Priestley thus maintained that God had instructed “the first parents of mankind” in the truth of his oneness and the fact that he alone is to be worshipped. “History,” Priestley told his readers, “informs us that the worship of one God, without images, was in all nations prior to polytheism.”⁴¹ This “primitive religion of mankind”, however, soon became corrupted, and idolatry gradually superseded the worship of the one true God. In order to free men and women from their idolatry God gave to human beings the Scriptures, a fact that Priestley regards as self-evident when one considers “how strongly this great article, the worship of one God only, is guarded in all the books of Scripture.”⁴² Yet, because of the human bent

towards idolatry, this article was subject to corruption both during the time of the Old Testament dispensation and after that of the New. Priestley was especially concerned with the latter period, for it was then that there was introduced into the life of the Church not only the worship of Mary and “innumerable other saints,” but also what he bluntly described as the “idolatrous worship of Jesus Christ.”⁴³

The Reformation had only partially rectified this state of affairs, for, while it had rejected prayers to the Virgin Mary and to the saints, “prayers to Christ, who is no more a proper object of worship than his mother, ... were retained.”⁴⁴ In arguing against the propriety of praying to Christ Priestley envisaged himself as completing therefore one aspect of the rediscovery of New Testament Christianity that had been left undone by the sixteenth-century Reformers. In fact, Alexander Gordon has pointed out that the major difference between the Socinianism promoted by Priestley along with friends like Theophilus Lindsey (1723–1808) and earlier English versions of this heterodoxy is that while the former categorically condemned the worship of Christ as idolatrous, the latter merely sought to keep it within due moderation. In Gordon’s words, Priestley and Lindsey made “reduction of worship to a strict Patrology ... central and distinguishing.”⁴⁵

From what he called “the general tenour of Scripture” Priestley argued that the early church knew nothing of Christ as “a proper object of worship” or prayer.⁴⁶ He found proof for this assertion in the fact, for instance, that Christ and his followers in the early church were in the habit of directing their prayers to God alone. As Priestley put it:

Our Saviour himself always prayed to his Father, and with as much humility and resignation as the most dependent being in the universe could possibly do; always addressing him as his Father, or the author of his being; and he directs his disciples to the same great Being, whom only, he says, we ought to serve.⁴⁷

Priestley appears to have in mind here such incidents in the life of Christ as his prayers in the Garden of Gethsemane (e.g. Luke 22:42) and his response to his disciples’ request to teach them how to pray (Luke 11:1–2). The life of the early church as it is described in Acts provided Priestley with further examples. In Acts 4:24–30 there is recorded a “prayer of some length,” which is addressed solely to God. Later, when James, the brother of John, was martyred and Peter imprisoned, supplication was made on Peter’s behalf to God without any mention of Christ (Acts 12:5). Likewise, the Apostle Paul, in such passages as Ephesians 3:14, “speaks of himself as praying to God, and not to Christ.”⁴⁸

Not only did Priestley find no clear examples in the New Testament that provided a precedent for praying to Christ, he was also confident that the New Testament commanded us to pray to none but God alone. James, for instance, directed those of his readers who lacked wisdom to ask God for it (James 1:5). He did not, Priestley emphasizes, advise “them to apply to Christ or to the Trinity for direction in these circumstances.”⁴⁹ The same is true with regard to the Apostle Paul. In his *Notes on All the Books of Scripture* (1804), Priestley quotes with evident approval a comment by a fellow Socinian, Paul Cardale (1705–1775), on the Apostle’s instruction in Philippians 4:6 [“let your requests be made known unto God” (KJV)]: “had it been possible for St. Paul to entertain the doctrine of a Trinity, he would no doubt have directed his own prayers, and [those of] the Philippians, to the Sacred Three, as is the common language of the present age.”⁵⁰ As Stephen Ford has pointed out, the final clause of this quote obviously has in view the language of the Church of England’s *Book of Common Prayer*, in which prayers and collects are regularly concluded with a reference to the Trinity.⁵¹ An open letter that Priestley wrote to a Swedenborgian congregation in 1791 made a similar point regarding Christ’s instructions about prayer in John 16:23 [“In that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he

will give it you" (KJV)]. According to Priestley's reading of the text, Christ "plainly distinguishes between praying to the Father, and asking any thing of himself."⁵² His comments on this verse and its context in the *Notes on All the Books of Scripture* reiterated that "Christ is not to be the object of worship or prayer in any respect," and that, contrary to what Christ appears to teach by the phrase "whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name,"

the intercession of Christ with God for us is needless. We are to address our prayers to God himself immediately; and his affection for us is such as will always induce him to grant whatever is proper for us, without the intercession, or mediation, of any being whatever for us.⁵³

