

GREGORY NAZIANZEN'S THEOLOGICAL ORATIONS

The Development of the Doctrine of the Trinity

ORATION 27: AN INTRODUCTORY SERMON AGAINST THE EUNOMIANS

SECTION 1

In this sermon, Gregory addresses the mistake of the Eunomians. He sees this as a confusion at the level of ontology and epistemology, claiming that God is known in the same way as other things and putting theology on the same level as other intellectual pursuits.

In this oration, Gregory distinguishes between knowledge and contemplation. At the same time, he shows the poverty of knowledge that is not grounded in a contemplative spirit. Without the interior illumination that comes through contemplation, even the subjects of one's inquiry fall short of the important and the true.

The Eunomians, Gregory says, are fond of sophistic argument, using words to confuse rather than reach the truth (27.1).

SECTION 2

He compares this to games that are designed only for entertainment, titillating people by the movements rather than any real purpose: "Every square in the city has to buzz with their arguments, every party must be made tedious by their boring nonsense" (27.2). They are also closed-minded in their intellectual arrogance (27.2).

He condemns "theology" pursued as an intellectual exercise.

SECTION 3

Engaging in theology, training the mind to be conformed to God's presence is a difficult task that requires patience and struggle (27.3). Here the translation uses "theology" to refer not to theology proper but to the ascent of the mind by means of the economy. This kind of theology, theology in the modern sense, requires first a background in intellectual pursuits and along with this, especially, a change of life, the cleansing of body and soul. ("It is not for all people, but only for those who have been tested and have found a sound footing in study, and, more importantly, have undergone, or at the very least are undergoing, purification of body and soul. For one who is not pure to lay hold of pure things is dangerous, just as it is for weak eyes to look at the sun's brightness." (Or 27.3, trans. Williams) This is connected with the principle that theology is God's embrace of the human person. It is not merely knowledge, nor can it be knowledge. It is the total transformation of the person, which requires a cooperating activity on the part of the person concerned.

The human engagement in theology begins with the practice of the spiritual life; it requires the silence of prayer (27.3). Those who engage in it must realize it is about the very meaning of existence and not just mere gossip, curious stories, or clever arguments (27.3). The person begins with those aspects of theology for which they are capable at the moment and from there is led to deeper aspects: "Just as excess of sound or food injures the hearing and general health, or, if you prefer, as loads that are too heavy injure those who carry them, or as excessive rain harms the soil, we too must guard against the danger that the toughness, so to speak, of our discourses may so oppress and overtax our hearers as actually to impair the powers they had before." (27.3)

Theology is not like the other forms of so-called knowledge. It requires that one be on the path to holiness. It is something that is not obtained by speculation but by allowing the mind to be open to God. Or 27.

Theology requires a good philosophical preparation and to be engaged on the path of purification. It also requires the right conditions and respect of the subject matter.

SECTION 4

But the engagement in theology, since it is more than an activity of the mind, should permeate all of our life. It begins and accompanies us as the remembrance of God ("It is more important that we should remember God than that we should breathe: indeed, if one may say so, we should do nothing else besides"—27.4). This being with God is our continual opening to God. It is the condition for more intellectual aspects of theology. Without this, theology becomes sterile. For this reason, Gregory says that we should not continually engage in a discussion of theology. This risks reducing theology to intellectual arguments and misunderstanding its role in our life.

Remembering God in silence is better than continual argument.

SECTION 5

Even the discussion of theology requires the proper context (27.5). It can only be properly engaged if those who engage it are properly prepared.

SECTION 6

Therefore, there are certain themes suited for some contexts and some for others. When theology addresses the most complex issues, in discussing our linguistic conformity to the being of God, an understanding of this requires the proper preparation (27.6). This metaphysical theology cannot be understood by those outside of the faith because it does not seek to make an intellectual argument. It is not the first step in interpreting the world. It is, rather, the last step in opening the mind to understand how God interacts with the world. When taken out of its proper context, it is understood as a metaphysics of God, an expression of something about the essence of God that purports to be as accessible to the mind as a theorem in mathematics.

The theologian must work hard to strip away all defects from theology.

SECTION 7

In section 7, Gregory cautions the theologians to take heed of the motives for talking about theology. These discussions are often undertaken, he says, not in the pursuit of truth but as a display of pride. Virtue comes before theology and provides its proper place.

