

# ABILENE1938 LECTURES

by Abilene Christian College

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*The annual Abilene Christian College Lectureship for 1938, featuring a series of sermons, lectures, and addresses by prominent preachers and teachers in the Churches of Christ on themes of faith, doctrine, and Christian living.*

15 Chapters

# Table of Contents

1. Preface
2. Jesus of Nazareth, God's Gift to Humanity
3. Christ Our Savior
4. Christ, the Fulfillment of Prophecy
5. The Virgin Birth
6. Christ, A Teacher Come from God
7. The Mind of Christ
8. Jesus the Manifestation of God in the Flesh
9. The Sinlessness of Jesus
10. Historic Evidences of Jesus Christ
11. The Incomparable Christ
12. Proof that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ the Son of God
13. Jesus in the Heart of the Earth
14. The Resurrection of the Christ
15. Christ Today, Our Mediator and High Priest

## Preface

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Preface PUBLISHER'S PREFACE The annual February "Lectures of Abilene Christian College" comprise some of the most valuable literature among the disciples of Christ. All of these addresses represent careful preparation, and study, for a great occasion. They were all delivered by men of ability; they were all presented to large audiences of representative people as patrons of Abilene Christian College, as Bible students, and as leaders among the churches of Christ.

These addresses, though delivered February of the year 1938, have not been published until the fall of 1939. We believe the following speeches are not inferior to any that have been published before. A large edition has not been printed and those who secure a copy are to be felicitated upon acquiring a valuable collection of carefully prepared lectures by capable and godly students of the word of God. We are sending this book forth with the satisfaction that there will be no disappointment by those who may peruse its pages.

G. H. P. SHOWALTER.

## Jesus of Nazareth, God's Gift to Humanity

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Jesus of Nazareth, God's Gift to Humanity JESUS OF NAZARETH, GOD'S GIFT TO HUMANITY

(John 3:16) By A. DeWilt Chaddick

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him might not perish, but have eternal life.” This passage of Scripture has been referred to as the “little Bible” and as the “Golden text” of the Bible. I do not know why, unless it is because this verse seems to enfold what the rest of the Bible seems to unfold.

John 3:16 is probably the most commonly quoted passage in the entire Bible and, I doubt not, the most generally misunderstood. You note that the statement begins with a reference to God. “For God . . .” “When I was a child four years old. I became conscious through my environment and the teaching I received that there was a being and an authority higher than either of my parents. This the people called God. Nearly all the homes where I visited at that time had, fastened on the wall, pictures of an unusual looking person with long flowing robes, with perchance a halo about the head, and a lamb in his arms. They were supposed to be the likeness of Jesus. At four years of age I had not drawn very clear lines of distinction in my mind between God and Jesus. In fact, it is still somewhat hard for me to get these two personalities entirely separated. Sometimes I think I have made a clear distinction and then Jesus comes along saying, “I am in the Father, and the Father in me,” and then I am all at sea again. I am beginning now to think that was the way it was intended to be. But those pictures, and especially the robes, had me guessing. I remember, one day I broke down and asked my mother if God were a woman. I could see that she was a bit puzzled at such a question, and my little Christian mother, bless her precious memory, was not able to make it altogether plain to her four year old son. Nevertheless, I gathered from her explanation that God was not a woman, that he must have been a man—a sort of a glorified man. But now with a little more maturity and with considerable study of the Scriptures, I do not think of God as a glorified man nor of the devil as a glorified beast. I am trying to put away childish things. Jesus who should know more about the nature of his Father than anybody else, said, “God is a Spirit and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24). “God is a Spirit,” and again (Luke 24:39), “A spirit hath not flesh and bones.” Thus, I know that when speaking or thinking of God, I must get flesh and bones out of my mind. I realize that it is extremely difficult for us humans, accustomed as we are to material bodies, material surroundings, and finite minds, to grasp spiritual quantities or spiritual values. Man has always been in the habit of expressing himself in terms having material significance. That is why, I presume, that God has depicted himself to us in figures of speech, ascribing to himself physical attributes. We must be impressed with the reality of God. Religion, and especially Christianity, has been designed for man—not man for religion. Therefore, God, in revealing his nature, speaks a language of accommodation; that is, he chooses words that will convey to man ideas which man is able to receive. For instance, in speaking of God's power and grace, the Bible says: “Behold, the Lord's

hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear" (Isaiah 59:1). God wishes us to know that sin is repulsive to his divine nature, so his prophet says: "But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear." Be it remembered that God is a Spirit and a spirit hath not flesh and bones; therefore the prophet refers figuratively to his hand, his ear, his face, etc.

Probably, we could appreciate better the reality of God's Spiritual nature if we could understand how our own spirit inhabits our body and gives us life and consciousness. This ought to be possible when we consider that death, physical death, consists of a separation of our spirit from our body (James 2:26). A few moments ago our friend was vibrant with life. He walked, he thought, he spoke, he sang. He was sad, then happy. Suddenly, he died. That is, his spirit left his body. The latter is now a mold of dust. Behold what the human spirit used to do for the body of my friend! Can we not at least begin to imagine the possible effect of God, a divine Spirit, upon the universe and upon our lives?

Yes, God is a Spirit, but God is very real. Many people would like to eliminate the very concept of God. But we cannot do away with God as long as a seed will sprout. Man is able to manufacture something that looks like a seed, but he cannot put into it the germ of life. In fact, we cannot do away with God as long as an atom of anything exists. Man cannot create. Man cannot bring into existence one particle of dust. It already existed in some form. Man cannot create, nor can he destroy. He may hate God and burn down the church house, but the latter still exists in another form. It is to be found in the ashes at his feet and in the gases that escaped into the atmosphere.

Perhaps, the atheist's best answer to the life issue, puny as it is, was advanced a few years ago by the president of the American Atheistic Society. He tells us that science has discovered .... And, mind you, I have no quarrel with science. More power to science! Few people live today who are more indebted to science, particularly medicine and surgery, for life, happiness, and usefulness, than this obscure person. I accept every conclusion scientifically arrived at. I do not accept as truth mere guesses, hypotheses, or theories. Scientific investigation should be afforded every encouragement. Every discovery genuinely scientific must add to our wealth of truth. Whether a truth were given by divine revelation or discovered by man's efforts, it is still a truth. All truth must be in harmony. I am not a whit afraid that scientists will ever find out anything that will shake my faith in the word of God. They may lead me to believe that, heretofore, I have misunderstood the real meaning of some parts of the Bible. In fact, I fear that even now, some of us are going about over the land preaching the way we were brought up, calling this the word of God. Indeed, each of us is continually finding additional meaning in passages that we thought we already understood, or in passages that have escaped our special notice. Scientific investigation is calculated to enhance our appreciation of the Bible. For instance, the people of the Middle Ages thought the earth was flat. Magellan's voyage proved it to be a sphere. Then the people could appreciate the meaning of Isaiah's language (Isaiah 40:22) where he speaks of God as sitting upon the "circle" of the earth. With a study of gravitation and with the development of more powerful telescopes, we have "discovered" somewhat recently the same thing that Job pointed out to his companions thousands of years ago. "He stretched out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing" (Job 26:7). Historians tell us today that every archeological find that affects at all the credibility of the Scriptures brings the Bible out on top. The great leaders of Science and the leaders of religious thought are good friends. Even Edison advocated spirituality as the crying

need for man's progress and happiness; and Marconi said that "faith" is the bridge that spans the chasm of the unknown. I do not know your disposition. But, as for me, I am an ardent patron of science, and I also kneel humbly at the feet of the Master, asking, seeking, and finding truth. But to get back to our story.: The president of the American Atheistic Society declares that science has discovered two chemicals that, when mixed together, behave very much like life. Wonderful beyond de-scription! Two chemicals, when mixed together, behave very much like life! What business has an atheist with test tubes? He cannot deal with elements which already exist and persist in being an atheist. Where did he get the chemicals? Who made these? The power to create is a power higher than that of man. This power we call God. If any man would be an atheist, let him create something. That alone would advance his argument. If science could produce life out of inert matter, he could not do away with God until he -could create matter. And if, even, he should create matter, he would still be confronted with the problems of how man came first to be and to have the ability to create.

Thus, behind this scheme of redemption, couched in John 3:16, was that benevolent, creative, Spirit which we call God—a Being whose nature, whose power, and whose mind are so infinite in scope that they are beyond the pale of our comprehension, save to the extent which they are revealed to us in the natural order of things and in the writings which we recognize as God's Holy Word. Therefore, we may not properly attempt to circumscribe his motives or his doings with our finite reasonings. Nevertheless, it is the Christian's privilege and his duty to think and to reason in terms of his blessings and of God's re-vealings (Isaiah 1:18; Php\_4:8).

"So loved the world . . ." Interesting it is that God loved the world, that is, man, when tjiere were other things upon which he might have bestowed his interests and his affections. There were the moon and the stars cast in all their glory which were the handiwork of his fingers. There were the mountains, the oceans, the rivers, and forests. There were the heavens with their rainbows and their clouds, their thun- derings and their lightnings, all competing, and uniting, to declare the glory that is God. But through all these and in spite of all these, God saw man, shrouded in the spiritual darkness about him, groping for a glimmer of light. He beheld man struggling in vain to interpret unto himself and his needs the great, universal, creative, Spirit which he felt to be above him and about him. God had pity because of man's afflictions. He had respect unto man's needs, He had regard for man's possibilities. And God loved man—and this in spite of sin. "He gave . . ." God's love was so deep, so full of divine compassion, that he made to the world a mar-velous gift. It was a gift that was to increase in worth and in brightness as the centuries took flight on the wings of time. Giving seems to be the soul of our religion. God gave his Son. The Son gave his life. Both gave the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit gave the word. The word gave the terms of salvation. Sinners give themselves to God. Behold, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." God sold man nothing. He bargained for nothing. He gave.

"His only begotten Son . . ." God so loved the w'orld that he gave his only begotten Son. There were other things that he could have given. He could have given man another code of laws, but, instead, he showed him a way of life. He who views Christianity as a mere set of rules and by laws surely misses the maximum joy in Christian living. Jesus said, "I am the way," and. "My words are Spirit and. they are life." Or, God could have given man a longer span of yTears, but, instead, he made it possible that man should never die. "He that liveth and believeth on me shall never die," said Jesus. Or, God could have given man a stiffer backbone, increasing his resistance to

temptation. Instead, he gave the world a life-example of one who was “tempted in all points like as we are” and was found without sin. God, I am confident, was able to offer man a more beautiful earth in which to live.

Neither my experience nor my intelligence permits me to imagine what could be more comely than the rugged mountain towering heavenward against the evening sun, or of the desert sands at dawn when the wind whispers gently among the palms. What could be more lovely than the flower in the crannied wall or the shell from the seashore in all its miracle of rose and pearl? What could be more delightful than the hillside dew-pearled, or the open sea with its billows bursting into white caps of joy? I know not how the earth could be more marvelous, but my faith allows me to presume, that, had it been the Lord’s good pleasure, he could have made a livelier emerald to sparkle in the grass and melted a deeper sapphire into the sea. But God in his infinite goodness knew a better gift for the world. “If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?” God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son. That is, God, himself, I understand, became flesh and dwelt among us, presenting himself as his Son. “And we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father.” God knew that the human family needed a leader, simple in his sublimity, who should have in his hand the scepter of righteousness and in his mouth the words of salvation. He must be a personality in whom the people would want to place their trust and upon whom they would be willing to cast their burdens. God was acquainted with our infirmities and knew that men stood in need of a great physician to bind up their broken hearts and prescribe the remedy for sin. He gave the world his only begotten Son. Nor was this a sudden impulse on the part of God, for we read (Revelation 13:8) that Jesus was a “lamb slain from the foundation of the world.”

If our leader were to tell us of heavenly things and bid us set our affections on things above, it is fitting that he himself should have come from heaven. If he were to be a merciful and faithful high priest, succoring us in the hours of temptation, it is fitting that he should have been clothed in human flesh and have learned obedience from the things which he suffered. If our leader were to show us that by following in his footsteps we could overcome the world, it was proper that he should be a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. If his message were to have a universal and lasting appeal for humankind, if he were to overcome earth’s last enemy, death, it was necessary that he be a super-human—a God-man. Then, what means could have been so reasonable for the Messiah to have made his advent into the world as the means affirmed by the Scriptures?

Here ends God’s part in the plan of salvation. Here begins man’s part. “Whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have eternal life.” The emphasis is now on “whosoever.” It has already been said that this passage of Scripture is quite generally mis-understood. There is a host of people who do not know the meaning of “whosoever.” Man-made creeds and confessions of faith declare that God has predestinated certain men and angels to eternal life and foreordained certain others to eternal destruction, that all are particularly and unchangeably designed for their sure destiny, and that the number in each class is so certain and definite that it cannot be either increased or diminished. You, for instance, have to, be good and cannot help it. You have to go to heaven and cannot help it. I have to go to hell and nobody can do anything about it. What fatalism! But thanks be to God, John 3:16 says “whosoever” believeth on him shall not perish but have

eternal life. This promise comes from the author of eternal salvation. Men teach that God has willed that certain ones shall perish, but the Bible says that God “is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9). Paul says, God “will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth” (1 Timothy 2:4).

Men teach that our salvation depends entirely upon God's predestination but the Bible specifically declares that our salvation rests utterly with our own volition. “The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely” (Revelation 22:17). Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely! The creeds say, “whosoever can,” but Jesus says, “whosoever will.” Whosoever will! You see, it reads just like John 3:16. Jesus says: “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not” (Matthew 23:37). And ye would not! Jesus does not say, “And ye could not.” He says, “and ye would not.” Salvation, with like blessings, is for those who have the will to lay hold upon it. Destruction awaits only those who will not escape it. “Whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have eternal life.”-- “Believeth on him . . .” Here again is where the masses of humanity misunderstand the Bible, and particularly, our present text. Why must men come to wranglings, or why must we even quibble over the efficacy of faith? The problem of faith's importance in the plan of salvation is so exceedingly simple of solution! We have to recognize only one thing: namely, that the terms denoting faith as used in the Scriptures are employed in two senses. In one sense to “believe” means merely to accept the veracity of given testimony. In the other sense, to “believe” comprehends the whole duty of man—a complete submission to the will of God. Whenever it is coupled alone with salvation or its equivalent, “belief” or “faith” means complete obedience to divine commands.

Jesus says: “Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned” (Mark 16:15-16). Here faith has a restricted meaning. Preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth—Believeth what? He that believeth the gospel (gospel facts) and is baptized shall be saved. To “believe” here means merely to accept the veracity of testimony. In this case there is something else to do in order to be saved. Similarly, we read that Paul entered Corinth and reasoned every sabbath with Jews and Greeks, “and many of the Corinthians, hearing believed, and were baptized.” That is, they believed what Paul taught them. They believed the facts of the gospel. But to be saved, there was more to do. Again, Jesus taught the people and wrought miracles, “yet they believed not on him.” “Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue. For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God” (John 12:42). They “believed” on Jesus; that is, they believed that he was the Son of God, but they would not confess him. No sincere person would ascribe salvation to these wicked hypocrites. They accepted the testimony in their own minds but did nothing about it. They “believed” in the restricted sense of the term. It was a case of “faith without works” (James 2:26). On the other hand, there are many passages in which faith is used in the broader sense—in the “saving” sense. For example Paul tells the Ephesians: “By grace have ye been saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works lest any man should boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9). Saved through faith. Here faith is coupled

alone (in so far as man's response is concerned) with salvation. It is not of ourselves; that is, our salvation is not merited. It is not of works. There is nothing that we have done or can do to deserve this demonstration of divine grace. God sent his son. We simply heard his message, embraced his teaching, submitted to his authority, put our trust in him, and set about to do his will. As a result, we were "created in Christ Jesus unto good works" (v. 9). By the same process, the Romans, "being justified by faith," had peace with God (Romans 5:1). Faith, being coupled with justification, is used in its all-inclusive sense.

Eternal life, itself, is conditioned upon our "believing." "Now the just shall live by faith: , but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them that draw back unto perdition; but of them that believeth unto the saving of the soul"(Hebrews 10:38-39), . Obviously, these people had already been saved from their past sins, else they could not have "drawn back" unto perdition. They were now interested in eternal salvation—eternal life. This eternal life was conditioned upon faith. "The just shall live by faith." "Faith" in a saving sense is a process of life. We "believe unto the saving of the soul." We believe unto eternal life! But eternal life is conditioned upon our doing the commandments. "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have a right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" (Revelation 22:14). Therefore, to believe unto salvation is to obey the commandments. Saving faith is obedience. When the children of Israel grew thirsty during their wilderness wanderings, they murmured against God and against Moses, and God commanded Moses and Aaron to assemble the people around the rock. He commanded Moses to raise his rod and speak to the rock. Moses gathered the people about the rock. He raised his rod, but instead of speaking to the rock, he spoke to the people. Then he smote the rock twice. The water came forth. But came also the voice of God, saying unto Moses and Aaron: "Because ye believed me not to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them" (Numbers 20:12). "Because ye believed me not!" What did God mean? Moses had failed to obey God in one point. This is all he had failed to do; but God said of this disobedience, "Ye believed me not." In various cases in the Bible, faith means obedience. Saving faith always comprehends it.

"Whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have eternal life." We are believing on the Lord when we repent of our sins and confess Christ before men. We are believing on the Lord when we are baptized. Paul told the jailor to believe on the Lord. The jailor went the same hour and was baptized. Why? Because he recognized it as an integral part of the process of believing on the Lord. We are believing on the Lord when we assemble each Lord's day for worship, when we sing with grace in our hearts, when we give of our means, when we pray without ceasing. We are believing on the Lord when we love our neighbor as ourself, when we observe the "golden rule," when we bring up our children as they ought to go, and when we study our Bibles. Indeed, we are believing on the Lord when we give a little child a cup of cold water in Christ's name. The point is: faith is not all, but it is all faith.

"Should not perish but have eternal life." It is not decreed that man shall perish or that he shall have eternal life. But it is foreordained that he shall do one or the other. Man has the inalienable right to choose his eternal destiny. If he chooses to believe on the Lord, his choice is for eternal life. If he chooses to not believe on the Lord, he chooses to perish.

What does it mean to perish? Not to be utterly annihilated as some would think, but it means to be eternally punished. "These (the wicked) shall go away into everlasting punishment." Even, were it not for the worm that dieth not and the unquenchable fire; even, were it not for the smoke of their torment that ascendeth up forever and ever and their restlessness day and night; even, were it not for the mental anguish for ill-spent lives, wasted opportunities, and unrequited love, hell would be a hellish neighborhood in which to spend eternity. I own no home, but rent my dwelling place. Therefore, I refuse to live for long in the midst of bad neighbors. But alas, there is no moving out of hell!

Let us come, in conclusion, to feast our hearts upon the thoughts of eternal life. The believing shall not perish but have eternal life. One reason why my soul yearns for the fruits of eternity is because when faith shall turn to sight, when hope shall blossom into reality, and love shall be perfected, some mysteries of life perhaps can then be understood. Why do the innocent have to suffer for wrongs they never did? And why is it that the one with apparently the most to live for is often among the first to die? Why, while the aged and trembling linger in uncertainty upon the brink of the grave, does the one with the glow of youth in his cheeks, with the blithesomeness of the songbird upon his lips, and the freshness of the morning-glory on his brow, receive his summons from on high? Nought here on earth has been discovered in answer to this question since, in the dim ages of antiquity, Job announced, "The Lord giveth, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Heaven appeals to me because I am a lover of good music, both vocal and instrumental—both in their proper places. I enjoy hearing little bands of Christians sing with the spirit and the understanding. But I read that in heaven a triumphant throng shall stand upon the glassy sea to sing the glad songs of redemption—the songs of Moses and the Lamb. I read that in heaven they sing with the volume of thunder, with the rhythm of falling waters, and with the harmony of harpers harping on their harps.

Heaven appeals to me because it is pictured as a place where money buys no special rights. How we should like to live in a land where love and neighborliness are exalted to the throne and gold is trodden under foot! The Bible says that the very streets are paved with shining gold.

Heaven appeals to me as a place where little children receive a square deal. There they cannot suffer for the sins of other people. Here they hunger, go ragged and cold. The rose fades from their faces and the sparkle from their eyes. Misery and disease prey upon their tiny bodies because the good earth's substance that the Lord gave us all has been amassed in the hands of a privileged few. But how hardly shall a rich man enter into the kingdom of heaven! And there they know no hunger, neither sorrow, nor crying. Heaven is a child's world. "Of such as these is the kingdom of heaven," and "their angels do always behold the face of the heavenly Father." "And except ye be converted and become as little children, ye can in no wise enter that heavenly kingdom." One of the grandest sights I expect to behold, if perchance I may enter behind yon jasper walls, is a company of little children playing on the banks of the river of life, casting their image in its crystal waters. In earth our hearts yearn for the city of the eternal king. "Let us go up and possess it, for we are well able to overcome it."

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life."

## Christ Our Savior

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Christ Our Savior CHRIST OUR SAVIOR

(Matthew 1:21)

By Cecil E. Hill

Napoleon said, "I know men, and I tell you that Jesus Christ was not a man." He may have been right when he said, "I know men," but he was certainly right when he said, "Jesus Christ was not a man."

Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "For I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified." With equal propriety and the same meaning he could have written, "For I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and him as the Savior of men."

Paul preached Christ and for the same reason we must preach Christ. Our greatest need is not exploration, not invention, not education, but salvation. Christ is our greatest benefactor because he can supply our greatest need. From Pentecost until now all of God's preachers have been proclaiming salvation through Christ. Perhaps every gospel preacher has meditated' this question, "How can I preach so as to accomplish the most possible good?" Christ left us the supreme example in homiletics when he said, "If I be lifted up .... I will draw all men unto me." Christ must be preeminent in our preaching because he is eminent in the Bible. Christ is its object and salvation its object. If all that pertains to Christ were removed from the Bible, there would be little left and it would be without meaning or value. From Genesis to Revelation we see him high and lifted up, He is the seed of woman found in Genesis 3:15, and the seed of Abraham through whom God promised to bless the world. For hundreds of years the prophets had foretold his coming. Before the scepter had departed from Judah, Shiloh came. His coming was announced to Mary and he was born in Bethlehem. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John record the story of his life and mission. In Acts we see how the apostles executed his final commission. In the epistles he is set forth as the crucified and resurrected Son of God. In Revelation he is unveiled as King of Kings.

Many offices and titles have been ascribed to Christ, but these are all included when we speak of him as the Savior. Indeed, I believe I am right when I say that this whole lectureship will exhalt Christ as the Savior. How appropriate then that this subject should be given a place. Read the subjects of the Lectureship with the thought that Christ is the Savior.

He is "God's Gift to Humanity" because humanity needed a Savior. He is the "Fulfillment of Prophecy" because it has been God's revealed purpose through the ages to send his Son into the world that the world through him might be saved. He was born of a virgin that he might be both man and God for this dual nature was indispensable in accomplishing his work as the Savior.

He was a "Teacher Come from God" that he might bring us to God. His was a "Sinless Life" because only a sinless life could be offered for sin. He is the "incomparable Christ" because he is the Savior of men. There have been priests many, prophets many, and kings many, but he is the

only Savior from sin. By his "Resurrection" he was declared to be the Son of God with power, and Paul said he was raised for our justification. He is our "High-priest and Mediator," but his priestly ministries are performed for our salvation. The incarnation of Christ is one of the cardinal doctrines of the Bible. It stands at the very center • of God's methods with a sinning race. Toward that event everything moved until its accomplishment. "The message of the prophets and the songs of the psalmists trembled with more or less certainty toward the final music which announced the birth of Christ." It is equally true that from that event all subsequent move ments have proceeded, depending upon it for direction and stimulation. Not only the actual messages which have been bound in the divine library, but all resulting issues from them are finally dependent upon this self-same coming of Christ. It is surely important, therefore, that wTe should understand its purpose in the economy of God. Various statements are given as to why he came, but when properly understood, thej all lead to the truth of it as announced by Christ, "I came to seek and to save the lost." It is said that he came to set up a kingdom, but to be saved and to enter the kingdom are the same.

Let us here notice some Scriptures relating to his mission: To Joseph, in ms perplexity, the angel said, "Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit, and she shall bring forth a son and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for it is he that shall save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:20-21). Thus we see that it.was his mission that determined his personal name., "Thou shalt call his name Jesus." Why? "He shall.save his people from their sins." He is Jesus because he is Savior; Jesus means Savior. The righteous and devout Simeon had learned that he was not. to die until he had seen the Messiah. When he saw the child Jesus in the temple, he prayed, "Now lettest thou thy servant depart Lord, according to thy word in peace. For mine eyes have seen thy salvation" (Luke 2:29-30).

John the Baptist pointing to Jesus said, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

Jesus had a perfect knowledge as to why he came. He came on a definite mission and clearly stated it. "I came to seek and to save the lost" (Luke 19:10). "I am the way, the truth,.and the life; no one cometh unto the Father but by me" (John 14:6).

Peter climaxed one of his sermons with the statement "apd in none other is there salvation; for neither is there any other name under heaven that is given among men, wherein we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). Again Peter said, "Him did God exalt with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance to Israel and remission of sins" (Acts 5:31). John said, "Ye know that he was manifested to take away sins" (1 John 3:5). Paul said, "Faithful is the saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Timothy 1:15). Peter said, "Christ also suffered for sin once, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God" (1 Peter 3:18). These Scriptures and many others picture;.Christ as the Savior of the world. He is not a Savior, but the Savior, "and in none other is there salvation." With joy and understanding we sing:

"My hope is built on nothing less

Than Jesus' blood and righteousness.

I dare not trust the sweetest frame,

But wholly lean on Jesus' name.

On Christ, the solid rock, I stand;

All other ground is sinking sand "

There are, several questions that present themselves concerning the Savior and salvation:

1. Why does man need a Savior?
2. From what does he need to be saved?
3. To what does he need to be saved?
4. To whom is Christ the Savior?

1. The first question is answered with the fact that man is lost. To speak of salvation implies that, the world is lost. The whole revelation of God assumes this. It is fundamental. This is the very thing we must make the world realize. The very first step in converting men to Christ is to make them realize they are lost.' When you have really convinced men that they are lost, the rest will be easy. When men come to understand that they are eternally doomed, they are going to do something about it. It may be that this is the weakness in our preaching. We are telling men what to do to be saved when they haven't learned that they are lost. Brother McGarvey said that the thing he desired most as a preacher was the ability to bring men face to face with the fact that they are lost. You would not have to beg a man to flee from a burning building. Just make known

the danger and he will thank you for it. Neither will you have to beg a man to flee from the wrath to come if you make him know that he is in danger. The fact that we are not making men realize that they are lost may be due to the fact that we do not fully realize it ourselves. Oh I know we claim to believe it, but when it becomes a burning conviction within us, we shall see more fruit from our labors. People can understand that we are not very much disturbed about their condition. Either we do not believe that people are lost, or we are not greatly troubled about it. Neither alternative is very complimentary to us. The realization that the world was lost explains the results of apostolic preaching. On Pentecost Peter proved to the Jews that they had crucified the Son of God. When they realized the enormity of their sin,' they cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" A century ago people were more conscious of being lost than today. The saints sang with joy and gladness such songs as:

"Amazing grace, how sweet the sound

That saved a wretch like me,

I once was lost, but now I'm found,

Was blind, but now I see."

2. From what does Christ save? Salvation to the Jews meant physical deliverance, such as the deliverance of Daniel from the lions. When Christ came, it meant their deliverance from the dominion of Rome. But the text answers the question: "And he shall save his people from their sins." People are lost because they are in sin. Sin abounds in the world. "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Isaiah declared that sin and iniquity had separated men from God.

