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# Dialogue on the Two Natures in Christ



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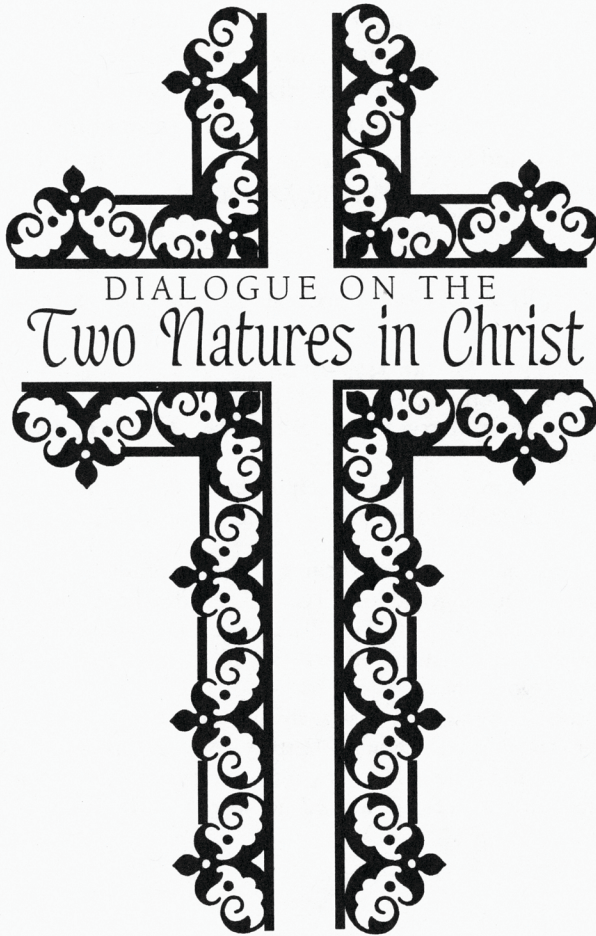
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The Peter Martyr Library  
Volume Two



Peter Martyr Vermigli

Translated and Edited  
with Introduction and Notes by  
John Patrick Donnelly, S.J.

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# Contents

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Abbreviations Used in this Volume . . . . .	vi
Preface . . . . .	vii
Translator's Introduction . . . . .	ix
Dialogue on the Two Natures in Christ by Peter Martyr Vermigli . . .	1
About the Translator . . . . .	204
Bibliography . . . . .	205
Scripture References . . . . .	207
Index . . . . .	210

## Abbreviations Used in this Volume

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- BIB     *A Bibliography of the Writings of Peter Martyr Vermigli*. J. P. Donnelly and R. M. Kingdon, with M. Anderson. Kirksville, Mo.: Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers, 1990.
- CR     *Corpus Reformatorum*. Edited by C. G. Bretschneider and H. E. Bindseil. Halle, 1834–.
- DS     H. Denzinger and A. Schönmetzer, *Enchiridion symbolorum definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum* (Barcelona: Herder, 1963), no. 75. This work cited DS, with its standard citation numbers rather than by pages.
- PG     *Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Graeca*. Edited by J. P. Migne. Paris, 1857–. Cited by volume and column no.
- PL     *Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Latina*. Edited by J. P. Migne. Paris, 1844–. Cited by volume and column nos.
- ST     Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*.
- WA     *D. Martin Luthers Werke*, Weimar Ausgabe.

## Preface

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THIS WORK BEGAN MORE THAN TWENTY YEARS AGO when Robert Kingdon invited me to join him and Antonio Rotondò for dinner in Madison, Wisconsin. There we discussed my doing a critical edition of Vermigli's *Dialogus de utraque in Christo natura* for the Corpus Reformatorum Italicorum series. I spent the summer of 1970 in various European libraries comparing the five Latin editions of the *Dialogus* and establishing a critical text. During the next several years I worked at running down Vermigli's many patristic references, but gradually my time and energy became absorbed in other projects. When the Corpus Reformatorum Italicorum and its publisher, Sansoni of Florence, ran into financial difficulties, I shelved my notes. Meanwhile I was cotranslator of two Latin works, and I became convinced that a translation of the *Dialogus* would be of greater value than the publication of a critical edition of the Latin text. The notes to a translation could provide almost all the scholarly information usually supplied by a critical edition, and the potential readership would be much broader.

Over the years I have incurred debts to many scholars for their help with this project. For two weeks in the summer of 1970 I enjoyed the hospitality of Professor Philip McNair and Darwin College as I compared the various editions in the *Dialogus* in the rich collections of Cambridge University. The start of Peter Martyr Library, whose driving force has been Joseph C. McLelland, gave me the impetus to take down my earlier work from the shelf and begin again. Marcus Haworth, S.J., Professor Emeritus of Classical Languages at Saint Louis University, kindly read the whole manuscript, caught many errors of omission and commission, and often provided me with a better turn of phrase. Roland J. Teske, S.J., Professor of Philosophy at Marquette University, has given me much help with passages from Saint Augustine. The aid of his colleague, William E. Dooley, S.J., was invaluable in locating references to Aristotle and his commentators as well as in deciphering and translating Greek quotations in the difficult Greek type font employed by Vermigli's publisher. Frederick Brenk, S.J., of the Pontifical Biblical Institute, Rome, helped

me with classical allusions. Professor Oliver Olson of Marquette's Department of Theology provided information about the participants of the Lutheran-Reformed controversy over the Eucharist. Marquette's Committee on Research funded much of my research costs, while Marquette Jesuit Associates helped with the cost of publication. A note of thanks is owed to the Zurich Zentralbibliothek for permission to publish the title page of the first edition of Vermigli's *Dialogus*. Special thanks are due to the General Editor of the Peter Martyr Library, Joseph C. McLelland of McGill University, and to its Managing Editor, Robert V. Schnucker of Northeast Missouri State University. The errors and shortcomings of this work, of course, remain my own. It is hoped that in this work a Jesuit priest, whose Eucharist beliefs are closer to those of Johannes Brenz and whose Christology largely agrees with Vermigli's, has carried out the role of the honest broker between the two contenders in the *Dialogus*.