Then the process is to orient ourselves to God, allowing our lower aspects to be united to the higher and ourselves to be refashioned, drawing out in us the beauty which is from God.

SECTION 8

He illustrates this in section 8 by recourse to a dialogue about the path to salvation.

Engagement takes focused discipline.

SECTION 9

In section 9, he berates those prone to theological sensationalism. Even if they have themselves achieved theological understanding, these people throw about theological arguments, sweeping up those who are not capable of understanding into the entertainment of baseless arguments. These logical games, he says, may be profitable when engaging other groundless systems. He gives examples of these in section 10: Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle, etc.

SECTION 10

He then continues in section 10 by commending those who love argument to begin with the things of life: the nature of the universe, the meaning of the soul, Resurrection, Judgment. Even sportive argument, he says, can be of some profit. Then comes the final sentence of the oration: "But of God himself the knowledge we shall have in this life will be little, though soon after it will perhaps be more perfect, in the same Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen." In the context of sections 7-10 he seems to be saying that there will be no knowledge of God in this life. This could be puzzling, since he spent some time in section 6 talking about this kind of knowledge of God. It makes sense, though, if one grasps the contrast Gregory is making between knowledge properly so called and the opening of the mind to God.

God gives himself to the human person and can be encountered by the human mind. However, God does not become like the creature. He enters into the created world. It is thus a mistake to use the word "knowledge" in the same way to refer to the normal operation of the human mind and the human response to God. Sicienski's text suggests this mistake when it says "this does not mean he denies a certain knowledge of the trinitarian God available through contemplation" (Sicienski, diss 22). It is not a matter of a bit of knowledge only accessible to humans. Rather, it is the nature of contemplation that is the key. Contemplation is precisely the means of knowledge of God. This does not give some slight information about God, but opens the mind to the indwelling of God, from which the mind is put in right relationship to God. The quote given by Sicienski from the end of Oration 27.10 in this context (n 43) should be interpreted not as contrasting partial information with fuller information but rather as a contrast between partial and full—to the extent of our capacity—participation: "In these questions (i.e., the soul, the resurrection, the sufferings of Christ) to hit the mark is not useless, to miss it is not dangerous. But of God himself the knowledge we shall have in this life will be little, though soon after it will perhaps be more perfect, in the same Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom be glory for ever and ever".

In fact, in this passage, Gregory is indicating the difference between knowledge of God and knowledge proper. Speculation is fit to criticize error. A different, higher, form of knowledge is that of seeking wisdom, exploring the relationship of the person to God. In the quote, he then moves to a third level of knowledge—which is not properly called knowledge in the human sense—the knowledge of God. Which is a different sort of thing, as he indicates by ending the oration in prayer.

Since the oration is aimed to correct the erroneous understanding of the possibility of knowledge of God by the Eunomians, the phrase "this does not mean that he denies" goes against the very point of the sermon. If he meant to hold for the possibility of knowledge of God in the same sense of knowledge of creatures, then Eunomius in the end would be correct, only a bit over-enthusiastic. His problem would be respecting his place, a question of obedience to the glory of God who has placed restrictions on his person. Instead, his mistake is epistemological and ontological. The difference between God and creatures places him on a different ontological plane to which human knowledge has no access in the human sense. The access is through contemplation, through the ascent of the mind. It is not through logic and philosophical skill.

ORATION 28: ON THE DOCTRINE OF GOD

SECTION 1

Gregory says that in Or. 27 he used "theology to cleanse the theologian", showing the salvific nature of theology itself that comes about through God's gift and human cooperation. In section 1 he summarizes the requirements of the theologian who seeks the truth.

SECTION 2

Section 2 invokes Moses's ascent of Mount Sinai as an image of the purification required of the theologian. We must leave behind all concerns of life and seek our ground in God. What we find is not God in himself, but God's revelation of himself in the Son. As he says, "Peering in I saw not the nature prime, inviolate, self-apprehended (by 'self' I mean the Trinity), the nature as it all abides within the first veil and is hidden by the

Cherubim, but as it reaches us at its furthest remove from God, being, so far as I can understand, the grandeur, or as divine David calls it the 'majesty' inherent in the created things he has brought forth and governs." We can only know God insofar as he manifests himself. This knowing, though, is only the glory of God present in creatures. God is far beyond the reach of our language and our concepts.

There is a need for skill and capacity; Moses' ascent illustrates the path.