Those who have not accepted Christ are yet in their sins. You may be a fine neighbor and a good citizen—you may be upright in your dealings—you may be honorable and just, but if you have not accepted Christ as your Savior, you are yet in sin. There can be no greater sin than to reject Christ. When Christ promised the Holy Spirit, he said he “would convict the world of sin.” The world can be brought to salvation only when it is convicted of sin. Men are convicted now as then, by the preaching of the gospel (Romans 1:16).

Frankly, let me tell you that with many the sense of sin is declining. The Christian Scientist has tried to explain it away. He has come to disregard and ignore it. He denies sin, and resolves it wholly into a traditional illusion and delusion. He claims that he has dug sin up by its roots and made away with it.

There are many who look upon sin as a misfortune and not a fault. With them the sinner is a victim and not an offender. He has not done wrong but has suffered wrong. He does not owe God repentance, but humanity owes him an apology. This view cancels all sense of sin. Yet the terrible reality of sin remains. Although the sense of sin has declined with some, the fact of sin remains. It has not been eradicated from our nature. The voice of conscience cannot be hushed. Sin is still the most frightful fact in the world and writes its ruin in a thousand ways. It is the awful tragedy of the universe and only fools mock at it. God cannot overlook sin and be a just and respectable God. It is still an eternal law that “The wages of sin is death.”

Please do not think that I am getting away from my subject in discussing the subject of sin. The meaning and the necessity of the Incarnation is to be found in the fact of sin. Jesus said so and that is enough. We cannot, therefore, fully comprehend the meaning of Christ if we will not frankly study the matter of sin. And this study of sin, if it is to be effective, must be a study of oneself. It is easy to prove the universality of sin. Added to Scriptures on the subject, we also have the statement from Sophocles the Greek, “Sin is common to all men.” Seneca, the Roman moralist, said, “We have all sinned.” But this general impeachment hardly disturbs our conscience. Sin, like death, is not seriously realized except as a personal fact. We really know it only when we know it about ourselves. In our hearts there is the consciousness of sin. We may try to excuse it; we may argue as to the reason for it, but there it still remains. We know we have sinned and we wish we had not.

Some theologians would blame Adam for all our woe. While I accept the Bible teaching as to the consequence of Adam’s sin, it seems to me we have been blaming him long enough. “The soul that sinneth, it shall die; the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son” (Ezekiel 18:20).

It has become our custom to classify sins. We divide them into big sins and little sins. We talk about white lies and black lies, but let me tell you that God makes no such classifications. The particular sins to which Jesus referred most pointedly were: pride, hypocrisy, resentment and unmercifulness. All sin comes from the heart. Man is defiled by the evil thoughts that proceed from within. Hate is the source of murder Lust is the essence of adultery.

Psychologically, sin is selfishness. Julius Muller has made a careful analysis of sin and has rather convincingly shown that every form of sin has its roots in selfishness. That is the thought of Paul when he wrote that Christ died for men that they might no longer live unto themselves.

Again I remind you that you cannot discuss salvation separate and apart from the subject of sin. The whole gospel story is written on the dark background of despair. The scheme of redemption grows out of the fact of sin.

3. Unto what does Christ save? Salvation is often too narrowly defined. Christ not only saves from but he saves unto. His work as the Savior does not stop when he has redeemed us from past transgressions. He saves unto a life of holiness and sanctification. Paul said that Christ was made unto us wisdom from God and righteousness and sanctification (1 Corinthians 1:30). It is by his power that we live the Christian life. We sometimes imagine that Christ saves us from past sins but that we must have the Christian life without him. That may explain why many make such miserable failures in Christian living. Fruit-bearing depends upon abiding in Christ. "He that abideth in me and I in him, the same beareth much fruit" (John 15:5).

Christ is our Savior from the penalty of sin, and he is our Savior from the practice of sin. It needs to be emphasized that Jesus not only saves from the guilt of sin, but from the dominion of sin. He not only saves us from the sins we have committed, but from the sins we would commit. Jesus taught his disciples to pray, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one" (Matthew 6:13). Peter said, "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation." Paul said that with every temptation a way of escape is provided. Many have experienced temptations to which they did not yield. This has been true with me. After a victory over temptation, I have wondered how I overcame. I am sure it was not by my own power of goodness, but rather by his grace.

Again Paul said, "When I would do good, evil is present with me." Again, "O wretched man that I am. Who shall deliver me?" Then he exclaims with joy and gratitude, "Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord, Jesus Christ." Jesus said, "Without me, ye can do nothing." Let us learn to say with Paul, "I can do all things through him that strengtheneth me" (Php\_4:13). He said, "It is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me."

Jesus was our Savior and he is our Savior. When he came to the world, he came as a Savior, and when he went back to heaven, he went as a Savior. Not only is it true that he once did something to save us, but he is still doing something to save us. The Hebrew writer declares, "that he is able to save to the uttermost" and explains that this is true because, "He ever liveth to make intercession" for us (Hebrews 7:25). He has never ceased his efforts to save us. His work as an intercessor is for man's benefit and salvation.

4. To whom is Christ the Savior? Let it be noticed that he will save people from their sins and not in their sins (Matthew 1:21). Christ died to save all men, but all men will not be saved. His death made it possible for all to be saved, but he only saves those who believe on him. Those that have "faith unto the saving of the soul" (Hebrews 10:39) are those that obey him in whom they believe. "He became unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation" (Hebrews 5:9).

Men are saved by faith, but not by faith only. "But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith apart from works is barren?" (James 2:20). James was not speaking of the works of the law, as mentioned by Paul in Romans, but was speaking of obedience to God. This is shown by the example he used in the next verse. "Was not Abraham our father not justified by works in that he offered up Isaac his son upon the altar?" Abraham obeyed God and James called it works. It was not a work of the law, but a work of righteousness. "All thy commandments are righteousness" (Psalms 119:172). Peter

said, "God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation, he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted with him" (Acts 10:34-35). To work righteousness then is to obey Christ. Men are saved by faith just like the walls of Jericho fell by faith. "By faith the walls of Jericho fell, after they had been encompassed about seven days" (Hebrews 11:30). The wall fell after Joshua did what God told him to do, but it was Joshua's faith that caused him to obey. It is well to remember that the blessing was received after faith and obedience and not between faith and obedience. Christ said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16). Salvation is received after faith and baptism, and not between faith and baptism. Those who believed Peter's preaching on the day of Pentecost cried out, "Men and brethren what shall we do?" Peter, speaking by inspiration, said to these believers, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38).

Saul of Tarsus had believed in Christ three days and nights and had fasted and prayed. Yet, Ananias, who was sent by the Lord, said unto him, "Saul, why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins" (Acts 22:16). This was not the Holy Spirit baptism for the simple reason that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is a promise and not a command. His sins were washed away when he was baptized. "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only" (James 2:24).

"Trust and obey, for there's no other way To be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey."

## Christ, the Fulfillment of Prophecy

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Christ, the Fulfillment of Prophecy “CHRIST, THE FULFILLMENT OF PROPHECY”

(Text: Luke 24:44) By Melvin J. Wise At Ephesus Apollos “mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ” (Acts 18:28). My brethren, such is my task today. It shall not be my mission to prove the infallibility of the Old Testament Scriptures, for I take it that you accept them unreservedly; but my work shall be to show that Jesus perfectly fulfilled what was written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms concerning him. Incidentally, however, such evidence within itself goes a long way in proving the infallibility of both the Old and New Testaments. That the development of Jewish thought centered around the coming of a Messiah is plain to any student of the Old Testament and other Jewish writings. The expectation of a Messiah was the hope of Israel. The Jews were a people who lived in the future. No nation ever cherished such a strong expectation of a good time coming, or clung more tenaciously, amid defeat and disaster, to the certainty of final triumph over all enemies and of entrance upon a state of perfect peace and happiness. While declaring God's wrath upon the people because of their sin and disobedience, the prophets looked beyond this Divine chastisement to the final era of blessedness, which would be ushered in when the nation returned to Jehovah. Then would come the Messiah—the Anointed—the Christ. Certainly the history of Israel culminates in Jesus Christ.

Jesus, himself, claimed to be the Christ (Mark 14:61-62; Luke 24:25-27; John 5:39). The apostles claimed Jesus to be the Christ in all of their preaching (Acts 2:22-24; Acts 3:14-15; Acts 8:35; Acts 17:2-3). The Jews knew their Scriptures. They knew, too, that their Scriptures promised a Messiah. If they could have produced one Scripture containing a prophecy concerning Jesus that had not been fulfilled, that would have been sufficient to set the claim of the apostles at naught. But no such Scripture has ever been produced, and for two thousand years the Jewish race has had to face the charge that they rejected the testimony of their own Scriptures and killed their Messiah and the world's Redeemer. The first promise of a Messiah is found in the curse God pronounced upon the serpent. “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel” (Genesis 3:15). In this we see the scheme of redemption involved—the eternal purpose of God. The serpent has deceived the woman, and both she and her husband have sinned. The serpent as the representative of evil and the powers of human sedition is cursed; while also upon the erring man and woman punishments are pronounced. It is a sad picture, for a dark and unknown future opens up before humanity. Labors and sorrows are to multiply and a deep-seated enmity between the posterity of the woman and the offspring of the serpent will exist. Yet in the midst of this gloom there is a ray of hope: the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head; a Redeemer shall be born of the woman. As the woman was the first to sin, yet she was to lead in man's re-demption in that she was to give the world (of her seed) a Saviour. Satan was to bruise his heel; Satan tempted him in all points and finally nailed him to the cross; but the seed of the woman was to bruise the serpent's head. Jesus bruised his head when he conquered death and the grave. John

says: "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (1 John 3:8).

There is a fantastic theory prevalent today which teaches that there shall be a literal carnal warfare at the second advent of Christ between the hosts of righteousness and unrighteousness—the battle of Armageddon—which will be fought in the Valley of Megiddo in the land of Palestine. I cannot conceive of the children of God engaged in a carnal strife against evil. Jesus said: "My kingdom is not of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight" (John 18:36). An intelligent understanding of the Word of God will lead one into the conviction that the battle against Christ and Satan is going on all of the time in your Christian life and mine (Read Galatians 5:16-17). Every time that you overcome a temptation you have won a victory in the battle between right and wrong.

Thus we see that the Messianic hope was kindled when man first lost Paradise; it burned brightly in Moses; its lustre is evident in the Psalms; and in Isaiah it reaches its fullest and most unclouded splendor; and it shined less brightly in Ezekiel and his postexilic successors. The birth of Jesus was foretold by the prophets. He was to be born of a virgin. "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel" (Isaiah 7:14). This prediction was fulfilled in the birth of Jesus of Nazareth. The angel announced to Joseph: "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us" (Matthew 1:21-23).

He was to be a descendant of Abraham. When God called Abram out of Ur, one of the blessings promised was "in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed" (Genesis 12:3). Paul applies this to Christ. "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ" (Galatians 3:16). "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Galatians 3:29). "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham" (Hebrews 2:16).

He was to be born of the tribe of Judah. "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be" (Genesis 49:10). That is, the Shiloh (one sent) or the Messiah would come before Judah ceased to be a distinct and ruling tribe. In the history of Israel various tribes ceased or amalgamated with others; but the tribe of Judah continued on through the division of the kingdom, the exile, and Judah was the only remaining tribe during the days of Christ. As we trace the ancestry of our Lord in Matthew 1 and Luke 3, we find that both Joseph and Mary could establish their connection with Judah's tribe. Paul said: "For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah . . . (Hebrews 7:14).

Jesus was to be born of the house of David. "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots" (Isaiah 11:1). Paul says that this was fulfilled in Christ—"And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfill all my will. Of this man's seed hath God according to his promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus" (Acts 13:22-23). Even though the stem was to lie down, some of the roots were to remain, and out of these roots was to spring up this righteous branch. Even though

the house of Jesse fell when Judah was carried into captivity, yet a remnant out of the royal family remained; and like, a stump of a tree that had fallen down, out of this remaining part of Jesse's family the Shiloh came.

Jesus was to be born in Bethlehem of Judea. Micah foreannounced the place of his birth in these words: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel" (Micah 5:2). It was generally understood among the Jews that the Christ would be born in Bethlehem, for when Herod demanded of the chief priests and scribes where Christ should be born "they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judea; for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, art not the least among the princes of Judah; for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel" (Matthew 2:5-6). Joseph and Mary lived hi Nazareth and not in Bethlehem, and how did it happen that the babe was born in Bethlehem? They were in Bethlehem at the decree of Augustus Caesar who de-manded that all the world should be enrolled. But why did Mary go along with her espoused husband? Surely she ought to have been excused under such cir-cumstances; and, too, Joseph could have enrolled for her. There were no automobiles or paved highways in those days, and why would an expectant mother under -take such a journey? Even though she might have known that the prophet had foretold that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem, did she go on this trip for the specific purpose that her child might be born in Bethlehem on this particular occasion? I do not believe that she did, for there is evidence that she did not. When the babe was born it was wrapped in "swaddling clothes"—clothes made from bolt cloth, unrolled from the bolt. There were no garments made; hence no evidence of preparation cor the birth of her babe. When Joseph fled mto Egypt with the babe Jesus and his mother, this was a fulfillment of Hosea 11:1, for Matthew\* says they were "there until the death of Herod; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, Out of Egypt have I called my son" (Matthew 2:15). The principle events in the life of the. Messiah w^ere minutely and accurately foretold. A divinely appointed harbinger was to announce the Messiah's coming and introduce his public ministry . "Behold, I wTill send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me; and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in; behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts" (Malachi 3:1). Without question John the Baptist was this "messenger" and Jesus was the "Lord" who should suddenly come to his temple. Malachi further prophesied: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord; And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse" (Mai. 4:5-6). This prophecy concerning the coming messenger, called "Elijah the prophet" is unmistakably applied by Jesus to John the Baptist. "For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee" (Matthew 11:10). "And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come? And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall come, and restore all things. But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them. Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist" (Matthew 17:10; Matthew 17:13). The mission of Elijah, as well as that of John the Baptist, was to call the nation back from shallowness to reality. Their stern denunciation of evil doers and their call to reformation are so strikingly similar as to suggest their exchange of names. The Messiah was to confirm his mission by the work-ing of miracles. Concerning this fact, Isaiah

foretells: "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing . . ." (Isaiah 35:5-6). Surely this prediction can find its fulfillment in none other than the Saviour's personal ministry. He often made the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak, the lame to walk, and cast out demons from those possessed with such. He was to be a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief" (Isaiah 53:3). Certainly this finds its fulfillment in the life of our Lord. When Matthew offered to follow him, thinking it to be a discipleship of ease, Jesus said to him: "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head" (Matthew 8:20). Luke says: "But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us" (Luke 19:14). John says: "He came unto his own, and his own received him not" (John 1:11). When Jesus closed the sermon on the "Bread of Life" in the synagogue at Capernaum it is said "From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him" (John 6:66). After Jesus was arrested by the mob from the Sanhedrin "Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled" (Matthew 26:56 b). The Messiah was to make a triumphal entry into Je-rusalem. About 518 B. C. Zechariah looked forward and foreannounced this incident in these words: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold, thy King cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass" (Zechariah 9:9). On Sunday of the last week of our Lord's ministry Jesus yields to a Messianic demonstration by making an open and public entry into Jerusalem. He imitates the nature of his reign and his kingdom by choosing to ride upon an ass, the symbol of peace, instead of a horse, the symbol of war. Jesus is in reality exactly what this occasion exemplified. He -was always humble and peaceful, coming to his people without boastful pretensions or royal displays; in fact, all of his life was one of humility, gentleness, and unostentation. In Matthew 21:4-5 this incident is quoted as an actual fulfillment of Zechariah 9:9. The betrayal and trials of Jesus were minutely foretold by the prophets. Zechariah predicted his betrayal in these words: ". . . So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver. And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter; a goodly price that I was priced at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord" (Zechariah 11:12-13). No Scripture was ever more literally fulfilled than this. "Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, And said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver" (Matthew 26:14-15). In Matthew 27:3-10 we have the account of Judas bringing the thirty pieces of silver and casting them down in the temple. As to the conduct of Jesus when on trial, Isaiah predicts: "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment; and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgression of my people was he stricken" (Isaiah 53:7-8). This finds its fulfillment in the trial of Christ as given by Matthew in Matthew 26. When on trial Jesus was to suffer great abuse. At this point Isaiah said: "I give my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting" (Isaiah 50:6). This was literally fulfilled at the trial of Jesus when he stood before the high priest. 'Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote him with the palms of their hands" (Matthew 26:67). If spitting in a person's presence is such a mark of indignity; how much more to spit into his face. The crucifixion and burial were predicted by the prophets. His

death was foretold by Isaiah. The prophet said: “. . . he was numbered with the transgressors” (Isaiah 53:12). During the personal ministry of Jesus he was often classed with publicans and sinners; his enemies said: “He hath a devil.” (John 10:20); but this prophecy had a specific fulfillment in the crucifixion—“And with him they crucify two thieves; the one on his right hand, and the other on his left. And the Scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors” (Mark 15:27-28).

Nails were to be driven through his hands and feet: “. . . they pierced my hands and my feet” (Psalms 22:16). When the other disciples told Thomas that Jesus had risen from the dead he said: “Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe. And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them; then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side; and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God” (John 20:25-28). The Jewish method of putting criminals to death was by stoning them; the Roman method was by beheading the criminal; but in the crucifixion of Jesus they used a cross, the most brutal and horrible death ever known. But if he was condemned by the Jews how did it happen that he was not stoned: The prophet said “they pierced my hands and my feet” and that meant crucifixion. Jesus, himself, indicated that he would be crucified (John 3:14-15; John 12:32-33).

It was predicted that the soldiers would part his garments—“They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture” (Psalms 22:18). This finds its fulfillment at the crucifixion of Jesus, for Matthew says: “And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots” (Matthew 27:35). When the Roman soldiers came to the bodies of the two thieves on their crosses they broke their bones, but when they came to the cross of Jesus, seeing that he was already dead, they did not break his bones. This did not happen by chance, but in the providence of God it was a fulfillment of an incident which occurred as the Israelites were leaving out of Egypt. In slaying the Passover Lamb they were not permitted to break its bones. Thus John says: “For these things were done, that the Scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken” (John 19:36). A remarkable prophecy was fulfilled when Jesus died. Isaiah said: “And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death . . . (Isaiah 53:9). It is universally known that Jesus died as a malefactor, yet he was an innocent man. It was a case of the just dying for the unjust. Too, a careful student of his life knows that he was acquainted with poverty; born of peasant parents in a stable; when he was called upon to pay the temple tax he secured the money by performing a miracle; his disciples were of the poorest class; but the prophet said that he would be among the rich in his death. Did such really come to pass? Let Matthew tell us how it was accomplished. “When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus’ disciple; he went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered. And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock; and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed” (Matthew 27:57-60). John adds: “And after this Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; and Pilate gave

him leave. He came therefore, and took the body' of Jesus. And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight. Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury" (John 19:38-40). Thus our Lord was given an expensive burial by two rich men. He was, therefore, buried with the wicked thieves that day, but in the tomb of the rich. The resurrection, ascension, and coronation of Jesus were definitely predicted by the prophets of old. It was foretold that he would be raised from the dead—. . . On the third day he will raise us up . . ." (Hosea 6:2). This was fulfilled in the resurrection of Jesus, for on the third day after our Saviour's burial, which was the first day of the week, early in the morning the women came to visit the tomb. "And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye; for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified, lie is not here; for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay" (Matthew 28:5-6). The ascension of Jesus was also a subject of proph-ecy. David said: "Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive; thou hast received gifts for men ..." (Psalms 68:18). In this there are several points as fulfilled by the ascension of Jesus. (1) "He ascended on high"—fulfilled in Acts 1:9 : "And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight"; (2) "He led captivity captive." Since he conquered death and the grave, which held in captivity the whole race of man, he became the first-fruits of them that slept (1 Corinthians 15:20); thereby, he "led captivity captive"; (3) "Thou hast received gifts for men"; Jesus received the Spirit without measure, and sent the Spirit down upon the apostles—"And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following" (Mark 16:20. Read also Acts 2:1-4 and Hebrews 2:3-4).

The Coronation of Jesus was foretold by Daniel in these words: "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed" (Daniel 7:14-15). Without question this finds its fulfillment in the Lord Jesus Christ. After his victory over death he appeared to his apostles and said: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Matthew 28:13). Paul said concerning the authority of Christ: "And he is the head of the body, the church; who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell" (Colossians 1:18-19).

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## Conclusion

These facts of prophecy and history and their wonderful and perfect agreement can only lead us to one conclusion—into a conviction that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. The facts of prophecy cannot be successfully questioned. There lies the Old Testament; 't is an open book; it is authentic; the men who wrote it were guided by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:21); the prophecies quoted, from its pages can be read and verified. Truly they are infallible. The same thing can be said of the facts of history—the New Testament. It is genuine and credible. The perfect agreement of prophecy and history cannot be explained away. It cannot be successfully said that these prophecies concerning Christ were written after the events occurred. The Old Testament was

originally written in the Hebrew language and translated into the Greek language at least 286 B. C. This Septuagint version is still regarded as authentic. Hence these prophecies were given at least 286 B. C.

These events in the life of Christ could not have happened to suit the demands of prophecy unguided by divine aid. How could finite men have made these events in the life of Jesus harmonize so wonderfully with these predictions ? Most of these prophecies were not understood when they were being fulfilled; nor are they understood now, only in the light of history and their fulfillment.

There is but one conclusion—the prophets were in-spired, and Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

There lies the evidence before you. The case is in your hands. You must render a verdict. What think ye of Christ? Whose Son is he? If he is the Son of God, then he is all that he claimed to be, and he claimed to be “the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6). Hence, you are lost without him. What is your decision? Will you accept his gospel and the salvation purchased for you and for me in his sacrificial death? Or will you reject his precious invitation and launch out into the darkness of a never ending eternity, without one ray of hope and without God?

## The Virgin Birth

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### The Virgin Birth THE VIRGIN BIRTH

By Glenn L. Wallace The Psalmist said, "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" When the foundation is weakened the whole building is weakened. Those today who tamper with Christianity by trying to take from its foundation some of the stones that prove Jesus to be the Son of God, weaken the building. We recognize that an attack upon the Christian religion does not actually weaken it, for the church is built upon a foundation that cannot be shaken; the attack does weaken the faith of many. One of the foundation stones that helps to prove Jesus to be the Son of God is his virgin birth. The story has been frequently assailed. The skeptics of the past and the modernists of today, attack the story as being utterly impossible and unworthy of the acceptance of any sane man. They charge that none but a prejudiced and blinded mind could believe in such a variation from the rules of nature. The Christian believes that Jesus was born as the Scriptures teach. He believes that Jesus had an earthly mother but that his father was God the Father of the universe. He believes that if Christ was not born of a virgin, then he was but a man and deserves respect only as a man. He believes that if Christ was not born of a virgin then the whole of the Bible is unworthy of the consideration of man as an inspired Book; for the Book most assuredly presents Christ as born of a virgin; and if this story be a mistake, then the whole book is a mistake. The Christian cannot account for his supernatural works and claims and his undying influence in the history of the world, except by his supernatural birth. Christ was supernatural and more than just Jesus the man of Galilee, the carpenter of Nazareth, a great leader, or a Master Teacher. He was Jesus the Son of God. If Jesus be the Son of God, it is true that he was born as the gospels present the story.

### What of Miracles

There are some who cannot accept any miracle. They say, "Miracles are incredible and so contrary to the experiences of the world that miracles just cannot hap-pen." Because men have never seen one born of a virgin they insist that Jesus could not have been. Some even insist that they would not believe in a miracle if they saw one performed. They' are so wise that even to witness one would not produce faith. To believe in miracles we simply ask for testimony. As to the amount of testimony necessary to produce faith, the Christian replies that it is no greater than that which would be required to establish any unusual and extraordinary event. If I should meet a friend today in whom I have great confidence and one I know to be sane and honest, and this friend should tell me a story of a most unusual accident, perhaps I would not believe it. Since nothing like it has ever happened be-fore and since it is the humanly impossible, I could not accept the story as true merely because one friend told it. I soon meet another friend, equally honest who tells me the same story. I meet another and another. All these claim to be eye witnesses to the unusual accident. Soon I would become convinced because of the straightforward, honest, independent testimony of these men. If I should persist in doubting the story, it would be evident that I considered only my word as being worthy of consideration. When one turns to the Bible and to

contemporary history, he finds a parade of honest men who testify of the virgin birth and of the other miracles of the Scriptures. The miracles of the Bible become more interesting when one considers that those who gave the records were not men who were likely to be dreamers or visionary in any way. Matthew who records the virgin birth was a hard-headed business man. Luke was a physician and one we would surely expect to keep his feet on solid ground. Neither of these were men who would likely be swept off their feet and lose their reason, because of reports of an enthusiastic and emotionally upset group of disciples. They would not write of something they did not know to be a fact. Paul, a great scholar and one educated at the feet of a famous teacher in Jerusalem, one who lived in the very shadow of the events described by Matthew and Luke, one who was a traveling companion of Luke, makes an unquestionable reference to the supernatural birth of our Lord. The virgin birth of Jesus was a miracle and the Christian finds no more difficulty in believing this miracle than any other one. He cannot agree with man who says, "Accept the New Testament as a book of religion and not of science. Since the virgin birth invades the field of known-science, and since no one has ever been born without "father and mother of this earth, then this story should have no part in the Christian's belief." Others say: "Accept Jesus as a Master Mind, and one who knew and conquered the hearts of men." There are many so-called Christians who reason this way. These skeptics further reason: "The authority of the Bible lies wholly in the field of external history. What care we how Jesus entered into the world?" Some go so far as to say, "I can believe in Christianity independent of Jesus as a living man." William Jennings Bryan well said, "The supernatural element cannot be eliminated from the account of the birth of Jesus except by the application of rules that will strip the Bible of every thing supernatural." The Christian who gives up belief in the virgin birth, one of the foundation stones of the Christian religion, compromises his religion. When he begins such a process of compromise, he soon turns out like the lady of Niger.

"There was a lady of Niger,  
Who went for a ride with a tiger,  
They returned from the ride,  
With the lady inside,  
And a smile on the face of the tiger."

#### Meaning of the Virgin Birth

Jesus is the Son of God and this means that he had to have a virgin birth. By the virgin birth we mean he was born of Mary, miraculously, outside the ordinary laws of human generation. The angel: made explanation to Joseph of what the Christian accepts. "That which, is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 1:20). The miraculous element was not in the formation of the body of our Lord nor in his deliverance, but in the begetting. The birth of John the Baptist was miraculous. His mother had traveled far beyond the age when it was possible for her to conceive and bear children. A. T. Schofield said, "Both births were supernatural; that to Elizabeth because it was too late, that to Mary because it was too soon." Jesus the Son of God depends upon his virgin birth, his vicarious death, his glorious resurrection from the dead and his triumphant ascension to the right hand of God. The God that made the world and made two people, Adam and Eve, and gave to them the power of reproduction, simply transferred that power to one person, the virgin

Mary. That is the virgin birth.

Reason vs. Faith The apostle Paul lays down the rule of the Christian's life in this language, "We walk by faith and not by sight." There is no need to argue that it is impossible to believe in anything that cannot be demonstrated today, for there are too many miracles, mysteries, and secrets around us that the human mind cannot explain yet accepts. Therefore, a Christian does not seek to explain HOW Christ was born of a virgin. It shall not be mine to deal with the mystery of how such could be possible. When I approach this wonderful truth, I take off my shoes for I tread on holy ground. Consider: The Ancient of Days began as a Babe in Bethlehem.