John Patrick Donnelly, S.J.

Marquette University



## Introduction

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# Eucharistic Controversy and the Reformation

THE EUCHARIST during the Reformation era, far from being a source of unity among Christians as intended by Christ, often functioned as the apple of discord. Most of the major colloquies or ecumenical efforts to reach doctrinal agreements broke up, often after notable progress on other differences, when discussion turned to the Eucharist and to the way that Christ is present in the Lord's Supper.

If Church historians have to point to one historical event at which Protestant unity broke down, the most obvious choice would be the discussions on the presence of Christ in the Eucharist at the Colloquy of Marburg on 3 October 1529, between Martin Luther (supported by Philip Melanchthon and Johannes Brenz) and Huldrych Zwingli (supported by Johannes Oecolampadius and others).

The most important and successful effort to heal divisions between Catholics and Protestants was the Colloquy at Regensburg (Ratisbon) in 1541 during which Melanchthon and Martin Bucer were able to work out a compromise with Cardinal Gasparo Contarini and Catholic representatives on many disputed issues, including justification, only to see the Colloquy collapse into mutual recrimination when it took up the Lord's Supper.

In France the most important effort to avert civil war and achieve religious unity was the Colloquy of Poissy of 1561, where the two most important

Protestant theologians were Theodore Beza and Peter Martyr Vermigli. Discussion went ahead rather smoothly until, as Vermigli wrote to Heinrich Bullinger, Beza told the assembly that “the body and blood of the Lord is as far from the bread and wine of the Lord’s Supper as the highest heaven is from earth.” The cardinals and bishops made such an uproar that Beza could finish his speech only with great difficulty. Vermigli related to Bullinger that the Cardinal of Lorraine then made an address on the Eucharist which downplayed Catholic doctrine and approached the views of Luther and Johannes Brenz (1499–1570). Lorraine asked Beza and Vermigli to subscribe to this teaching, but they refused. Lorraine asked the two to sign the Augsburg Confession, with its statement of the real presence. Beza and Vermigli again refused. Vermigli rose and replied to Lorraine in Italian, arguing that the words of institution should not be taken literally and supporting his position by quotations from the early Church. This provoked an angry rebuttal from the learned General of the Jesuits, Diego Lainez. The Colloquy quickly broke down thereafter and civil war soon followed, but before leaving Poissy and Paris Vermigli wrote a declaration on the Eucharist that was frequently reprinted in his works.<sup>1</sup>

Toward the end of the sixteenth century a new effort to heal differences between Protestants was made at Montbéliard in 1586. The giants of the Reformation era had long since gone to their reward. The two chief spokesmen were Theodore Beza (1519–1605) for the Reformed or Calvinists and Jacob Andreae (1528–1590) for the Lutherans. Andreae had earlier been largely responsible for healing doctrinal divisions among Lutherans and achieving a far-ranging doctrinal consensus in the Formula of Concord of 1577. But the Colloquy of Montbéliard also broke down and further embittered Beza and Andreae, who had once enjoyed cordial relations. Both sides published contradictory accounts of the Colloquy and claimed a theological victory. It is worth noting that in all the four failed efforts at consensus reviewed here the secular rulers applied pressure on the theologians to reach a compromise, but the theologians stuck to their principles.

#### PETER MARTYR VERMIGLI (1499–1562)

It is against this background of longstanding sacramentarian controversy that we must approach Vermigli’s *Dialogue on the Two Natures in Christ*, the last work of his distinguished career as theologian. But the *Dialogue* must

<sup>1</sup>For Vermigli’s Poissy statements on the Eucharist, see J. C. McLelland and G. E. Duffield, eds., *The Life, Early Letters & Eucharistic Writings of Peter Martyr* (Abington, Oxford: Sutton Courtenay Press, 1989), 327–336.

also be viewed in the context of his own life and theological development. Peter Martyr, as Vermigli is usually known in English, was trained as an Augustinian canon at the University of Padua, where he mastered Aristotelian philosophy and received a solid grounding in the scholastic theologians. During his twenty years as priest and prior in Italy he read widely, gradually became disillusioned with the Roman Church, and was won over to Protestantism. Rightly fearing increasing repression after the breakdown of the Colloquy at Regensburg, he fled to Zurich in 1542. His first stay there was short, because no suitable position was available; instead he accepted an invitation to teach theology at the famous Academy in Strasbourg side by side with Martin Bucer (1491–1551). Bucer was learned, energetic, original, and irenic; his Eucharistic teaching tried to mediate between Luther and Zwingli. Clearer minds could and did call this trying to square the circle, but Bucer's style was so prolix and opaque and his teaching so conditioned by political considerations that it was often hard to see precisely where he stood. On one point Bucer was certainly clear: theological divisions among German Protestants made them vulnerable to the rising military might of the Catholic emperor Charles V. The emperor's victory in the First Schmalkaldic War forced Martyr to leave Strasbourg and accept an invitation from the government of Edward VI to teach at Oxford. Bucer soon followed him and took the chair of theology at Cambridge. In his lectures at Strasbourg and initially at Oxford Vermigli was understandably cautious on issues that divided Protestants, but the reaction to his Oxford lectures on 1 Corinthians, whose eleventh chapter is the earliest and most important Eucharistic text in the Bible, forced his hand. Among those attending his lectures was Richard Smith, whom Vermigli had replaced as regius professor. The lectures resulted in an outcry for a public disputation on the Eucharist. Smith, fearful of the government, fled,<sup>2</sup> but the Catholic position was defended by other theologians in May 1549. The government had the records of the debate published together with Martyr's more systematic account of his Eucharistic theology, the *Tractatio*.<sup>3</sup> The next year an English translation of the *Tractatio* was published in London. The first two continental editions of this, Vermigli's first book, appeared in Zurich in 1552 and 1557. In 1557 there were also French and Italian translations published in

<sup>2</sup> Later Vermigli wrote a book against Smith on priestly celibacy and religious vows.