SECTION 3

"What experience of this have I had, you friends of truth, her initiates, her lovers as I am? I was running with a mind to see God and so it was that I ascended the mount. I penetrated the cloud, became enclosed in it, detached from matter and material things and concentrated, so far as might be, in myself. But when I directed my gaze I scarcely saw the averted figure of God, and this whilst sheltering in the rock, God the Word incarnate for us. Peering in I saw not the nature prime, inviolate, self-apprehended (by 'self' I mean the Trinity), the nature as it all abides within the first veil and is hidden by the Cherubim, but as it reaches us at its furthest remove from God, being, so far as I can understand, the grandeur, or as divine David calls it the 'majesty' inherent in the created things he has brought forth and governs. All these indications of himself that he has left behind him are God's 'averted figure'. They are, as it were, shadowy reflections of the Sun in water, reflections which display to eyes too weak, because too impotent to gaze at it, the Sun overmastering perception in the purity of its light." (Or 28.3, trans. Wickham)

The ascent detaches from the world, penetrates the cloud, and sees only the averted figure of God by sheltering in the Incarnate Word. What you see is not the nature of God but God's majesty or grandeur as it reaches towards us. God has left indications of himself in creation, reflection of himself. This is as far as we can reach with our knowledge.

Renczes also sees Gregory here limiting our contact with God to God's manifestations of himself; this shows a fundamental distinction between God in himself and God's activity. (109)

SECTION 4

Creatures cannot know God: Section 4 begins with this principle. God is very difficult to attain and cannot be expressed in human reality as he is in himself. While Plato argued in the *Timaeus* (28c) that "to know God is hard, to describe him impossible", in reality God cannot be known or described. This is true because of our sinful condition and also because human reality is not capable of receiving God's glory in its fullness. Nonetheless, as Gregory says, other beings, higher than us, may be more open to God's glory and thus can know God more completely than us, but "not with total clarity". All knowledge of God is receptive; it depends upon participation in God and thus depends on the capacity of the receiver. As he says, "their degree of clarity vari[es] proportionately with their rank."

Describing God is impossible as it is to know him.

SECTION 5

We cannot even know the fullness of creation (28.5). We can know of God's existence even if we do not know his essence (28.5). Yet, lack of full knowledge is not ignorance. As Norris argues, "the background for this interjection appears to be a disagreement within various philosophical traditions about whether one could know the existence of something if one does not know exactly what it is." (Norris, 1991, 111)

We cannot have exact knowledge of the world either. Even more so can we not know God, though we can know that he exists.

SECTION 6

We can know that God exists, but by that we do not know God. What we do know is the creative power itself, even though we don't understand it. Norris introduces here the category of foundationalism, by which he means a natural structure upon which we can recognize the truth of revelation, or "a strong natural theology

on which he can found his sense of revelation" (111). This would introduce a distinction between natural theology and revealed theology, a distinction that both Norris and Hanson, whom he references (709 n 119) do not find in Gregory. I too see no basis for any sort of natural theology in the ancient or modern sense in Gregory. Theology is, for Gregory, intellectual contact with God. Naturally, we have only intellectual contact with the world and the world's reasons. There, it is true, is the divine creative will, but we cannot ascend from this back to some sharing in God himself, at least not without God himself guiding us. As Gregory writes and Norris cites (112), "whatever we imagined or figured to ourselves or reason delineated is not the reality of God." In explaining this, Norris makes a mistake, at least in expression. He sets out a contrast between knowledge and faith and then says "enfleshed humans do not have the capacity to grasp God's nature except in faithful acceptance of the mystery" (112). This is faulty on two counts. First, the bodily constitution of humans does not qualitatively effect our capacity to grasp God's nature. Our current flesh may make the entry into revelation more difficult, but humans, enfleshed or not, cannot grasp God's nature. Second, the human response is not a mere acceptance of mystery. The acceptance that God is beyond our grasp is indeed the first step, but this is a disposition that leads into the ascent into that very mystery, where we become sharers in the divine nature.

SECTION 7

Rational argument can show that God is above and better than created things (28.7).

SECTION 8

Scripture's assertion that God is everywhere leads to the conclusion that God is not corporeal, that he cannot be some substance stretched out among things (28.8). This assertion does not say anything positive about God's being; it only places it above our conceptions.

SECTION 9

This is true of all conclusions about God (Gregory gives "ingenerate", "unoriginate", "immutable", "immortal").