He who thunders in Heavens, cried in the cradle.

He who gave to all their meat, .sucked the breast.

He who made all flesh, became flesh and dwelt among us.

His mother was younger than the child she bore.

He who could call legions of angels, was wrapped in swaddling clothes.

The mighty God became a helpless babe. When one considers the marvels of the virgin birth he is made to say with one of old, "I can scarce get past his cradle in my wondering, to wonder at his cross. The infant is in some views a greater marvel than Jesus with the crown of thorns." We cannot know the scientific side of the virgin birth. We simply trust him who made even the rules of nature, and know that he who made the wonders of the physical birth as we know it, could also give the world one born of a virgin. The birth of our Lord is a glorious Scriptural fact and not a natural fact.

#### Testimony of the Early Church

Belief in the virgin birth is common today and there is no doubt that belief in it can be traced even to the middle of the first century. At the close of the second century it was regarded as an essential part of Christianity. The fact that belief was so common at this date shows of course that it must have originated at a much earlier time. Universal acceptance of this story did not happen overnight. As early as 100 the virgin birth was accepted by the Christian world and was being assailed by the enemies of the church. It has been said that probably one of the first to impugn the virgin birth was a Jewish Gnostic, whose name was Gerinthus. He lived about one hundred.

He ascribed, to Jesus a purely human origin. Like others of the Gnostics he believed that Jesus had a dual personality and made a great difference between Jesus the Son of God and Jesus the man. The Gnostics held that communication of divine life was to Jesus at his baptism of John in the Jordan River. The Christ part dwelt in him until he died and then went back to God. In the second and third centuries there was a sect known as the Ebionites who rejected belief in the virgin birth. They held that Jesus was the son of Joseph and born as any other man. With the exceptions of these two small sects, it is said at this early date that belief in the supernatural birth of Jesus was universal among Christians. It is evident from history without the New Testament record that the early Christians believed Jesus to have been born of a virgin.

Within seventy years after, the church was established, men were reading the accounts of Matthew and Luke. If belief in the virgin birth was accepting something that had been faked, then thousands of men and women were being deceived by a story that they could easily have disproved.

### Testimony of the Scriptures

I believe the word of God. It has survived and marches on today crushing sin and defeating Satan, so it is to the word that I turn for testimony that convinces the Christian. The first promise of the coming of the Lord in a miraculous way is found in Gen. C: 15. Here in the early morning of creation, four thousand years before the birth of Jesus we find the first man and woman disobeying God. Jehovah God, walked in the cool of "the evening" and found Adam and Eve who were ashamed and had hidden themselves. They had fallen and at this early date God made a promise of one who should raise man from a fallen state. Speaking to the serpent he said, "Cursed art thou above all the cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life; I will put enmity between thee and the woman, between thy seed and her seed; he shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel." Here it is definitely stated that it was to be the seed of the woman who was to bruise the head of Satan and thus completely conquer him. No man with an earthly father could ever fulfill the promise made here. Jesus with an earthly mother and with God as his Father fulfills this grand promise.

Reference to the virgin birth is found in Isaiah 7:14. This is called the "great Immanuel prophecy." The Messiah and his miraculous birth is presented in these words, "The Lord himself shall give you a sign: behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a Son and shall call his name Immanuel." The name was to be "Immanuel" or "God with us." When one looks to the New Testament and sees the sinless life of Jesus; his mission of mercy as he raised the dead, healed the leper, opened the blind eyes, loosed the dumb tongue; he is made to exclaim, "God indeed is with us." The son of a virgin mentioned in Isaiah 7:14 is without a doubt the same one extolled in Isaiah 9:6-7. In this we read, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; the government shall be upon his shoulders and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness." This prophecy is quoted as fulfilled in Matthew 1:23.

Objections to this Scripture come from critics who have said that the Hebrew word of "virgin" of Isaiah 7:14 does not mean a virgin in a strict sense, but merely a young woman of marriageable age. It has been said that this same word occurs about six times in the Old Testament, and each time it carries the idea of an unmarried woman. It was said of Martin Luther that he made a challenge long ago that has never been accepted. He said, "If a Jew or a Christian can prove to me that in any passage of Scripture the Hebrew word for virgin means a married woman, I will give him 100 florin, although God alone knows where I shall find them."

Isaiah reveals that the virgin's son should come to sit upon David's throne, and it should be a reign of peace. Jesus, Immanuel or God with us; or as the New Testament pictures him, "The Word was God, the Word v, as made flesh and dwelt among us," only Jesus could fulfill this prediction. It is true that not many references are made to the virgin birth in the Old Testament, yet this does not L'ake the faith of the Christian. For God to speak once should produce as much faith as if he had

spoken one hundred times. When one turns to the New Testament he finds two of the gospel writers giving us accounts of the birth of our Lord. There is every evidence that these men were sane, honest and credible witnesses. They would be accepted as such in any court today. Even if it be true that no other New Testament writer makes mention of this event, the testimony of these two would be enough; for in the "mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established."

We consider first Matthew's record. "Now the birth of Jesus was on this wise: When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. And Joseph her husband being a righteous man, and not willing to make her a public example was minded to put her away privily. But when he thought on these things, behold an angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she shall bring forth a son and thou shalt call his name Jesus; for it is he that shall save his people from their sins." This language is plain and simple. It is not veiled in words hard to be understood. It bears every evidence of a sincere and honest writer. It is stamped with purity; there is nothing vulgar about it. The record is not one that has crept into the translations, but is found in the oldest manuscripts. It, along with the whole of the New Testament, is either true or false. It is not a copied record, but stands as an independent story. In this record we see that Joseph was perplexed when he heard the announcement of Mary's condition. Hers was the most humiliating condition that could be imagined. She was a young woman engaged to be married to Joseph. They had not yet come together and the marriage had not been consummated. With her reputation, her honor and her life at stake, when she knew her condition, she told Joseph. Only a deep faith in God and the assurance that God was with her could have supported her in that trying hour. The fears of Joseph were soon removed when God revealed that "that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit." His original purpose to put her away privately was set aside, and in a gracious and unquestioning way he followed the directions of the Lord. Matthew as a Jew in simple language wrote for Jews. He wrote not as a dreamer or one who had lost his reason but honestly and plainly to his fellowmen.

Luke's record is just as beautiful and straightforward. "Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David and the virgin's name was Mary. And he came unto her and said, "Hail, thou art highly favored, the Lord is with thee. But she was greatly troubled at the saying and cast about in her mind what manner of situation this might be. The angel said unto her, fear not Mary for thou hast found favor with God. And behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son and shalt call his name Jesus, he shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High: and the Lord God shall give him the throne of his father David, and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever: and of his kingdom there shall be no end. And Mary said unto the angel, how shall this thing be seeing I know not a man, And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee; wherefore also the holy thing which is begotten shall be called the Son of God. And Mary said: Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word." From the standpoint of a physician in tender language, Luke describes the events. He makes known her great call; her fears as a young maiden; her chaste pure life; her humble submission to the will of the Lord; then her unbounding joy that she was to be the mother of Jesus the Savior. In the second chapter Luke

makes known the condition under which Jesus was born. In the day when Mary and Joseph travelled to Bethlehem, to attend to the demand of the law, Mary was great with child. It was time that she should be delivered and the hour had come when the glorious promise made four thousand years before should be fulfilled. In crowded Bethlehem with the doors of all homes and hotels closed, this humble man from Nazareth took' the godly Mary into a stable for the night. On that night the greatest event the world had ever known transpired. "She brought forth her first born son; and she wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn."

Both of these records come from men of the apostolic age, and their records are found in the oldest of manuscripts. Matthew does not copy from Luke, and Luke does not copy from Matthew. The records are independent, yet they are not contradictory. They are complementary. It takes the two to make a complete story. These revelations were accepted by the early Christians and today the genuine Christian says, "Lord I believe."

We believe it unworthy of a Christian to notice the vulgar charges of the skeptics that these beautiful stories are the product of the early Jewish Christians, or that the Christians borrowed them from some vulgar myths about them.

There are some who charge, that since only Matthew and Luke mention the virgin birth, then it is evidence that the other writers of the New Testament knew nothing of it. Yet when we consider the story, it is a very delicate one and all that could be said upon it, was said by Matthew and Luke. Had the other writers given it, it would have been but a repetition. Then it is very plain to the Bible student that both John and Mark write of the life of Christ from a different view than that of Matthew and Luke. Mark reveals Jesus as the servant. John pictures him as the Son of God, and goes back beyond all human genealogies, and presents Jesus as having existed in the beginning. John knew of the miraculous birth of Jesus or what could his words mean in chapter 1 and verses 1 and 2 of his gospel, "in the beginning was the Word, the Word was God—the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." It was not the purpose of the second and fourth gospel writers to present the circumstance of the nativity. At least John shows the divine descent of Jesus and how the Word became flesh he does not say.

It has been further suggested that because Paul, one of the chief writers of the New Testament does not directly mention the virgin birth, that he was un-acquainted with it. Certainly one is taking too much liberty to say that Paul was ignorant of this great event. He was a companion of Luke; and as these two traveled about on their missionary tours, surely they often discussed this great truth presented by Luke. Paul did write of the pre-existence of Jesus, and of his redeeming love and divine dignity. He presented him to be from God and the head of the church and the Savior of the world. Such a one as Paul reveals could not have entered into this world in the ordinary way. We believe that Paul taught the miraculous birth of the Lord in these words, "Who existing in the form of God, counted not being on the equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of man, and being found in fashion as a man" (Php\_2:6-8). "When the fulness of time came, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman under the law" (Galatians 4:4). John, Paul and all the New Testament writers who present Jesus to us in his dignity, holiness, purity and sinlessness; surely they knew of his being born as Matthew and Luke decribed.

Even the silence of the other writers of the New Testament would not disprove the record as presented by Matthew and Luke. From a recent issue of the Gospel Advocate, I quote from H. Leo Boles: "Many events which are generally accepted are recorded by only one or two writers of the New Testament. A criminal could find one hundred witnesses that did not see him commit the crime to one who did see him but the failure of the many to see the crime committed, does not prove the falsity of the one who did see it committed."

#### Why Should Jesus Be Born of a Virgin

Jesus came as a revelation of God. He was with God in the beginning. He said, "None knoweth the Son save the Father, neither doth anyone know the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will- eth to reveal him" (Matthew 11:27). If Jesus was the Son of God, it was necessary that when he came to man to reveal God, he should have none but God as his Father. In Jesus we see God. Because he was God in the flesh he could speak with "all authority." He reveals that God is interested in us, and in Jesus we can truly say, "God is with us."

Jesus not only had a divine side but a human side. This could not have been, had both his parents been of this earth. From his virgin mother he took the flesh, and in the flesh he experienced all our problems. He wept with the sad. He was hungry and thirsty. He knew the sorrows of being forsaken by friends, and even saw some of his disciples turn away from him, "He was tempted in all points like as we, yet without sin." His life in the flesh make him; thoroughly acquainted with man.

Let us thank God for Jesus, the Son of God, born of the virgin Mary, our Savior and King. Of his great supernatural birth let us say:

"I will seek to believe rather than to reason: to adore rather than to explain; to give thanks rather than to penetrate; to love rather than know; to humble myself rather than to speak."

## Christ, A Teacher Come from God

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Christ, A Teacher Come from God CHRIST, A TEACHER COME FROM GOD

By Hulen L. Jackson

One day during the personal ministry of Jesus on earth his disciples came to him with this request: "Lord, teach us to pray as John also taught his disciples." We as Christians need to come to the Christ and make a similar request. What an admirable attitude we would be manifesting if we should come to Christ as the teacher come from God and say, "Lord, teach us."

If Jesus were here in person again I should like to ask him to teach me also how to pray. I do not know how to pray as I ought. The value and importance of prayer I do not know. Hence, the need of having the Lord teach me how to pray. Those disciples of the Lord did not know how to pray and I am persuaded to believe that most of us today do not know how. Not only would I request the Lord to teach me to pray but would also request him to teach me how to live. I do not know how. Once the Jews brought the adulterous woman to Jesus to find out what he would say concerning her. His opinion mattered little to them. Naturally they had a base purpose in asking him. Nevertheless, as Jesus writes upon the sand and says "He that is without sin let him cast the first stone" the accusers of the woman leave one by one, Jesus and the woman only remaining. "Woman where art thine accusers? Does no man accuse thee?" "No man, Lord." "Neither condemn I thee. Go and sin no more." Jesus did not commend the life of this woman taken in sin neither did he approve of her sinful act. What propensity of character was Jesus manifesting- upon this occasion? Have we forgotten the story of the same Christ as his body was suspended upon the cross between heaven and earth? There he looked down from the cross upon the same Jews who just a few hours past had cried out to Pilate, "Crucify him, crucify him. His blood be upon us and our children." They were the same ones who took him yonder to the hall and placing the purple robe about him crowned him with the thorns. Yes, they hated h-m. They spat upon him. They beat him with many stripes. They mocked him to scorn. And now they are crucifying him between two thieves. Yet Jesus came to seek and save such. Listen to that Lord as he manifests the same character as he did to the woman. "Father forgive them for they know not what they, do." My request this afternoon is, "Lord, teach me to be forgiving and. thus to live," Looking at his life among us I realize I do not know how to live. The great need of not only the world but the church also is to say to him, "Lord, teach us." When the twelve came to Christ and made their request they recognized that he had the power and right to teach them what they wanted to know. When today I would request of him instruction, my request implies that in him is both the power and the right to teach. Yes, as one come from God he has the power. As one come from God he has the right granted to him to teach us. Jehovah has sent him forth among man clothed with all power to do his will and that includes teaching man his needs. The Father in sending the Son to man gave him also the right or permission to teach us. "God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake unto the fathers by the prophets hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son." The Jews would know by what power Jesus did his works. "The baptism of John:, was it of heaven or

of men ?” They then reasoned with themselves like this. “If we say of heaven, he will say that we should then have accepted him. Fearing the people, we shall not say of men for they accept John as a prophet.” They knew not was their answer to the Christ. “Then neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.” Of course this conversation of the Lord teaches that his power came from God. He himself said later, “All power hath been given unto me in heaven and in earth.” Jesus with that power and right granted to him of the Father was involved in an educational movement. His purpose was to teach. God sent him to speak the words of life eternal.

Listen as I make this statement. Jesus came not simply to live and to die but to live and while living to teach and to die and by or through his death to teach also. He truly was a teacher. No one denies the fact that Jesus of Nazareth who lived in the long ago and walked upon the shores of the Galilean sea was a teacher. He did teach mankind. His life was a life of teaching those whom he contacted day by day. He has always been revered even by the unbeliever as the Great Teacher. The multitudes hung upon his words as they fell from his lips. This Naz- arene approached life’s problems as a teacher. The world ranks Jesus Christ as one of the greatest if not the greatest of all teachers. They recognize his teaching ability. No teacher has ever lived in any age or country whose message has affected the society and civilization of the world as much as Jesus’ has. His work is our work today. His life is our life. His message is our message. The truths concerning life spoken by him nineteen centuries ago in that far off country have permeated the lives of people individually and collectively in every nation under the sun. We may reject him as one come from God yet we can hardly escape being influenced and affected by him. That which he taught makes the servant a better servant, the slave a more obedient slave, and the Lord a better lord. The world accepts him as teacher but not as teacher come from God. We walk together in reference to simply his teachings but we part in referring to him as the teacher divine. Nicodemus said, “Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.” The world accepts the first part of Nicodemus’ statement and heralds Jesus, the Nazarene, as a teacher or even as THE teacher. Not so, with the “come from God” part.

Other great outstanding teachers of the ages taught personally but wrote also that their message may be permanent. Jesus as far as we know wrote only once. While talking with the accusers of the sinful woman he wrote, upon the sand we know not what. How then could Jesus, not writing his message that it too may become permanent, become a great teacher of the generations following him? In this respect he differs from the other great teachers of the world. Get it, Jesus revealed the plan of human redemption and then gave a plan of perpetuating the plan by teaching men to teach other faithful men that they may be able to teach others also. Think of that statement for it tells us how Jesus’ message comes to us today. “Heaven and earth shall pass away but my word shall not pass away.” Why? Because he has provided a plan of perpetuating that word to all men throughout all ages world without end. Jesus gave a command to his disciples in his day in these words: “Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations.” That command we have today and, beloved, it is just, as binding now as it was when Jesus spoke it himself and as it would be if he were here in person and spoke it to us. The Jews expected a king and not a teacher. They would not accept his kingship; therefore they rejected that which he taught. They had made a mold for the promised Jesus to fit into as their regal leader, but he did not fit into it; consequently they rejected him. Their conception of Jesus, a misconception as it was of a material king sitting upon a material throne ruling over material subjects in a material kingdom was that which motivated them

to crucify him and to nail his body to Calvary's cross. Beloved, that same conception, a misconception still of the nature of Jesus in his kingdom, many people have today and thus like the Jews of yesterday are led to crucify Jesus anew by nailing his body spiritual, the church, to a cross of division, strife, partyism, and shame. May we ne'er forget that the teacher come from God said, "My kingdom is not of this world." Misconceptions of Jesus have in the past led folk to commit many sins against him and his kingdom. Let me suggest to you that it is rapidly becoming very popular to recognize in Jesus of Nazareth a teacher but not a teacher divine. That, dearly beloved, is just another misconception of the Son of God. I cannot rate Jesus as simply a teacher among many rejecting at the same time him as a teacher of divinity and have a true conception of the

Christ. As the Jew's misconception of Jesus' kingship resulted in their rejection of him, likewise will our misconception of him as teacher result in our rejection of him. It is inevitable. We cannot escape it. The rejecting world, modernistic in its view of him, loves to place Jesus upon the platform as just a teacher and then listen as he delivers his message. A technical analysis of his teachings follows. No, the Christian does not refuse to have his teacher examined. He can and is standing the test and examination. Let them analyze him if they will. It will but lead them to appreciate and admire him the more. His pedagogical methods are the best. They will find that out. To be sure, they like to take the sermon on the mount and place it as one of the greatest pieces of literature on record and as no doubt the most sublime sermon ever delivered. None greater than this can be found anywhere. But, after their careful scrutiny of this sermon and their analysis of his teaching their conclusion is so oft that he is just a teacher and not one from God. That is the modernistic conception of Jesus being presented even from our pulpits of today. God deliver and free the church from such a misconception. But because the world at large will not accept him as a God-sent teacher does not mean everything nor does it deny his claimed power and right to teach. During his ministry Jesus was never referred to as a preacher yet he did preach for Matthew 11:1 says, "And it came to pass after Jesus had made an end of commanding his disciples, that he departed hence to teach and to PREACH in their cities." Yes, Jesus did preach. Personally, though, I love to think of Jesus as not a preacher standing before an audience in a formal service and in a formal way speaking forth, but rather as a teacher sitting upon the mountain or in the boat talking very informally to those about him. It has been suggested that Jesus was called teacher forty-five times and twelve of those by his enemies, during his life. Not once did even the unbelievers claim that he was not a teacher. They knew that he was. Man twice conferred the title, Rabboni, upon him. This was given to only a very few of the great master teachers among the Jews.. From a human standpoint no greater honor could have been conferred upon the Christ. Yet that proves nothing. Because man styled him Rabboni does not mean that they accepted him. At the same time the Jew said, that he hath a devil or is of the devil. Jesus as a teacher who claimed to be from God must stand or fall not because of what the Jew thought of him but because, of what he was and what he is.

Jesus' methods of teachings are discussed by the modernist. Who has ever used a simpler method than Jesus? Was he not simple in his teaching? To be sure. 'Ye are the salt of the earth.' "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel but on a candlestick and it giveth light to all that are in the house." This is simple teaching. The child can understand it. When talking to the Pharisees Jesus taught them what they needed to know. When the Sadducees came he gave them that which they needed.

Jesus was direct, then, in his teaching. "I spake openly to the. w'ould. I ever taught in the temple and the synagogue whither the Jews always resort and in secret have I said nothing." What do we get from thus? Jesus was bold and aggressive in his teaching. These are but a few of Jesus' character-

istics as a teacher. But, friend, if we, as the modernist, exalt the, simplicity, the directness, the boldness and aggressiveness of the greatest of all teachers yet forget to "know thou art a teacher come from God" our efforts are in vain. Too, Jesus employed the best methods of contact. Can you not recall the story concerning Nathanael? Philip having found the Lord seeks out Nathanael and tells him about the Christ. "Can anything good come out of Nazareth" Nathanael asks. Philip readily replies, "Come and see." When Jesus sees him coming he exclaims, "Behold an Israelite, indeed, in whom is no guile." Soon the doubting Nathanael says, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God. Thou art the king of Israel." This shows Jesus' method of contact. He as teacher did know how to approach his pupils. Yet, again, it is not his method of contact and approach, that the modernist exalts, which is important but rather the fact that he came from God. The officers were sent out by the chief priests and Pharisees to arrest that one claiming to be their king. Returning to the officials, they were asked, "Why have ye not brought him?" Their answer quickly given was "Never man spake like this man." The question I should like to ask of the modernist who is claiming to believe in Christ yet at the same time rejects him as a divine teacher is why was it that man never spake like this man. The answer must come back—because he was a teacher come from God. When there existed a division among the Jews concerning Christ some asked, "How can a man being a sinner do such miracles." The question today is how can he do such miracles. The only answer that can be given is that he came from God. On the mount of transfiguration the, voice from heaven said to Peter, James, and John, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. Hear ye him." Why hear Jesus then and why hear him today? Because "we know thou art a teacher come from God," Jesus taught them as one having authority and not as the scribes.- The people at the end of his sermon on the mount were astonished. Why did he speak that way? Why were they astonished? He was not a mere teacher but one from God. That explains why. Then, too, let me call your attention to this fact concerning Jesus' teaching. "He that receiveth you receiveth me and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me" saith Christ. Also he said, "Whoso shall receive one such little child in MY NAME receiveth me." Over and over again did Jesus use these expressions in his teaching: "Ye have heard it said—but I say unto you. Verily, verily, I say unto you." An average teacher could not use such expressions and still be accepted. Even the very best of teachers would not be permitted to use such. These statements exceed all modesty and propriety if Jesus were just a teacher. We must grant first that he came from God as a teacher or else we have to apologize for his using these expressions. These words cannot be placed even in the mouth of any Old or New Testament teacher save Jesus of Nazareth as one come from God. He must be ranked not as a mere teacher nor merely as the greatest of all teachers and not even as a prophet of God but as teacher who has come from God. You cannot accept Christ and reject his claim of divinity as a teacher. To you he must be not a man-made teacher but one who is God-made and God-sent. Did you ever think on these things? Jesus taught even in his miracles. These supernatural acts of his not only confirmed that which he taught as the word of God but also contained lessons many a time within themselves. Who could not get a wonderful lesson from this New Testament story. The disciples were yonder on the sea in the boat. All at once they see Jesus walking to them upon the waters. Peter then requests the Lord to

let him walk the waters also. Peter starts but looking round about begins to sink and cries out, "Lord, save me." To be sure, the Lord reaches out his hand and raises him from the danger. The lesson contained in that miracle and in the circumstances surrounding it is so plain that it need not be stated. But again. As he is about to feed the multitude with only a few loaves and fishes, he sets them down in companies of fifty. Order and system. That's the lesson. Jesus taught it here. "God is not the author of confusion." Jesus required man to furnish all that he had—loaves and fishes. When man had done this, Jesus miraculously multiplied the food and fed the multitude of thousands. God still requires man to furnish all that he has and then he will do the rest. I take myself sin wrecked, sin cursed, and sin condemned to the Saviour—just as I am—and he then in a sense miraculously changes me into a child of God. What a lesson and we found it within one of the miracles of our Lord.

Jehovah sent Christ as his only begotten Son to man and he spoke while here all that God would have us know. "It is finished," said he upon the cross just before he died. This must undoubtedly refer to his work as one sent by God to man to reveal to man what God wanted him to know. Jesus taught concerning primarily three subjects:

1. The Godhead—Jehovah, the Holy Spirit on high, and himself,
2. The kingdom of God, and
3. Man's relation to that kingdom.

God sent him to teach just that. In Matthew 13:34-35 this language is recorded. "All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables. And without a parable spake he not unto them. That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet saying, I will open my mouth in parables." Jesus' way of teaching fulfilled prophecy. Isaiah 35:5-6, "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing; for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert." Jesus' miracles confirming that which he taught fulfilled prophecy. Hence, listen to this climaxing statement. Jesus had to teach:

1. that which he taught,
2. in the way he taught it, and
3. to confirm that which he taught with signs, wonders, and mighty deeds

to be the Christ, a teacher come from God.

Each was a literal fulfillment of prophetic language concerning him. These three facts which cannot be successfully refuted or denied prove conclusively that Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ, was a teacher come from God.

We may eulogize the contacts, the methods of approach, and the systems of teaching employed by the greatest of all teachers; yet if we lose sight of the message itself and the plea of the teacher that he came from God to seek and save that which was lost, all is vanity and Jesus' work is in vain.

## The Mind of Christ

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### The Mind of Christ THE MIND OF CHRIST

By Paul Southern

Introduction The world has produced many outstanding men in the various fields of human endeavor. Time would fail us to tell of all the luminaries that have enlightened the ages with their radiant splendor. For instance, the songs of Shakespeare have been sung around the globe. Millions have bathed their thirsty souls in the musical waters of Beethoven's symphonies. In our own country we have had many benefactors of civilization. George Washington, the father of our nation, gave a personal fortune to help perpetuate American democracy. Benjamin Franklin had time to snatch the lightning from the sky, and a scepter from the hands of George III. Abraham Lincoln, the great emancipator, broke the shackles of millions of slaves and linked his name with that of liberty and freedom. The flowery eloquence of W. J. Bryan has likewise reverberated against a thousand hills in the interest of world peace. But of all the characters who have distinguished themselves in the march of civilization, none is com-parable to Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ, the Son of the Living God. He outshines all other stars in the human firmament, just as the sun shines with greater splendor than all the planets that revolve around it.

He towers above all other creatures, just as Pike's Peak rises above the little hills that surround it.

Jesus Christ is the most noted man ever clothed in mortal flesh. He is talked about more than any other creature, for he is the idol of millions of Christians, and the popular target for millions of enemies. Jesus is written about more than any other person. The Bible is the best seller of all books, even in the wicked city of Hollywood, California, and Christ is the central figure of the entire book. The books, tracts and other compositions written about the Lord are as innumerable as the stars of the heavens. Jesus is likewise sung about more than any other creature. In the hymn book of the church there is not a single song ascribed to the memory of George Washington. On the other hand, it contains scores of hymns in honor of our Lord.

It may not be his true likeness, but the face of Jesus has been painted more than that of any other person. And what man is not moved by that inspiring picture, "The Man of Galilee"? There is a thrill in his name that makes even infidels and skeptics shudder, for they are afraid he is all that he claims to be—the Son of God and the Savior of the world. In one of his most famous addresses against Jesus, Robert Ingersoll concluded by saying: "Regardless of all else that may be said about him, the Nazarene was one of the greatest characters that ever lived." In this address we are to discuss another phase of the matchless life of Jesus. The topic which has been assigned to me is "The Mind of Christ." From the Philippian letter let us read a very appropriate text. Paul said: "Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross. Wherefore also God

highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Phil. 2:5-11). In order for us to appreciate the lesson properly, some limitations and explanations are in order. We shall not concern ourselves with the incarnation suggested in the text. Other speakers on the program will discuss this phase. And when we say “The Mind of Christ,” we are not thinking of that superior intellect which Jesus had. Truly this would be an interesting investigation, for Christ had the greatest mind that ever engaged the powers of burning eloquence or inspired poetic fire. Our discussion will have to do with the major characteristics of the spirit or dis-position of Christ.

