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I and the Father are one (John 10:30): a new approach

Abstract

The essay starts from the consideration that the gospel of John does not speak about the divine and the human Jesus in an inconsistent manner. The theory of friendship, developed in classical antiquity especially by Aristotle and wide-spread in vulgar texts also, is able to provide an answer.

Starting-point for a modern interpretation likewise is the analysis of human soul. Different human beings with a soul all their own can deal, for instance, with exactly the same idea of house in Platonic or Aristotelian meaning. Indeed, such an idea has as source concrete houses, which human beings have realized before. However, the idea of house is not limited to houses seen in former times, but also refers to houses never seen, perhaps designed by an ingenious architect in a manner not existing in an earlier period. There may be long discussions about aesthetic principals, nevertheless if the architect can proof the function of house, it would be ridiculous to deny that the new object is a house. Analogously the divine persons with a *ὑπόστασις* all their own deal with simply all ideas, removed from any local or temporal restriction, while normally human beings have only the possibility of applying recognized ideas. However these ideas are not alien elements to human soul: In recognizing an idea, a human being activates the part of the soul (more precisely of the *intellectus possibilis*), which is disposed of exactly this recognition.

In Aristotle's view, human friendship will be all the more profound as the friends deal with common ideas. At its best even an ideal human friend becomes *ἄλλος αὐτός* – downright catchword in classical antiquity -, i.e. completely identical as to the recognized contents on the one hand, and on the other hand different as to the individual soul.

If the gospel of John insists upon the quality of human being for Jesus, that would mean that Jesus normally makes use of concrete instances with local and temporal restriction for getting and applying recognized ideas. However if John 10.30 asserts the divinity of Jesus without reservation, that would imply that Jesus Christ is able to make active the complete divine power, for example fulfilling a miracle. Such an explanation corresponds to everyday live: Highly intelligent human beings often need only few instances to recognize an idea.