In his scientific enquiries Priestley was regularly guided by utilitarian considerations, since he believed that the "immediate use of natural science is the power it gives us over nature, by means of the knowledge we acquire of its laws; whereby human life is ... made more comfortable and happy."⁵⁴ Similarly, "the sound knowledge of Christianity is not of importance as a matter of speculation merely"; the theological convictions for which Priestley contended could not be believed without an impact on the "sentiments of our hearts, and our conduct in life."⁵⁵ In the case of his belief regarding the nature of God there were at least two practical consequences. First, God the Father alone should be the recipient of prayer and he alone worshipped. Then, Socinians must separate themselves from those who disagreed with them and they needed to form their own congregations. Addressing men and women of like mind, Priestley therefore raised the question that if

it was a sufficient justification of the first Reformers, that they considered the church from which they separated as worshipping saints and angels; will it not justify your separation from their partial reformatations, that you consider them as praying to and worshipping one whom you consider as a man like yourselves, though honoured and

distinguished by God above all other men? To join habitually in public worship with Trinitarians, is countenancing that worship, which you must consider as idolatrous; and which, however innocent in them, is highly criminal in you.⁵⁶

The society, however, in which Priestley was seeking to propagate his viewpoint and establish Socinian congregations was to a great extent still dominated by a powerful *ancien régime* whose political ideology and religious convictions were firmly interwoven.⁵⁷ Consequently, it is not at all surprising that his assertions regarding the person of Christ involved Priestley in a variety of heated and prolific debates during the 1780s and early 1790s, which fostered a widespread public perception of Priestley as an enemy to both church and state. Indeed this perception was the key factor in the violent Birmingham "Church-and-King" riots of 1791, which witnessed the destruction of Priestley's home, library and laboratory, as well as the meeting-house in which he regularly preached, and which eventually led to his emigration to the United States in 1794.⁵⁸

"ARDENT LOVE TO CHRIST"

Among Priestley's fellow Dissenters who publicly deplored these riots was Andrew Fuller. From Fuller's point of view the riots were an "iniquitous business," contrived and executed by "men of no principle."⁵⁹ Fuller's profound disapproval of the riots did not deter him, however, from publishing in 1793 an extensive critique of Priestley's position in *The Calvinistic and Socinian Systems Examined and Compared, as to their Moral Tendency*.⁶⁰ Fuller was well aware that there had been numerous replies in response to the Socinian position by orthodox authors. What made his response unique was that it sought to determine which one of these two rival perspectives on the Christian Faith was most "aretegenic," that is, most conducive to the development of moral transformation and the creation of virtuous character.⁶¹

As has been noted, Socinians such as Priestley argued that the first-century church refused

to venerate Christ and thus worshipped God aright. Yet, Fuller asks, if this be so, how does one explain the fact that:

The primitive Christians ... worshipped Jesus Christ. Not only did the martyr Stephen close his life by committing his departing spirit into the hands of Jesus, but it was the common practice, in primitive times, to invoke his name. "He hath authority," said Ananias concerning Saul, to bind "all that call on thy name" [Acts 9:14]. One part of the Christian mission was to declare that "whosoever should call on the name of the Lord should be saved" [cf. Romans 10:13], even of that Lord of whom the Gentiles had not heard. Paul addressed himself "to all that in every place called upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ" [cf. 1 Corinthians 1:2]. These modes of expression (which, if I be not greatly mistaken, always signify Divine worship) plainly inform us that it was not merely the practice of a few individuals, but of the great body of the primitive Christians, to invoke the name of Christ; nay, and that this was a mark by which they were distinguished as Christians.⁶²

In order to demonstrate that the worship of Christ was not unknown during the period covered by the New Testament, Fuller began with Acts 7:59, a text that was frequently raised during this controversy over the person of Christ. The Baptist author saw in Stephen's "calling upon" Christ an act of invocation and prayer, and thus worship.⁶³ Fuller observed that the verb "to call upon" is one that is used a number of times in a variety of contexts in the New Testament to designate Christians. Ananias, for instance, described the believers in Damascus as "all that call on thy name" (Acts 9:14). This description is found in the midst of an address to the "Lord" (Acts 9:10, 13), who, from the context, can be none other than Jesus (Acts 9:17; see also Acts 9:5). A similar phrase was used by the Apostle Paul when he characterized his ministry as a proclamation of God's desire to save "whosoever shall call

upon the name of the Lord" (Rom 10:13) and when he designated Christians as all those who "call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Cor 1:2). Since this phrase clearly depicts prayer in Acts 7:59, Fuller reasoned that it must have a similar meaning in the other New Testament texts where it appears. Thus, he stated that "these modes of expression ... always signify Divine worship."⁶⁴

Moreover, the early Christian writers, Fuller maintained, made the dignity and glory of Christ's person "their darling theme," for they "considered Christ as the All in All of their religion; and, as such, they loved him with their whole hearts."⁶⁵ Among the examples he adduced in support of this observation is Paul's depiction of Christ in Ephesians 1–3.