1. An Obedient Mind The first thing that attracts our attention is the obedient mind of Christ. That he was obedient to his earthly parents is suggested by the fact that “he went down with them, and came to Nazareth; and he was subject unto them” (Luke 2:51). In this age of disobedience, children would do well to emulate the example of Christ. Paul says: “But if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his” (Rom. 8:9). Christ was also obedient to his heavenly Father, as the following Scriptures clearly teach. “For I am come down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me” (John 6:38). Again we hear him say: “for I do always the things that are pleasing to him” (John 8:29). Thus he was baptized to fulfill all righteousness (Matt. 3:15). The writer of Hebrews also tells us: “though he was a Son, yet learned obedience by the things which he suffered; and having been made perfect, he became unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation” (Heb. 5:8, 9).

What does such a disposition on the part of Christ mean to us? May I suggest that the world is still waiting for the sunrise of real Christian devotion. We have emphasized the doctrinal, often to the neglect of the practical. Constantine the Great, Emperor of Rome, was accepted as a convert to the Greek Catholic Church. And yet, after his alleged conversion, he murdered his conquered colleague and brother-in-law; sentenced to death his eleven-year-old nephew; killed his eldest son; brought about the death of his second wife; took the nails that were supposed to come from the cross of Christ and put one of them on his war helmet, and one on the bridle of his war horse. In spite of all these sordid crimes, he was canonized by the Greek Catholic Church and hailed by the Council of Nicaea as “a bishop of bishops.” Certainly, Constantine had failed to learn the first lesson of true discipleship. And one of the great needs of modern Christianity is to re-discover the laws of the Christ of the Mount. Lack of respect for constituted authority is a marked characteristic of the denominational world.

## 2. A Prayerful Mind

Christ also had a prayerful mind. He began his earthly ministry in prayer. “Now it came to pass, when all the people were baptized, that, Jesus also having been baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended in a bodily form, as a dove, upon him, and a voice came out of heaven, Thou art my beloved Son: in thee I am well pleased” (Luke 3:21, 22). Jesus continued steadfastly in prayer. He thought more of prayer than he did of rest. “And in the morning, a great while before day, he rose up and went out, and departed into a desert place, and there prayed” (Mark 1:35). He also thought more of prayer than he did of sleep. “And it came to

pass in those days, that he went out into the mountain to pray; and he continued all night in prayer to God" (Luke 3:12). He closed his earthly ministry in prayer. Upon the cross he prayed: "My God, my God, Why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:43). And again: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). Just before he made his ascension to the right hand of God, he lifted up his hands and blessed the disciples (Luke 21:50, 51). Now in the very holy of holies, Jesus continues his prayers for us, for "he ever liveth to make intercession for" us (Heb. 7:25).

Prayer is one of the most beautiful exercises of the Christian, the nearest possible approach to God. In fact, prayer is the high water mark of Christianity. Jesus never uttered a more sacred word than when he taught our trembling lips to say: "Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name" (Matt. 6:9). With one word, "Our," he taught us the brotherhood of man. With one word, "Father," he taught us the Fa-therhood of God. Yet we often spoil this sacred exercise of prayer by using it for a sordid purpose. Prayer often becomes a parade filled with selfishness and ostentation. In one of the great art galleries there is a picture which at a distance seems to portray a monk standing with folded hands in prayer. But when you approach the picture, you notice that the monk is squeezing a lemon into a punch bowl. Prayer may seem reverential at a distance, but when we get closer, we find that it has been used for self. "The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself" (Luke 18:11). It is this praying with self that makes prayer a self-ish exercise. Prayer took on a new meaning for me when I leaned over the bed and helped to teach our two-year-old son to say: "Now I lay me down to sleep; I pray the Lord my soul to keep. If I should die before I wake, I pray the Lord my soul to take." Paul Jr. looked up from his little crib and said: "Daddy, why don't you say your prayers with me?" Since that time prayer has had a deeper meaning for me.

3. A Serving Mind Our Savior also had a serving mind. At the age of twelve he manifested this characteristic. When found in the temple, talking with the teachers, he said to his parents: "Knew ye not that I must be in my Father's house?" (Luke 2:49). Within the shadow of the cross he said: "We must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (John 9:4). Again we hear him say: "the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Matt. 20:28). In giving his disciples an idea of true greatness, he said: "But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant" (Matt. 23:11).

It has been truly said that "He profits most who serves best." Some Christians are slow to learn this lesson. I once knew a school teacher who was a gospel preacher. He said to me: "I would not be a local church preacher." Naturally I wanted to know why. He said to me: "Because you never know when your job is completed." And so I learned about Christianity from him. Think of it! Here was a man going out to tell people about the serving Christ, and looking for a place to quit. Such ingratitude will crucify the Son of God afresh and put him to an open shame. There is no quitting place in Christian service. Paul said: "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not vain in the Lord" (1 Cor. 15:58). Remember the parable of the pearl of great price. Everything worthwhile costs toil. The greatest things are attained only by hardship and struggle. The traveler who ascends to the summit of the Swiss Alps does so at the expense of hard labor and danger. But when at last he reaches the top, what a commanding and imposing view he has. In like manner, heaven is not gained by a single bound, but "we build the ladder by which we rise from the lowly earth to the vaulted skies, and mount to its summit round by round."

4. A Humble Mind The mind of the Master Was likewise humble, and this spirit is inseparably linked with acceptable service. Our text says that he “counted not the being on equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross” (Phil. 2:6-8). Jesus was born in humble environs in a little town on the outskirts of civilization. He was brought forth in a stable and cradled in a manger, and perhaps never traveled over an area more than one hundred miles long during his personal ministry. He lived a life of humility, associating with and serving the common people. In him the lowliest found a friend, for he was interested in the least, the last and the lost. In washing the disciples’ feet he left an incomparable picture of humility (John 13:1-17). Here we are reminded that there are only two great philosophies of life. Nietzsche summed up one of them when he said, “Assert thyself.” This German philosopher was interested only in the glorification of the will to power, and the development of a super-man. Nietzsche died in a mad-house, and the world that followed him went to the very brink of hell in that war which was supposed “to make the world safe for democracy.” Jesus stands at the very opposite of such a philosophy and says, “Renounce thyself.” “If any man would come after me,” he said, “Let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me” (Mark 8:34). The genesis of such an attitude is found in self-renunciation; the exodus is life eternal.

Truly, the way to heaven is down. You must lose yourself in humble service at the bottom of the ladder before you can find your crown at the top of the ladder. But too many nominal disciples are interested in getting credit for what they do. The Pharisees often stood in the synagogues and on the corners of the street to be seen of men. Dr. E. Stanley Jones tells of a Hindu -worshipper who sat on a bed of spikes and pretended to be repenting in ashes. But that bed of spikes was at the crossroads where the race of men go by, where the penitent could be seen. When Dr. Jones was about to take a picture of the man, he objected because his ashes were not on straight. Some professed Christians are likewise afraid that their ashes are not on straight.

However, the truly great men of ages past and many loyal souls of our generation have not sought the plaudits of the world, but have lost themselves in a righteous cause. Yet some men cannot live and work without glory, any more than a drug addict can live without his drug, or a whiskey fiend without his whiskey. They are continually striving for a position in the limelight. They like to hear their names heralded from the platform, and see their pictures in the leading journals of the land. The trouble with Benedict Arnold was that he loved fame more than he loved duty. Napoleon continually harped on glory, but never mentioned duty. As a result, when glory and duty clashed on the field of Waterloo, duty triumphed as it always does. Well did the poet Gray say:

“The boast of heraldry and the pomp of power,

and all that beauty, all that wealth e’er gave

Await alike the inevitable hour—

The paths of glory lead but to the grave.”

Napoleon was a complete embodiment of the spirit of self-assertiveness. At the outset the plan seemed to work, but in the end it brought destruction. At first Europe bowed at his feet, but toward the close of his life we find Napoleon sitting in wretched loneliness on Saint Helena. When the

French nation was called upon to select their greatest character, they passed up Napoleon and chose Pasteur who had dedicated his life to the betterment of humanity. The truly great will render his service whether known or unknown, thanked or unthanked, rewarded or unrewarded. Our real reward is in achievement, and our compensation in the services we render. We must be lowly salt before we can be exalted light. No man can shine in obviousness until he is permeated with obscurity. Many would like to be light, but are not willing to work like salt—"unseen, unnoticed, unsung."

5. A Forgiving Spirit A casual reading of the life of Christ shows that the Savior had a forgiving spirit. To the sick of the palsy he said, "Thy sins are forgiven" (Matt. 9:2). To the woman taken in adultery he said: "Neither do I condemn thee: go thy way; from henceforth sin no more" (John 8:11). It is impossible to reclaim a harlot by treating her as a harlot. Concerning his murderers Jesus said: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). The only possible way to get rid of an enemy is to turn him into a friend. There is no way to get rid of hate except by love. You cannot make a man your friend without being friendly. Many prodigal sons returning to their first love have been driven away from the church by self-righteous elder brothers standing in the vestibule. We often assume divine prerogatives that even God himself does not yet use to the full. He does not pass judgment until all the evidence is in, but we sometimes consign men to hell the first time they fall. We forgive with our fingers crossed, and just hope that the penitent will not hold out.

Booker T. Washington has well said: "No man can keep another man down in the gutter without staying down there with him." A woman in India came to a doctor to get relief from a severe abscess. The doctor suggested that the swollen place would have to be opened with a knife in order to let the poison out. She insisted on putting a plaster on the abscess. The result was that the poison beneath the plaster spread to her heart and she died. In like manner we try to plaster over our misunderstandings in religion, and the poison often kills the souls of men. There are too many religious elephants with their names on the church rolls. They refuse to forgive, however penitent their brother may be. Manifestly, this is not the spirit of Christ. He taught that we must forgive our brother, even if he sin against us "until seventy times seven" (Matt. 18:22).

## 6. A Loving Spirit

After discussing the foregoing characteristics of Jesus, it seems superfluous to say that he had a loving mind. This trait was supremely exhibited in his tender affection for little children, his care for the poor, his sympathy for widows, and in the remembrance of his mother. Just before he expired on the cross, Jesus placed a halo of sanctity and beauty around true motherhood that no man dares remove. Christ himself showed his great love for humanity in the sacrifice which he made. He gave up heaven, the very throne of divine glory, where he was so highly exalted in honor and dignity that it was no robbery of God for Christ to be-made equal with him (Phil. 2). He became clothed in human flesh, and was tempted in all points like as we are (Heb. 4:15). Though supremely rich, for our redemption he became poor, that we through his poverty might become rich (2 Cor. 8:9). He became so poor that he could say: "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the heaven have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head" (Matt. 8:20). Yea, he loved the world to the extent that he laid down his life for his sheep (John 10:11).

Truly, love cannot be love without the burdens of love. Without the cross there can be no crown; without bleeding there can be no blessing. Christ was willing to shoulder his responsibility, make his sacrifice. Therefore he went to the cross, just as a lamb to the slaughter. His death becomes a glorious absurdity, an infallible proof of his divinity. Jesus puts taste into life. As death approached, an actor said: "Let down the curtain, the farce is done." But in death hope sees a star, so the Christian says: "Raise the curtain, for life has just begun."

Someone has said: "The Alpine rock must own its mossy grace, or else be nothing but a stone." And if I may paraphrase, the Christian must own his re-sponsibility to the Lord, or else be nothing but a cold, hard stone. Are we really good stewards of the manifold mercy and blessings of God? I am sorry that we have a few leaches in the church who drink at her spiritual fountain and feast at her educational table never to repay the debt of love and gratitude they owe. "Such men may last but never live, Who much receive but nothing give." There is an attitude among some Christians that makes them try to get all they can for nothing. They have also put Christianity on a commercial basis and demand so many visible results for so many dollars invested. Thank God these are in the minority. Multitudes in the church are willing to spend and be spent for the Lord. Inspired by the loving sacrifice of Jesus, they say: "Take my life, and let it be consecrated, Lord, to Thee; . . . Take my silver and my gold: Not a mite would I withhold."

Consequently, I believe that the church's today is better than her yesterday, And if our members will join themselves in her every forward movement, tomorrow will be better than today.

## 7. A Missionary Mind

We must not close this study without mentioning the missionary mind of the Master. Jesus said: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (John 12:32). His gospel was to be a blessing to all. In announcing the birth of the Lord the angel said: "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all the people" (Luke 2:10). Hence Jesus said: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:23). Upon another occasion he said: "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and they shall become one flock, one shepherd" (John 10:16). If the gospel had remained with the Jews alone, it would have died pot-bound. The religion of our Lord is universal in its application, international in its scope. There is no way around this Scriptural fact. Jesus had a vision that encompassed the whole world. He broke down every racial and social barrier in his dire passion for men. .. A missionary was talking with a Hindu doctor who had performed a hundred thousand operations on the eye. When asked what the secret of his success was, the doctor replied, "I was mad after eyes." In like manner, Jesus is mad after men. General Booth of the Salvation Army once stood before Queen Victoria, and she asked what she might do for him. He replied: "Your Majesty, some people's passion is money, and some people's passion is fame, but my passion has been men." In this statement he echoed the mind of the Master. Listen to the words of our Lord: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned" (Mark 16:15, 16). Evidently we do not believe all of that statement. I am certain that our actions belie our faith. We have taught, and correctly so, that baptism is a condition of pardon. The same passage also teaches that the whole world must be evangelized. For some reason we have not fully accepted this divine challenge. Our missionary lethargy reminds us of a Hindu officer who

received orders to report to a flooded ama and assist the sufferers. For forty-eight hours he watched the stars, waiting for a propitious time to go. He finally went, but arrived too late. Thousands had already died, and naturally he was demoted by his government. Jesus said go into all the world with relief for suffering souls flooded with sin. And we gaze at the stars for a propitious day while millions suffer for human needs and gospel light. Christian friends, there is no time to lose. Jesus says we must work now. So "Today if ye shall hear his voice, harden not your hearts" (Heb. 4:7). When Moffatt returned from Africa, he toured England speaking in behalf of the benighted natives. He closed every address with the statement, "In Africa I can see the smoke of a thousand villages without a Savior." David Livingstone happened to be in the audience one day when that statement was made. At the close of the service he presented himself to Mr. Moffatt and asked: "Do you think that I will do for service in Africa?" "Yes, when can you go?" Moffatt replied. With the light of immortality in his eye, Livingstone said, "I can go today." It goes without saying that the Lord's business demands haste. Only those who seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and respond to this missionary mind of the Master can say with the apostle Paul: "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith" (2 Tim. 4:7). Remember, "if any man hath not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his" (Rom. 8:9).

Conclusion No man can observe these characteristics of the J ud and truthfully say that Jesus of Nazareth is int the Christ. In closing our study we should renumber that Jesus has promised to be with us al- wa.> s, even unto the end of the world, if we have his mind in us. His mercy stops not at the grave; it does not end at death. It opens to our vision mansions in the sky, a home not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Before Jesus left this world, he promised to go and prepare a place for us. "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you unto myself; that wrhere I am, there ye may be a.so" (John 14:2, 3). Somewhere out yonder beyond the sunset of life the righteous will live on forever in the land of fadeless day. The tug of tomorrow leads us on to the place where time shall be no more.

"When we've been there ten thousand years, bright, shining as the sun,

We've no less days to sing God's praise than when 'twas first begun." My friends, I am sure that you want to go to that sinless summer land. Then cast your lives at Jesus' feet and sing with the redeemed saints:

"All hail the power of Jesus' name!

Let angels prostrate fall,

Bring forth the royal diadem,

And crown him Lord of all."

## Jesus the Manifestation of God in the Flesh

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Jesus the Manifestation of God in the Flesh JESUS THE MANIFESTATION OF GOD

IN THE FLESH

By Roy H. Lanier

Jesus of Nazareth has been the marvel of all men for nearly twenty centuries. His friends have loved and worshiped him as the sinless Son of God and Saviour of men from their sins. His enemies, unbelievers of all shades and degrees, while making countless vain efforts to discredit him, have been forced to admit that from every point of view he was a super-man. He lived as none before or since his day ever lived; his teaching is superior to that of any other man in any age, both as to method and content; his works, if there be any truth in words falling from the lips of dying men, were truly the works of God; and his influence, in spite of the most persistent and malicious opposition, has been felt by more people and has done more good than that of any other man before or since his day. Evil men and unbelievers have tried to account for these facts in various ways, but there is only one satisfactory explanation, which is at once both simple and superb, contained in the words of that Israelite in whom was no guile, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God." That this Jesus of Nazareth, according to the teaching of the Scriptures, was God, God in flesh, God in the flesh, God manifested in the flesh, it is the purpose of this paper to prove.

### 1. The Prophets Said He Would Be God

Hundreds of years before Jesus was born Isaiah said: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel," (Isaiah 7:14). Matthew says this prophecy was fulfilled when Jesus was born, and interprets the word "Immanuel" for us as meaning "God with us" (Matthew 1:23). So according to Isaiah and Matthew Jesus was "God with us." And again Isaiah foretells his coming in these words: "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6). In this statement we learn that the one to be seated upon the throne of David was to be the "Mighty God." The angel Gabriel undoubtedly alluded to this prophecy when he told Mary she was to have a son and call his name Jesus. "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David" (Luke 1:31-32). The son of Mary was to be called "the Son of the Most High" because he was the "Mighty God" of Isaiah's prophecy. The prophet Micah said: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah, which art little to be among the thousands of Judah, out of thee shall one come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth are from old, from everlasting" (5:2). It was to this prophecy that the chief priests and scribes turned when Herod asked where the Christ was to be born. It was this prophecy that caused Herod to send the wise men to Bethlehem where they might find him "that is born King of the Jews" (Matthew 2:2-8). So the one who was born King of the Jews is the one who, according to Micah, is from everlasting. This can be said of no creature; only the creator can be described in such terms. So according to

prophecy he was to be God.

## 2. Jesus Said He Was God

Before citing the Scriptures to prove that Jesus claimed to be God, let us study the Jewish conception of the Messiah. As expressed by one of their number, Trypho, in his celebrated dialogue with Justin Martyr, their conception was: "That this Christ existed as God before the worlds, and then submitted to be made and born a man, and that he was not a man begotten of man, seems to me not only incredible, but silly. . . . To me their doctrine appears much more credible who say, that he was born a man, and that, by election, he was anointed--and made Christ, than those things which you affirm. For we all also think that Christ shall be a man born of human parents, and that Elias shall come and anoint him. And if this man should appear to be the Christ, we ought by all means to believe that he is a man, and that he was born as other men. But I neither believe that he is Christ,,nor that Elias is come" (pp. 233-236, from *The Eternal Son- ship*, by R. Treffry Jr., pp. 80, 81). That the Jews had this conception in the time of Jesus is seen from an incident recorded in Matthew 22:41-45 : "Now while the Pharisees were gathered togethes, Jesus asked them a question, saying, What think ye of the Christ? Whose son is he? They say unto him, The son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in the Spirit call him Lord, saying, 'The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Till I put thine enemies underneath thy feet' ?

If David then calleth him Lord, how is he his son? And no one was able to answer him a word." Why could not those Jews tell why David called him Lord? Simply because they expected him to "be a man born of human parents" of the family of David. If they had known their Scriptures taught that he was to be God in flesh, flesh descended from David, they could have answered the question. But again, it was no great sin in the estimation of the Jews for one to claim to be the Christ, the Messiah; nor was it a crime for people to believe one to be the Christ. In Matthew 9:27 two blind men call Jesus "the son of David"; and in Matthew 15:22 the woman of Canaan does the same. Then when Jesus rode into Jerusalem in what is called his "triumphal entry" the multitudes went before him, saying, "Hosanna to the son of David" (Matthew 21:1-17). They used the expression "son of David" in the same acceptation as used when the Jews told Jesus that the Christ was to be the son of David. So the multitudes were calling him the Christ. However there were but very few of them who believed him to be the Son of God, God in flesh, for only a few days later they joined the leaders in condemning him for blasphemy because he said he was the Son of God.

Now to the passages where Jesus calls himself God. He uses the term "Son of God" to mean God, just as the expression "son of man" means man. In John 5:17-18 we read; "Jesus answered them, My Father worketh even until now, and I work. For this cause therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only broke the sabbath, but also called God his own Father, making himself equal with God." The Jews called themselves sons of God, and called God their Father (John 8:41), and surely they would not object to Jesus calling God his Father. But they did. Why? Because he used the term "own Father," which made "himself equal with God." When he used a term which made himself equal to God, it was the same as calling himself God, which they considered blasphemy. Again in John 8:53-54 the Jews ask him, "Whom makest thou thyself? Jesus answered, if I glorify myself, my glory is nothing; it is my Father that glorifieth me; of whom

ye say, that he is your God.” Here Jesus identifies his proper Father as being the one whom the Jews called their God. This is another way of saying that he is the Son of God in a distinct way in which no other being is, and therefore equal with God. That the Jews understood him to make himself equal with God when he called himself the Son of God is made clear in John 10:30-36. Jesus said: “I and the Father are one. The Jews took up stones again to stone him. Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shown you from the Father; for which of those works do you stone me? The Jews answered him, For a good work we stone thee not, but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God. Jesus said .... say ye of him whom the Father sanctified .... Thou blasphemeth; because I said, I am the Son of God?” Here it is plainly set forth that when Jesus called himself the “Son of God,” the Jews understood that he made himself God.

It was this claim that finally led him to his death.

Before the Jewish council he was asked two questions. The first was, “If thou art the Christ, tell us.” To this his answer left them no room to doubt his claim. But there was no law against a man claiming to be the Christ, hence they could do nothing. The second question was, “Art thou then the Son of God?” He answered, “Ye say that I am,” which was an affirmation. And then the Jews said, “What further need have we of witnesses? for we ourselves have heard him from his own mouth” (Luke 22:66-71). They then took him before Pilate and his first accusation there was that he made himself Christ a king. When they saw this accusation would not secure sentence, they said: “We have a law, and by that law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God” (John 19:7). According to their law one guilty of blasphemy was to be put to death (Leviticus 24:16), and they accused him of blasphemy because he had confessed to being the Son of God (Matthew 26:63-66). So Jesus claimed to be on equality with God; he claimed to be God in the flesh.

### 3. The Apostles Said He Was God

Those men who were nearest Jesus while he was on earth; those men who saw his miracles, and heard his teaching constantly for more than three years; those men who saw him and ate with him after he arose from the grave; yea, those men who were baptized in the Holy Spirit who not only guarded them from error but gave them the words they should use in conveying to us the message, those men said he was the Son of God, God made flesh, God manifested in the flesh. John, that beloved disciple, who perhaps entered most fully into a correct understanding and appreciation of our Lord's relationship with the Father, guided unerringly by the Holy Spirit wrote: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him; and without him was not anything made that hath been made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men . . . And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth” (John 1:1-4; John 1:14). That the “Word” here mentioned was the second person of the Godhead, I suppose, I need not argue; and that this “Word” became Jesus need not be argued, for it is all but stated in verse fourteen. Let us then, first, notice the things said about this “Word” that prove him to be God; and, second, we shall notice that this “Word,” which is proved to be God, became flesh and was known as Jesus of Nazareth. The eternity of the Word is first stated by the words “in the beginning” was. This Word already “was”

when all things else began to be, hence was before all created things. He therefore was no part of creation; he is eternal. None but God is eternal; he, therefore is God. Next, his co-existence with the Father is stated, "and the Word was with God." The Word was in the beginning with God. Next, his essential and personal deity is affirmed, "And the Word was God." And then his distinction from the Father is stated, "The same was in the beginning with God." These words are but an unintelligible jumble if they do not convey the idea that there are two beings of each of whom it may be said, He is God. The "Word was God" and yet he was with another being called God; consequently there were two beings called God, and yet, because of their unity it can be truly said, "There is one God." Further, this Word is said to be the creator, "All things were made through him; and without him was not anything made that hath been made." This again proves that he existed before all creation, therefore he was not created. His self existence and vitalizing and enlightening power are next stated, "In him was life; and the life was of the light of men." According to this he is the source of all life and light. Truly he was God. But we have now to notice that this being, this Word, became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth. And in becoming flesh he lost none of those attributes which characterized him as the Word, God. In the flesh he asserted his eternal existence when he said, "Before Abraham was born I am" (John 8:53). Not as the eternal Word, but as Jesus of Nazareth, he declares his co-existence with the Father by saying, "Glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was" (John 17:5). That he asserted his deity by declaring himself to be the Son of God I have before shown, he demonstrated his creative powers by turning the water to wine and by increasing the loaves and fishes so that after feeding the thousands more was gathered in baskets than they formerly had. And Paul says that the worlds were made through that Son through whom God has spoken to us in these last days (Heb. 1:2). And Jesus declared he was the source of life when he said, "I am the living bread which came down out of heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever" (John 6:51). And again he said, "I am the resurrection and the life" (John 11:25). And he claimed to be the light of men when he said, "Yet a little while is the light among you . . . While ye have the light, believe on the light, that ye may become sons of light" (John 12:35-36). This is not intended as an exhaustive study of this phase of the subject, but as sufficient to prove that Jesus of Nazareth possessed all the attributes of deity which the "Word" of John 1:1 possessed, and that, therefore, it is proper to speak of him as God.

It is not the purpose of this paper to enter the endless intricate theological meanderings of those who have tried to search out how the Word became flesh. But it does seem needful to say that the expression "became flesh" must not be made to mean that spirit was turned into flesh. Neither does it mean that a physical body became the tabernacle of the eternal Spirit for a third of a century, afterwards yielding it up to return to its former plane and mode of existence. But rather that the Word partook of human nature, flesh and blood (Hebrews 2:14); that he became identified with humanity, not for a third of a century, but forever. While he was here he possessed all the essential attributes of humanity as well as those of divinity. When he left this world he did not leave behind his humanity. His body was raised incorruptible and immortal. And we are told that we shall be like, him. (1 John 3:2), and our vile bodies shall be fashioned anew that they may be conformed to the body of his glory (Phil\_3:21). "God is a Spirit" (John 4:24), and is not to be thought of as having a body. And such we conceive the Word was until the Word became flesh, or was born of Mary. From that time forward forever he is identified with humanity. This conception should heighten our appreciation of his sacrifice, and our privileges which we enjoy in him both

now and throughout eternity. In the first epistle of John is to be found further evidence of the divinity of the Lord Jesus. He says, "To this end was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (1 John 3:8). This of course means that the Son of God was manifested in the flesh, for it is plainly taught in Hebrews 2:14 that he partook of flesh and blood "that through death he might bring to nought him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." So bear in mind the form of the expression, the Son of God was manifested in the flesh. But we have learned that when that expression was used it meant equality with God; Jesus was accused of making himself God because he claimed to be the Son of God. So to say that Jesus was the Son of God manifested in the flesh is equal to saying he was God manifested in the flesh. But further, John says, "The life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare unto you the life, the eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us" (1 John 1:2). This is so similar to John's statement in the gospel. Notice, that life which was manifested was the eternal life. It was first with the Father and then was manifested unto us. If the Son of God was with the Father and then was manifested unto us, and the eternal life was with the Father and then was manifested unto us, are we not justified in concluding that the eternal life was the Son of God? But we are not left to such uncertain conclusions. "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son, Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life" (1 John 5:20-21). From this we learn that the Son of God is that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us in the flesh, and known as Jesus Christ. We might well make this the end of our quest, for we have found the positive inspired statement that this Son of God, his Son Jesus Christ, that which became flesh and dwelt among us, "is the true God." I am aware of the fact that the pronoun "this" is made by some to refer to God and not to the Son. But such an interpretation violates a simple rule of grammar which says the demonstrative pronoun always refers to the nearest antecedent. And next the pronoun "this" must refer to the Son for this true God is said to be the eternal life, and in 1 John 1:2 this eternal life is said to have been "with the Father, and was manifested unto us." This is positive proof that the Son, Jesus Christ, is the true God.

