

Grateful for past battles - quotations

1. Creation

1.1. God and creation, Article I, Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion:

There is but one living and true God, ever-lasting, without body, parts, or passions; of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness; the Maker, and Preserver of all things both visible and invisible. And in unity of this Godhead there be three Persons, of one substance, power, and eternity; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

1.2. Marcion's approach, Tertullian, *Against Marcion* 1.9:

Marcion's special and principal work is the separation of the law and the gospel...This is Marcion's *Antitheses*, or contradictory positions, which aim at committing the gospel to a variance with the law, in order that from the diversity of the two documents which contain them, they may contend for a diversity of gods also.

1.3. A sample of Gnosticism (Valentinus), Irenaeus, *Against the Heresies* 1.2.6:

Then, out of gratitude for the great benefit which had been conferred on them, the whole Pleroma of the Aeons, with one design and desire, and with the concurrence of Christ and the Holy Spirit, their Father also setting the seal of His approval on their conduct, brought together whatever each one had in himself of the greatest beauty and preciousness; and uniting all these contributions so as skilfully to blend the whole, they produced, to the honour and glory of Bythus, a being of most perfect beauty, the very star of the Pleroma, and the perfect fruit [of it], namely Jesus. Him they also speak of under the name of Saviour, and Christ, and patronymically, Logos, and Everything, because He was formed from the contributions of all.

1.4. Irenaeus on recapitulation, *Against the Heresies* 5.14.2:

...the Word has saved that which really was created, humanity which had perished, effecting by means of Himself that communion which should be held with it, and seeking out its salvation. But the thing which had perished possessed flesh and blood. For the Lord, taking dust from the earth, moulded man; and it was upon his behalf that all the dispensation of the Lord's advent took place. He had Himself, therefore, flesh and blood, recapitulating in Himself not a certain other, but that original handiwork of the Father, seeking out that thing which had perished.

1.5. Irenaeus on how the Bible is abused by Marcion, *Against the Heresies* 1.27.2:

Besides this, he [Marcion] mutilates the Gospel which is according to Luke, removing all that is written respecting the generation of the Lord, and setting aside a great deal of the teaching of the Lord, in which the Lord is recorded as most dearly confessing that the Maker of this universe is His Father. He likewise persuaded his disciples that he himself was more worthy of credit than are those apostles who have handed down the Gospel to us, furnishing them not with the Gospel, but merely a fragment of it. In like manner, too, he dismembered the Epistles of Paul, removing all that is said by the apostle respecting that God who made the world, to the effect that He is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and

1

2. Trinity

2.1. Arius, there was a time when the Son was not, Letter to Eusebius of Nicomedia

And before he was begotten or created...he was not. For he was not unbegotten. But we are persecuted because we say, "The Son has a beginning, but God is without beginning."...We are persecuted because we say, "He is from nothing."

2.2. Athanasius on the Son's eternal generation (Always Father, Always Son), *Contra Gentes* 3.41:

though He is Word, He is not, as we said, after the likeness of human words, composed of syllables; but He is the unchanging Image of His own Father. For men, composed of parts and made out of nothing, have their discourse composite and divisible. But God possesses true existence and is not composite, wherefore His Word also has true Existence and is not composite, but is the one and only-begotten God, Who proceeds in His goodness from the Father as from a good Fountain, and orders all things and holds them together.

2.3. Athanasius on the Son's eternal generation (Always Father, Always Son), *Contra Arianos* 1.5.14:

...if He is called the eternal offspring of the Father, He is rightly so called. For never was the essence of the Father imperfect, that what is proper to it should be added afterwards; nor, as man from man, has the Son been begotten, so as to be later than His Father's existence, but He is God's offspring, and as being proper Son of God, who is ever, He exists eternally. For, whereas it is proper to men to beget in time, from the imperfection of their nature, God's offspring is eternal, for His nature is ever perfect. If then He is not a Son, but a work made out of nothing, they have but to prove it; and then they are at liberty, as if imagining about a creature, to cry out, 'There was once when He was not;' for things which are originated were not, and have come to be. But if He is Son, as the Father says, and the Scriptures proclaim, and 'Son' is nothing else than what is generated from the Father; and what is generated from the Father is His Word, and Wisdom, and Radiance; what is to be said but that, in maintaining 'Once the Son was not,' they rob God of His Word, like plunderers, and openly predicate of Him that He was once without His proper Word and Wisdom, and that the Light was once without radiance, and the Fountain was once barren and dry?