Feeling in himself an ardent love to Christ, he vehemently desired that others might love him too. For this cause he bowed his knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ [cf. Ephesians 3:14], in behalf of the Ephesians; praying that Christ might dwell in their hearts by faith. He represented him to them as the medium of all spiritual blessings; of election, adoption, acceptance with God, redemption, and the forgiveness of sins; of a future inheritance, and of a present earnest of it; as Head over all things to the church, and as him that filleth all in all. He described him as the only way of access to God, and as the sole foundation of a sinner's hope; whose riches were unsearchable, and the dimensions of his love passing knowledge.⁶⁶

Priestley, as has been noted, regarded the fact that Paul directs his prayer in Ephesians 3:14 to God the Father, and not to Christ, to be a significant indication of the Apostle's convictions about the impropriety of prayer to Christ. Fuller, though, sought to relate this prayer to its immediate and larger context in the letter to the Ephesians. Central to the prayer in Ephesians 3 is Paul's request of the Father that Christ might indwell the hearts of his readers by faith. Who is this Christ, though, about whom Paul makes such a request? Well, in what precedes his prayer Paul has

described Christ, to use the words of Fuller, as “the medium of all spiritual blessings” (cf. Eph 1:3), the “only way of access to God” (cf. Eph 2:18), and the One “whose riches were unsearchable” (cf. Eph 3:8). Moreover, the Apostle finished his prayer by stating that “the dimensions of his [i.e. Christ’s] love” surpass knowledge (Eph 3:18–19). Could the love that is evident in such descriptions as these, Fuller justly asked, ever be bestowed on “a fellow creature”—“a fallible and peccable man” in Priestley’s perspective⁶⁷—without it being considered anything but “the height of extravagance, and essence of idolatry”? In other words, while Paul’s prayer may not actually be addressed to Christ, its content and that which it presupposes all point to a conviction of Christ’s deity.

The Socinians’ rejection of the propriety of praying to Christ or worshipping him led in turn to Fuller’s refusal to recognize them as Christian brothers and sisters.⁶⁸ As the Baptist theologian pointed out in an article on “The Deity of Christ”:

Calling on the name of the Lord Jesus is considered, in the New Testament, as of equal importance with believing in him, having the same promise of salvation annexed to it.—“Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved” [Romans 10:13]. And seeing it is asked, “How shall they call on him in whom they have not believed?” [Romans 10:14], it is strongly intimated that all who truly believe in Christ do call upon him. This is one of the distinguishing characteristics of the primitive Christians. Paul’s Epistle to the Corinthians was addressed to them, in connexion with “all who in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord” [1 Corinthians 1:2]. Now as a rejection of the Divinity of Christ renders it idolatry to worship him, or call upon his name; so it must involve a rejection of that by which primitive Christians were distinguished, and which has the promise of salvation. ... [W]e have no warrant to acknowledge those as fellow Christians who come not under the description given of such in the New Testament; that is, who call not upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.⁶⁹

Romans 10:13–15a outlines the chain of events by which a person is saved. It begins with God sending forth someone to preach the gospel and concludes with a person responding in faith by calling upon the name of the Lord. Fuller noted how vital is the final link in this chain, the calling upon the name of the Lord, for it is this action which is determinant of the status of Christian. Unless a person has called upon the name of the Lord for salvation, he or she cannot consider himself or herself a Christian. This conclusion is further supported by 1 Corinthians 1:2, which describes Christians by means of the verb “to call upon” and where this verb is used in a similar fashion to Romans 10, namely the invoking of the Risen Christ in prayer. The Socinians, however, rejected the propriety of prayer to Christ on any occasion and for any reason. By so doing, Fuller can only conclude, they should not be regarded as Christians in the New Testament sense of the term.

Fuller thus was in full accord with Priestley that Socinians and Trinitarians should not worship together and that the former ought to have their own “separate communion”⁷⁰ or community.

Some of the grand ends of Christian society are, unitedly to worship God—to devote ourselves to the blessed Trinity by Christian baptism—and to acknowledge the atonement made by the Redeemer, by a participation of the ordinance of the Lord’s supper. But what union could there be in worship where the object worshipped is not the same—where one party believes the other to be an idolater, and the other believes him to be a degrader of Him who is “over all, God, blessed for ever” [Romans 9:5]? ... Either we are a company of idolaters, or they are enemies to the gospel—rendering the cross of Christ of none effect. Either they are unbelievers, or we are at least as bad—rendering to a creature that homage which is due only to the Creator; and, in either case, a union is the last degree of absurdity.⁷¹

FULLER'S TRINITARIANISM

Foundational to Fuller's response to Priestley was the former's deep conviction that Jesus is fully divine. For Fuller, Socinianism's denial of Christ's deity made it akin to Deism and this could only lead to the total ruination of the virtuous life.⁷² As he put it in a sermon he preached in 1801: "The person and work of Christ have ever been the corner-stone of the Christian fabric: take away his Divinity and atonement, and all will go to ruins."⁷³ Christ's deity and his atoning work are "the life-blood of Christianity"; deny them and there is only death.⁷⁴ Fuller thus frequently insisted that without the confession of the deity of Christ, one simply cannot be counted as a Christian, for "the proper Deity of Christ ... is a great and fundamental truth in Christianity."⁷⁵