Incidentally these passages should be quite sufficient to settle the age old controversy as to whether the expression "Son of God" refers to the divine or the human nature of Jesus. Brother Isaac Errett says, "Jesus is not, as the creeds sometimes style him, 'the eternal Son of God.' He is the eternal Word of God; but 'the Word made flesh' is the Son of God. He became the Son of God by virtue of his participation of human nature" ("Evenings With the Bible," Vol. III, p. 44). While others, as Treffry, argue with equal clearness on the other side. But if words are faithful vehicles of ideas, if they mean what they say, John teaches that the "Son of God" is his "Son Jesus Christ" and that this is the true God and eternal life. The Son of God is that eternal life. And he further says this eternal life was with the Father and was manifested unto us. This is equal to saying that the Son of God was with the Father and was manifested unto us. But if the expression "Son of God" is the "Word made flesh," John would be guilty of saying that the Word made flesh, Jesus of Nazareth, was with the Father and was manifested unto us. So it would seem that those who hold to the eternal Sonship have the edge of the argument. But my conception of the matter does not permit of such an argument; I see not how we may divide our Lord and say this part is human, and this part is divine. He was God with all the essential attributes of humanity; he was human with all the attributes of divinity. There was such perfect fusion of divinity and humanity that he was a human being composed of body, soul and spirit, yet he was God in whom dwelt all the fullness of

the Godhead bodily. I do not object to the terms “human nature” and “divine nature” as being dangerous or hurtful; but as being too literal and material. The next apostle who writes of the divinity of Jesus is Paul, that apostle to whom the Lord appeared after he had ascended to heaven, that one who was caught up and allowed to see and hear things not lawful for him to utter. He said, Jesus “existing in the form of God, counted not the being on equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross” (Php\_2:6-8). Here Paul says this Jesus was once on equality with God, but that he emptied himself of, gave up, that equality. But while here Jesus was the equal of God in that the fulness of the godhead, all the powers of God, dwelt in him. In what way was he not the equal of God? In that he was made in the likeness of men, and was no more in the likeness of God, a Spirit. He gave up that when he identified himself with humanity. But here we have that for which we search, that he was God made in likeness of men and dwelt among us as God in the flesh. Hebrews 2:14-17 is of identical import so far as our use of it is concerned, so space will not be used in the discussion of the passage.

Paul further says of the Son of God, “Who is the image of the invisible God, the first born of all creation; for in him were all things created .... all things have been created through him, and unto him; and he is before all things, and in him all things consist” (Colossians 1:15-17). Those who do not believe in the divinity of Jesus use the phrase “firstborn of all creation” to mean the “first made creature.” But the next statement is given as the reason why he is the firstborn of all creation—for by him were all things created. The word “firstborn” means heir and lord, as well as one born first. So he is Lord of all creation, for all things were made by him. This makes good sense; the other interpretation does not. “He is before all things,” meaning all created things. This argues his divinity in that he existed before all created beings. “And in him all things consist.” This cannot be said of a created being, but may with propriety be said of him who created all things. The same apostle, Paul, argues along this same line in Hebrews 1:2-4; Hebrews 1:8; Hebrews 1:10. In this passage he adds, “When he had made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.” This purification was made through “the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all” (Hebrews 10:10). To develop this line of argument would require too much space, but it is sufficient to say here that the offering of a human body would not have made purification for sins, therefore his was the offering of more than a human body; it was the offering of God in flesh. But in verse 8, he is called God, “But of the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever.” And again, verse 10, “Thou, Lord, in the beginning didst lay the foundation of the earth.” The next statement from Paul is one too plain and unequivocal to admit of doubt or misunderstanding. In speaking of the Jews he said, “Whose are the fathers, and of whom is Christ as concerning the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever” (Romans 9:5). This simply says that the Christ, brought forth in the flesh by the Jews, is over all, God blessed forever; he is God entitled to blessings instead of cursings which he was, and is, receiving from the Jews. Here, as in other passages, I am mindful of, and in a measure acquainted with, the attacks made upon the verse by those who disbelieve the divinity of our Lord, but space forbids further discussion. The plain import of the passage in its present translation is that Christ, in the flesh given him by the Jews, is God. The apostle Paul considers the resurrection of Jesus as the greatest proof that he was the Son of God, or God in the flesh. Twice God had spoken from heaven saying, “This is my beloved Son,” but the Jews refused to believe him. Jesus had performed such miracles as no man ever had done, and

yet they did not believe him. He had testified under oath that he was the Son of God, but, instead of accepting this testimony, they crucified him as a blasphemous imposter because of it. And now\* the Great God of heaven reverses the decision of the highest courts of earth and, by raising him from the dead, declares that he is his Son. Hear Paul as he writes about the gospel of God “Concerning his Son, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, who was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead; even Jesus Christ-our Lord” (Romans 1:3-4). Here Paul calls Jesus Christ our Lord God’s Son. His Son was one who had his humanity through David, but his resurrection declares that he was more than human. He was crucified for saying he was the Son of God; that, though he was the son of David, he had a higher relationship than that. His divinity was not derived through his connection with David, but through his relation to God. And God honors the claim that Jesus made by raising him from the dead. This passage stands as solid rock in proof of both the humanity and divinity of Jesus Christ. It ties humanity and divinity together in the person of “Jesus Christ our Lord,” and calls that per-son God’s Son. It is worthy of notice that Paul says, relative to the flesh, he was “born” of the seed of David. Birth denotes the beginning. But of the spirit he said “who was declared to be” the Son of God. That does not denote a beginning. In Jesus of Nazareth we see the fusion of that humanity, which had its beginning at birth, and divinity, which was with God and was God. In him, and in him alone, do we see God manifested in the flesh.

4. His Works Declare Him To Be God The works Jesus did while here on earth, according to his own statement, were such as had never been done by any one else. He said: “If I had not done among them the works which none other did, they had not had sin” (John 15:24). He considered his works sufficient evidence of his deity, for said he, “For the works which the Father has given me to accomplish, the very works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me” (John 5:36). That they are abundantly sufficient as evidence is attested by the fact that all who disbelieve are condemned. “For except ye believe that I am he, ye shall die in your sins” (John 8:24). The power that Jesus exercised over evil spirits and his explanation of it is proof of a power beyond that of a human being. When he was accused of casting out demons by Beelzebub he replied, “No one can enter into the house of the strong man, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house” (Mark 3:27). Here he claimed a power beyond that of humanity. His very presence was disturbing to the demons. In the synagogue at Capernaum one cried out, saying, “Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God” (Mark 1:24). Another fell down before him and said, “Thou art the Son of God.” They recognized in him the one who is to destroy them, and asked, “Art thou come hither to torment us before the time ?” (Matthew 8:29). Aside from proving that his power was no less than that of God, these passages show that the demons recognized him as the Son of God, the One with whom they would have to deal when the time for their punishment arrives.

While here on earth Jesus forgave sins, which, as the Jews correctly said, none but God can do. They accused Jesus of blasphemy when he said to a man, “Thy sins are forgiven.” But he healed the man before their eyes to prove that he had the power to forgive sins (Mark 2:1-12). Incidentally this proves two things. First, that one who can, of his own power, heal the sick, can forgive sins. And secondly, that he could forgive sins, which none but God could do, and that, therefore, he was God. Time forbids that I should refer to his stilling the tempest, feeding the thousands with a morsel of bread and gathering twelve baskets of fragments, walking on the water, and raising the

dead to life again, and bring each to its just conclusion that Jesus was God in the flesh. But since no man has ever been able to perform any such miracles, except while confessedly doing it in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, as did Peter (Acts 3:6) when he healed the lame beggar at the Beautiful gate, surely we are justified in concluding that Jesus, when he exercised the power in person, was God manifested in the flesh.

Conclusion This theme, that Jesus is the Son of God, God manifested in the flesh, is the very heart of the gospel. It is the foundation upon which everything else rests. Disprove the proposition and the gospel becomes a dead letter; admit the truth of the proposition and all humanity is obligated to live in harmony with his teaching. Therefore from this proposition we may draw many lessons of encouragement to sustain us in the hours of trial. Time forbids more than a passing mention of a few of these lessons.

Firstly, the superiority of Christianity over Judaism is based upon the fact that Jesus is greater than Moses. This is argued at length in the book of Hebrews.

Secondly, upon the truth that Jesus was God in flesh rests our hope of an exaltation above the angels. He is set forth as an example; he is the firstfruits as proof that we too shall be exalted and given an inheritance undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us.

Thirdly, God becoming flesh and living among men was a manifestation of his love for the lost. Here we have a picture of God seeking man. There is much said about the duty of man to seek after God; but it became the duty of man to seek God only because God has come to seek and to save the lost. It is interesting to note that the Son of God passed over the angels who had fallen and did not extend help to them; that he "giveth help to the seed of Abraham" (Hebrews 2:16). It was humanity that he loved and lifted, not angels.

Fourthly, God becoming flesh, living among men, and dying for man shows how valuable a human being is in the sight of God. Jesus taught the Jews that a man is worth more than a sparrow or a sheep. And, the fact that he died for man, that he gave his life in the place of ours, indicates that he valued our lives more highly than he did his own. He wishes to save us, not from hell only, but from sin in this life, that our lives may be worth as much as possible while here we live. If we live in sin, we are worthless. Living for him is the only way to make your life worthwhile.

## The Sinlessness of Jesus

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### The Sinlessness of Jesus THE SINLESSNESS OF JESUS

By W. W. Otey When the Pharisees were gathered together Jesus asked them saying, "What think ye of Christ? whose son is he?" (Matthew 22:41-42). The hope of a sorrowing world depends upon the correct answer to that question. If he is only the son of man, all hope of a future and better life is vain. If he is the Son of God, man's greatest hope is made sure. That he is the Son of God may be proved from any one of several viewpoints. The viewpoint to be considered in this address is, Did he live a sinless life? To determine the guilt or innocence of a man there must be first, a law by which to measure his deeds. Second, truth witnesses. If no reliable witness testifies that the one on trial has violated the law, he is adjudged innocent. Jesus must be tried by the same rule. But in proving him to be sinless, it is permissible to introduce certain other evidences that are, in the very nature of the case, not applicable to any other life. The first incontestable evidence that Jesus must of necessity be sinless is the fact that man requires one who is sinless in order ever to return to God. Sin separated man from God so that he could no longer appear in the immediate presence of God, and needed one who is sinless to appear in his behalf. Nor is a sinless mediator all that man needed. A sacrifice and offering for sin, an atonement, was needed that could "take away sin." Such a sacrifice must be sinless, voluntarily offered, and of such merit as to atone for sin. All these requirements of man's needs are united in Jesus. Not one of them has ever been found or even claimed in any other one who has lived among men. He came from God; is as divine as God; yet as human as man. He is the only one in all history for whom it has ever been claimed that he came from God; is as divine as God; yet as human as man; lived sinless; voluntarily offered himself as a sacrifice for sin in order to bring man back to God; was raised from the dead and ascended to God, there to appear in man's behalf. These claims have never been made for anyone else except Jesus. By what law shall he be tried to determine his guilt or innocence? First, by the law of Moses under which he lived. Second, by his own teaching which has been universally accepted as the highest law ever given to man. Third, by the standard of purity and holiness agreed on by Jew, Christian, ancient Pagan and modern moralists. He stands before every known standard of law known to man, not only not condemned, but sinless. This has been the verdict of friend and foe. Who shall be called to testify? First, those who knew him personally, both friend and enemy. Second, all who have viewed his life with the most extreme critical ability. Judas, who lived with him daily for more than three years, brought back the thirty pieces of silver given for his betrayal, cast it down at the feet of the Jewish rulers, and said, "I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood" (Mntt. 27:3, 4). Pilate, the Roman Governor, after hearing the conflicting testimony of the Jewish mob, though desiring to find occasion to declare him guilty in order to appease the mob, said, "I find no fault in him" (John 18:38). Not a word of testimony was given to prove that he had violated either the law of Moses or the civil Roman law. In all the trials before the council of the Jews and before Pilate, only one charge was sustained; he said he was the Son of God. And for that claim, and for none other, he died. When his Jewish brethren were railing against him, he boldly asked: "Which of you convicteth me of sin?" They were silent. It is

true that on one occasion the Jews charged him with breaking the Jewish Sabbath. But his reply again silenced them. It was only by perverting the meaning of the law of the sabbath that they could so charge him. For nearly two thousand years the enemies of Jesus have been critically examining the life of Jesus as set forth in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. It is safe to say that his enemies have all agreed that the life pictured by his four biographers, when judged by all known standards of purity, presents a sinless character —attributed to Jesus. Jesus either lived a sinless life, and these writers were inspired to picture his life as sinless, or these four writers conspired to invent and picture a life that was sinless. No other writers in the history of letters have ever been able to picture any other life as sinless, either as fiction or true biography. And we are irresistibly forced to conclude that the character of the sinless Jesus was real, and they were guided by the Holy Spirit to accomplish that which never before nor since has been accomplished—describe a sinless life. Standing alone this fact over balances all adverse testimony ever given against him.

Peter, one of the twelve, said of him, “Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.” And so testified all who lived with him.

Time and space will permit of but one other quotation. The great Emperor, Napoleon, when humbled by defeat, gave utterance from his prison on St. Helena, to a speech, so sublime, grand, and inspiring that it is perhaps not surpassed by any uninspired man. I can give only a few detached sentences here.

“I know men, and I tell you that Jesus Christ is not a man. Superficial minds see a resemblance between Christ and the founders of empires and the gods of other religions. That resemblance does not exist. There is between Christianity and whatever other religion the distance of infinity.”  
“Paganism is the work of man. One can here read but our imbecility. What do these gods, so boastful, know more than other mortals—these legislators, Greeks or Romans, this Numa, this lycurgus, these priests of India or of Memphis, this Confucius, this Mohammed? Absolutely nothing. They have made a perfect chaos of morals.”

“It is not so with Christ. Everything in him astonishes me. His spirit overawes me, and his will confounds me. Between him and whoever else in the world there is no possible term of comparison. He is truly a being by himself. His ideas and sentiments, the truths which he announces, his manner of convincing, are not explained either by human organization or the nature of things.”

“The nearer I approach, the more carefully I examine, everything is above me . . .”

“I search in vain in history to find the similar to Jesus Christ, or anything which can approach the gospel. Neither history, nor humanity, nor the ages, nor nature offer me anything with which I am able to compare or to explain it. Here everything is extraordinary. The more I consider the gospel, the more I am assured that there is nothing there which is not beyond the march of events, and above the human mind. Even the impious themselves have never dared to deny the sublimity of the gospel, which inspires them with a sort of compulsory veneration.”

“In every other existence but that of Christ, how many imperfections?” The Messiahship, by Walter Scott, 1860, pp. 153-57. The hour has come for the long expected mediator to be born. As the prophets had foretold that he was to be a king reigning over a universal kingdom it was expected that he would be born of royal blood in a palace. God's plans were different. The expectant mother

was turned away from the village inn because “there was no room.” Had the innkeeper but known, the best room would have been given her. What a slighted opportunity! How often may we have turned away the sinless Jesus in the person of some one of ‘The least of his brethren.’ The humble but holy young Mary goes down to the village stable. How far removed from what men regarded as a suitable birth-place for a great king! He came from the greatest heights, from heaven itself, and made his abode in the humblest possible place—a stable. There the Redeemer is born. Look! Listen! Out there on the hills shepherds are keeping watch over their flocks by night. Behold the angel of the Lord appears, and the glory of the Lord shines about them. • See the shepherds as they fall to the ground trembling with fear. Listen as the angel, in tender tones, speaks to them, “Be not afraid: for behold, I bring to you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people: For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.” Look and listen again as there appears a “multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will to men.” God’s promise is fulfilled; the Redeemer has come. The mediator between God and a sinful, fallen race is born. A merciful and faithful high priest, who can intercede for us in the immediate presence of God, is here. The prophetic promise, “a body didst thou prepare for me” to be offered willingly to “take away sin” lies quietly in the manger. In the east the wise men see his star that leads them westward and finally stands over where the young Jesus lies. See them as they present to him costly gifts and bow and worship him as an infant. What a privilege now to worship him on his throne!

About thirty years later, a young man named John, appears in the wilderness of Judea preaching, saying, “Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” Multitudes hear him, confess their sins and are baptized in Jordan. There is a great throng of people extending far back from the river. We see out there the dense crowd as it parts to make way for one who is coming to John. He comes near. We look anxiously at him. His walk is firm and measured. On his face we see calmness, power, purity. Not a trace of sin mars his serene face. He asks John to baptize him. John hesitates. He knows he is baptizing for the “remission of sins,” and he knows this young man has no sin to remit. He is perplexed, and says, “I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?” “Suffer it to be so now,” said Jesus, “for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness.” Watch as John leads him out into the river, buries his body in the water, and raises him up from the burial in baptism.” “Behold the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming upon him.” Hear the voice of God from heaven, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

Jesus went immediately into the wilderness where he was tempted by Satan. In the beginning man was tempted, sinned and fell and was separated from God, and was conquered by death. Jesus came to conquer Satan and to undo his evil work. He was tempted and did not yield. He needed to be “tempted in all points like we yet without sin” “that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God,” and “be able to succor them that are tempted,” and “to make intercession for us.”

Let us now go with Jesus over to the city of Nain. As he nears the city he meets a funeral procession. Funerals are always sad because of the sorrow of relatives. But this is an unusually sad occasion. It is a young man. A promising youth taken away is sad. And he is the son, yes, the only son of a widow. Bereft of her husband, now burying her only son{ and perhaps her only

means of a support. How heavy indeed must have been her sorrow. And when the Lord saw her he had compassion on her, and said unto her, "Weep not." How strange to ask a heart-broken mother to cease weeping when about to bury her only son. But he knew her sorrow would soon be turned to joy. "And he came near and touched the bier; and the bearers stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee arise. And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak." Infinite love and sympathy for the sorrowing widow. Would that we could sincerely believe that, even though seated at God's right hand, he still has the same love and sympathy for us that he had for the widow of Nain.

After a day of toil teaching the people he said to his disciples, "Let us pass over unto the other side." Being weary, he fell asleep on a pillow in the "hinder part of the ship." A great storm of wind rises. The wind blows violently, the ship tosses, the waves run high and pour into the ship. At first the disciples are not alarmed. Some of them had spent most of their lives along the shore. Doubtless they think the worst will soon be over. But the fury of the wind increases, the waves roll higher, the little ship is filling with water. They are in the greatest danger of going down into the depths of the sea. They are frightened, and rush to the Lord, and cry out in terror, "Master! Master, rarest thou that we perish?" Jesus rises from his pillow. He hears the shrieking of the wind in the rigging, sees the waves as they roll high and spill over the sides, and feels the tossing of the ship. But there is no sign of fright in his face or voice. He knows that his Father "holds the waves in the hollow of his hand." And why should he fear? It was "by him, through him and for him that all things were created." He • was there when the earth, wind and sea were called into being. "He rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. And he said unto them, Why are ye fearful? Have ye yet not faith? And they feared exceedingly,, and said one to-another, Who.bis .this, that even the wind and pea obey him ?" And yet when our souls are troubled by our little trials, we "fear exceedingly" because our faith is so weak that we do not fully trust our souls m his keeping.

Jesus is teaching iij the temple early one morning. Out toward the entrance we see a commotion. Some scribes and Pharisees are pressing their way through the dense crowd, bringing a prisoner to Jesus. Is it a robber or a murderer? The city is full of such uan> gerous criminals. No, it is just a poor woman who has made a mistake. They come near to Jesus and tauntingly ask, "Master, Moses commanded that such sinners should De stoned. No douiot about her guilt. She was taken in the very act." Why were not both sinners arrested, if one could be? Public .sentiment let him go free just as public sentiment does today. Public sentiment then condemned the woman, the lesser sinner, and excused and set free ihe man, the greater sinner. Public sentiment today condemns the lesser sinner to social ostracism, while excusing the greater sinner. Ilut God has one standard of moral purity for both, but places the greater responsibility on man.

Jesus stoops down and writes on the ground as though he heard them not. "Master, master, Moses commanded that such as this woman should be stoned. What sayest thou?" Jesus lifted up himself, and said unto them, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." "Again he stooped down and wrote on the ground." In what manner did he utter those words? Did he, in ndignation, hiss them through clenched teeth? Or did he hurl them with the force of a thunder bolt? We are not told. But his words convicted her accusers of being at least as great sinners as she whom they desired to stone. Be-ginning with the eldest they went out till the last one was gone. Jesus raised up himself and in pity looked upon the trembling woman. "Woman,

where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?" "No man, Lord." "Neither do I condemn thee: Go and sin no more." Did Jesus mean to encourage her, or any one now, to sin? A thousand times no. So terrible was sin that he came to die to make an atonement for sin. He only meant that it matters not how great one has sinned, nor how one may have been cast out and ostracized by men, yet if one repents and turns to God, the past is all blotted out. The love of the sinless Jesus reaches down to the worst sinner, offers full pardon if the sins are repented of and forsaken. Of all that Jesus said and did while on earth perhaps nothing else makes a stronger appeal to the discouraged, penitent sinner than this story.

There lived in Bethany Mary, Martha and Lazarus, whom "Jesus loved." Lazarus became seriously sick. And what did the sisters do? Just what we do now when in deep distress. We send for those whom we love most. We want their love and sympathy just as Mary and Martha did when in sorrow. They send a hurried messenger way over beyond Jordan to tell Jesus, "He whom thou lovest is sick." Jesus tarries two days, then says to his disciples, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I will go that I may awake him out of sleep." "Lord, if he sleepeth, he will do well." "Then said Jesus to them plainly, Lazarus is dead." The saddest word heard by those in sorrow is that your loved one is "dead." It means that the sparkling eyes, the sweet smile and tender voice will be seen and heard no more. Jesus added, "And I am glad," What? Jesus glad that his friend and the only brother of the sisters is dead? Yes, but for a great reason. "I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe." Yes, and that we who now live may believe that he will come again and call us from the dead to a better life.

There is no fast train, automobile or airplane to take him the long distance. The wearisome journey must be made a step at a time. He nears the home. A messenger brings word to the sisters that the Master is coming. Martha rises from her place of weeping and hurries out and meets Jesus, and from a broken heart, cries out, "Lord, if thou had been here my brother had not died." She knew Jesus had raised up many from sickbeds, and she is sure had he been here in time he would have healed Lazarus. But now it is too late! Brother has been dead four days already, and since the world began no one has ever lived again being dead so long. Hear Jesus say to her "He shall live again." "I know that he shall live again in the resurrection at the last day." And then Jesus uttered words, the like of which human ears had never before heard. "I am the resurrection and the life." Per-haps the strongest assurance that had ever been given of a coming resurrection till that hour.

"Where have ye laid him?" "Lord, come and see." Yes, even the place where the dust of our loved ones he is sacred. Years ago, in Virginia, I preached much at Laurell Hill. I made my home with Brother Sale, who had two sons, Alva and Frank. Alva, one of the best boys I .ever knew, died and was buried over on the hill in the little family burying place. On Sunday morning Brother Sale got his hat and cane, with bowed head, went down the little lane, crossed the main highway, across the little meadow and up the hill. "Where is he going," was my question to Sister Sale. "To Alva's grave. He goes every Sunday morning." As Jesus draws near the tomb, it is recorded, "Jesus wept." Those two words have opened the hearts of countless numbers because it shows the love of the real sinless Jesus. "Behold, how he loved him," said the Jews. "Some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that this man should not have died?"

They arrive at the grave. "Take away the stone," said Jesus. Martha objects, "Lord, by this time the body decayeth; for he hath been dead four days." But the stone is removed. There we see Lazarus, wrapped in his shroud and a napkin about his head. There is no lifting of the chest in respiration; the heart is still. There lies Lazarus, did we say? Yes, but Lazarus is not there. That which we see is only the corruptible house in which Lazarus lived. He is in the paradise of God. When living in Indiana I was called by wire a long distance to speak at the funeral of Ed Bennet, a fine Christian youth, who had died under the surgeon's knife. The scene was so strongly impressed on my mind that it remains vivid till this day. The father, mother, sister and seven brothers, stood around that casket, with streaming eyes, as they called, "Ed, O Ed, speak to us." But Ed did not speak. He was not there. That which we looked upon was only the earthly house in which Ed had lived. He was in the unseen world. Some day our loved ones will gather around our old house of clay, and call it by the endearing name of father, mother, brother, sister, son or daughter. But we will not be there, and will not answer to their call.

Jesus offers a short prayer to his Father and then cries with a loud voice, "Lazarus come forth." At the command of that voice, the blind had seen, the sick had been made whole, the deaf had heard, the winds and waves had obeyed, and here the dead came forth. The day is coming when all the dead will hear that voice and arise from the dead. "Loose him and let him go." Since sin and death entered the world, no such assurance had been given of victory over death and to a better life. None but the sinless Jesus has ever been able to give such undoubted assurance of a coming resurrection.

"The hour draws near for him to depart out of this world." He observed the passover with the twelve in a borrowed upper room. This is his last night with them, and being divine, he knew what was the best memorial for those who should afterward love him to keep him in memory. He gave thanks separately for a loaf and the cup, "the fruit of the vine," and said, "this is my body . . . this is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured for many unto the remission of sins." "This do in memory of me." No other memorial or monument has ever been seen and observed by so many millions of the most enlightened and righteous as this which was composed of a bit of bread and a cup of the fruit of the vine. It has aided in lifting countless millions to a higher plane of goodness and happiness. It stands between the two greatest events of time, pointing back to the cross where sins were atoned for, and forward to his coming in the clouds to redeem his loved ones, and give them "a crown of life."

He led them way down into the garden of Gethsemane. He left the little company of chosen ones, asked them to pray; went on a little distance, fell on the ground and was very sorrowful, saying, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful even unto death." He saw before him, not only the torture of the cross, but the shame of his ill treatment. A sensitive person suffers more intensely from shame than from bodily pain. Who can doubt that Jesus' greatest suffering was the shame? So intense was his mental agony that his "sweat became as great drops of blood." Three times he cried out in the anguish of his soul, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass away from me: nevertheless, not my will but thine be done." He knew that his mission was to die for the lost, yet when the ordeal of shame and suffering drew near, his soul was greatly troubled, and he prayed for deliverance if there was any other way to save man. His bitter cry was as much as to say, "Father, if thy wisdom, power and love can devise any other way to save man, then, Father, save me from this awful shame and death. But, Father, if there is no other way to save man from sin, then let me drink this

cup.” It was not while before Pilate, nor even on the cross, where his greatest trial of suffering came. It was down in the garden. Never before in all his life had he shown any fear, or any hesitation. Nor after he came from the garden did he show any hesitation. Always except in the garden he was calm, self-possessed, and without fear. May we say that here in the garden was witnessed the greatest battle of all time?