<sup>3</sup>*Tractatio de sacramento Eucharistiae...* (London: [R. Wolfe], 1549). Bound with it was *Disputatio de eodem Eucharistiae sacramento....* The first edition of the *Tractatio* must have come to the attention of the Lutheran Johannes Brenz because Bucer was apologizing to Brenz for its teaching as early as 15 May 1550. An English translation of the *Tractatio* is in McLelland and Duffield, *Life, Early Letters*, 173–289.

Geneva. The publication history of these writings alone indicates that Vermigli's teaching took a distinctly Reformed rather than a Lutheran stance. Gradually Vermigli's influence on Archbishop Cranmer grew. It is in no small measure because of this influence that the Edwardian Forty-Two Articles, which later as the Elizabethan Thirty-Nine Articles became the main doctrinal statement of Anglicanism, took a definitely Reformed position on the Eucharist, and ruled out both the Catholic and Lutheran positions.<sup>4</sup>

The death of Edward VI and the accession of Mary Tudor in 1553 forced Vermigli to leave England and return to his old teaching position in Strasbourg. But conditions in Strasbourg had changed. Bucer had died in England, and the clergy of the city were now led by Johann Marbach, who favored a strict Lutheran position on the Eucharist. Several times Marbach tried to impose on Vermigli a Lutheran confession dealing with the Lord's Supper. He refused to submit to this pressure, and in his 1556 statement to the Strasbourg Senate he recapitulated his doctrine, rejected a Lutheran doctrine of the real physical presence of Christ in the Eucharist, and repudiated the teaching that Christ's body can be in more than one place.<sup>5</sup> This last point was to be the crucial issue in the *Dialogus* published six years later. Rather than face a public quarrel with the cards stacked against him, Vermigli decided to leave Strasbourg and take the teaching position at Zurich which had become open on the death of Conrad Pellican. Except for the sojourn to Paris for the Colloquy of Poissy, Vermigli spent the last years of his life, 1556 to 1562, at Zurich.

Before leaving Strasbourg Vermigli wrote his longest and most important statement on Eucharist theology, *Defensio doctrinae veteris et apostolicae in sacrosancto Eucharistiae sacramento*.<sup>6</sup> The work is directed against Stephen Gardiner, bishop of Winchester, an old rival of Cranmer and then an important figure in Mary Tudor's reestablishment of Catholicism. Gardiner was an accomplished patristic scholar, and Martyr took up the challenge at the insistence of John Jewel and other English friends who had followed him into exile. Martyr wrote to John Calvin in December 1558 that the work was going to press.<sup>7</sup> Calvin greatly valued Martyr's Eucharistic writings and later wrote

<sup>4</sup>See Articles xxviii and xxix. It was John Jewel, Martyr's dear friend and the recipient of the prefatory letter of the *Dialogus*, who revised the Thirty-Nine Articles. He wrote Martyr that the Articles "do not differ from you by a nail's breath; for as to the ubiquitarian theory, there is no danger in this country": see *The Works of John Jewel*, edited for the Parker Society by John Ayre (Cambridge, 1850), 4: 1246.

<sup>5</sup>The statement is printed in McLelland and Duffield, *Life, Early Letters*, 320–325.

<sup>6</sup>Vermigli's *Defensio doctrinae veteris et apostolicae*... was published in Zurich in 1559 by Christopher Froschauer, his favorite publisher. The *Defensio* runs 821 folio pages. There is a translation of a brief *Epitome* of the *Defensio* in McLelland and Duffield, *Life, Early Letters*, 286–318.

that refutation of the Lutheran teaching on the local presence of Christ's body "received its finishing touches from Peter Martyr, who left nothing more to be done."<sup>8</sup> The study of the writings of the Church Fathers involved in refuting Gardiner stood Martyr in good stead when he turned to refuting Johannes Brenz in the *Dialogus*, where his patristic erudition is the most striking feature.

Prior to writing the *Dialogus* Martyr had written against Catholics, as has been noted, but he was reluctant to engage in polemics against Protestants. Most of his writings were based on his lectures and took the form of commentaries on Scripture plus a commentary on Aristotle's *Ethics*. Much of this material was published from his lecture notes after his death. He had attacked the veteran Zurich professor Theodore Bibliander, mainly over predestination, but this controversy, which ended in Bibliander's dismissal, was largely kept quiet.<sup>9</sup> Hostility to certain Lutheran teachings, especially regarding the Eucharist, had been building in Vermigli for several years. Undoubtedly his bitter experiences with Marbach had fed his frustration, but personal motives were secondary.

#### THE SUPPER DISPUTE RENEWED

After the Marburg Colloquy of 1529 polemics over the Eucharist between the Lutheran and Reformed wings of Protestantism abated considerably, but in the 1550s Reformed doctrine made inroads into Germany in a form that owed more to Calvin than to Zwingli. It affirmed that Christ was really but not physically present in the Eucharist. Many Lutherans were alarmed and labeled the new teaching crypto-Calvinism. The new doctrine was almost indistinguishable from the teaching of Melancthon in his last years. Strict Lutherans began to attack crypto-Calvinism, and a new phase of the Supper Dispute was on.

The opening salvo was the *Farrago ... de coena Domini* of Joachim Westphal (1510–1574) published in 1552. The new attack centered on the way or mode that Christ was present in the Eucharist. Westphal lumped the teachings of Zwingli and Calvin together and condemned as heretics those who denied a corporeal presence of Christ in the Eucharist and a literal eating of Christ's body.

<sup>7</sup>John Calvin, *Opera quae supersunt omnia*, ed. Baum, Cunitz, and Reuss, CR edition (Brunswick: Schwetschke, 1877), 17: 391.

<sup>8</sup>"Cumulum addit Petrus Martyr, ut nihil prorsus desiderari queat"; *ibid.*, 9: 490.