Given this insistence about Christ's deity, it is noteworthy that when it came to the divinity of the Holy Spirit Fuller was nowhere near as emphatic, though he did believe that the Scriptures "expressly call ... the Holy Spirit God" in Acts 5:3–4 and he did not hesitate to assert that "every perfection of Godhead" has been ascribed to the Spirit.⁷⁶ This lacuna is somewhat surprising since Fuller, like others impacted by the Evangelical revivals of the eighteenth century, had a robust understanding of the Spirit's work and ministry.⁷⁷ In part, this is due to the fact that Priestley and the other apostles of Socinianism focused their attention overwhelmingly upon Christ and not the Holy Spirit. When Fuller on one occasion referred to the first principles of Christianity he believed were the focus of the Socinian controversy he listed the doctrine of the Trinity, the deity of Christ, and the atoning death of the Lord Jesus,⁷⁸ not the distinct deity of the Spirit. Fuller's defence of the deity of Christ and the propriety of worshipping him is therefore akin to the way that Athanasius argued in the fourth century. The Church Father also spent most of his time and energy defending the full and essential divinity of Christ in the face of the Arian onslaught against Christ's person. Only near the end of his life did Athana-

sius turn his attention to the Spirit.⁷⁹ However, Fuller was also aware that the Spirit's overarching new covenant ministry is the glorification of the Lord Jesus—the "Holy Spirit is not the grand object of ministerial exhibition; but Christ, in his person, work and offices"—and this is a key reason why "much less is said in the Sacred Scriptures on the Divinity and personality of the Holy Spirit."⁸⁰ And here Fuller seems to have followed Scripture.

Finally, with regard to statements about the Trinity, Fuller is certain that the Scriptures affirm the existence of three divine persons—the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.⁸¹ These three are never to be considered three separate beings, but one God. As Fuller put it: "in a mysterious manner, far above our comprehension, there are in the Divine unity three subsistences."⁸² How they are one has not been revealed—and so to believe it steadfastly requires faith and humility.⁸³ Moreover, this is a truth that must be regarded as being above reason, not against it nor a contradiction. As long as Christian theology does not make the mistake of the Socinians, which is to regard God as unipersonal, it can affirm this truth without fear of being irrational. In this Christians need to "regulate [their] ideas of the Divine Unity by what is taught us in the Scriptures of the Trinity; and not those of the Trinity by what we know, or think we know ... of the Unity."⁸⁴

In addition to the experience of worship, discussed at length above and which for Fuller was determinative for his understanding of the Godhead, Fuller's reflections upon baptism served to reinforce his Trinitarianism. His main piece on this ordinance is *The Practical Uses of Christian Baptism*, a highly significant tract on the meaning of baptism. Fuller argued that since baptism is to be carried out, according to Matthew 28:19, "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit," submission to the ordinance entails an avowal of the fact that God is a triune Being. Well acquainted with the history of the early Church at this point, Fuller rightly stated that this baptismal formula was

widely used in that era to argue for the doctrine of the Trinity.⁸⁵ To relinquish the doctrine of the Trinity is thus tantamount to the virtual renunciation of one's baptism.⁸⁶

Fuller tied baptism to the Trinity again, and also to worship, in a small piece entitled "The Manner in which Divine Truth is Communicated in the Holy Scriptures." He wrote:

The doctrine of the Trinity is never proposed to us as an object of speculation, but as a truth affecting our dearest interests. John introduces the sacred Three as witnesses to the truth of the gospel of Christ, as objects of instituted worship, into whose name we are baptized; and Paul exhibits them as the source of all spiritual good: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen." [2 Corinthians 13:14]. Again, "The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ." [2 Thessalonians 3:5].⁸⁷

What is noteworthy about this text is the refusal to see the Trinity as merely a "metaphysical mystery," or as Fuller put it, "an object of speculation."⁸⁸ Rather, Fuller emphasized that the doctrine has a bearing on our "dearest interests," namely, the truth as it is in the gospel, worship, and "all spiritual good." The first item, the truth of the gospel, is supported by an allusion to 1 John 5:7, the famous *Comma Johanneum*, which Fuller evidently regarded as genuine.⁸⁹ For the third point, "all spiritual good," Fuller has recourse to 2 Corinthians 13:14 and 2 Thessalonians 3:5. The use of the latter Pauline text is fascinating. Fuller's Trinitarian reading of it ultimately goes back to Basil of Caesarea (c. 329–379), who employs it in his argument for the Spirit's deity in his classic work, *On the Holy Spirit*.⁹⁰ Fuller most likely found this reading of the Pauline verse, however, in John Gill's commentary on 2 Thessalonians 3:5, where Gill follows Basil's interpretation.⁹¹

It is with regard to the second point, the Trinity as the object of adoration, that Fuller mentions baptism: "the sacred Three" are described "as objects of instituted worship, into whose name we are baptized." Fuller was presumably thinking of Matthew 28:19. The reason why doctrinal confession of the Triunity of God is vital is because it lies at the heart of Christian worship. Fuller clearly saw baptism into the name of the Triune God as not only the initiatory rite of the Church—what made it a "Trinitarian community"—but also the beginning of a life of worshipping the Trinity. Fuller made the same point in yet another text that has already been cited: among "the grand ends of Christian society are unitedly to worship God" and this meant nothing less than "to devote ourselves to the blessed Trinity by Christian baptism—and to acknowledge the atonement made by the Redeemer, by a participation of the ordinance of the Lord's supper."⁹² Fuller's choice of the verb "devote" here is noteworthy. Christian baptism is an act of dedicating oneself to the Triune God—an act that surely is to continue throughout the Christian life till it culminates in the beatific vision of the Trinity.