Although he can ask the Father to send more than twelve legions of angels to rescue him, yet he calmly submits to arrest. His disciples flee in the darkness. The officers bind him as though he were a dangerous criminal, and take him before the highest court of the Jews. False witness is sought, but nothing alleging any wrong in their contradictory statements. He is buffeted, spat upon and taunted. He bears it all in calm silence. Morning comes and they take him to Pilate, the Roman governor, who alone has the legal authority to impose, the sentence the Jew's seek—death on the Roman cross. Pilate hears their wail, conflicting testimony, and gives his verdict, “I find no fault in him.” And with this verdict even Jesus' enemies have agreed till this day. This verdict enrages the Jews, and they become a frenzied mob. Pilate well knows the danger of a general uprising of sedition, and it is his desire to pacify and quiet the leaders if possible. They demand the death sentence and will accept nothing less. Skillful diplomat that he is, Pilate decides on a scheme that he thinks will surely pacify in a measure the mob, and also release this “innocent man.” It is customary, as a measure of pacifying the Jews, to release at each feast one prisoner of their own choosing. He thinks in order to make it sure that Jesus can be set free that he will make the choice, not from prisoners in general, but a choice between two only, Jesus and Barrabas, who is guilty of robbery, sedition and murder. “I am, said Pilate, to release unto you at this feast a prisoner whom you may choose. But I now give you your choice between two whom I select. Here is Jesus in whom I find no fault. Here is Barrabas who is guilty of sedition, robbery and murder. “Which shall I release?” Surely, thought Pilate, they will not want this noted criminal turned loose and will choose “this innocent man.” Pilate was unable to see that here hangs the crisis of a world and its salvation. The current of human events have converged ever since man was lost. The sinless Jesus on the Roman cross is the only way of redemption. The Scriptures must be fulfilled. The atonement must be made.

Listen to the deafening clamor of the frenzied mob as they cry out in unison, “Release to us Barrabas. Let him raise sedition, rob and murder. Let Jesus' blood be upon our heads.” Brother, sister, the wicked Barrabas typifies you and me. The sinless Jesus went to the cross that we sinners might be freed from bondage to sin and death.

He is delivered to the Roman soldiers. They lead him out to Golgotha. There they nail him to the cross. Not for any sin of his own. But “he was despised, and rejected of man; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.” “Surely he hath borne our grief and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.” For long hours he endures the agony. No earthly friend is there to speak a word of comfort. But his Father is still present with him. At last his Father withdraws his presence and he is left alone. He now cries out in the bitterest grief, “My God, My God, Why hast thou forsaken me?” Why did his Father in the last moment withdraw his presence, perhaps for the first time since before creation? It was decreed that he should “tread the winepress alone.” He alone and unsupported must bear the sins in his own body on the cross. He bowed his head, and cried, with

a loud voice, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." The tragedy of earth and time is ended. Jesus is dead.

Joseph asked Pilate for the body, tenderly removed it from the cross, and laid it in his own new tomb. Do you know that the three days while his body was in the tomb were the darkest and most hopeless of all the days since man sinned? The Redeemer has come, but he now lies in the embrace of death. The only ray of hope during those three days was three words uttered by him who is now held by the tomb. Those three words were, "I will arise." Can the dead make good his promise? Will the "gates of Hades prevail against his soul" and hold it in the prison house? It is true that David had foreseen, in the person of Jesus, his triumph over death, and speaking in the person of Jesus prophesied, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hades." "It was not possible that he should be holden of death." On the morning of the third day he conquered death, came forth victorious from the tomb. He met with the apostles on different occasions for about forty days. He led them out on the mountain, gave them the worldwide commission. He lifted up his hands and blessed them. How their hearts overflow with joy! Their Master has come back from the dead and is again with us. What their thoughts and ideas in regard to their future with Jesus were we can never know. But it seems that they still held to the idea that now he would surely proclaim himself king, assemble an army and drive the hated Roman legions out of their country.

While they are looking into his face and listening to his words a strange thing happens. His feet gently began to leave the ground, and he, perhaps, slowly rises above their heads. In amazement they watch as his body rises still higher, and at last enters a cloud out of sight. With the speed of light, perhaps, he passes through space till he nears the place where God dwells. The angel porter, watching from the battlement of heaven, cries out, "Lift up your heads O ye gates; and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory." The sinless Jesus swept through the gates that had opened wide and took his seat at the right hand of God, to reign till the last enemy, which is death, shall be destroyed.

What song think you that the angels then sang? May we think, perhaps, the mighty host of heavenly angels then sang in unison:

All hail the power of Jesus' name!

Let angels prostrate fall,

Bring forth the royal diadem,

And crown him Lord of all.

Let every kindred, ev'ry tribe,

On this terrestrial ball,

To him all majesty ascribe,

And crown him Lord of all.

## Historic Evidences of Jesus Christ

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### Historic Evidences of Jesus Christ HISTORIC EVIDENCES OF JESUS CHRIST

By Chas. H. Roberson The proof of the grand proposition, Jesus is the Christ the Son of God, announced by the Father and the Holy Spirit, which is to be believed by men, and upon which the church is founded, is given or men could not be held accountable for their unbelief. This proof consists of the testimony of the apostles, the character of Christ and of his religion, and the evidence from prophecy. In the discussions of men, more and more does the problem turn upon the authority and person of Jesus. Today, the main question is, Who was Jesus? The army of the Lord must rally around the person, Jesus of Nazareth, if it would be united and victorious. The arguments supporting the historicity of Jesus Christ should rest on the bed-rock of admitted facts. Proposition and proof must be homogeneous. As scientific facts must be verified by observation and experiment, so historical conclusions must be supported by adequate testimony. None other than a novice in reasoning would demand other than historical proof for historical propositions.

“Who was Jesus” is the battle ground of the religious world. Upon the question of the historic Christ are concentrated today the hope and fear, the feeling and the thought, of the civilized world. The fact that Jesus of Nazareth is Christ is the grandest truth known to man. It is so far beyond every merely human event that to imagine, even, a comparison would be an insult to cultivated intellect. That Jesus is Christ, is the hope of men in their quest of higher civilization and of light to shine on the eternal mysteries of life and death and of assurance of eternal blessedness.

While Augustus (Octavius) Caesar was peacefully ruling over a hundred million pagans and polytheists, there occurred within the Eastern limits of his Empire an event destined to work a wonderful change in the future condition of the world. This event was the birth of Jesus Christ, the Founder of the Christian religion, the promised Messiah and Saviour of the world, and the head of the church. Jesus Christ was born about B. C. 4 in the little village of Bethlehem, in Judea, during the reign of Herod the Great whom Mark Antony had made tributary king of Judea, under the Romans. The appellation Jesus Christ denotes his twofold mission: (1) “Jesus” is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew “Joshua,” meaning “Jehovah is salvation.” It is the personal name of the Lord in the gospels and Acts of Apostles; (2) “Christ” is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew “Messiah,” meaning “anointed.” It designates Jesus as the fulfiller of the Messianic hope of the Old Covenant and of the Hebrew people. After the resurrection it became the current title for Jesus in the apostolic church. Most frequently in the Epistles he is called “Jesus Christ,” sometimes “Christ Jesus,” often simply “Christ,” and frequently associated with “Lord,” as “the (or our) Lord Jesus Christ.” In presenting the evidence of the historical appearance of Jesus as is the aim of this address, it is necessary to set forth certain things pertaining to the sources of our knowledge of him. The lives of Christ is legion, and each has its own peculiarity. One is written from a positive, another from a negative viewpoint; one is constructive, another destructive; one is popular, another scientific. There are those who find the evangelical history in Buddhistic sources, and those who have treated the life of Jesus for socialistic- atheistic propaganda, but these do not

concern this address, for, whatever their standpoint, the canonical gospels were their source.

There is a large mass of material pertaining to the life of Jesus found in works which have never been recognized by the church as her own, and which are called acanonical and apocryphal, and whose authors, in most cases, “meant to weave around the brows of Christ a garland of honor.” This apocryphal material is voluminous and stands in contrast to “canonical.” It appears that while the canonical records were being collected, there was a mass of contemporary evidence by which their statements could have been corroborated. There were many independent sources of the Christian paradosis, for the career of Jesus was not “done in a corner,” but in the face of the whole world, and the witnesses of the facts were accordingly many. The apocryphal gospels are numerous, some known only by name, others in fragments. They are partly heretical—Gnostic and Ebionite—perversions or mutilations of the real history, partly innocent compositions of fancy, or religious novels intended to link together the disconnected periods of Christ’s biography, to satisfy the curiosity concerning his relations, his childhood, and his last days, and to promote the glorification of the virgin Mary. Concerning which, Schaff says, “These apocryphal productions have no historical but considerable apologetic value; for they furnish by their contrast with the genuine gospels a very strong negative testimony to the truthfulness of the evangelists, as a shadow presupposes the light, a counterfeit the real com, and a caricature the original picture.”

Concerning the motives of the various writers, it may be suggested that because of a pious wish of too curious Christians to know more of those events in the life of Christ of which, the New Covenant writings say little or nothing at all, the authors in order to satisfy such curiosity put together what tradition offered and supplemented the gaps by thei\*\* own inventions. Also, the heretical gnostics were especially fruitful, but other heretics contributed their share also. Such motives account easily for the great un-certainty of most apocryphal texts which according to necessity were manifoldly interpreted and mutilated. But, whatever the motive of the author, whatever the value of these quasi-gospels, there may be sidelights, here and there, which furnish evidence of the historical facts of the gospels, as is obtainable in no other way. These writings include narratives referring to the life of Mary, and the birth, childhood, and boyhood of Jesus, of his passion and resurrection, of his sayings, and a variety of miscellaneous records pertaining to him.

Concerning the worth of such uninspired accounts, let it be observed that they stand in marked contrast with the inspired silence of the thirty years that Jesus lived at Nazareth. When uninspired men write biography, they like to dwell upon the incidents of boyhood, the signs and promise of budding genius. The writers of the apocryphal gospels crowd their pages with portents and precocious miracles, meant to honor, but really dishonoring him. The self-restraint of our canonical gospels is proof both of the reality of their story and the inspiration of the writers. The so-called apocryphal gospels are worthless as authority. Of even less importance are some late fabrications referring to Pilate, such as Pilate’s letter to the emperor Tiberius, Pilate’s official report, the Paradoses of Pilate, and the death of Pilate. In all such writings, each author gave loose rein to his imagination, and a careful study of them justifies the observation of the editors of the Ante-Nicene Library that while they afford us “curious glimpses of the state of the Christian conscience, and modes of thought in the first centuries of our era, the predominant impression which they leave on our minds is a profound sense of the immeasurable, superiority, the unapproachable simplicity and majesty, of the Canonical Writings.” The few additional sayings of

Christ found in outside writings are of doubtful genuineness. Concerning the more recently discovered sayings ascribed to Jesus, in view of the resources now available, the most that can be said is that we have a few glimpses of a collection that circulated in Egypt in the third century, of great interest and possibly of considerable value, but of completely unknown origin. Indeed, practically the only sources of our knowledge of Jesus Christ are the Canonical records of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. There is nothing either in the few notices of Christ in non-Christian authors, or in the references in the other books of the New Covenant, or in later Christian literature which adds to the information which the canonical gospels already supply.

However, the excess to which skepticism has gone in recent years even to denying the very existence of Jesus Christ, even though the very extravagance of such skepticism is its sufficient refutation, makes it obligatory in the discussion of our theme to place before you that testimony that is available, and those voices out of the past which speak of the historical appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ. Candor prompts the controlling aim to present the evidences of Jesus Christ on purely historical grounds. The effort, then, is to fulfill the part of the historian and not that of the controversialist. No one can be more grieved than myself if there is any misrepresentation of any point of real value. Those who know how extensive is the field of research will pardon the less serious errors. It should be recognized that history is not our only guide; for while internal criticism cannot usurp the place of history, it has its proper field; and as feeling cannot decide on facts, so neither can testimony convey that sense of the manifold wisdom of the inspired biographers, which is, I believe, the sure blessing of those who rightly seek to penetrate into the fulness of their records. The historicity of Jesus is fully sustained by profane history. The Talmuds, body of Jewish civil and Canonical law, the compilation of which began as early as the second century, speak of Christ and name several of his disciples. They contain admissions that he performed many and great miracles, but impute his power to his having learned the correct pronunciation of the ineffable name of God, which, they say, he stole out of the temple; or to the magic arts, which they claim, he learned in Egypt.

Josephus was born about four years after the ascension of Jesus. The famous passage in his Antiquities, XVIII, iii, 3, beginning, "Now there was about this time, Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man; for he performed many wonderful works," et cetera, if it be genuine affords direct and positive testimony, but, if not genuine, then Josephus is silent concerning Jesus; but this silence is exceedingly significant. He could not have been ignorant of the facts; he does not contradict the statements in the New Covenant; nor attempt to expose Jesus as an impostor. His silence, if the passage is spurious or interpolated, is a strong corroboration of the existence of Jesus Christ.

Tacitus was a Roman historian, born about A.D. 59. In a well-known passage relating to the persecution of Nero, and of Nero's imputing the burning of Rome to Christians (Annals XV. 44), he tells how the Christians, already "a great multitude" (*ingens multitudo*), derived their name "from one Christus, who was executed in the reign of Tiberius by the procurator of Judea, Pontius Pilate. This testimony is not questioned. It is confirmed by Suetonius, Martial, Seneca and Juvenal.

Pliny was governor of Pontus and Bithynia, and a contemporary of Tacitus. His celebrated letter to the Emperor Trajan yields important attestation to sustain the position that Christ was a real historic personage and the founder of the Christian religion.

Seutonius was a Roman historian, born about 70 A. D. In his account of Claudius, he speaks of the Jews as expelled from Rome for the raising of tumults at the instigation of one "Chrestus" (impulsore Chresto), plainly a mistake for "Christus." The fact referred to is the incident in Acts 18:2; "Aquila . . . lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome/" the emperor not making a clear distinction between Jews and Christians.

Hegesippus, writing of Domitian, who reigned from 81 to 96 A. D., says, "There were at that time yet remaining of the kindred of Christ the grandsons of Jude, who was called his brother according to the flesh. These some accused as being of the race of David, and Evocatus brought them before Domitianus Caesar; for he, too, was afraid of the coming of Christ as well as Herod." Edward Gibbon in his "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," vol. 1, p. 606, records, "Among the Christians who were brought before the tribunal of the emperor, or as it seems more probable, before that of the procurator of Judea, two persons are said to have appeared, distinguished by their extraction, which was more truly noble than that of the greatest monarchs. These were the grandsons of St. Jude the apostle, who himself was the brother of Jesus Christ."

Celsus, Lucian, Epictetus, Galen and Porphyry, all bear testimony similar to that cited, and all so far as they go confirm the facts given in the New Covenant. In concluding this part of the testimony, let me remind you that this evidence has been thoroughly sifted by modern criticism, and that it is in addition to the direct testimony of the New Covenant and all the Apostolic Fathers. Had the New Covenant never been written, and had the fathers maintained an unbroken silence, we should be able to gather from these outside sources, and be compelled to receive, all the great facts of the life of Jesus. The Age of the Apostolic Fathers is a fruitful period for research concerning the historicity of Jesus Christ. The student is struck by the extent and the variety of the correspondences which they offer with the facts of the canonical history. The writings of the Apostolic Fathers are at once a tradition and a prophecy, for they instruct, rather than argue; and prepare the student for the one-sided systems of the following age. Their writings are not essays, or histories, or apologies, but letters. They wrote from no literary motive, nor from a desire to shield their faith from attacks of its enemies, but rather from an intense feeling of a new fellowship in Christ. The Apostolic Fathers occupy an important place, undesignedly it may be, but not therefore the less surely concerning the historical setting of the Lord Jesus Christ. Their evidence is, indeed, stamped with the characteristics of their position and implies more than it expresses, but even directly they say much. Within the compass of a few brief letters they show that the writings of the apostles were regarded as invested with singular authority as the true expression of Christian doctrine and Christian practice. The main testimony of the Apostolic Fathers is to the substance of the Gospels. They witness that the great outlines of the life and teaching of our Lord were familiarly known to all from the first: they prove that Christianity rests truly on an historic basis.

Clement of Rome, Ignatius, Polycarp and Barnabas, each bear testimony to the great features of Christ's life. Christ, we read, our God, the Word, the Lord and Creator of the world, who was with the Father before time began (Ign. ad Rom. inscr. c. iii.; ad Ephes. inscr.; ad Magnes. viii.; Bar. v.: Ign. ad Mag. vi.), humbled himself, and came down from heaven, and was manifested in the flesh, and was born of the Virgin Mary, of the race of David according to the flesh, and a star of exceeding brightness appeared at his birth (Clem. xvi.; Ign. ad Magnes. vii.; Barn. xii.; Ign. ad Smyr. i.; ad Tralles ix.; ad Ephes. xix.; xx.) (The nineteenth division of Ignatius' epistle to the

Ephesians is especially interesting.) Afterward he was baptized by John, to fulfill all righteousness; and then, speaking his Father's message, he invited not the righteous, but sinners to come to him (Ign. ad Smyr. i.; ad Rom.viii. ; Barn. v.). Perfume was poured over his head, an emblem of the immortality which he breathed on the church (Ign. ad Ephes. xvii.). At length, under Herod and Pontius Pilate, he was crucified, and vinegar and gall were offered him to drink (Ign. ad Magnes. xi.; ad Trail, ix.; ad Smyr. i.; Barn. vii.). But on the first day of the week he rose from the dead, the first-fruits of the grave; and many prophets were raised by him for whom they had waited. After his resurrection he ate with his disciples, and showed them that he was not an incorporated spirit (Barn. xv.; Ign. ad Magnes. ix; Clem. xxiv.; Poly. ii.; Ign. ad Magnes. ix.; ad Smyr. iii.). And he ascended into heaven, and sat down on the right hand of the Father, and thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead (Barn. xv.; Polyc. ii.; Barn, vii.; Polyc. ii.). Each of these fathers make numerous references to the discourses of our Lord which are recorded in the gospels. (See Canon of New Testament, Westcott, p. 53f.) Such, in their own words, is the testimony of the earliest fathers to the life of Jesus Christ (Clement c. 96 A. D.; Ignatius c. 1.10, tried and condemned; Polycarp c. 110; Barnabas 70-100). The great work of the Greek Apologists was to set forth the Christian religion as the divine answer to the questionings of heathendom, as well as the antitype to the law, and the hope of the prophets. To some extent the task was independent of the direct use of the Scripture. Those who discharged it dealt mainly with the thoughts of the apostles and the facts of Christ's life. The very constitution of the Greek writers gives evidence that their first contribution was to give witness to the genuineness of the teaching of the scripture. The first and last names of these apologists are Papias and Hegesippus. Since Papias stood on the verge of the first age of the church, naturally, his testimony has high value. He tells us that he preserved the traditions with zeal and accuracy, and afterwards embodied them in five books, entitled "An Exposition of the Oracles of the Lord" (Logion kuri- akon eksegesis). In this, Papias claimed for himself the office of expositor and not of historian. "Oracles of the Lord" are presupposed as the basis of his work, and not for the first time set forth in it. The direct testimony that he bears to the gospels confirms their being genuine, and so the historicity of Jesus Christ. The Apology of Quadratus was generally current in the time of Eusebius. The single passage preserved shows that he insisted rightly upon the historic worth of the Christian religion. He argues, "The works of our Savior were ever present; for they were real," etc. To this may be added the testimony of Aristides who in a striking summary of the historic creed gives prominent place to the virgin birth and the ascension.; But Justin Martyr represents in many respects the best type of the natural character of the Greek apologist. For him philosophy was truth, reason a spiritual power, Christianity the fullness of both. Having accepted Christianity as the true philosophy, he says, "Immediately a fire was kindled in my soul, and I was possessed with a love for the prophets and those men who are Christ's friends." In the strength of his new conviction he traveled widely to spread the truth which he had discovered. At Ephesus he held a discussion with the Jew Trypho, proving from the Old Covenant that Jesus is the Christ. At Rome he is said to have established a school where he endeavored to satisfy the doubts of the Greeks.

There is nothing that furnishes wider scope for apocryphal narrative than the history of the infancy of our Lord, yet Justin's account is as free from legendary admixture as it is full of the incidents recorded by the evangelists. It appears that he knew nothing more than they knew, and he tells without suspicion what they have related. He tells us that Christ was descended through Jacob, Judah, Phares, Jesse and David (Dial. c. 120. See c. 100. Cf. c. 43)—That the angel Gabriel was

sent to foretell his birth to the virgin Mary (Dial. c. 100)—that this was a fulfilment of the prophecy of Isaiah (7:14) (Revelation 1:13)—that Joseph was forbidden in a vision to put away his espoused wife, when he was so minded (Dial. c. 78) — that our Savior’s birth at Bethlehem had been foretold by Micah (Ap. 1:34; Dial. c. 78)—\*—that his parents went thither from Nazareth where they dwelt, in consequence of the enrollment of Cyrenius (Ap. 1:34; Dial. c. 78)—that as they could not find lodging in the village they lodged in a cave close by it, where Christ was born, and laid by Mary in a manger (Dial. c. 78) [this account seems to be supplementary to Luke 2:7. Indeed, Origen speaks of the cave without any misgiving that he is contradicting Luke, and Epiphanius actually quotes Luke for the fact (Haer. 51:9).] —that while three wise men from Arabia, guided by the star, worshipped him, and offered him gold and frankincense and myrrh, and by revelation were commanded not to return to Herod to whom they had first come (Dial. c. 78)—that by the command of God his parents fled with him to Egypt for fear of Herod, and remained there till Archelaus succeeded him (Dial. cc. 78, 103)—that Herod being deceived by the wise men commanded the children of Bethlehem to be put to death, so that the prophecy of Jeremiah was fulfilled who spoke of Rachel weeping for her children (Dial. c. 78)—that Jesus grew after the common manner of men, working as a carpenter, and so waited in obscurity thirty years more or less, till the coming of John the Baptist (Dial. c. 88).

He speaks in general terms of the miracles of Christ, but says little of the details of his life till the last great events. He tells of Christ’s triumphal entry into Jerusalem from Bethphage as a fulfilment of prophecy (Ap. 1:35; Dial. c. 53), the cleansing of the temple the second time (Dial. c. 17), the conspiracy against him (Dial. c. 104), the institution of the Eucharist for the remembrance of him (Ap. 1:66. Cf.; Dial. cc. 41, 70), the singing of the psalm afterwards (Dial. c. 106), the agony at night on the Mount of Olives at which three of his disciples were present (Dial. c. 99), the prayer (Dial. c. 99), the bloody sweat (Dial. c. 103. Cf.; Ap. 1:50; Dial. c. 53), the arrest (Dial. c. 103), the flight of the apostles (Dial. c. 53), the silence before Pilate (Dial. c. 102), the remand to Herod (Dial. c. 103), the Crucifixion, the division of Christ’s raiment by lot (Dial. c. 97. Cf.; Ap. 1:35), the signs and words of mockery of the bystanders (Ap. 1:38; Dial. c. 101), the cry of sorrow (Dial. c. 99), the last words of resignation (Dial. c. 105), the burial on the evening of the day of the passion (Dial. c. 97), the resurrection on Sunday (Ap. 1:67), the appearance to the apostles and disciples, how Christ opened to them the scriptures (Dial. cc. 53, 106; Ap. 1:50), the calumnies of the Jews (Dial. c. 108), the commission to the apostles (Ap. 1:61), the ascension (Dial. 132 ; Ap. 1:46). The greater part of Justin’s references are to the teaching of the Savior. He spoke of Christianity as a power mighty in its enduring and godlike character. He spoke of Christ as him of whom the prophets witnessed. To Justin the words of Christ were as a living voice in the church, and the great events of his life were symbolized in its services. He habitually represents Christ as speaking, but also does he distinctly refer to histories in which he found written “all things concerning Jesus Christ.” Every quotation of our Lord’s words in the Apology is simply introduced by the phrases “thus Christ said” or “taught” or “exhorted.” For the public events of Christ’s life, Justin refers to the Enrollment of Quirinus and the Acts of Pilate (Ap. 1:34). [Whether Justin referred to the apocryphal Acts of Pilate which we now have, or not, is of no importance; it is only necessary to remark the kind of evidence which he thought best suited to his design.]

Every line of research leads to the conclusion that Justin accepted the records of Matthew, Mark and Luke as the authentic memoirs of Christ’s life and work. To him the words of the evangelists

were in some sense the words of Christ, and so we are justified in interpreting his language generally, so as to accord with the certain judgment of his age and that immediately following.

Some mention must be made, of the heretical teachers of the apostolic age. The earliest of these exhibit in striking contrast the two antagonist principles of religious error. Mysticism on the one hand and legalism on the other appear in conflict. By each of these the work and person of Christ are disparaged and set aside. In Simon Magus and Menander the anti-Christian element of the Gentile world is definitely embodied; in Cerinthus, the anti-Christian element of Judaism.

Simon Magus is invested by common consent of all early writers with mysterious importance as the open enemy of the apostles, determined to countermine the work of the Savior, and to establish a school of error in opposition to the church of God. The Simonians used the Canonical books, but ascribed the forgeries among them to "Christ and his disciples, in order to deceive those who loved Christ and his servants" (Constit. Apost. VI. 16:1). Menander, disciple of Simon Magus, is said to have repeated and advanced his preceptor's teaching.

Cerinthus was evidently acquainted with the historic facts of the parentage of our Lord, with the details of his baptism, his preaching, his miracles, his death and his resurrection. The relation of the first heretics to the apostles is of the utmost importance. Like the early fathers, they witness to universal truth; they exhibit the correlative errors as the fathers embodied its constituent parts. The general character of the teaching of these heretics can be determined with certainty. And when we find the marks of activity of speculation, and that their characteristic divergencies are not only stereotyped in universal truth, but also implied in contemporary heresies, we know that these false teachers fall naturally into an historic position, and give per se irrefutable testimony to the historicity of Jesus Christ. The historicity of Jesus Christ, is bound up inseparably with the genuineness and integrity of the Canonical Gospels.

There can be no doubt that by the close of the first century and the early part of the second, opinion was practically unanimous in recognition of the authority of the gospel records of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Irenaeus recognized the four gospels as "pillars" of the church. Recent attempts to get rid of the important authority of Irenaeus will not succeed; it has been shown to be merely assertive where there is no evidence and agnostic where evidence is apparently demonstrative. During the past century, the gospels, as regards their composition, credibility, and historicity, were subjected to the most searching and unsparing criticism, which may be said to have begun when Strauss "shocked the conscience of all that was Christian in Europe" by the publication of his first Life of Christ. The method he used and the controversy excited by this criticism can hardly yet be said to have subsided. This is not the place to enter into an account of the controversy, and is sufficient here to say that the traditional positions of the church have been ably defended, and in particular, that the claims of the canonical gospels have been abundantly maintained. The four gospels, then, with their rich contents, remain as our primary sources for the knowledge of the earthly life of Jesus. The supreme guaranty of their trustworthiness is found in the narratives themselves; for who in any age could imagine a figure so unique and perfect as that of Jesus, or invent the incomparable sayings and parables that proceeded from his lips?

Finally, may a word be said concerning the relation between the historical Christ, the child of Nazareth, the divine presence in the world, the expression of the relationship between man and God, the embodiment of the purpose of God and his unending interest in man? This question

embraces all questions regarding Christianity. It is a question that comes to everyone who possesses sufficient intellectual power to think about the nature of the universe of which he forms a part, the question which everyone must put to himself and answer for himself. That the Christ must come on earth in manifest form is a matter of necessity. And the answer to our new question is a matter of historical evidence. The answer of history is clear and decisive. The life of Jesus is the knot in which all the threads of previous history are gathered up, and from which the threads of succeeding events again diverge. Men may ridicule this or inveigh against that, but the main facts are undeniable and are not denied. Jesus remade the evolution of history. He stands forth, even in the estimation of unsympathetic opponents, as the one perfect embodiment of the divine spirit in human nature. The conclusion to which all our lines of thought point is that the belief in a divine will ruling in and directing the course of history logically and inevitably involves the belief that the historical Jesus is the eternal Christ.