<sup>9</sup>See John Patrick Donnelly, "Three Disputed Vermigli Tracts," in *Essays Presented to Myron Gilmore*, ed. Sergio Bertelli and Gloria Ramakus (Florence: La Nuova Italia, 1978), 1: 37–46.

## About the Translator

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John Patrick Donnelly, S.J., received his Ph.D. in history from the University of Wisconsin–Madison in 1972, where he wrote a dissertation on Peter Martyr Vermigli under the direction of Robert M. Kingdon. Since 1971, he has taught at Marquette University in Milwaukee, where he is professor of history. His research has centered mainly on the Jesuits and on Peter Martyr Vermigli. In addition to six articles and chapters in books dealing with Vermigli, he has published *Calvinism and Scholasticism in Vermigli's Doctrine of Man and Grace* (Leiden: Brill, 1976), and with Robert M. Kingdon, *A Bibliography of the Works of Peter Martyr Vermigli*, Sixteenth Century Essays and Studies, XII (Kirksville, Mo.), 1990. He has previously translated from Latin various works of Thomas More (1982), Robert Bellarmine (1989), and Girolamo Savonarola (1994). He has held various offices in professional societies, including President of the Sixteenth Century Studies Conference (1977) and President of the Society for Reformation Research (1990–1991). He currently serves on the editorial boards of *The Sixteenth Century Journal* and *Archive for Reformation Research*. He is co-general editor of the Peter Martyr Library.

# Scripture References

---

## GENESIS

1:3 ..... 171  
 1:8 ..... 119  
 1:26 ..... 89, 198  
 49:28 ..... 62  
 49:30 ..... 63  
 49:31 ..... 63

## NUMBERS

22:30 ..... 141

## JOSH

10:12 ..... 141  
 10:13 ..... 141

## 2 KINGS

2:11 ..... 140  
 6:6 ..... 141

## 2 CHRONICLES

2:6 ..... 129  
 20:12 ..... 202

## PSALMS

2:4 ..... 183  
 8:5 ..... 182  
 18:26 ..... 149  
 22:6 ..... 58  
 24:7 ..... 154  
 53:3 ..... 183  
 57:3 ..... 183  
 68:18 ..... 127  
 73:6-20 ..... 149  
 103:19 ..... 183  
 110:1 ..... 28  
 110:2 ..... 58  
 115:16 ..... 183  
 138:7 ..... 20  
 138:8 ..... 20  
 139:7 ..... 19  
 139:7-10 ..... 132

## PROVERBS

13:9 ..... 121

## ISAIAH

40:12 ..... 129, 132  
 66:1 ..... 132

## JEREMIAH

1:5 ..... 145  
 22:15 ..... 152  
 22:2 (Septuagint) ..... 19  
 23:24 ..... 20, 28, 45, 132

## EZEKIEL

1:1-3 ..... 19  
 1:4-28 ..... 178

## DANIEL

3:80 ..... 119  
 3:94 ..... 141  
 4:8 ..... 19  
 7:1-27 ..... 178  
 14:35 ..... 19

## HAGGAI

2:5-6 ..... 19

## WISDOM OF SOLOMON

1:7 ..... 19, 20

## MATTHEW

1:22 ..... 53  
 3:17 ..... 199  
 5:18 ..... 114  
 6:9 ..... 182  
 10:28 ..... 72  
 14:26 ..... 140  
 14:29 ..... 140  
 17:2 ..... 137  
 17:2-5 ..... 138  
 18:20 ..... 259  
 19 ..... 30  
 24:46-51 ..... 187

## MATTHEW (*cont'd.*)

25:1 ..... 10  
 25:31-33 ..... 22  
 26:11 ..... 155, 156  
 26:26 ..... 193  
 26:29 ..... 130, 201  
 26:64 ..... 22, 58  
 28:20 ..... 154, 155, 161, 163

## MARK

3:35 ..... 74  
 9:2-7 ..... 138  
 16:6 ..... 111

## LUKE

1:11 ..... 19  
 1:30 ..... 53  
 1:31 ..... 53  
 2:22-23 ..... 144  
 4:2 ..... 140  
 9:28-37 ..... 138  
 9:29 ..... 140  
 17:21 ..... 139  
 17:22 ..... 161  
 19:12-27 ..... 186  
 22:19 ..... 16, 202  
 22:55-61 ..... 177  
 23:43 ..... 46, 87, 97, 156, 158,  
     161  
 23:46 ..... 56  
 24:6 ..... 15  
 24:26 ..... 130  
 24:39 ..... 199  
 24:43 ..... 130  
 24:51 ..... 15

## JOHN

1:1 ..... 199  
 1:13 ..... 156  
 1:14 ..... 32  
 1:15 ..... 66  
 1:17 ..... 66

JOHN (*cont'd.*)

1:18 .....	165
1:27 .....	51
1:30 .....	51, 73
3:10 .....	138
3:13 ... 53, 56, 62, 68, 87, 88, 108, 110, 137, 138, 165	
4:6 .....	57
4:22 .....	89
4:24 .....	199
6:33 .....	56
6:35 .....	200
6:51 .....	108, 150, 200
6:52-64 .....	III
6:57 .....	151
6:58 .....	108
6:62 .....	56, 108
6:63 .....	66
7:34 .....	85, 159
8:58 .....	73
8:59 .....	140
9:39 .....	149
10:30 .....	199
11:14-15 .....	163
11:15 .....	15, III
12:8 .....	15, III
13:33 .....	85
14:2 .....	113
14:3 .....	113
14:18 .....	160
14:20 .....	169
14:27-28 .....	155
14:28 .....	58, 62, 199
14:31 .....	58
15:1 .....	198
15:4 .....	169
15:5 .....	198
16:7 .....	160
16:14 .....	66
16:28 .....	15, III
17:11 .....	159
17:19 .....	108
18:37 .....	58
20:17 .....	136, 163