We can show by reason the limitlessness of God—non-corporeal, ungenerate, unbounded—but not a positive affirmation.

SECTION 10

In section 10, Gregory shows that God cannot be in the universe. Space cannot apply equally to God and the universe. God cannot be limited. At the end of the section, he alludes to the fact that he cannot be conceptually limited either. Philosophical reasoning runs aground when considering the nature of God. He simply does not fit into the categories of our thought.

SECTION 11

This prepares the way for section 11, where he asserts that God is incomprehensible to the human mind. Again here, Norris in his commentary presents a significant misunderstanding (116). It seems that he sees the contrast in Gregory to be on that turns on human bodiliness. In fact, for Gregory, it is a contrast between purely human knowledge and graced human knowledge. Or, more strongly, it is a contrast between the false activity of human knowledge applied where it has no power—towards God—and the true receptive capacity for human knowledge in being lifted to God. Norris says that on the one hand our goal is participation in God, but "in this worldly existence, with its fleshly hindrances, we are incapable of fully comprehending the essence of God" (116). The now and then contrast is not because of fleshliness, it charts, rather, two stages in the spiritual progress. It is not this existence as a temporal state that is the problem but sinful existence that gives way to graced existence even and properly within this current state. Hence the importance and the joy of the monastic life.

SECTION 12

Section 12 argues that the mind has no means to approach God. As he continues in section 13, we cannot think of incorporeal reality; we can only conclude it by abstracting from the material. He does make reference to "this corporeal gloom", which might suggest that corporeality is a problem. In context, though, the liberation from the gloom is not the removal of the circumstances, but the enlightening of the situation by God himself. "Our grossness" is meant to be elevated, not removed. Everything we think is drawn from experience and all experience is corporeal. God, then, can be known only through things, not in things. The beauty and order of things is an invitation to God rather than God himself. Again, Norris gets the contrast wrong and speaks of "in this life" and "while we are here on earth" (117).

Embodied beings cannot grasp ideal beings.

SECTION 13

"Though every thinking being longs for God, the First Cause, it is powerless, for the reasons I have given, to grasp him." (Or 28.13)

The divine transcendence requires and invites human ecstatic self-transcendence (Golitzen, 291, drawing on Theological Oration 2.13, 41-43)

We cannot abstract from names for the divine to reach divinity—all we get is a lesser form of the reality expressed: justice, love, wisdom.

SECTION 14

Our incapacity for the greatness of God leads us to call God things that are within our grasp, Gregory continues in section 14.

SECTION 15

We also call the non-material things within our grasp, like emotions, God (28.15).

SECTION 16

Reason can lead beyond this to some grasp of God's reality (28.16).

Reason leads the desire for God towards its object.

SECTION 17

In section 17, he turns to God's nature. This can only be known, he says, through illumination. It cannot be reached by reason. Our mind must share in God to know God. This will be accomplished more fully in the future; in the present there is only a "scant emanation, as it were a small beam from a great light" (28.17).

Our knowledge/reason strains towards God because it is like him, but it cannot reach him (Or 28.17)

God in his nature and essence cannot be discovered, perhaps only when the mind "returns to the pattern".

The marvels of creation show the glory of and evidence for God.

SECTION 18

Enoch's accomplishment must be as a consequence, not a precondition of contact with God's nature. Or, rather, the question is the degree of God's intervention and help. The section lists the various Old Testament theophanies and explains them as God's condescension and the subjects' openness to being filled with God's presence. These are not the nature of God, but God come to them.

SECTION 19

The story of Elijah specifies that it was the presence, not the essence, of God that was perceived. Isaiah's vision purifies him. "None saw, none told, of God's nature" he concludes.

SECTION 20

The world itself cannot contain God, nor can God himself, as experienced by Paul, be spoken of. Words cannot contain God.

SECTION 21

Reason is difficult enough when we seek to understand creation. The application of reason to theology is most difficult. In it, reason is changed. The mind ascends to God's judgments, God's revelation and must be changed in the process.

SECTION 22

Humanity itself and the human person in particular is beyond the total grasp of reason.

SECTION 23

Animals cannot be known in their totality.

Creation also shows the immeasurableness of possible knowledge and how we fall short even of this.

SECTION 24

Fish escape the full grasp of reason. As do birds, and the dawn of human crafts.

SECTION 25

Animal behavior is a mystery.

SECTION 26

Plants as well. Geography and planetary forces are also a mystery. All of these reflect the hand of God.