We all see the figure of Christ before us, but we see it dimly and inadequately, for it is distorted to our gaze in the midst of our own poor individuality. But surely we can all recognize the essential nature of that figure and the truth for which it stands to us. That truth is the gospel of growth. Freedom of will, truth, knowledge, goodness, beauty, we cannot attain absolutely unto; they are above us and outside us; but we may make all things ours by believing into them and striving to grow up in them. The good man is he who has tried hard to achieve even a little progress on the way to goodness; he is made good, because he believed and tried. And the guarantee that all good things are ours lies in that one supreme truth of all the records of history, Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ. To him there is only life and truth. And the personality that has emerged from behind the veil is the one truth, the one reality in the world, CHRIST;

“That one face, far from vanish, rather grows,

“Or decomposes but to recompose,

“Becomes my universe that feels and knows.”

## The Incomparable Christ

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### The Incomparable Christ THE INCOMPARABLE CHRIST

By W. D. Bills

Several of the addresses on this Lectureship will deal directly and definitely with the evidences of the divine Sonship of the Lord Jesus Christ and for that reason it shall be my purpose, in the main, to call attention to such utterances and evidences in the word of the Lord which reveal and affirm that Jesus Christ is superior to all human beings, though great they may have been, and that his virtues, services, and accomplishments are without comparison. We are pleased with the selection of this general theme. Nothing is of greater importance, and no subject is more vital or more needed today than that selected for this week's discussions. In announcing as candidates for places of public trust, men depend upon quite a number of issues, physical and moral powers, to attain success. They rely upon an interesting and commendable background, a prominent place of residence, a strong constituency, and quite frequently one's personal appearance adds to his possibilities of success. Has it ever occurred to you, my friends, that Jesus, in announcing himself as the Redeemer of this world, and consequently worthy of the praise and confidence of the people, did not depend upon anything usually depended upon by men? He could not boast of distinguished parentage nor of the place of birth or residence; he could not expect contributions from those who became his immediate followers, for they were among the poor and unknown of the land, many of them fishermen by occupation; he did not have money to introduce or promote his cause, not even a place to lay his head, and so far as the record indicates his personal appearance did not advertise him very strongly. The Bible tells us nothing about the appearance of our Lord. We know nothing of his height, his weight, the color of his eyes or hair. God has left the sculptor, artist and image-maker without any definite data upon which to proceed. The only reference in the word of God which seems to refer to the appearance of our Lord is found in Isaiah. In this the prophet said, "When we see him there is no beauty that we should desire him," and while this may not permit being limited to his personal appearance, it does indicate he was not what would be called an attractive man.

Jesus depended wholly upon the power of his message. If success is to finally crown his humble efforts, it must be because his message gets into the hearts of men and women and turns their minds toward God and things of eternal interest. Jesus depends upon nothing more. The gospel alone is the power of God unto salvation. His plans and relationships as well as aims and determinations are without parallel in the history of this world. Usually men are recognized and commended, and their greatness established, because of some particular outstanding virtue or characteristic. Abraham has been called great because of his faith, Moses because of his meekness, Job because of his patience, Paul because of his loyalty; but Jesus possessed a deeper trust in God than Abraham, a meekness far superior to that of Moses, had greater difficulties and consequently a more serene patience than Job, and all through his blessed and eventful life exhibited a greater loyalty than Paul. Each of these characteristics was outstanding in

the lives of these individuals, yet Jesus possessed each in greater degree than all of them. This could hardly be possible had he been only a man, and the fact that he did thus surpass the great of all the ages of the Bible argues strongly in favor of the plea that he is the Son of God, the incomparable Christ. In a study of the recorded merits of our Lord Jesus Christ as compared with the best and greatest of all the ages, the following facts and considerations warrant the conclusion that none can approximate or approach him, that he alone occupies such places and positions as he did and does occupy, and God has thus determined he is and ever shall be above all beings in heaven and on earth. The Word of God

Jesus had the distinction of being greater than all from the standpoint of longevity of life and an unapproachable list of accomplishments during that time. Turning to the gospel of John we learn that the Word was in the beginning with God, and was made flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:1-14). "In the beginning," of course, refers to the time of the creation of this earth (Gen. 1:1), and so we read "Let us make man." Certainly, Jesus was there. He who was made flesh was in the beginning as the Word of God. Paul says for him, "A body hast thou prepared me," But to emphasize this point just a little further, let us hear again the matchless apostle to the Gentiles. "Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through him and unto him; and he is before all things and in him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the first born from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence" (Colossians 1:15-18), Again we read, "That they may know the mystery of God, even Christ, in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden" (Colossians 2:2-3). And once again, "For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and in him ye are made full, who is the head of all principality and power" (Colossians 2:8-9). A more graphic and wonderful description could not be given than is here given portraying the high and exalted station of our Lord. Let us analyze it somewhat and see what the apostle really says about him. God's purpose is that Jesus Christ shall have preeminence above everything in this world, he alone is the bodily expression of the godhead, he is the image of the invisible God and the firstborn of every creature; all things visible and invisible, thrones, dominions, principalities and powers, have been created by him and for him, he is before all things and by him all things consist or hold together. He is the revealed mystery of God in whom all treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden, and it is through him and in him we are made full. It was through him our circumcision was made complete in the circumcision of Christ, in putting off the sins of the flesh, and God's eternal plan is to sum up all things in him. All this could not possibly be said of any other who ever lived, in earth or in heaven, and it is because of this we can steadfastly declare he is the incomparable Christ. Not only do we find these glorious services and divine positions credited to Christ, but during this great period of longevity we find certain references indicating he was interested and active, in some way, in the affairs of men. Moses lived one hundred and twenty years and died, Abraham lived one hundred and seventy-five years and died, and their activity ceased with their demise; but during the whole of the Old Testament we find the hand of Jesus Christ our Lord in the affairs of men.

Peter tells us Christ preached to the disobedient spirits when the ark was being prepared, and that the salvation thus effected through him will in a similar way be given unto us through the

resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, that he is at the right hand of God in heaven, angels and authorities and powers being made subject to him (1 Peter 3:17-22). It is not our plan to discuss the apparent difficulties surrounding these verses and the many interpretations offered, simply to say our conviction is that the preaching was done through Noah by the Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead, and that the apostle simply says Jesus went and preached to the disobedient and imprisoned antediluvians. So, Jesus was there.

Again we read, "For I would not, brethren, have you ignorant, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual food, and did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of a spiritual rock that followed them: and that rock was Christ" (1 Corinthians 10:1-4). Not only was Jesus in some form and manner present in the preaching of Noah, thus offering salvation to the disobedient of that generation; but he was the source of spiritual supply to the Israelites in their travels to the land of promise.

Turning now to Christ's memorable prayer recorded in the seventeenth chapter of John, we hear our Lord as he declares, "I glorified thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which thou hast given me to do. And now, Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was" (John 17:4-5). Jesus was to be no more in the world but was returning to the Father, and was praying for the glory of God's own self, the glory he had before the beginning of the world. This by no means exhausts the information in the word of God as regards the longevity of our Lord, but is quite sufficient to establish the fact that in this particular none other can compare to him, and consequently he is the incomparable Christ.

#### Christ a Servant

One of the difficult things for the ordinary man is to meekly step from a place of authority and position to the menial task of servitude. The condescension of our Lord in this particular is the most interesting and startling on record. Paul said, "Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross" (Php\_2:5-8).

Jesus was in the presence of God and equal with God, yet emptied himself of this divine glory and took the form of a servant, being made in the fashion of a man. Jesus actually emptied himself of the glory he had with the Father before the world was and took upon himself the likeness of men and thus gave the world the greatest example of condescension and service. He became our bondservant, the prince of glory, the Son of God; that personage equally with God is now divested of the eternal and coveted glory to become a bondservant! From our human and selfish way of thinking it is just as impossible as anything can be, and can only be explained on the basis that he was the Son of God and our sacrifice for sin. Not only is the superiority of Christ emphasized from the fact that he condescended to become a bondservant, but it is further emphasized in the nature and extent of the service rendered. In Matthew 18:21-35 we find the story of the two debtors and the two debts, and in this parable we find the spirit of the service of Christ. The first debtor owed his Lord ten thousand talents, whereas the second owed this particular debtor only a hundred shillings. The two debts were in comparison as \$17 to \$10,000,000. The lesson is given to teach us we must forgive—how often we must forgive, and the matter of our forgiveness as compared to

the forgiveness of our Lord is as a hundred shillings compared to ten thousand talents! Thus in the matter of forgiveness Jesus has demonstrated his superiority and evidenced his rightful place as the Son of God. But the parable emphasizes the spirit and extent of Christ's forgiveness, his forgiveness in principle, while in John 13:1-16 we discover the service of Christ in actual example. Here Jesus had washed the disciples' feet, and said, "I have given you an example, that ye also should do as I have done unto you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, A servant is not greater than his Lord; neither one that is sent greater than he that sent him." From these lessons we find the eternal distance comprehended in the service of Christ and how far greater is he than others of earth's greatest servants, his service reaches all the way from the most menial to that of granting unto us the actual remission of our sins, and this could not possibly be said of any other who ever lived on this earth. He raised the dead, healed the sick and crippled, opened the eyes and unstopped the ears of the blind and deaf, and finally arose from the dead for our justification, thus evidencing in this great service that he is truly the Son of God.

### Jesus An Example

Jesus is also held up before the world as the one and only example which men may follow and be certain no mistake will be made. Peter informs us, 'For hereunto were you called: because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, that ye should follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously" (1 Peter 2:21-23). Here is our example, in that he did no sin. Not another in all the world has been sinless! Because of this he is the embodiment of perfection and an example worthy of emulation. Jesus said to his disciples, "Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matthew 5:48). Though we are told that we shall be perfect, just as our Lord is perfect, we are very conscious none of us are and none have ever been. John says, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" and "if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." Though instructed to be perfect, we are deeply conscious such is impossible! Did Jesus, therefore, mean that we are to be sinless in this life, that we are to grow unto a state of sinless perfection in this world? We hardly think so. You will notice he said, "Ye therefore shall be perfect," and the word "therefore" indicates a conclusion from previous statements. In the context we learn he instructed that one must, if forced to go a mile; go the second mile; if one smite the right cheek, turn the other also; if one take away the coat, give him the cloak also; and in this act we learn the lesson of "perfection" taught by our Lord. The perfection we are to have is the willingness and ability to go the second mile. Jesus is drawing the lesson (of the natural and unnatural, the human and natural thing to do about matters, and then going beyond that. It is not quite reasonable, if forced to go with one a mile, to propose to go a second mile—that is just a little more than our judgment would suggest. And so it is with God, we are to be perfect as he is perfect. He has done for us more than was the natural and human thing to do, he had gone far beyond what could in the very nature of the case be expected. In this he showed a perfection above the natural, and this must be characteristic of his children. We hear much about sacrifice these days, but one cannot contemplate the idea of sacrifice until the second mile is begun. Until we step from the natural and expected to the supernatural and unexpected we shall find no real sacrifice. And this brings us to the range of relative perfection where we shall be somewhat like unto our Lord who was perfect in the absolute.

Christ also becomes our example in that no guile was found in his mouth. Peter said, "But like as he who called you is holy, be ye yourselves also holy in all manner of living" (1 Peter 1:15). Again, "Put away therefore all wickedness, and all guile, and hypocrieies, and envies, and all evil speaking." (1 Peter 2:1). Throughout the New Testament Jesus and his inspired apostles have been very definite, about the language Christians shall use. Paul speaks of foolish talking and jesting which are not befitting (Ephesians 5:4), and admonishes the church at Colosse to put away all shameful speaking out of their mouth (Colossians 3:8). Peter informs us that Lot was vexed, or tormented day by day in seeing and hearing the lawless deeds of the wicked of his day (2 Peter 2:7-8). The Christian, therefore, is to honor the name of Christ, not only with a clean life but with a clean speech. No corrupt communications are to proceed from his mouth, he is to be holy in all manner of living and refrain from all evil speaking. He is not to engage in conversations which include foolish talking and jesting which are not befitting, but on the other hand is to follow the example of Lot in that all such will vex or torment the soul. The followers of Christ must be clean in speech, and to that end our Lord set the most perfect example this world has ever known. But there is another very important way in which Jesus became our example. He tells us he came to do the will of God. and Paul informs us he learned obedience by the things which he suffered. Concerning his followers he said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me" (John 10:27). In verse 5 of the same chapter he tells us they will not hear the voice of strangers. In this a most interesting and valuable lesson is presented. Jesus gave us a commendable example of service and expects loyalty from us. We are to follow implicitly the way he directs. The example of Christ, then, offers a three-fold lesson. He was our example of a clean life, a clean speech, and a clean service. We are to follow him in these particulars. He alone was qualified to set such an example, for he was the Son of God. The Great Teacher

Another very important particular in which Jesus is the incomparable, is that he was the greatest of all teachers. Great teachers have been a blessing in all ages of the world. It is through them our children are inspired to greater things in life, and it must be evident to all that the teacher contributes about as much to the moulding of the character of the child as do the parents. For that reason the study of teacher and pupil has ever been considered important. Though there have been great teachers in every department of human advancement and accomplishment, none have ever reached the plane occupied by our Lord.

Nicodemus said Jesus was a teacher come from God. The place or institution from which a teacher comes is a fair evidence of his standards as a teacher. Since Jesus came from God, and Nicodemus was correct, he is as far above men as a teacher as heaven is above earth, and his wisdom as far superior as the wisdom of God is superior to the wisdom of men. A teacher usually has his credentials as to his training and ability. These are his evidence, and having such credentials he expects a hearing from those to whom he appeals. The evidence or credentials of our Lord Jesus Christ are found in the fact that "no man can do these signs that thou doest, except God be with him." The miracles of Jesus were his evidence that he came from God, and they singularly attest the fact of his superiority as a teacher.

Again we read that he taught them as one having authority (Matthew 7:29). He spoke with positive and divine confidence. He entertained not one doubt as to the truth of his utterances. There was no speculation in his teaching. He never began with a hypothesis and ended with a guess. He spoke with positiveness and evidenced sublime confidence in his message.

Another angle on the ability of our Lord as a teacher is his preparation. We read, "And Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man" (Luke 2:52). We do not propose to assume anything as to the ability of our Lord, what he did or did not know, could or could not do, simply and only to call attention to the fact that Jesus advanced in wisdom and knowledge and in favor with God and man. Whatever other lessons this may present, it does convey the fact that he made ample preparation for his life's work and that preparation was gradual. Not only did he enjoy a gradual increase in physical and mental ability, but he came to better know and consequently better instruct and lead those taught by him. His ability, therefore, as a teacher, includes gradual and satisfactory development, and implies a preparation adequate for the task he came to perform.

Too frequently teachers are abstract and selfish. They teach, not for the joy of teaching and the business of moulding character; but for the revenue involved. Having received that they have no further concern. Their interest in such work extends no further than pay day. But not so with our Lord. His interest in his teaching was more than human. He was not trying to inculcate a theory, but lead men to God. The great burden of his life was to save people, and his principles and standards were necessary thereto. Thus we learn why he was so careful and definite in the things he taught. He said, "We must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh when no man can work" (John 9:4). "I must be about my Father's business" (Luke 2:49). "I glorified thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which thou gavest me to do" (John 17:4). A stewardship had been appointed unto him and he felt the urgency of his work. He knew his task, had come with a definite instruction, and turned neither to the right nor left until the task was finished.

Every efficient teacher knows perfectly that one's methods have much to do with his success as a teacher. A whole evening could be given to the methods of Jesus as the great teacher, and even then the subject would not be exhausted. All through the New Testament we find emphatic statements and helpful examples of the method of teaching, and these methods vary according to the attitude and character of the person taught. To some Jesus could say, "Woe unto you, scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites." In one chapter we find this expression some eight times. This harsh rebuke, this cold challenge to their sincerity and honesty was demanded because of what they were, yet on other occasions his attitude and methods were entirely different. To Nicodemus he could say, "Verily, verily. I say unto thee, except one be born of water and spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Again, "Art thou a teacher in Israel and knowest not these things?" How different his tone, how much more considerate his attitude!

Many of us as teachers of the word of God should learn the lesson of the importance, of proper methods in declaring his will. Our forbearance or gentleness is to be known unto all men, and we are to show all meekness toward all. Our speech must be with grace, seasoned with salt, that we may know how to answer every man (Colossians 3:6). We sincerely believe great damage has been done to the cause of Christ in many communities by bitterness and unnecessary harshness and criticism on the part of preachers, when conditions did not warrant such methods. Teachers must "affirm confidently, to the end that they who believe in God may be careful to maintain good works" (Titus 2:8), but this definite and uncompromising procedure must be in the spirit of Christ. Another outstanding characteristic of our Lord as a great teacher, was the influence of his teaching. After Pentecost, when the apostles were instructed to no longer teach in the name of Jesus,

Peter said, "For we cannot but speak the things which we saw and heard" (Acts 4:20). Again, "And they stoned Stephen, calling upon the Lord, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" (Acts 7:39). These expressions speak loudly as to the influence of the teaching of Jesus upon his friends and followers. These disciples were so certain of their position and so deeply convinced that Jesus Christ was the Son of God that they gave their lives as a testimony to their conviction.

Another consideration worthy of study regarding Jesus as a great teacher is observed in his success. Not all teachers who are great in information are great in success. In fact, some of the most learned are failures as regards practical success. Not so with the Master Teacher. "All the saints salute you, especially they of Caesar's household" (Php\_4:20). "And a great company of priests were obedient to the faith" (Acts 6:7). "So mightily grew the word of the Lord and prevailed" (Acts 19:20). "If so be that ye continue in the faith, grounded and stedfast, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel which ye heard, which was preached in all creation under heaven, whereof I Paul was made a minister" (Colossians 1:23). Evidently Jesus was a success as a teacher, not only while he walked upon the earth, but the influence of his teaching has gone on and on, and is today a tremendous influence upon the hearts and lives of men and women in all the land. Prejudiced priests could not resist his worthy and unselfish appeal, his word made its way into the household of the rulers of the nation, and it so mightily grew and prevailed that within a half of a century it had gone to every creature under heaven. No other message has traveled so extensively and under such difficulties and hazards as has the gospel of Christ, and today his teaching permeates every department of our thinking. Surely, as a teacher, he was wonderfully successful, more so than would have been possible had he been other than the Son of the eternal God.

Perhaps the most interesting and commanding thing found in his life as a teacher is in the lesson taught. "Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that he himself said, it is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:25). No egotism was found in his bearing, no selfishness in his message. His lesson was one of giving. He thought always of the other person. He died not only for his friends but his enemies as well, and his ever interesting lessons of unselfishness and good-will are a constant testimony to his greatness as a teacher. From these considerations we observe the superiority of Christ as a teacher, in that he presented better evidence, better credentials; he had unflinching confidence in his message; he made ample and startling preparation for his work as a teacher; his interest was in perfect keeping with the importance and significance of his message; his methods were just, natural, holy and helpful; his influence so deep and abiding that his death and passing in no way affected the ardor and determination of those who believed in him; his success belted the globe, including in his group of faithful followers those of the emperor's household as well as the most ignorant and ignoble of the land. How could this be if we reject the claim that he was the Christ, the Son of the living God?

Jesus Our Savior and Redeemer Not only has Jesus been presented to us as the earth's greatest teacher, but he alone of all who have lived upon the earth or in heaven could be our Savior, and he alone has been chosen by the Father to finally call or redeem us from the grave. The message of the angel was, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus for it is he that shall save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21). A world lost in sin through him has the opportunity to be redeemed from both sin and the grave. "And not only so, but ourselves also, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for our adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body"

(Romans 8:23). This waiting and groaning would have no end, and there could be no redemption for the bodies of the soldiers of Christ who have fallen in battle, had it not been for the sacrifice by our Lord in becoming the offering for our sins. Jesus came to this earth for the express purpose of providing a means for our escape, and yet sacrifice on his part was necessary to qualify him for the task. "And having been made perfect, he became unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation" (Hebrews 5:9). Jesus came to do the will of God, began at the age of twelve by saying he must be about his Father's business, and upon the cross at the age of thirty-three said "it is finished." He met every requirement of God, even to the death upon the cross, fulfilling every obligation crowded into his short and busy life, but if we are to enjoy the blessings thus provided for us, we must obey him; He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him, and short of this he has not promised to save any of us. It is not, however, the distinction given to the necessity of obedience that declares his superiority, but the fact that he did what none other could do, became what no other could become, and thus gave us the right of obedience with the promise of eternal salvation.

Many good men have lived in this world, and certainly the angels about the throne of God who delight to do his service are righteous and holy, yet not one has ever qualified for the tremendous task of saving this world from sin. It was necessary that one be capable of representing both God and man, of blending earth and heaven. Angels perhaps could represent God to many, they know his goodness, love and mercy, and that he is patient and longsuffering; but they could not represent man to God, knowing nothing of our fleshly weakness, temptation and sin. Among the great and good of the earth no doubt one could be found to represent man to God, but could not represent God to man. Consequently, it was necessary to have one both God and man, one who knows God and knows man, one who can properly and righteously represent both earth and heaven, and Jesus Christ our Lord is the only one thus qualified. He is our Priest and Advocate, he is the King of kings and Lord of lords. He knows how to sympathize with us in all our trials and weaknesses, having been tempted in all points just as we have been; and he also understands the goodness and mercy of God as well as justice and the demands of his law. Eliminate Christ from the picture of the redeemed throngs of this earth and your picture quickly fades and disappears. Among the living and dead of time, and eternity Jesus alone has the right and distinction of being the Savior of fallen and sinful men.

God's plan of redemption embraces more than deliverance from sin. If in this life only we have hope we would be most pitiable. Deliverance from sin and a life of righteousness would be exceedingly valuable even if this world were to end it all. The Christian life would pay royal dividends if there were no hereafter. It would make better homes, better fathers and mothers and children, and better citizens. Only through the principles of the Christian religion do we learn the lesson that each is his brother's keeper. Fortunately for us, this life does not end it all, there is a hereafter, a heaven to gain and a hell to shun, and it is through our Lord Jesus Christ that we shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious and final liberty of the sons of God. Paul said, "We groan within ourselves, waiting for our adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." Jesus came to earth to destroy him that had the power of death and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. Hence we read, "Marvel not at this: for the hour cometh, in which all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the

resurrection of judgment” (John 5:28-29). Through Moses and the prophets God spoke to those under the first covenant, but now speaks to us through his Son. By the living word of God, the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, we are called from darkness into his marvelous light, from the power of Satan unto God, and it will be by his word that the sleeping nations of the earth shall be called from the grave, and this shall take place in that hour ordained by our heavenly Father. “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up into the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord” (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17). The apostle affirms nothing here regarding the wicked. His discussion is about the righteous, dead and alive. The living shall not precede those who are dead, but the dead shall rise first and the living shall be caught up to meet them in the air and shall ever be with the Lord. Though the wicked shall be raised at that time, this Scripture does not contemplate them.

Jesus has been appointed as the great sacrifice for our sins and has qualified as the Savior of the world. He translated us from darkness to light and calls us unto himself where we are new creatures in Christ Jesus. He will finally speak to those who sleep in cold and pulseless clay, call them from their graves to meet him in the air, and provide new bodies and a new home wherein dwelleth righteousness. Jesus alone could become our Savior and his voice alone will be heard when the saints are called to higher ground. None other ever qualified for such service, consequently none, even the best of the earth, can favorably compare with the Lord Jesus Christ.

#### Jesus Our Judge and Rewarder

Another evidence of the superiority of Jesus is the fact that he has been appointed as the judge of all the earth. ‘Inasmuch as he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead” (Acts 17:31). Even though God is longsuffering unto us now, not willing that any should perish but that all should come unto repentance, a day has been set when all men shall appear before the great judgment bar of God. God has assured us of this in that he has raised our Lord from the dead. Jesus will be the judge whose decisions will be righteous, just and unquestionable (John 5:30). He will judge both living and dead of every thought, word and act. “For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be bad” (Ecclesiastes 12:14). Paul tells us “God will judge the secrets of men, according to my gospel, by Jesus Christ” (Romans 2:16). We need not be surprised about the judgments of God, for they are clearly revealed in the word of God. A definite day has been appointed, the judge selected, and the code of judgment revealed. Jesus Christ will ascend the throne of judgment and before him all the nations shall gather. His judgments shall be according to truth (Romans 2:2), and without prejudice, bias or respect of persons. He knows all men, even to the secrets of our hearts, and is qualified to render a verdict of mercy as well as justice, but let us not forget that his decisions will be “according to each man’s work” (1 Peter 1:17). Frequently in the judgments of this earth there is more or less partiality and respect of persons, but not so with the great judge of all the earth. He will show no partiality and there will be no alibi on the part of any one. The very fact that Jesus can and will judge the earth in righteousness and according to truth, even the secrets of the heart, and without a single exception his judgment will be just, is a definite evidence of the superiority of our Lord.

Confidence in his standard of conduct gives one positive assurance as he faces the unseen. When the peerless apostle to the Gentiles stood in a Roman court, he could declare, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at that day; and not to me only, but also to all them that have loved his appearing" (2 Timothy 2:7-8). Paul was conscious the end was near, but he was not afraid. Perhaps he was rather glad the end of his hazardous and eventful life had come. He would depart now and be with the Lord, and with him this was the greatest consolation of his life. For this he had worked and for this he would now gladly die. As a soldier, he had fought a good fight; as a runner, he had finished the course; as a steward, he had kept the faith. He knew the righteousness of the judge before whom he would now appear, and in his heart had every reason to believe there would not be one accusation. He knew Christ "in whom he had believed and was fully persuaded he was able to keep that which he had committed unto him against that day." We thank God for such bravery, for such steadfast endurance, and for such loyalty and devotion, but more so for such love and sacrifice on the part God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord to make the Christian life possible. Truly, he is the Incomparable Christ.

## Proof that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ the Son of God

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Proof that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ the Son of God PROOF THAT JESUS OF NAZARETH IS THE

CHRIST THE SON OF GOD

By Clarence C. Morgan

Introduction In Matthew the twenty -second chapter and forty- second verse, Jesus asked the Pharisees the question, “What think ye of the Christ? Whose son is he?” and from that day until now, this has been a universal question to which we find one of three answers is generally given.

1. The avowed atheists and infidels say Jesus was a deceiver and an imposter.
2. Others, including many religionists, accept Jesus to a degree, claiming that he was a great and good man but deny his deity. Today this view is also held by many notable Jews, who formerly' agreed with the infidels.

“Rabbi Ferdinand M. Isserman, of Temple Israel, St. Louis, recently addressed the Chicago Sunday Evening Club. ‘A Jewish View of Jesus’ was the subject announced. On the platform he changed it to ‘A Jew’s View of Jesus’—explaining that while he could not speak for his Jewish brethren, he could speak for himself. He stated, with carefully selected words, that it was not his purpose to recognize ‘the Christ of Christianity.’ Nevertheless, he said: ‘As a Jew, I am proud of Jesus.’ He also insisted—at length, and with considerable, argument—that Christians and Jews should unite in Jesus. That is, doubtless, the most astounding proposition submitted by a famous Jewish leader since Paul urged his Jewish brethren to accept their promised Messiah.” (Quoted from Christian Standard).

3. In contrast to these two views of Jesus, Christianity contends that he was the Christ, the divine Son of the living God, and in this address it is my purpose to establish, by .irrefutable proof, the Christians’ contention.

### I. Jesus Claimed To Be the Son of God

1. To an Individual: “The woman saith unto him, I know that Messiah cometh (he that is called Christ), who,

when he is come will declare unto us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak to you am he” (John 4:25-26).

2. To the Court of the Jews: “And the high priest said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us

whether thou art the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus said unto him, Thou hast said.” Thus on trial for his life,

Jesus took the legal oath of his own nation, swearing that he was the Son of God” (Matthew 26:63-64).

3. To the Roman Court: “Now Jesus stood before the governor: and the governor asked him, saying, Art

thou the King of the Jews? And Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest” (Matthew 27:11). From the testimony of Jesus we must draw one of two conclusions, either he was what he claimed himself to be,

the Son of God, or he was a lying, deceiving imposter and not even a good man, for good men do not tell lies,

let alone swear them on the witness stand. So, to deny the deity of Jesus is to brand him a deceiving imposter.