## ACTS

1:3-10 .....	156
1:3-12 .....	107
1:6-8 .....	158
1:8 .....	158
1:10 .....	15
1:11 .....	22, 47, 160
3:21 .....	112, 126, 132, 201
6:9-12 .....	177
7:55 .....	147, 175, 187
7:56 .....	22, 175
8:2 .....	62
8:26 .....	19
8:39 .....	141
9:3-6 .....	175
9:4 .....	157, 178
9:10-11 .....	175
10:3 .....	19
1:11 .....	156
12:1 .....	63
12:2 .....	63
17:28 .....	14, 47, 149, 157
17:31 .....	22
22:10 .....	175
22:17 .....	178
26:14 .....	175

## ROMANS

1:3 .....	74
3:3 .....	149
9:5 .....	199
10:17 .....	197
14:17 .....	139

## 1 CORINTHIANS

1:21-24 .....	149
1:23 .....	57
2:8 .....	55, 74
3:20 .....	123
4:15 .....	190
6:15 .....	151
8:6 .....	110
10:1-3 .....	195
10:3-4 .....	195
10:4 .....	201
10:16 .....	168, 190, 191

1 CORINTHIANS (*cont'd.*)

11:24 .....	198
11:29 .....	149
15:20 .....	73
15:42-44 .....	142
15:47 .....	51, 53, 68, 110
15:48 .....	68

## 2 CORINTHIANS

5:16 .....	82, 83
10:5 .....	38
12:2 .....	120, 141
13:3 .....	163

## GALATIANS

4:4 .....	49, 74
5:17 .....	27, 72

## EPHESIANS

1:7 .....	74
1:17 .....	69
1:20 .....	37, 92, 128
1:21 .....	37, 92, 117, 128
3:17 .....	68
4:5 .....	52
4:7 .....	127
4:8 .....	127
4:9 .....	126
4:9-10 .....	125
4:10...92, 106, 116, 119, 126	
5:23 .....	192

## PHILIPPIANS

2:6 .....	53
2:7 .....	48
2:9 .....	54, 129
2:10 .....	129
3:20 .....	110

## COLOSSIANS

1:12 .....	121
1:18 .....	73
1:19 .....	37
3:1 .....	166
3:2 .....	165



1 THESSALONIANS

1:9 ..... 110

1:10 ..... 110

1 TIMOTHY

2:4 ..... 93

6:16 ..... 116

2 TIMOTHY

2:12-13 ..... 17

HEBREWS

2:9 ..... 70, 73, 74

4:14 ..... 128, 187

HEBREWS (*cont'd.*)

6:18 ..... 17

7:26 ..... 128

12:12-13 ..... 69

1 PETER

3:18 ..... 63

4:1 ..... 59, 67, 78

2 PETER

3:7 ..... 114

3:12 ..... 114

1 JOHN

4:12 ..... 199

5:7 ..... 199

REVELATION

Book of ..... 197

14:4 ..... 96

EXTRA-CANONICAL

SIRACH

24:4 ..... 66

24:14 ..... 136

# Index

---

- Abraham (patriarch), 47, 63, 73, 74  
 Achilles, 3*n*  
 Aeacus, 3, 3*n*  
 Aegina, 3*n*  
 Ajax, 3*n*  
 Albert the Great (saint), 102, 102*n*  
 Alcibiades, 29  
 Alexander of Aphrodisias, 43, 43*n*  
 Alexander the Great, 4, 4*n*  
 Alypius, 4  
 Ambrose (saint), 58, 62, 70, 108, 135, 135*n*,  
     145, 146, 169, 175, 179  
 Analogical arguments, refutation, 71-85  
 Ananias, 179  
 Andrae, Jacob, x, xiv  
 Andrew the Apostle, 133  
 Antiochean school, xxiii  
 Apollinaris of Laodicea, 29*n*  
 Apostles' Creed, 23, 72  
 Apuleius, 4*n*  
 Aquinas. *See* Thomas Aquinas (saint)  
 Aratus, 14*n*, 47*n*  
 Aristides, 29, 30  
 Aristotle, xiii, xviii, 4, 4*n*, 14, 14*n*, 23,  
     40*n*, 41, 42*n*, 43, 43*n*, 44*n*, 90*n*,  
     112*n*, 113, 114, 114*n*, 116, 117, 141,  
     141*n*, 174, 174*n*, 180  
 Arius, 20, 199  
 Ascension of Christ into heaven, 107-113,  
     164, 165, 201  
 Asia, 19, 177  
 Athanasian Creed, 23, 35, 35*n*, 181  
 Athanasius (saint), 20, 28, 236, 265, 282  
 Athens, 48  
 Aubert, Hippolyte, xvi  
 Augsburg Confession, x, 203*n*  
 Augustine (saint), xvii, xxii, xxv, 4, 14,  
     14*n*, 16, 38, 38*n*, 41, 41*n*, 42, 44, 45,  
     45*n*, 46, 46*n*, 58, 66, 83, 84-87, 93,  
     95, 97-99, 118, 123-125, 142, 144,  
     144*n*, 146, 150-152, 154-158, 165, 166,  
     169, 172, 175, 178, 178*n*, 183, 195, 196,  
     198  
 Aulus Gellius, 8, 8*n*  
 Auxentius the Arian, 176  
 Averroës, 44, 44*n*  
 Ayre, John, xi*n*  
 Babylonia, 19  
 Barclay, Alexander, 45*n*  
 Baridon, Silvio F., xviii  
 Basel edition of *Dialogus*, xxiv, xxv, 80*n*,  
     109*n*, 162*n*, 168*n*  
 Basil (saint), 18, 19, 76-79, 121, 169  
 Bede (saint), 12, 120*n*, 169  
 Bernard (saint), 201  
 Bertelli, Sergio, xiii*n*  
 Bethany, 137  
 Beza, Theodore, xiv, xx, xx*n*, x, 169*n*  
 Bible translations, xxiv  
 Bibliander, Theodore, xiii, 6*n*  
 Biel, Gabriel, 102, 102*n*  
 Boetius, 33*n*  
 Bonaventure (saint), 98, 98*n*, 102, 103,  
     103*n*  
 Brandy, Hans C., xv*n*, xviii*n*, xx*n*, xxii-  
     xxiii(*nn*)  
 Brecht, Martin, xv*n*  
 Bremen, xv*n*, 168, 168*n*  
 Brenz, Johannes, ix, xi*n*, xiv-xxiii, xxv,  
     6*n*, 8*n*, 12*n*, 28*n*, 30*n*, 34*n*, 36-41*nn*,  
     44*n*, 48*n*, 52*n*, 61*n*, 75*n*, 77*n*, 80-  
     81*nn*, 83-84*n*, 91-92*nn*, 96*n*, 98*n*,  
     107*n*, 128-130*nn*, 132*n*, 135*n*, 137*n*,  
     139*n*, 141*n*, 144*n*, 148*n*, 153*n*, 171*n*  
 Brunswick, 16, 169*n*  
 Bucer, Martin, ix, xi, xi*n*  
 Bullinger, Heinrich, x, xi*n*, xii-xx, xiv,  
     xv*n*, 10, 10*n*, 126, 126*n*  
 Bullinger, Rudolph, xxiv  
 Caesar, Julius, 9  
 Calvin, John, xii-xvi, xix, xxii, xxii*n*,  
     169*n*, 188*n*  
 Cardinals, of Lorraine, x  
 Cato, Marcus, 8, 9, 29, 185, 186  
 Chadwick, Henry, xxiii, xxiii*n*  
 Chalcedon, Council of, xxii, 39*n*, 55, 60,  
     61, 72  
 Charles V, xi