SECTION 27

The sea causes one to marvel and to tremble.

SECTION 28

The air and the sky are beyond expression. The movements of the sky reflect the providence of God. Faith gives the ultimate answers where reason can only feebly progress.

SECTION 29

Reasons only with difficulty reach the sun, but the scriptures can orient our minds rightly to it. This shows that revelation, in leading us to God, leads us to see the world in its proper context. The knowledge that arises is not that which is native to the mind. It is a knowledge given through a sharing in God's creative perspective.

SECTION 30

The heavenly bodies escape rational explanation.

SECTION 31

He lists heavenly powers: angels, archangels, thrones, dominions, principedoms, powers. They minister God's presence to creatures ("ministers of the divine will").

ORATION 29: ON THE SON

SECTION 1

Hastiness in making theological arguments is dangerous. Gregory says that he will set out his views before taking up the refutation of the objections.

SECTION 2

Differences in the understanding of God are differences in the fundamental principles of reality: none, many, or one. The monotheism of Christians is not "the sovereignty of a single person" but a single rule from an "equality of nature". The one becomes three, but not involuntarily. There is no "overflowing of goodness". Gregory limits himself to traditional terms: "Ingenerate" "Begotten", and "what Proceeds from the Father".

Norris points out that the phrase "as though a bowl had overflowed" has not been traced back to its source in neoplatonic philosophy (hoion krater tis hyperrue)

Trinity is a more perfect unity than a single person's rule. The "one eternally changes to a two and stops at three."

SECTION 3

The Son and Spirit originated when the Father did. The Son has been begotten as long as the Father has not been begotten. They are not unoriginate, but they are eternally from the Father. "The Sun is not prior to its light." The principle is that " 'Being unoriginate' necessarily implies 'being eternal,' but 'being eternal' does not entail 'being unoriginate,' so long as the origin referred to is the Father".

Norris makes much of Gregory's assertion that "a cause is not necessarily prior to its effects". He refers to Meijering's critique in *God Being History* and Meyendorff's analysis in *Byzantine Theology*. At 30.1, 31.23/33, Gregory insists that nothing is the cause of God; yet, Norris says his use here is arbitrary according to his needs. He says that in 31.14 he speaks of the Godhead as the primal cause.

To think about Trinity, categories of time must be left behind, which is an abstraction not entirely possible for us.

SECTION 4

Divine generation is not like corporal generation. It involves no change any more than it entails gestation, etc. A virginal birth means that the one born has a spiritual birth of an entirely different nature.

Begetting in God is not a process or a change.

SECTION 5

Father is an eternal name; God did not begin to be father. Biblical texts often use temporal expressions non-literally. He is Father in the true sense; human fathers are also sons.

The Bible often uses tenses inappropriately, removing any weight to the temporal argument from "he begat".

Fatherhood is a perfection in the Father, as Sonhood in the Son.

SECTION 6

The question turns to whether the Son came forth from the Father's will. A son, even a human son, is not from the will of the father but from the father's being. At the same time, the son is willed by the father. Gregory makes a distinction between the act and the source of the act. "What is willed does not *belong* to a will—it is not a necessary concomitant of it. Nor does what is begotten *belong* to a begetting, nor what is heard to an act of speech. They belong instead to the subject who willed, who begat, who speaks." Intimacy between God and creation also at stake.

The Son is from the Father—he is not merely from his will.

SECTION 7

The issue is not that of will, because the will of the Father becomes problematic in the Eunomian arguments even when it is argued that the son is created. Will and reason, after all, do not produce. Some substance is needed. The Father is not God voluntarily or involuntarily, he simply is God.

SECTION 8

Our begetting is beyond comprehension, so much more God's. That should be honored by silence.

How God begets is not something we know.

SECTION 9

The being begotten of the Son coincides with his eternal existence. [It is in this way that he is distinguished from the Father.] Logical puzzles do not lead to the truth. God did not come into being.

SECTION 10

The opposition between generate and ingenerate turning on the question of essence is a false one. The names are not the same as properties. Two of the same essence can have these diverse properties. God is not demarcated by his attributes. Generate and ingenerate are not the same as created and uncreated. These are properties of Father and Son, not their essence.

It is a false argument to say that ingenerateness is the being of God in a way that immutability and immortality are not.

SECTION 11

We are limited to negative statements in regard to God's nature. One cannot isolate one particular attribute as a statement that has access to God's nature.

