

CHRIST'S TITLES OF HONOR AND HIS ATTRIBUTES

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1. This is the most important of the Gospels of the church year, and yet it is not, as some think, obscure or difficult. For upon it is clearly founded the important article of faith concerning the divinity of Christ, with which all Christians ought to be acquainted, and which they are able to understand. Nothing is too great for faith. Therefore let us consider this Gospel lesson in the simplest manner possible, and not as the scholastics did with their fabricated subtleties, con-

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ceal its doctrine from the common people and frighten them away from it. There is no need of many fine and sharp distinctions, but only of a plain, simple explanation of the words of the text.

2. In the first place, we should know that all that the apostles taught and wrote, they took out of the Old Testament; for in it all things are proclaimed that were to be fulfilled later in Christ, and were to be preached, as Paul says in Rom. 1, 2: "God promised afore the Gospel of his son Jesus Christ through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures." Therefore all their preaching is based upon the Old Testament, and there is not a word in the New Testament that does not look back into the Old, where it had been foretold.

Thus we have seen in the Epistle how the divinity of Christ is confirmed by the Apostle from passages in the Old Testament. For the New Testament is nothing more than a revelation of the Old. Just as one receives a sealed letter which is not to be opened until after the writer's death, so the Old Testament is the will and testament of Christ, which he has had opened after his death and read and everywhere proclaimed through the Gospel, as it is declared in Rev. 5, 5, where the Lamb of God alone is able to open the book with the seven seals, which no one else could open, neither in heaven, nor on earth, nor under the earth.