2.5 Athanasius on 'Father' and 'Son' in Christian worship, *Contra Arianos* 1.9.34:

it is more pious and more accurate to signify God from the Son and call Him Father, than to name Him from His works only and call Him Unoriginate...the latter is unscriptural and suspicious, because it has various senses; so that, when a man is asked concerning it, his mind is carried about to many ideas; but the word Father is simple and scriptural, and more accurate, and only implies the Son. [...] when He teaches us to pray, 'He says not, 'When you pray, say, O God Unoriginate,' but rather, 'When you pray, say, Our Father, which art in heaven.' [...] His will that the Summary of our faith should have the same bearing, in bidding us be baptized, not into the name of Unoriginate and originate, nor into the name of Creator and creature, but into the Name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. For with such an initiation we too, being numbered among works, are made

3

also those passages from the prophetic writings which the apostle quotes, in order to teach us that they announced beforehand the coming of the Lord.

1.6. Irenaeus on how the Bible is abused by the Gnostics, *Against the Heresies* 1.8.1:

...they disregard the order and the connection of the Scriptures, and so far as in them lies, dismember and destroy the truth. By transferring passages, and dressing them up anew, and making one thing out of another, they succeed in deluding many through their wicked art in adapting the oracles of the Lord to their opinions. Their manner of acting is just as if one, when a beautiful image of a king has been constructed by some skilful artist out of precious jewels, should then take this likeness of the man all to pieces, should rearrange the gems, and so fit them together as to make them into the form of a dog or of a fox, and even that but poorly executed; and should then maintain and declare that this was the beautiful image of the king which the skilful artist constructed, pointing to the jewels which had been admirably fitted together by the first artist to form the image of the king, but have been with bad effect transferred by the latter one to the shape of a dog, and by thus exhibiting the jewels, should deceive the ignorant who had no conception what a king's form was like, and persuade them that that miserable likeness of the fox was, in fact, the beautiful image of the king.

1.7. One version of the Rule of Faith, Irenaeus, *Against the Heresies* 1.10.1-2:

The Church, though dispersed through our the whole world, even to the ends of the earth, has received from the apostles and their disciples this faith: in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are in them; and in one Christ Jesus, the Son of God, who became incarnate for our salvation; and in the Holy Spirit, who proclaimed through the prophets the dispensations of God, and the advents, and the birth from a virgin, and the passion, and the resurrection from the dead, and the ascension into heaven in the flesh of the beloved Christ Jesus, our Lord, and His manifestation from heaven in the glory of the Father "to gather all things in one," and to raise up anew all flesh of the whole human race, in order that to Christ Jesus, our Lord, and God, and Saviour, and King, according to the will of the invisible Father, "every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess" to Him, and that He should execute just judgment towards all; that He may send "spiritual wickednesses," and the angels who transgressed and became apostates, together with the ungodly, and unrighteous, and wicked, and profane among men, into everlasting fire; but may, in the exercise of His grace, confer immortality on the righteous, and holy, and those who have kept His commandments, and have persevered in His love, some from the beginning, and others from their repentance, and may surround them with everlasting glory.

As I have already observed, the Church, having received this preaching and this faith, although scattered throughout the whole world, yet, as if occupying but one house, carefully preserves it. She also believes these points just as if she had but one soul, and one and the same heart, and she proclaims them, and teaches them, and hands them down, with perfect harmony, as if she possessed only one mouth. For, although the languages of the world are dissimilar, yet the import of the tradition is one and the same.

2

2.6 Athanasius and homoousios, *Contra Arianos* 1.3.9:

Very Son of the Father, natural and genuine, proper to His essence, Wisdom Only-begotten, and Very and Only Word of God is He; not a creature or work, but an offspring proper to the Father's essence. Wherefore He is very God, existing one in essence with the very Father...

2.7 Gregory of Nazianzus on contemplating the Trinity, *Oration* 40.41

No sooner do I conceive of the one than I am illumined by the splendour of the three; no sooner do I distinguish them than I am carried back to the one. When I think of any one of the three I think of Him as the whole, and my eyes are filled, and the greater part of what I am thinking escapes me. I cannot grasp the greatness of that one so as to attribute a greater greatness to the rest.

4

3. Incarnation

3.1 Gregory of Nazianzus' rejection of Apollinarianism, Letter 101.5

The unassumed is the unhealed, but what is united with God is also being saved. Had half of Adam fallen, what was assumed and is being saved would have been half too; but if the whole fell he is united to the whole of what was born and is being saved wholly. They are not, then, to begrudge us our entire salvation or to fit out a Saviour with only bones and sinews and the picture of a human being.

3.2 Cyril's fears about Nestorianism, Letter 1.23, 24, 26, 27

...the Word of God who is born ineffably from the being of God the Father, has honoured our nature by taking up the human condition, but he did not thereby become alienated from his own transcendence but remained God even in his manhood...[so] we maintain that the Word became flesh...He has laid down his life for us...even though, as God, he was Life by nature. How can Life be said to die? It is because Life suffered death in its very own body that it might be revealed as life when it brought the body back to life again. [...]