ENDNOTES

¹ The title comes from Andrew Fuller, *Strictures on Some of the Leading Sentiments of Mr. R. Robinson* (*The Complete Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller* (ed. Joseph Belcher [1845 ed.; repr. Harrisonburg, Virginia: Sprinkle Publications, 1988], III, 601). This standard collection of Fuller's works will be henceforth referred to as *Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*. For the term "Trinitarian communities," see Andrew Fuller, *Socinianism Indefensible on the Ground of its Moral Tendency* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, II, 258). Portions of an earlier paper of the author—"A Socinian and Calvinist Compared: Joseph Priestley and Andrew Fuller on the Propriety of Prayer to Christ," *Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis/Dutch Review of Church History* 73 (1993): 178–198—have been used in this essay with permission from E.

J. Brill, the publisher of this journal.

² See his *Letters on Systematic Divinity* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, I, 684–711). Fuller was asked to draw up this “System of Divinity” at the request of his close friend John Ryland (1753–1825). He deals with the doctrine of the Trinity in the ninth, and final one, of these letters (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, I, 707–711). He would have written this final letter no earlier than October 1814.

³ *The Nature and Importance of an Intimate Knowledge of Divine Truth* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, I, 164).

⁴ *Ibid.*, 165.

⁵ “The Manner in which Divine Truth is Communicated in the Holy Scriptures” (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, III, 537).

⁶ *Intimate Knowledge of Divine Truth* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, I, 165).

⁷ *A Defence of a Treatise entitled The Gospel of Christ Worthy of All Acceptation containing A Reply to Mr. Button’s Remarks and The Observations of Philanthropos* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, II, 511).

⁸ His surname is sometimes rendered Socinus, hence Socinianism.

⁹ *Reason and Religion in the English Revolution. The Challenge of Socinianism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 240–241.

¹⁰ See especially William C. Placher, *The Domestication of Transcendence. How Modern Thinking about God Went Wrong* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996), 164–178; Philip Dixon, ‘Nice and Hot Disputes’: *The Doctrine of the Trinity in the Seventeenth Century* (London/New York: T & T Clark, 2003). The quote is from Dixon, ‘Nice and Hot Disputes’, 212.

¹¹ G. L. Bray, “Trinity” in *New Dictionary of Theology* (eds. Sinclair B. Ferguson, David F. Wright, and J. I. Packer; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 694.

¹² For the loss of Trinitarianism among the General Baptists, see the very helpful discussion by Curtis W. Freeman, “God in Three Persons: Baptist Unitarianism and the Trinity,” *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 33 (Fall 2006): 324–328.

¹³ *The First London Confession of Faith* 2 in *Baptist Con-*

fessions of Faith (William L. Lumpkin; rev. Bill J. Leonard; Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 2011), 144. The spelling has been modernized.

¹⁴ See, in particular, the following publications by White: “The Organisation of the Particular Baptists, 1644–1660,” *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 17 (1966): 209–226; “The Doctrine of the Church in the Particular Baptist Confession of 1644,” *The Journal of Theological Studies*, ns, 19 (1968): 570–590; “Thomas Patient in Ireland,” *Irish Baptist Historical Society Journal* 2 (1969–1970): 36–48, especially 40–41; “The Origins and Convictions of the First Calvinistic Baptists,” *Baptist History and Heritage* 25:4 (1990): 39–47; and *The English Baptists of the Seventeenth Century* (Rev. ed.; London: The Baptist Historical Society, 1996), 59–94.

¹⁵ Freeman, “God in Three Persons,” 331.

¹⁶ *The Second London Confession of Faith* 2.3 in *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, 237.

¹⁷ *The eternal Existence of the Lord Jesus Christ considered and improved* (London, 1766), iv–v.

¹⁸ “To the Reader” in his *A Treatise of the Holy Trinity* [*sic*] (London, 1690), [i–ii]. For a brief discussion of this work, see Freeman, “God in Three Persons,” 332–333.

¹⁹ *The Christian Strife for the Faith of the Gospel* (London, 1738), 78, cited Roger Hayden, “The Contribution of Bernard Foskett” in *Pilgrim Pathways: Essays in Baptist History in Honour of B. R. White* (eds. William H. Brackney and Paul S. Fiddes with John H. Y. Briggs; Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1999), 197.

²⁰ *The Doctrine of the Trinity, stated and vindicated* (2nd ed.; London, 1752), 166–167.

²¹ Letter to John Davis, March 7, 1745 (transcribed Gerald Priest; ms. in The Baptist Church in the Great Valley, Devon, Pennsylvania; used by permission of the church). I am indebted to Dr. Priest, for many years Professor of Church History at the Detroit Baptist Theological Seminary, for access to this letter.

²² John Rippon, *A Brief Memoir of the Life and Writings of the late Rev. John Gill, D.D.* (Repr. Harrisonburg, VA: Gano Books, 1992), 127–128.