- Chebar, 19  
 Chemnitz, Martin, xv  
 Christ. *See* Jesus Christ  
 Chrysostom, John (saint), 65*n*, 136, 200, 201  
 Cicero, xvii, 4*n*, 123  
 Cirlerus, Stephanus, 167*n*  
 Clark, Francis, 12*n*  
 Cleanthes, 47*n*  
 Cledonius, Letter to, 68, 68*n*, 116  
 Clement of Alexandria, 169  
 Colloquies  
   Marburg, ix, xiii, 164*n*, 165*n*  
   Montbéliard, x  
   Poissy, ix, x, *xn*, xii, xvi, xvii, *xxn*  
   Regensburg [Ratisbon], x  
 Communication of idioms, 50, 51, 60, 66, 81, 83, 98, 102-104, 138, 165, 166  
 Concord, Formula of, x, xv, *xvn*  
 Constable, John W., *xvn*  
 Constantinople, Councils of, 29*n*, 145*n*  
 Contarini, Gasparo, *xvn*  
 Corda, Salvatore, *xx*, *xxn*  
 Cornelius, 218  
 Councils  
   Chalcedon, xxii, 39*n*, 55, 60, 61, 72  
   Constantinople, 29*n*, 145*n*  
   Ephesus, xxi, xxii, 11*n*, 26*n*, 55, 61, 73  
   Nicaea, 68*n*  
 Cranmer, Thomas, xii  
 Creeds and confessions  
   Apostles' Creed, 23, 72  
   Athanasian, 23, 35, 35*n*, 181  
   Augsburg, x, 203*n*  
   Formula of Concord, x, xv, *xvn*  
   Forty-Two Articles, xxii  
   Heidelberg Catechism, xxii  
   Nicene, 23, 68*n*, 86, 87, 117  
   Thirty-Nine Articles, xii, *xiin*  
 Crypto-Calvinism, xiii  
 Cyprian (saint), 165  
 Cyril of Alexandria (saint), xxii, xxiii, *xxiin*, *xxv*, *xxvn*, 20, 21, 44, 48-53, 53*n*, 55, 59, 61, 65-67, 73, 79-83, 87-89, 110, 110*n*, 138, 139, 158-160  
 Daneau, Lambert, *xx*  
 Dardanus, letter to, 14, 14*n*, 45*n*, 46, 47, 66, 87, 156, 158, 175  
 David, King, 56, 74  
 Davidson, William L., 47*n*  
 Davus, 11, 11*n*  
 Didymus (saint), 19  
 Dionysius, 169  
 Docetists, 29*n*  
 Donatus, 20  
 Donnelly, John P., *xiiin*, *xvin*, 181*n*, 204  
 Dooley, William, 43*n*  
 Duffield, G. E., *xn*, *xin*, *xxin*  
 Edward VI, xii, 6*n*  
 Eheim, Christian, *xixn*  
 Elert, Werner, 38*n*  
 Elijah, 138, 140  
 Elizabeth I, 7*n*, 9*n*  
 Empie, Paul C., *xixn*  
 Ephesus, Council of, xxi, xxii, 11*n*, 26*n*, 55, 61, 73  
 Erastus, Thomas, xix  
 Eucharist  
   as cause of denominational schism, ix, x  
   Christ's presence, 148-164  
 Eucharistic controversy (1552-62), *xiii-xx*  
 Europa, 3*n*  
 Eustatius of Antioch, 65, 66*n*, 136  
 Eustochium, 16, 145  
 Eutyches, xxii, xxiii, 23, 26, 26*n*, 28, 57, 62, 73, 160, 161  
 Eutychians, 55  
*Extra-Calvinisticum*, xxii, *xxiin*, *xxiiin*, *xxii-xxiiin*  
 Fathers of the Church, xxii-xxv, 23, 50, 91, 95, 99, 125, 154-164, 179  
 Fatio, Olivier, *xn*  
 Flavian, 53, 54  
 Florence, *xxiv*  
 Formula of Concord, x, xv, *xvn*  
 Forty-Two Articles, xxii  
 Frankfurt, xvii  
 Frederick III (elector), xiv, 203*n*, 166-167*n*  
 Froschauer, Christopher, *xiin*, xvi, *xxiv*  
 Fulgentius (saint), 20, 64, 109, 162  
 Gabriel, Archangel, 53  
 Gardiner, Stephen, xii, 6*n*  
 Gelasius, 27, 28, 28*n*, 30, 30*n*, 31, 32  
 Gorham, George C., *xviin*  
 Gratian (emperor), 62