He was the Word in his own body born from a woman, and he gave it to death in due season, but he suffered nothing at all in his own nature for as such he is life and life-giver. Nonetheless he made the things of the flesh his own so that he suffering could be said to be his. [...]

...if the Christ is neither true Son nor God by nature, but merely a man like us and an instrument of the Godhead, then we are certainly not saved in God but rather saved by someone like us who died on our behalf and was raised again by external powers. [...]

...we have not worshipped a mere man, God forbid, but rather God by nature, because we recognised his glory even though he came as we are while remaining what he was, that is God.

3.3 Cyril's Second Letter to Nestorius, Letter 4.5-6

So it is we say that he both suffered and rose again; not meaning that the Word of God suffered in his own nature either the scourging or the piercing of the nails or the other wounds, for the divinity is impassible because it is incorporeal. But in so far as that which had become his own body suffered, then he himself is said to suffer these things for our sake, because the Impassible One was in the suffering body... [...]

And so we confess One Christ and Lord. This does not mean we worship a man alongside the Word...rather that we worship one and the same because the body of the Word, with which he shares the Father's throne, was not alien to him. Again this does not mean two sons were sharing the throne, but one, because of the union with the flesh. But if we reject this hypostatic union as either impossible or unfitting, then we fall into saying that there are two sons...

5

4. Salvation

4.1 Augustine's experience of the cruelty of heresy, Confessions 4.7.12

...my soul felt burdened by a vast load of misery. I should have lifted myself to you, Lord, to find a cure. I knew that, but did not wish it or have the strength for it. When I thought of you, my mental image was not of anything solid and firm; it was not you but a vain phantom. My error was my god. If I attempted to find rest there for my soul, it slipped through a void and again came falling back upon me. I had become to myself a place of unhappiness in which I could not bear to be; but I could not escape from myself.

4.2 Augustine on Evil, On the Catholic and the Manichaean Ways of Life, 2.2, 4.6,

You ask me where evil comes from, and I, in turn, ask you what evil is. Who is asking the right question? Those who ask where evil comes from, although they do not know what it is! Or the person who thinks he must first ask what it is so as not to perpetuate what is absurd, namely, seeking the origin of an unknown thing? [...]

there is one good in itself and in the highest sense, that is, by its own nature and essence and not by participation in some other good, and there is another good that is good by participation, deriving its goodness from the Supreme Good, which, however, continues to be itself and loses nothing...this good...is a creature to whom harm can come by defecting, by unmaking, but God is not the author of such a defect, such an unmaking, since God is the author of existence and, so, of being. It becomes clear, then, how "evil" is to be spoken about, for it is properly applied not to essence, but to privation.

4.3 Augustine on Evil, On Free Will, 2.19.53:

Evil consists in the will's turning away from the changeless good and in turning to goods that are changeable.

4.4 Augustine on Manichaeism, On Genesis against the Manichees, 2.29.43:

Since they cannot deny that the human race is in the misery of sin, they say that the nature of God is in misery. We deny this and say that the nature that God made from nothing is in misery and that it came to this state, not under compulsion, but by the will to sin. [...]

They say that the sins of other harms the nature of God. We deny this and say that sins harm only the nature of the sinner. We say that God is of such great goodness, and of such great justice, and of such great incorruption that He does not sin, that He harms no one who does not will to sin, and that He is harmed by no one who wills to sin.

4.5 Pelagius: sinners have no excuse, Letter to Demetrias 16.2:

Why do we indulge in pointless evasions, advancing the frailty of our nature as an objection to the one who commands us?

4.6 Augustine on Pelagius' error, On nature and grace 23:

The Lord Jesus...in accordance with His merciful character, says: They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick; I have come not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. [...] [Pelagius] asks "Why seek Him? They are whole for whom you seek the Physician."

6

4.7 Augustine on how the Lord's Prayer refutes Pelagius, On nature and grace 20:

That a man, however, requires to be helped not to sin, he has nowhere admitted...he keeps a strange silence on this subject altogether; although the Lord's Prayer enjoins upon us the necessity of praying both that our debts may be remitted to us, and that we may not be led into temptation.

4.8 Augustine on the human will, Letter 157.7-8:

...the will is freer the more it is subject to divine grace

4.9 Augustine on the human will before and after the fall, On nature and grace 25:

...free will, whereby man corrupted his own self, was sufficient for his passing into sin; but to return to righteousness, he has need of a Physician, since he is out of health.

4.10 Augustine on human nature in the hospital of salvation, On nature and grace 50:

[We are] the man whom the thieves left half dead on the road, and who, being disabled and pierced through with heavy wounds, is not so able to mount up to the heights of righteousness as he was able to descend therefrom; who, moreover, if he is now in the inn, is in process of cure.

7