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## ***A Note on Jesus Christ and the Church***

To speak the name of Jesus Christ, biblically and in the tradition of the early church is to say Trinity, and it is to say humanity, and it is to say cosmos, and it is to say that the Triune God, the human race and the cosmos are not separated, but bound together in relationship, in union, in covenant forever, for, according to the apostles, Jesus Christ is the Father's Son. He is the One anointed in the Holy Spirit. He is the One in and through and by and for whom all things were created and are sustained.

The critical question is: Did Jesus break relations with his Father when he became human? Did he give up his anointing in the Spirit? Did he set aside his connections with the human race and the universe when he became incarnate? The answer is a resounding "No!" We cannot speak of Jesus Christ, therefore, without speaking of his relationship with his Father, and his anointing in the Spirit, and his relationship with the human race, and his relationship with the universe. And we cannot speak of the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ without speaking of what happened to us and to the cosmos in him. We he died; we died. We he rose; we rose. We he ascended; we were exalted in him.

To speak of Jesus Christ is to say that in him, the Father himself, the Holy Spirit, the human race, and the cosmos are related, together, united. He is the union.

The gospel is not news of an absent Jesus who waits for us to receive him into our lives. The gospel is the staggering news that Jesus has received us into his life. Jesus has received us into his relationship with his Father, into his anointing with the Spirit, into his relationship with the human race, and into his relationship with the cosmos.

In the light of who Jesus Christ is; in the light of the fact that he has received us into his relationship with his Father, and into his anointing in the Spirit, and into his relationship with humanity, and the cosmos, we can see who we truly are, why we are here, what our time, our history, our lives are about, personally and corporately and historically. In the light of Jesus Christ we can see what the Triune God has planned and willed for humanity. For the existence of Jesus Christ is not plan "B," quickly worked up after the failure of plan "A" in Adam. Jesus Christ is plan "A." He is the alpha and the omega, the first, the eternal Word of God

In the light of Jesus Christ and what he has made of us in his life, death, resurrection and ascension, we can see something of the profound darkness that is blinding the human race, something of how far we are falling short personally and corporately and globally of who we are in Jesus Christ, something of the terrible bondage that is holding us down.

It is the calling of the Christian Church to take Jesus Christ seriously, to believe in Him. The Church is summoned to be the people within the world in darkness where Jesus is allowed to have his way with the mind and heart and will of humanity. It is our calling to have our minds, our world-views, our fundamental vision reconstructed in the light of Jesus Christ, to think through the personal, relational, global, historical, political, economic, environmental, religious, scientific and cosmic implications of the very identity of Jesus Christ. We are called to be the people in whom the

stunning news of our adoption in Christ - of our inclusion in Jesus' four-fold relationship - is understood, believed, enjoyed and freely shared with the world.

Jesus Christ himself is the truth that can set us free from the bondage of darkness. The Church is called to bear witness to Jesus Christ, the truth of all truths, the light of the cosmos, the One in whom the Triune God, the human race and the universe are personally and rightly related.

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