- Greece, 133  
 Gregory of Nazianzen (saint), 34, 34*n*, 68, 92, 92*n*, 95, 116, 117*n*, 169  
 Gregory of Nyssa (saint), 134  
 Grollwitzer, Helmut, xiv*n*  
 Gualter, Rudolph, xix*n*
- Haller, Wolfgang, xix*n*  
 Hammond, N. G. L., 4*n*  
 Hardenburg, Albert, 168-169*nn*  
 Heaven, Christ's body in, 111-148  
 Heidelberg, xix, 167*n*  
 Heidelberg Catechism, xxii  
 Helvidius, 146, 146*n*  
 Hercules, 123  
 Herkenrath, Erland, xix*n*  
 Herod (tetrarch), 63  
 Heshusius, Tilemann, xiv, 168, 169, 169*n*  
 Hippolytus, 136  
 Homer, 3*n*  
 Hopf, C., 12*n*  
 Horace, 3*n*, 9*n*  
 Hospinian, Rudolph, xiv*n*  
 Hugh of Strasbourg, 99*n*  
 Humanity of Christ, 11-39  
 Hypostatic union, 21-41, 45, 59, 60, 72, 77, 81, 82, 84, 86, 88-90, 93, 95, 96, 98-101, 104, 105, 130, 131, 135, 137, 139, 140, 143, 144, 147, 155, 161, 164, 182
- Idioms, communication of, 50, 51, 60, 66, 81, 83, 98, 102-104, 138, 165, 166
- India, 133  
 Innocent I (pope), 103, 103*n*  
 Innocent III (pope), 1-3*n*  
 Innocent V (Peter of Tarantaise), 101, 102*n*  
 Irenaeus (saint), 59, 59*n*  
 Issac (patriarch), 69
- Jacob (patriarch), 62  
 James the Great (saint), 63  
 Jena, 169*n*  
 Jerome (saint), 9, 16, 59, 94, 96, 97, 99, 132-135, 145, 146, 146*n*, 152, 184  
 Jerusalem, 48, 137  
 Jesus Christ  
   ascension into heaven, 107-113, 165, 201, 164
- Jesus Christ (*cont'd.*):  
   body of, in heaven, 111-148  
   humanity, 11-39  
   presence in Eucharist, 148-164  
   properties of the natures in, 39-89  
   transfiguration, 137, 138
- Jewel, John, xii, xii*n*, xvii, xx, xxv, 3-10  
 John of Antioch, xxiii, 52, 52*n*, 67  
 John of Damascus, 100, 100*n*, 119, 120  
 John the Apostle, 85, 138  
 John the Baptist, 51  
 Josaphat (king), 202  
 Joshua, 141  
 Jove, 147, 147*n*  
 Julian (bishop), 59
- Kerquefinen, Claude de, xvi  
 Kingdon, Robert M., xvii*n*  
 Kittelson, James, 203*n*  
 Kluckhorn, A., 167*n*  
 Knossos, 3*n*  
 Köhler, Walther, xix*n*  
 Königsberg, 169*n*
- Laelius, 185, 186  
 Laines, Diego, x  
 Lasco, John à, xvi  
 Lazarus, 15, 111, 163  
 Leah, 63  
 Leo I (emperor), 54, 62*n*, 146  
 Leo the Great (saint), 53, 54, 59, 62*n*, 146, 164
- Letters  
   to Cledonius, 68, 68*n*, 116  
   to Dardanus, 14, 14*n*, 45*n*, 46, 47, 66, 87, 156, 158, 175  
   to Trasimundus, 64, 109, 162, 163
- Light, ubiquity of, 171-177
- Livy, 9
- Lombard, Peter, 98-102, 120, 120*n*, 165
- London, xi
- Lorraine, Cardinal of, x
- Luther, Martin, ix, xi, xv, xxi, xxiii*n*, 105, 105*n*, 106, 153*n*, 154, 164, 164*n*, 171*n*
- Mahlmann, Theodore, xvii-xviii*nn*  
 Manichees, 116, 126  
 Marbach, Johann, xii, xiii, 6*n*, 203*n*  
 Marburg, Colloquy of, ix, xiii, 164*n*, 165*n*  
 Marcella, 132-135

- Martyr, Peter. *See* Vermigli, Peter Martyr  
 Mary, the Virgin, 26, 53, 56, 60, 67, 84,  
     87, 88, 111, 138, 139, 144, 146, 154, 155,  
     165  
 Mary Tudor, xii, 9*n*  
 McCord, James I, xix*n*  
 McDonnell, Kilian, xxii*n*  
 McLelland, Joseph C., x*n*, xi*n*, xix*n*, xx,  
     xx*n*, xxii*n*, xxiii*n*  
 Mecklenberg, Examen of, 169  
 Melanchthon, Philip, ix, xv, xvi, 106*n*,  
     164-170  
 Menalcas, 3*n*  
 Menander, 14*n*  
 Minos (king), 3, 3*n*  
 Monophysitism, xviii, xxii, xxiii  
 Monothelites, 29*n*  
 Montanus, Johann F., xix*n*  
 Montbéliard, Colloquy of, x  
 Mörlin [Morlinus], Joachim, 168, 169*n*  
 Moses, 138, 140, 146, 195  
  
 Naumburg, Diet at, 203, 203*n*  
 Neoptolemus, 4  
 Nestorians, 55, 59, 84  
 Nestorius, xxi, 11, 11*n*, 26, 26*n*, 28, 31, 33,  
     59*n*, 109  
 Nicaea, Council of, 68*n*  
 Nicene Creed, 23, 68*n*, 86, 87, 117  
  
 Oecolampadius, Johannes, ix, 11, 11*n*,  
     164, 164*n*  
 Oedipus, 11, 11*n*  
 Origen, 145, 145*n*  
 Orothetes, xvii, 3, 11-203 *passim*  
 Ovid, 3*n*, 147*n*  
 Oxford, xi, 9  
 Oxford Disputation, 6*n*  
  