²³ Eifion Evans, *Daniel Rowland and the Great Evangeli-*

cal Awakening in Wales (Edinburgh/Carlisle, PA: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1985), 273–274.

²⁴ For Dutton's concern about Romaine, see her *A Letter on the Divine Eternal Sonship of Jesus Christ* (London, 1757), now in JoAnn Ford Watson, ed., *Selected Spiritual Writings of Anne Dutton. Eighteenth-Century, British-Baptist, Woman Theologian* (Mercer, GA: Mercer University press, 2008), 5:1–13.

²⁵ The words of Hywel M. Davies, *Transatlantic Brethren: Rev. Samuel Jones (1735–1814) and His Friends: Baptists in Wales, Pennsylvania, and Beyond* (Bethlehem, PA: Leigh University Press/London: associated University Presses, 1995), 116. See Davies' account of Allen's career in *Transatlantic Brethren*, 115–119. See also Jim Benedict, "Allen, John (d. 1783)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004; online ed., May 2007 [http://www.oxforddnb.com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/view/article/380; accessed March 31, 2013]).

²⁶ *The Spirit of Liberty: or, Junius's Loyal Address* (London: n.p., 1770), 91, 91–92, 95. The capitals in this text have been altered to lower case in accord with modern practice.

²⁷ See *ibid.*, 95–104.

²⁸ Cited Andrew Gunton Fuller, "Memoir" (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, I, 20).

²⁹ Cited John Ryland, *The Work of Faith, the Labour of Love, and the Patience of Hope illustrated; in The Life and Death of the Reverend Andrew Fuller* (London: Button & Son, 1816), 62–63, 54.

³⁰ Ryland, *Life and Death of the Reverend Andrew Fuller*, 52, 54. See also John W. Eddins, Jr., "Andrew Fuller's Theology of Grace" (Th.D. thesis, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky, 1957), 123–130.

³¹ H. L. Short, "Presbyterians under a New Name" in C. G. Bolam, et al., *The English Presbyterians from Elizabethan Puritanism to Modern Unitarianism* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1968), 229–233.

³² *The Dissenters* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), 1:472. For the biographical details of Priestley's career, I am especially indebted to *The Memoirs of Dr. Joseph Priestley* (ed. John T. Boyer; Washington, DC: Barcroft Press, 1964); Robert D. Fiala, "Priestley,

Joseph (1733–1804)," *Biographical Dictionary of Modern British Radicals* (Hassocks, Sussex: Harvester Press/Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1979), 1:396–401; Erwin N. Hiebert, "The Integration of Revealed Religion and Scientific Materialism in the Thought of Joseph Priestley" in *Joseph Priestley: Scientist, Theologian, and Metaphysician* (eds. Lester Kieft and Bennett R. Willeford, Jr.; Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1980), 27–61.

³³ Robert E. Schofield, "Priestley, Joseph (1733–1804)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004; online ed., May 2007. [http://www.oxforddnb.com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/view/article/22788, accessed April 1, 2013]).

³⁴ *Defences of Unitarianism, for the Year 1786* (1787) (*The Theological and Miscellaneous Works of Joseph Priestley* (ed. J. T. Rutt; New York, NY: Klaus Reprint Co., 1972), 18:372. Later references to the corpus of Priestley will cite these works as *Works of Joseph Priestley*. In a lecture that Fuller's friend Robert Hall, Jr. (1764–1831) gave "On the Spirit of Socinianism" in 1823, the Baptist preacher took note of the Socinians' "zeal for proselytism" (*The Works of the Rev. Robert Hall* [eds. Olinthus Gregory and Joseph Belcher; New York, NY: Harper & Bros., 1854], 3:24).

³⁵ For Priestley's threefold appeal to reason, scripture, and history, see his *Defences of Unitarianism, for the Year 1786* (*Works of Joseph Priestley*, 18:350); *An History of Early Opinions concerning Jesus Christ* (1786) (*Works of Joseph Priestley*, 6:7). The description of Priestley is that of Martin Fitzpatrick, "Toleration and Truth," *Enlightenment and Dissent*, 1 (1982), 25.

³⁶ "Toleration and Truth," 29, n. 119. On the commitment of Socinianism in general to Scripture, see Klaus Scholder, *The Birth of Modern Critical Theology. Origins and Problems of Biblical Criticism in the Seventeenth Century* (trans. John Bowden; London: SCM Press/Philadelphia, PA: Trinity Press International, 1990), 32–38.