Unbegottenness is not a positive assertion and so cannot be the being of God.

SECTION 12

The word God is far more comprehensive than ingenerate. The difference lies outside the substance of God; must you be your Father's father?

God's substance is not expressed in personal characteristics.

SECTION 13

The Eunomians contradict their own theory of names if they refuse the name God to the Son. Whatever is called God *is* God.

The substance is that which identical beings share.

SECTION 14

The same nature reflects equality of some sort. The identity of names reflects and identity of level of being.

SECTION 15

Our experience of causing is superiority, but this is not the case with God.

The Father is superior to the Son qua cause, but this does not make him greater. Affirmations are not of substance but hypostasis.

SECTION 16

Father is not substance or activity; relationship, manner of being.

The three persons of the trinity are distinguished only by relation (skésis), not by essence or activity (TO 3.16, Golitzen) *actually 2.16*

“Father” designates neither the substance nor the activity, but the relationship, the manner of being, which holds good between the Father and the Son.”

SECTION 17

The affirmations of Scripture eternally apply to the Son

The Scriptures refer to the Son as God. The Father was never without his Word, not Father, not true, without wisdom and power, lacking life, splendor, goodness.

SECTION 18

The lowly names refer to his incarnation.

The subordinate and lowly expressions referring to Jesus refer to his incarnation and self-emptying

SECTION 19

He assumed humanity, remaining what he was; single whole “in order that I might be made God to the same extent that he was made man”

SECTION 20

Human things in a divine way

SECTION 21

The purpose was to change us.

Faith gives fullness to our reasoning.

ORATION 30: ON THE SON 2

SECTION 1

Restating the principle

SECTION 2

“Created me” refers to his humanity

SECTION 3

His incarnation lifts us up

SECTION 4

“Untils” signify a change in rule

SECTION 5

Son actively produces submission to the Father.

The submission of the Son is his making submission for us.

SECTION 6

Learning obedience is taking on humanity; God will be all in all.

His obedience and other variable passions are his taking our side.

SECTION 7

SECTION 8

The same application principle applies to titles.

Jesus is both creator and created, God and creature.

SECTION 9

Receiving can apply to both; one temporally, the other eternally

SECTION 10

Cannot has different senses

SECTION 11

The Son cannot do anything the Father does not do; equal authority

SECTION 12

Christ’s will is dependent upon God

The Son’s will is not separate from the Father’s.

SECTION 13

“One God” is a refutation of polytheism, not a denial of the deity of the Son

SECTION 14

SECTION 15

SECTION 16

The Son’s knowledge is the Father’s.

All expressions of ignorance apply to the Son’s human nature.

Knows as God but not as man—the Son’s knowledge is the Father’s knowledge

SECTION 17

To theion akatonomaston.

This is borne out in the Tetragrammaton. The great theologian has not the whole knowledge of God but is one who has been opened to the richer picture or his shadow (fantasthe pleon).

All’hos ean allou fantasthe pleon, kai pleion en heautw synagage to tes aletheias indalma, e ho ti kai onomastomen.

Our bond does not receive the whole.

God is unnameable (akatonómaston): TO 4.7 (Golitzen 293) *actually 4.17*

SECTION 18

The names of God’s being are “He who is” and “God” insofar as our capacity allows.

SECTION 19

Names of God refer to the Trinity: They lead us to him.

Other titles refer to God’s power or to his ordering of the world.

SECTION 20

Son and Father are identical rather than like.

The Son, Only-Begotten, Word refer uniquely to the Son.

SECTION 21

ORATION 31

SECTION 1

The Spirit confuses some who are right about the Son.

SECTION 2

A crack about vain curiosity: “They must have something to blaspheme or life would be unlivable.”

A scriptural analysis will be undertaken.

SECTION 3

The same expressions should be applied to all three. Three subjects refer to the same reality (hen en).

“We receive the Son’s light from the Father’s light in the light of the Spirit.”

SECTION 4

There was never when the Spirit was not.

Holiness comes from the Spirit; he therefore must be truly God. God’s holiness is identical with the Spirit. If the Spirit is not from the beginning, then he is a creature and cannot sanctify. If the Holy Spirit is a creature, how can he make me God?

SECTION 5

The Spirit is what the philosophers intuited as the world soul or the nous.