 Padua, xi, 44*n*  
 Palaemon, 3, 3*n*, 10*n*  
 Palatinate on the Rhine, 166, 167*n*, 169*n*  
 Palestine, 146  
 Pammachus, 9  
 Pantachus, xvii, 4-203 *passim*  
 Paris, x, xii  
 Parkhurst, John, xvii  
 Patologia Graeca (PG), vi, xxiv  
 Patrologia Latina (PL), vi, xxiv  
 Patterson, W. Brown, xx*n*  
  
 Paul of Samosata, 199, 199*n*  
 Paul (saint), 14, 22, 27, 37, 47*n*, 49, 53, 54,  
     57, 67, 69, 72, 83, 93, 110, 120, 126-  
     128, 141-143, 149, 165, 178  
 Pelikan, Jaroslav, 26*n*  
 Peter of Tarantaise (Innocent V), 101,  
     102*n*  
 Peter (saint), 59, 63, 67, 112, 114, 125, 133,  
     140, 175-177, 179, 201  
 Philip (saint), 19, 140  
 Photinus, 20  
 Pilate, Pontius, 58, 86, 87  
 Plato, xvii, 3*n*, 6*n*, 141, 141*n*, 180  
 Plutarch, 4*n*  
 Poissy, Colloquy of, ix, x, x*n*, xii, xvi,  
     xvii, xx*n*  
 Popes  
     Innocent I, 103, 103*n*  
     Innocent III, 1-3*n*  
     Innocent V (Peter of Tarantaise), 101,  
     102*n*  
     Leo the Great (saint), 53, 54, 59, 62*n*,  
     146, 164  
 Poullain, Valerand, xiv  
 Praxeas, 182  
 Preus J.A.O., xv*n*  
 Prosper of Aquitaine, 151*n*, 169  
  
 Ramakus, Gloria, xiii  
 Regensburg [Ratisbon], Colloquy of, ix  
 Rhadamanthys, 3, 3*n*  
 Richard of Mediavilla, 102, 102*n*  
 Rome, 45, 133  
 Romulus, 123  
 Ruffinus, 154, 165  
  
 Sabellius, 20  
 Sacerius, Erasmus, 169, 169*n*  
 Saints. *See under* individual names  
     invocation of, 184  
 Sarah, 63  
 Sasse, Hermann, 165*n*  
 Schaff, Philip, xiv*n*, xv*n*  
 Schmalkaldic War (first), xi  
 Scholastic theologians, 98-105, 142. *See*  
     *also under* individual names  
 Schulze, J.L., 65*n*  
 Scipio, 185, 186  
 Scripture. *See* Index of Scripture Refer-  
     ences, 207-209

- Scullard, H. H., 4*n*  
 Seeberg, Reinhold, 29*n*  
 Seneca, 185, 186  
 Severianus of Gabala, 65, 65*n*  
 Simler, Josiah, xix*n*, xx  
 Smith, Richard, xi, xin, 6*n*  
 Smits, Luchsius, xiv*n*  
 Smyth, Charles H., 12*n*  
 Solomon (king), 49, 129  
 Soul, parts and powers of 180-182  
 Sound, ubiquity of, 173  
 Stephen (saint), 22, 62, 147, 175-178  
 Stoics, 180  
 Strabus, Walafridus, 120, 120*n*  
 Strasbourg, xi, xii, xiv, 6*n*, 9*n*, 203*n*
- Tartarus, 3*n*  
 Terence, 11*n*  
 Tertullian, 15, 145, 169, 182  
 Themistius, 43, 43*n*  
 Theodoret of Cyrillus, xxiii, 17, 21, 22, 52*n*, 55, 57, 57*n*, 60, 62, 65-67, 69, 70*n*, 136, 170  
 Theophrastus, 6, 6*n*  
 Thiel, Andreas, 28-31*nn*  
 Thirty-Nine Articles, xii, xii*n*  
 Thomas Aquinas (saint), 13*n*, 33*n*, 43, 43*n*, 98, 100, 101, 180*n*  
 Thomas the Apostle, 133  
 Timann, Johann, xv*n*, 168*n*  
 Transubstantiation, 194  
 Trasimundus, letter to, 64, 109, 162, 163
- Ubiquity, 6, 7, 12, 13, 21, 25, 31, 34, 36, 41, 45*n*, 49, 61, 62, 77, 79, 81, 89-107, 137, 138, 142, 143, 147, 153, 154, 165, 182, 184, 187, 189  
 as a source of spiritual comfort  
   refuted, 186-203  
 Udalricus [Ulrich Engelbrecht of Strasbourg], 102, 102*n*  
 Universities, Padua, xi, 44*n*
- Vermigli Peter Martyr  
   x-xxiv, 3, 4*n*, 7*n*, 8*n*, 11*n*, 17*n*, 28*n*, 38*n*, 41*n*, 43*n*, 44*n*, 46*n*, 48*n*, 52*n*, 54*n*, 57*n*, 59*n*, 70*n*, 91*n*, 102*n*, 103*n*, 106*n*, 108*n*, 109*n*, 119*n*, 123*n*, 124*n*, 132*n*, 135*n*, 141, 153, 157*n*, 159*n*, 167*n*, 174*n*, 181*n*, 188, 199*n*, 203*n*
- Vestal Virgins, 124  
 Vigilantius, 96  
 Vigilius, 10, 27, 58, 70, 72, 108, 109*n*, 160-162  
 Vincentius Victor, 172  
 Virgil, 3*n*  
 Virgin Mary. *See under* Mary, the Virgin
- Westphal, Joachim, xii, xiv, xiv*n*, xvi  
 Willis, E. David, xxii*n*  
 Wittenberg, 169*n*  
 Worms, 169
- Zanchi, Girolamo, xiv, 203*n*  
 Zechariah, 19  
 Zeus, 3*n*  
 Zurich, xi-xiii, xvi, xx, xxv, 3, 6, 6*n*, 9*n*, 10, 10*n*, 12*n*, 14*n*, 97

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