³⁷ *An Appeal to the Serious and Candid Professors of Christianity* (1770) (*Works of Joseph Priestley*, 2:385). See also J. G. McEvoy and J. E. McGuire, "God and Nature: Priestley's Way of Rational Dissent," *Histori-*

- cal Studies in the Physical Sciences 6 (1975): 325–326; Fitzpatrick, “Toleration and Truth,” 4–5.
- ³⁸ *An History of the Corruptions of Christianity* (1782 ed.; repr. New York, NY/London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1974), II, 440.
- ³⁹ Cf. Scholder, *Modern Critical Theology*, 40; Geoffrey Gorham, “Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Intellectual Life” in *The Routledge Companion to Theism* (eds. Charles Taliaferro, Victoria S. Harrison, and Stewart Goetz; New York, NY/London: Routledge, 2013), 129–130.
- ⁴⁰ *Defences of Unitarianism, for the Years 1788 and 1789* (1790) (*Works of Joseph Priestley*, 19:108). See also his *Appeal to the Serious and Candid Professors of Christianity* (*Works of Joseph Priestley*, 2:395); *History of Early Opinions concerning Jesus Christ* (*Works of Joseph Priestley*, 6:33–37); *Letters to the Members of the New Jerusalem Church* (Birmingham, 1791), 2.
- ⁴¹ *Works of Joseph Priestley*, 2:74.
- ⁴² *Ibid.*, 2:280.
- ⁴³ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁴ *Familiar Letters, Addressed to the Inhabitants of Birmingham* (1790) (*Works of Joseph Priestley*, 19:250).
- ⁴⁵ *Addresses Biographical and Historical* (London: The Lindsey Press, 1922), 276.
- ⁴⁶ *History of Early Opinions concerning Jesus Christ* (*Works of Joseph Priestley*, 6:31–33).
- ⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 6:28–29. See also *History of Early Opinions concerning Jesus Christ* (*Works of Joseph Priestley*, 6:30); *Letters to Dr. Horsley* (1783) (*Works of Joseph Priestley*, 18:95); *Familiar Letters, Addressed to the Inhabitants of Birmingham* (*Works of Joseph Priestley*, 19:249).
- ⁴⁸ *Letters to Dr. Horsley, Part II* (1784) (*Works of Joseph Priestley*, 18:243–244); *Notes on All the Books of Scripture* (*Works of Joseph Priestley*, 14:274).
- ⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 18:243.
- ⁵⁰ *Notes on All the Books of Scripture* (*Works of Joseph Priestley*, 14:320).
- ⁵¹ “Coleridge and Priestley on Prayer,” *Anglican Theological Review* 70 (1988): 353. Cf. Priestley, *Familiar Letters, Addressed to the Inhabitants of Birmingham* (*Works of Joseph Priestley*, 19:249–250).
- ⁵² *Letters to the Members of the New Jerusalem Church*, 21. See also *Notes on All the Books of Scripture* (*Works of Joseph Priestley*, 13:315).
- ⁵³ *Notes on All the Books of Scripture* (*Works of Joseph Priestley*, 13:328).
- ⁵⁴ Quoted John G. McEvoy, “Joseph Priestley, ‘Aerial Philosopher’: Metaphysics and Methodology in Priestley’s Chemical Thought, from 1762–1781. Part 1,” *Ambix* 25:1 (1978): 18.
- ⁵⁵ *Appeal to the Serious and Candid Professors of Christianity* (*Works of Joseph Priestley*, 2:402).
- ⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 2:414.
- ⁵⁷ On this *ancien régime*, see especially J. C. D. Clark, *English Society 1688–1832. Ideology, social structure and political practice during the ancien régime* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); idem, “England’s Ancien Regime as a Confessional State,” *Albion* 21 (1989): 450–474.
- ⁵⁸ On these riots, see Arthur Sheps, “Public Perception of Joseph Priestley, the Birmingham Dissenters, and the Church-and-King Riots of 1791,” *Eighteenth Century Life* 13 (1989): 46–64.
- ⁵⁹ *Calvinistic and Socinian Systems Examined and Compared* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, II, 111). See also the comments by Fuller in his *Memoirs of the Rev. Samuel Pearce* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, III, 433).
- ⁶⁰ *Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, II, 108–242. Fuller received advice from both Abraham Booth (1734–1806) and John Fawcett (1740–1817), fellow Baptist ministers, in drawing up this treatise. See J. W. Morris, *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of the Rev. Andrew Fuller* (London, 1816), 330–331.
- ⁶¹ *Calvinistic and Socinian Systems* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, II, 112). The term “aretegenic” is a neologism coined by Ellen T. Charry. See her important work *By the Renewing of Your Minds: The Pastoral Function of Christian Doctrine* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).
- ⁶² *Calvinistic and Socinian Systems* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, II, 160).
- ⁶³ See also his interpretation of Acts 7:59 in *Socinianism Indefensible on the Ground of its Moral Tendency* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, II, 260);