Some destroy Trinity by limiting infinity: Father, infinite in essence and power; Son, infinite in power but not essence; Spirit, finite on both: Creator-Coworker-Minister

SECTION 6

Some reduce the Spirit to an accident, an activity of God. If this is so, then he cannot act, which contradicts the Scriptures. " 'Believing in' is not the same thing as 'believing a fact about' ". To believe in the Spirit is to refer to him as God.

SECTION 7

The question returns to how the Son and Spirit are not brothers or father and son. "Son" is not the basis for further extension of the metaphor. The Son is not Son in the creaturely sense. Neither is God male because Father and Son are grammatically masculine. Language and reality are not mutually indicative (see comm 192). They do not give an essence that can then be speculated upon. Marcion might should be Marius (see comm 192).

The Son is Son most excellently—that is the way we are given for our mind to be directed to him. This is given, further speculation of making God into a family is not legitimate.

SECTION 8

Procession is not generation. Gregory is arguing that the Scriptures use a language that has access to a super-rational reality that cannot be grasped in words. To demand that the reference be logical is to reduce the Scriptures to human knowing, depriving it of its revelatory power.

Procession is used in the Scripture to describe the origin of the Spirit. That he proceeds means he is not a creature, that he is not begotten means that he is not Son: "procession is the mean between ingeneracy and generacy".

SECTION 9

He then tackles the assertion that the Spirit must lack something in order to distinguish him from the Son. The difference between the three, Gregory replies, is not in defectiveness, but simply in difference. Difference without subordination, distinguishing by origin.

The difference in person is what the difference in names reflects, not a deficiency vis-à-vis the Son.

SECTION 10

Being God means consubstantialness. There is nothing creaturely that can be applied to deduce God.

SECTION 11

Gregory then moves precisely to an example from creation to apply a counter argument: two different individuals can be and often are the same substance. He uses Eve and Seth to show that two beings of the same substance can come from a single source without both being generated.

SECTION 12

He next moves to the precedent for worshipping the Spirit. He replies that it is only in the Spirit that we can worship at all. Praying in the Spirit, he concludes, is the spirit presenting worship to himself.

Worship of the Spirit has been since the beginning of the Church. (12)

“Worshipping, then, and praying in the Spirit seem to me to be simply the Spirit presenting prayer and worship to himself.”

All things were made in the Spirit; the Spirit was not made.

The Spirit is in whom we worship and through whom we pray.

SECTION 13

The divinity of the Spirit does not make three gods any more than the divinity of the Son makes two. (13)

SECTION 14

Norris says that here Gregory speaks of the Godhead, not the Father, as the primal cause. But this is of creatures, not of the Persons. Godhead exists undivided in separate beings. There are no degrees of being in God; there is simply God. There is a single prima cause and three “in whom the Godhead exists”. (14)

SECTION 15

The three persons are not individuals, separate from one another (15).

SECTION 16

They do not have different functions (16)

Each of the Trinity is united in being and power.

SECTION 17

Just because the trinity can be counted says nothing about their substance or their separation (17-20)

SECTION 18

SECTION 19

We cannot submit the faith to a logical analysis of words.

SECTION 20

SECTION 21

The divinity of the Spirit is amply supported by Scripture. Scripture says many things in ways that are not clear. (21-23)

SECTION 22

SECTION 23

SECTION 24

SECTION 25

What you find in the Scripture is a gradual revelation of the being of God (25-28)

There is a progress in God’s dealing with humans and progress in the revelation of God.

SECTION 26

SECTION 27

SECTION 28

The Spirit's divinity is shown in his enabling our salvation.

SECTION 29

All that pertains to our salvation and deification is the work of the Spirit (Or 31.29, see Lossky MT, 160). Nonetheless, the divinity of the Spirit is clear, especially in the New Testament (29-30)

All the attributes of God apply to the Spirit except ingenerate and begotten.

SECTION 30

SECTION 31

There are some created metaphors for the Trinity (31-32)

- o Source, spring, river
- o Sun, beam, light

SECTION 32

SECTION 33

Nonetheless, these are always inadequate, since creatures cannot reflect the fullness of God (33)

"I resolved to keep close to the more truly religious view and rest content with few words, taking the Spirit as my guide and, in his company and in partnership with him, safeguarding to the end the genuine illumination I had received from him, as I strike out a path through this world. To the best of my powers I will persuade all men to worship Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as the single Godhead and power, because to him belong all glory, honor, and might for ever and ever. Amen."