- "Defence of the Deity of Christ" (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, III, 698).
- ⁶⁴ *Calvinistic and Socinian Systems* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, II, 160).
- ⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 189, 192.
- ⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 192.
- ⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 193.
- ⁶⁸ "Agreement in Sentiment the Bond of Christian Union" (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, III, 490, 491).
- ⁶⁹ "The Deity of Christ" (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, III, 696, 697).
- ⁷⁰ "Decline of the Dissenting Interest" (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, III, 487).
- ⁷¹ *Leading Sentiments of Mr. R. Robinson* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, III, 601).
- ⁷² *Calvinistic and Socinian Systems* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, II, 220–233).
- ⁷³ *God's Approbation of our Labours Necessary to the Hope of Success* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, I, 190). See also *Calvinistic and Socinian Systems* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, II, 183); *The Backslider* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, III, 637).
- ⁷⁴ *Christian Steadfastness* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, I, 527). See also *Calvinistic and Socinian Systems* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, II, 183, 191–192).
- ⁷⁵ *Calvinistic and Socinian Systems* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, II, 180); *Justification* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, I, 284); *Calvinistic and Socinian Systems* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, II, 183, 191–192); *Defence of a Treatise entitled The Gospel of Christ* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, II, 458); "Decline of the Dissenting Interest" (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, III, 487); "The Deity of Christ" (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, III, 693–697); *Calvinistic and Socinian Systems* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, II, 180).
- ⁷⁶ "Defence of the Deity of Christ" (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, III, 698); "Remarks on the Indwelling Scheme" (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, III, 700). See also *Letters on Systematic Divinity* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, I, 711); "Mr. Bevan's Defence of the Christian Doctrines of the Society of Friends" (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, III, 758).
- ⁷⁷ See, for example, his *Causes of Declension in Religion, and Means of Revival* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, III, 319–320, 324) and *The Promise of the Spirit the Grand Encouragement in Promoting the Gospel* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, III, 359–363).
- ⁷⁸ *Socinianism Indefensible* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, II, 249).
- ⁷⁹ See his *Letters to Serapion*, written in the late 350s. Athanasius died in 373. See further my *The Spirit of God: The Exegesis of 1 and 2 Corinthians in the Pneumatomachian Controversy of the Fourth Century* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994).
- ⁸⁰ *Letters on Systematic Divinity* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, I, 711).
- ⁸¹ See *Jesus the True Messiah* (1809) (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, I, 219); "Passages Apparently Contradictory" (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, I, 668); "Remarks on the Indwelling Scheme" (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, III, 700); "The Doctrine of the Trinity" (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, I, 707–708). In the last of these passages Fuller cites a catena of Trinitarian texts, including Matt 28:19; 1 John 5:7; Rom 15:30; Eph 2:18; Jude 20–21; 2 Thess 3:5; and 2 Cor 13:14.
- ⁸² "The Doctrine of the Trinity" (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, I, 708).
- ⁸³ *Nature and Importance of an Intimate Knowledge of Divine Truth* (1796) (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, I, 163–164).
- ⁸⁴ *Letters on Systematic Divinity* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, I, 708); "Remarks on the Indwelling Scheme" (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, III, 700). Cf. *Walking by Faith* (1784) (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, I, 124–125): "It is one thing to say that Scripture is contrary to right reason, and another thing to say that it may exhibit truths too great for our reason to grasp."; "Trial of Spirits" (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, I, 654).
- ⁸⁵ *The Practical Uses of Christian Baptism* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, III, 340). The very same point had been made a quarter of a century earlier by John Collett Ryland (1723–1792), the eccentric Baptist largely remembered today for his dampening rebuke of William Carey's zeal for overseas missions. Also writing in a circular letter for

the Northamptonshire Association, Ryland had observed that “the true doctrine of the Trinity” had been “kept up in the Christian church” by the ordinance of baptism “more than by any other means whatsoever” (*The Beauty of Social Religion; or, The Nature and Glory of a Gospel Church* [Northampton: T. Dicey, 1777], 10, footnote).

⁸⁶ *Christian Baptism* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, III, 340). For other instances of Fuller’s Trinitarian exegesis of Matt 28:19, see *Calvinistic and Socinian Systems* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, II, 236); “On the Sonship of Christ” (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, III, 705–706).

⁸⁷ “The Manner in which Divine Truth is Communicated in the Holy Scriptures” (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, III, 539).

⁸⁸ For the phrase “metaphysical mystery,” I am indebted to Stephen Holmes. See “The Quest for the Trinity: An Interview with Stephen R. Holmes,” *Credo Magazine* 3:2 (2013): 49.

⁸⁹ See his extended argument in *Letters on Systematic Divinity* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, I, 708–709).

⁹⁰ See Basil of Caesarea, *On the Holy Spirit* 21.52.

⁹¹ Here is the relevant section of Gill’s comments on this verse: “The phrase of directing the heart to God ... is not to be done by a believer himself, nor by the ministers of the Gospel: the apostle could not do it, and therefore he prays “the Lord” to do it; by whom is meant the Spirit of God, since he is distinguished from God the Father, into whose love the heart is to be directed, and from Christ, a patient waiting for whom ’tis also desired the heart may be directed into; and since it is his work to shed abroad the love of God in the heart, and to lead unto it, and make application of it; and which is a proof of his deity, for none has the direction, management, and government of the heart, but God, ... and in this passage of Scripture appear all the three Persons [of the Godhead]; for here is the love of the Father, patient waiting for Christ, and the Lord the Spirit.” (*An Exposition of the New Testament* [1809 ed.; repr. Paris, Arkansas: The Baptist Standard Bearer, Inc., 1989], III, 265). See also John Gill, *The Doctrine of the Trinity, Stated and Vindicated* (London: Aaron Ward, 1731), 198–199.

⁹² *Leading Sentiments of Mr. R. Robinson* (*Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, III, 601).