## II. Jesus Proved His Claim by His Mighty Works

1. When Jesus came, claiming to be the divine Son of the living God, he neither asked nor expected to be believed

simply upon his own testimony, but as heaven’s ambassador, he brought with him heaven’s credentials—miracles

—and by his mighty works proved that he was the Son of God.

2. In his first miracle, that of turning water into wine, (John 4:4-8) he proved his power over nature. In healing the man

born blind (John 9:5-7), he proved his power over disease. In healing the nobleman’s son (John 4:48-50), he

proved his power over distance. In calming the wind and the sea (Matthew 8:26), he proved his power over the

elements; and in raising Lazarus (John 11:39), he proved his power over death.

## III. Fulfilled Prophecy Proves that Jesus Was the Son of God

Hundreds of years before Jesus was born, men of God had made certain prophecies concerning the coming Messiah,

the seed of the woman, who was to bruise the serpent’s head (Genesis 3:15). We give here a few of these prophecies

and where the record of their fulfillment is to be found:

Isaiah 7:14. To be born of a virgin. Luke 1:26-35.

Micah 5:2. To be of the tribe of Judah. Matthew 2:5-6.

Isaiah 9:7.. To be of the house of .David.. ->Luke 2:4.

Mic. 5:2. To be born in Bethlehem. Matt: Zechariah 9:9. Triumphant entry into Jerusalem. Matthew 21:45.

Zechariah 11:12. To be betrayed for thirty pieces of silver. Matthew 26:14-15.

Psalms 22:16. Feet and hands to be pierced. John 20:7.

Isaiah 55:12. To be numbered with transgressors. Matthew 27:58.

Psalms 22:18. Lots to be cast for his vesture. Mark 15:24.

Isaiah 53:9. Tomb to be with the rich. Matthew 27:57-60.

Psalms 16:10. Body not to see corruption. Matthew 28:6.

And many others. In fact Jesus fulfilled every prophecy ever made concerning the coming Messiah, and he is the only one who fulfilled any of them. Therefore, by the fulfillment of prophecy, Jesus of Nazareth is proven to be the divine Son of the living God.

#### IV. Upon the Testimony of Others, Jesus Is Proven To Be the Son of God

1. His Relatives: John the baptist was a cousin of Jesus and no doubt had known him from his youth.

In John 1:29-34 he bears divine testimony that Jesus was the Son of God. "On the morrow he seeth "

Jesus coming unto him, and saith, behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. This

is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man, who is become before me, for he was before me. And

I knew him not, but that he should be made manifest to Israel, for this cause came I baptizing in water.

And John bear witness, saying, I have beheld the spirit descending as a dove out of heaven, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize in water, he said unto me, Upon

whomsoever thou shalt see the spirit descending, and abiding upon him, the same is he that baptiseth

in the Holy Spirit: and I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.

2. His Friends: Jesus' closest friends, his apostles, who knew him better than anyone else, all bore testimony

that Jesus was the Son of God."

- (a) Peter. "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16:16).
- (b) Andrew. "We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, Christ" (John 1:41).
- (c) James. "Lord, wilt thou that we bid fire come down from heaven?"
- (d) John. This apostle and member of the inner circle of Jesus' friends, wrote five books of the New Testament, in each of which he repeatedly bears testimony to the fact that Jesus was the Son of God.
- (e) Philip. "Philip findeth Nathanael and said unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law and the prophets wrote Jesus of Nazareth . . ." (John 1:46).
- (f) Nathanael. "Thou art the Son of God; thou art King of Israel" (John 1:49).
- (g) Thomas. "My Lord and my God" (John 20:28).

These seven apostles have borne direct testimony as to their faith in Jesus that he was the Son of God, as also did many other of his personal friends who knew him well.

### 3. His Enemies:

(a) Judas the traitor. The one who stooped so low as to betray Jesus with a kiss, bore testimony that even he believed that he was the Son of God. "Then Judas, who betrayed him, when he saw that he was' condemned, repented himself, and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood" (Matthew 27:4).

Jesus was charged by the Jews of blasphemy, because he claimed to be the Son of God. The Jews found him guilty, but Judas said "He is innocent of the charge," when he said, "I have betrayed innocent blood."

(b) Mrs. Pilate. The wife of Governor Pilate, who could hardly be counted among the friends of Jesus,

said to her husband, "Have thou nothing to do with that righteous man, for I have suffered many things

this day in a dream because of him" (Matthew 27:19). If Mrs. Pilate had not believed that Jesus was what

he claimed to be, the Son of God, she could not and would not have called him a "righteous man."

(c) Governor Pilate. Now we come to consider the testimony of the man who passed sentence upon

Jesus and signed his death warrant. Coward though he was, yet he never did admit that he believed

him guilty, for we hear from his lips such expressions as these: "I am innocent of the blood of this righteous

man" (Matthew 27:24). "I having examined him before you, found no fault in this man touching those things

whereof ye accuse him: no, nor yet Herod, for he sent him back unto us: and behold, nothing worthy of

death hath been done by him" (Luke 23:13-16). "Behold your King" (John 19:15). "Jesus of Nazareth,

the King of the Jews" (John 19:19).

(d) The Centurion: The man who directed the crucifixion, and gave the orders for the nails to be driven in his

hands and feet, as he watched Jesus hanging on the cross, cried out, "Truly, this was the Son of God" (Mark 15:39).

4. The Demons: Matthew, Mark, and Luke all record the testimony of the Demoniacs of Gadara who said,

"What have we to do with Thee, Jesus, Thou Son of God?" From the testimony thus far produced we

see that the man who denies that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ, the Son of the Living God, brands

Jesus as a liar, sets at naught his mighty works, ignores the prophets, discredits the testimony of both

Jesus' friends and enemies, and places himself on a plane beneath cowards, traitors, and the demons of hell.

But the end is not yet.

V. Heaven Proclaims that Jesus of Nazareth Was the Christ the Son of the Living God.

1. Angels:

(a) It was an angel who said to Mary, "Thou shalt bring forth a son and shalt call his name Jesus" (Luke 1:31).

(b) It was an angel who announced to the shepherds that night out on the moonlit hills of Judea, "There is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:11).

(c) It was a host of angels who, in that same night, sang, "Glory to God in the highest."

(d) It was an angel who warned Joseph to flee into Egypt with the babe Jesus to protect him from Herod (Matthew 2:13).

(e) It was angels who came and ministered unto him after his temptation in the wilderness.

(f) It was an angel who stood by him and strengthened him that night in the garden of Gethsemane (Luke 22:43).

(g) An angel of the Lord came and rolled away the stone from his tomb (Matthew 28:2).

(h) The angels announced his resurrection (Matthew 28:6).

(i) Angels witnessed his ascension into heaven and announced his second coming (Acts 1:10-11).

2. The Holy Spirit: At his baptism the Holy Spirit came down from heaven in a visible, bodily form and sat upon

him (Matthew 3:16).

3. God:

(a) When Jesus was baptized of John in the river Jordan, God proclaimed from heaven,

“This is my be-loved Son in whom I am well pleased” (Matthew 3:17).

(b) On the mount of transfiguration God again announced from heaven, “This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him” (Matthew 17:5).

4. Nature: In the first chapter of John, verse three, we learn that “All things were made through him;

and without him was not anything made.” Through him then was made the sun, moon and stars, the earth, and all that is in it. When Jesus was crucified all creation rebelled at the dastardly deed.

(a) The sun, which Jesus had made, refused to shine at noonday (Matthew 27:45).

(b) The earth, which Jesus had made, did quake, and the rocks were rent, the graves of dead men gave up their dead, and the veil of the temple was rent in two.

VI. By His Resurrection Jesus Is Proven To Be the Son of God.

1. Death:

a. This grim reaper took away our Lord's life from his mortal body, consigned his body to the grave and

his soul to nades. But, by the power of God, he conquered death, hades, and the grave, breaking their

bonds and coming forth a victor, abolishing death and bringing life and immortality, to light.

All hail the power of Jesus' name, let angels prostrate fall. Bring forth the royal diadem and crown  
lum Lord of all.

## Jesus in the Heart of the Earth

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### Jesus in the Heart of the Earth JESUS IN THE HEART OF THE EARTH

By T. H. Etheridge This subject is my part of this gospel symposium arranged by President Cox for this Lectureship on the larger theme: "Jesus Is the Christ the Son of the Living God." In Matthew 12:38-41, we read: "Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee. But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here." This talk is arranged in two major parts. The first part deals with an exegesis of the passage from which the arranged theme gets its justification, and the second, part is its larger significance, viz. its suggestiveness for the larger implication which was in Brother Cox's mind when he assigned the subject to me, viz. Jesus in the Presence of His Enemies.

I invite, your attention to the passage itself, the first part of the theme to be discussed.

#### Jesus in the Heart of the Earth

It may not be amiss to suggest some of the things for which this talk will not be responsible, however intriguing such matters may be for speculation and study; as for instance: first, the historicity and credibility of Jonah. Doubtless this is valuable, but it lies outside the bounds of the task which I have set for myself. Those of you who are interested in this matter could profitably study McGarvey's scholarly and thought-provoking book entitled, *Jesus and Jonah*. Secondly, I am not interested—in this discourse, at least—in prophecy and its fulfillment. That has already been discussed, and no doubt ably so. Thirdly, I am not going to spend valuable time refuting the heretical and speculative errors of those who claim that while Jesus was in the grave he preached to the "spirits in prison," or as others have said, "preached the gospel to the souls of the dead" while he was in the Unseen World.

Nor, fourthly, am I going to speculate on the "three days and three nights" Jesus was "in the heart of the earth" so as to try to set the crucifixion day. I might refer to this matter in passing, however, only so as to remark, that it is fortunate that we do not know the day of the crucifixion. The fact that the day is not revealed shows that it was not to be observed as the crucifixion day as such. Some men in their ignorance observe the traditional day, and it is probable that more would observe it, if they knew when it was; and their knowledge might then lead them into error. It is bad enough that; men are led astray by ignorance; it would be tragic, if they were led into error by knowledge. Good Friday exercises are unscriptural, and the Maundy Thursday observance of the Lord's Supper, so popular with our "Progressive Brethren," is without a leg to stand on—since no one knows the crucifixion day of our Lord, and consequently does not know the exact time of the first observance

of the Supper, even if such observance counted. All attempts at setting dates of events of the Passion Week of our Lord are provisional and hypothetical at best; they are absurd and devilish at their worst. On this point the scholarly Westcott remarks, "The difficulties connected with the chronology of the Paschal Week are acknowledged on all hands to be very considerable, and the various solutions which have been proposed have tended to perplex the question still more by introducing uncertainty into the interpretation of the terms involved." I am content to leave the matter right there, in so far as this address is concerned. With these animadversions to what this study is not, let us now see what the study is. In a word, as I understand it, it is an analogy of Jonah's experience in the whale with that of our Lord in his death.

I. Jesus and Jonah Contrasted When we open the book of Jonah we find that Jonah "fled from the presence of the Lord." But Jesus lived always in the presence of the Father. Since "man had far wandered from God" and Jesus came to bear man's sins to the cross, as though he himself were the sinner, it was perhaps necessary in the hour of trial for God to withdraw his presence from his Son that full vicarious suffering might be endured. So much did the Son crave his Father's presence that we have in his dying gasp the only complaint in all his suffering, in these aching words, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me." Jonah withdrew himself from God but God withdrew himself from his only begotten Son.

Jonah fled from duty; Jesus met duty's every demand, even though it involved drinking the cup of suffering to its bitter dregs and treading the winepress of the wrath of God alone.

Jonah was helpless and futile in the storm to save himself or his fellows, yet Jesus spoke to the raging billows of the sea and they obeyed his will. The wind and waves obeyed his will when his soothing voice, soft as a mother's lullaby to her cradled babe, uttered his imperial, "Peace! Be still."

Jonah loved only the Jews and fretted when God spared the penitent Ninevites; Jesus loved everybody and came to save to the uttermost all who repent. So conscious was he of his mission to save non-Jews as well as Jews that when Thomas reported to him a band of Greeks had come, saying, "Sirs, we would see Jesus" Jesus said: My hour is come that I may be glorified. When men of other tribes and tongues yearned after him, he was then achieving and nearing his goal.

Jonah reproached God for his mercy to Nineveh, the cruel oppressor of his people; Jesus prayed for his merciless tormentors. Rousseau, the French Deist, compared the death of Socrates of Athens, who blest the hand of his executioner, with the death of Jesus of Nazareth praying for his enemies, and said, "Socrates died like a philosopher, but Jesus Christ—how like a God!"

Jonah had a gourd given him of Jehovah, of which he was very proud. When God, to show his mercy to sinners, cut it down, Jonah was very angry; but when God, to show his mercy to all mankind, cut down his own Son, he received no reproaches from the suffering Messiah. Rather he became obedient even to the death of the cross, emptying himself into utter selflessness. For this we praise his name and say with Paul: "We remember the grace of our Lord Jesus who, though rich, became poor that we through his great poverty might be rich." We praise unselfishness which humbles us to say with Tennyson, in his strongest simile,

"Love took up the harp of life,

And smote on all the chords with might;  
Smote the chord of Self, that  
Trembling, past in music out of sight.”

## II. Jesus and Jonah Compared

Both Jesus and Jonah were selected by their enemies for a vicarious offering—Jonah by lot through the superstitions of heathen sailors; Jesus through the envy and hate of religious bigotry and callous selfrighteousness. Do you not remember the words of Caiaphas, the high priest, “Ye know nothing at all, nor do ye take account that it is expedient for you that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. Now this he said not of himself: but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus should die for the nation; and not for the nation only, but that he might gather into one the children of God that are scattered abroad” (John 11:49-52) ?

Each was borne to his experience by foreigners—Jonah by the seamen who plied the sea from Tyre to Tarshish; Jesus by the Romans who nailed him to the tree of the cross. The one was in the whale three days and three nights, the other in the valley of the shadow of death for a like period. Each prayed in his charnal house—the one in deepest penitence; the other in the highest hope, saying, “Thou wilt not leave my soul in hades nor wilt thou suffer thine holy one to see corruption.”

Each was conscious in his house of death, showing that the soul does not sleep in death, that all does “not end in the tongueless silence of the dreamless dust.” Each come forth in a resurrection, Jonah by figure and Christ in fact. And in this coming forth we see a change—Jonah changed morally and Christ mysteriously, so that he holds the keys and bars of death. Hence each came forth to a new life. Each, after his experience became a missionary to others—Jonah to Nineveh, Jesus to all the world, that the gospel might be preached to the whole creation.

Each led a moral reformation. Jonah led Nineveh to repentance. The text says that “Nineveh repented .at (eis) the preaching of Jonah”; that is to say, Nineveh repented into the manner of life prescribed by the preaching of Jonah; Christ leads every nation, tribe and tongue from the power of darkness and death into the light and life of God. Once God overlooked or winked at the ignorance and superstition of the nations but “now commandeth men everywhere that they should repent, because he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world by that man whom he hath ordained” (Acts 17:29-30).

Each depended on the preached word to work the will of God. Neither ever referred to God’s word as a “dead letter.” Each showed the willingness of God to save ^sinners —Jonah the Ninevites, and Jesus all mankind. Their experiences and messages attest at once the power of love to save and to awaken the potential worth of beings created in the image of the eternal God. This is the golden fulcrum of the Christian’s hope.

“Yet Love will dream, and Faith will trust

(Since he who knows our need is just)

That somehow, somewhere, meet we must.

Who hath not learned, in the hour of faith,

The truth to flesh and sense unknown,  
That Life is ever lord of Death,  
And Love can never lose its own?"—Whitter.

III. The Significance of the Comparison for Us From this comparison of Jesus and Jonah we may draw a lesson of practical significance. Just as Jesus used the case of Jonah as an illustration of his own experience, the apostle Paul afterwards drew an analogy between the experience of Jesus and the experience of men in becoming Christians. You will recall his argument in the 6th chapter of Romans, where the allusion to Jesus' death is made. The argument runs as follows:

1. Jesus before his death lived the earth life; that is to say the normal life of man, though without sin.
2. Jesus was killed to that life.
3. Jesus was .buried to that life,
4. Jesus was raised from the dead,
5. He arose in a new life—a life unlike his former life.

Just so the apostle reasons:

1. Before becoming a Christian, one lived the life of sin or in sin.
2. In becoming a Christian he was killed to the old life—killed to its love by faith in the sinless Christ,  
killed to its practice by genuine repentance, killed to its allegiance by owning or confessing Jesus as Master and Lord—hence he was dead to the world.
3. As Jesus was buried to the old life after being killed to it, so the penitent believer is buried to the world by baptism.
4. He has now been raised.
5. He has been raised to a new life, and is morally bound to live a life of holiness—a life different to the

life of a sinner. That this is what was in the apostle's mind is evident when he wrote, "How shall we who are dead to sin live any longer therein ? Do you not know that so many of us as have been baptized into Christ have been baptized into his death? We are buried therefore with him by baptism into death that like as Christ has been raised from the dead by the glory of the Father; even so, we should also walk in a newness of life. For if we have been planted together with him in the likeness of his death we shall also be in the likeness of his resurrection." In this connection, I like to think of the language of the Revised Version. This version says "united with him' in the likeness of his death." You will remember that Jesus unites himself with Jonah in the language of our text: "As Jonah was in the whale's belly three days. and three nights, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."

Jesus unites himself and his experience with Jonah and his experience in order that you and I may unite our experience in turning from the world to the church with our Lord's turning from the world of mortality to the world of immortality; hence we can say with Paul: "For if we have become united with him in the likeness of his death we shall also be in the likeness of his resurrection."

I like to think of my being united with Christ. I remember that Jesus wants me to be united with him. When he came into the world he took not on himself the nature of angels but human flesh that he might be like unto his brethren, and that he might be tempted as they are, and that he might feel as they feel, to the end that he might be their high priest faithful and efficient in bringing many sons unto perfection. This makes the Christian religion at once vital and personal. As Christ lives so may I live; as he interests himself in others, I am shamed out of myself to become my brother's keeper. Then in hours of disappointment or danger I can lean on his breast, knowing that around me are the everlasting arms, and can say with Elizabeth Barrett:

" . . . because thou overcomest so, Because thou are more noble and like a king Thou cans! prevail against my fears and flmg Thy purple round me, till my heart shall grow Too close against thme heart henceforth to know How't shook when alone." And in joy my union with Christ is enhanced to cause me to sing,

"And he walks with me And he talks with me

And he tells me [ am his own;

And the joy we share As we tarry there

None other has ever known."

#### IV. Jesus in the Presence of His Enemies

I turn here to the second major portion of my theme: Jesus in the presence of his enemies on earth. It is well to study the earth life of our Lord. I am sure we have not preached too much on the death of Christ, and of his love measured by his death. That would be impossible. It is through death that Christ brings to naught him who has the power of death—the devil, When we cease, to preach the efficacy of the cross then to our shame "shall the offense of the cross have ceased." Nevertheless I am sure we have emphasized too little the life of Jesus. It is stnl true, as the apostle said, "we. are saved by his life." I turn therefore to the life of our Lord, which is itself a demonstration that he. is the Christ, the Son of God.

I pause however, to ask, did Jesus really live? Was there such a being as we worship; and honor ourselves in honoring? To ask this question would almost make a skeptic blush. Those who deny that Jesus lived—and there are not many such—are hard put to hold countenance even among their fellow skeptics. For very few skeptics deny the vital facts of Jesus' earthly life. They only deny that he lived as he is said to have lived, that he did the wonders that are attrd> uted to him, and that he rose from the dead in any significant sense.

Those who deny that Jesus lived on the earth are hard put to justify their belief that Confucius or Caesar or Charlemagne or Washington ever lived. Most of their fellows do nor relish such an intellectual poser; for they might as rationally deny the existence of Alexander the Great or Justinian or Leonardo da Vinci as to deny the life of Jesus Christ. But in admitting the life of Christ

skeptics involve themselves in an uncomfortable dilemma. They must admit on the testimony they accept—so far as his life is concerned—the character of Jesus which the same testimony reveals; or insist that the testimony is untrustworthy—which they have accepted as trustworthy in so far as the “vital statistics” of Jesus is concerned.

How do they do this? They say that his character, as revealed by the gospels, was invented—created— and exists in a literary sense only.

By this admission they testify to the high character of the Lord. If it were considered an ordinary character, they would not try to explain it—they would only say, “Well—what of it!” But in insisting on a created character of Jesus they run into further difficulties! They must account for the men who created the character. How could they do it? One cannot create a character greater than himself. Shakespeare was greater than either Hamlet or Lear; Goethe was greater than Faust; and John Milton greater than his Satan. To deny that Jesus really displayed this character to men, forces them to say that a greater than Jesus has lived —one great enough to create out of the recesses of his mind the character we attribute to the son of Mary. But that is only one of the difficulties. They must account for four such superhuman geniuses, since four men have each created a perfect character. Their trouble only grows when, in desperation, they insist that the four do not agree on the same one! There is no trouble for the one who holds to the historicity of Jesus. Smaller men often write of the greater. To write of an actual man and what he actually did—however good and wise and great he may have been—is one thing; to create such a one is altogether another thing. Men write of greater men than themselves—how many have written of Washington, Hamilton, Jefferson and Franklin who were not their equals—but these writers never created a greater than themselves.

Then skeptics must account for the facts that these literary' geniuses never created anybody before creating Jesus, and then never created anybody else after creating him. Indeed, by the admission of Jesus' enemies we are constrained to say, no one man created Jesus; no set of men created him—any more than that four men created four of him—but that they wrote of him who lived, who died and who rose again—Jesus the Christ, the Son of the living God! It requires greater credulity to believe the explanations of those who deny the credibility of the gospel message than the amount of faith that accepts the simple stories as they have been written. But how did Jesus live and die among his enemies? In answer one may say that “he came unto his own and his own received him not, but to as many as received him he gave the right or power to become the sons of God, even to as many as believed on his name.”

“He came to his own.” He came to his own town to be' born but there was no room for him at the inn. He came to his own inheritance, a prince in the line of David—and the reigning monarch sought his life. - He came to his people and they cried, “Away with him. The man Jesus shall not reign over us.” He came to his family and they said, “He is beside himself.” He came to his Father's house on at least two occasions: On the first, even his mother was surprised that he was about the Father's business; and on the second, he found that the house of prayer had become a den of thieves. He came to the leaders of Israel, the sons of the priests and prophets who were the custodians of the faith of Moses, and they preferred a murderer and a robber. He came to his own created world, rich in its opulence; but had no place of his own to lay his head. He came to all mankind that they might have life and have it more abundantly. In this he showed his and his

Father's love so aptly described by an unknown poet:

“Could we with ink the ocean fill,  
And were the skies of parchment made,  
Were every stem on earth a quill,  
And every man a scribe by trade;  
To write the love of God would drain the ocean dry,  
Nor would the scroll contain the whole

Though stretched from sky to sky”; and yet mankind met his coming to them in love by hate, and gave him cruel death on the ignominious Roman cross. In the face of these rebuffs how did Jesus conduct himself ? How did he demonstrate his sonship ? What works and words did he oppose to this unfriendly and vigorous opposition? In answering these questions the erudite will recognize my obligations to Canon Westcott, Bishop Ha- good, and Yale's Professor Bushnell, which I hereby acknowledge. Everything I know I owe to somebody. If I am anything at all it is not originality. If I should have original ideas in my head they would rattle like seed in a dry gourd; and I have a suspicion that they would be only about as valuable as simlin seed!

Jesus said, “The works that I do they testify of me.” What were some of these? First, there were the miracles over nature. Jesus turned water into wine, “when the water saw its Lord and blushed.” Second, at the feeding of the thousands he multiplied the bread. In this substance was increased, showing Deity to be the source of all subsistence. Third, he walked on the water, and showed force under his control and himself the source of strength.

Then Jesus wrought works of providence. Think of the miracles of expedience: the miraculous draught of fishes, the storm stilled at the cry, “Master, save; we perish”; the money in the fish's mouth to pay the tribute money; and the miracle of judgment, when the barren fig tree was cursed. But more intimate to us were the miracles on men. Organic defects were cleared away, so that the eyes of the blind were opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped; the lame man was made to leap with joy and the tongue of the dumb sang, “Hallelujah.” Mortal fevers were cooled at his touch, and a centurion's servant was healed at a distance. At his, “I will; be thou clean,” leprosy fled away, and incurable palsy was driven from its victim, so he could take up his couch and walk. In like manner Jesus strode over the opposing spirit world and the princes of the power of the air fled— whether a single unclean spirit, as in the case of the synagogue's poor lunatic, or the legion in the dweller in the tombs. But this is not all: he brought comfort to the home of bereavement by invading the precincts of death, and at his mandate there arose from the bed and bier and grave an only daughter, an only son, and an only brother. To crown it all, he triumphed openly over death, making good the apparent boast, “I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it up again”; hence he then could say, “I am he that lived, and was dead, but, behold, I am alive forever more; and have in my hands the keys and bars of death!” To a wicked and adulterous generation which sought a sign this was, and is, the “sign of the Prophet Jonas”—the sign of the resurrection, the best-attested fact of ancient history!

If to a generation which sought a sign the Master put the sign of Jonas, then to a generation which sought wisdom he gave a series of paradoxes which stunned to scorn those who refused to believe on him, but which have been justified by the critically examined lives of men of all succeeding ages; so far as the logic of history can prove anything. A few cases only can be referred to, in this address, but those few will serve to illustrate the point. To those who rested on family connections, saying, "We have Abraham to our father," he said, "Ye must be born again." To the legalist, he opposed the Sermon on the Mount; to the self-complacent traditionalist, the beatitudes. To the unjust, Jesus propounded the Golden Rule— and confounded them. The rich were taught that it is more blessed to give than to receive, and the poor had the good news preached to them. To the bearbaiting nationalists of his day he spoke the parable of the Good Samaritan, and to the religiously elite, "up in g" with God (?)—the Pharisaical classes, who objected to his eating and drinking with the masses— he told the story of the forgiveness and love of the father of the Prodigal Son, and of the sorry conceit and self-righteous hate of the Prodigal's unnatural brother. On trial for his life, possessed of unlimited powers to escape and crush his traducers, he posed Truth to Force in his trial before Pilate, who was the embodiment of all the power of the Roman empire; and he scorned the use of the sword to protect himself or advance his kingdom. Reviled he reviled not again and demonstrated the power of passive resistance by turning the other cheek nineteen centuries before Ghandi. In a period of wars and rumors of war he blest the peacemakers as the "sons of God," worthier of praise than those who "wade through slaughter to a throne and shut the gates of mercy on mankind." To those out of the way, ignorant and perishing, he offered a perfect pattern—himself, "the way, the truth and the life." To those who sought by human wisdom the sunimum bonum he offered the Incarnation—"the Word made flesh" dwelling among men. As Browning made David to say to Saul (I do no violence to read Soul for Saul):

"It is by no breath,

Turn of eye, wave of hand, that salvation joins issue with death!

As thy love is discovered almighty, almighty be proved

Thy power, that exists with and for it, of being Beloved!

He who did most, shall bear most; the strongest shall stand the most weak.

'Tis the weakness in strength that I cry for! My flesh, that I seek

In the Godhead! I seek and I And it. O Saul, it shall be

A face like my face that receives thee; a Man like to me,

Thou shalt love and be loved by, forever; a Hand like this hanci

Shall throw open the gates of new life to thee! See the Christ stand!"

Finally to those who would be elevated he offered the greatest paradox of all, viz: he that would save his life shall lose it but he that loses his life for others shall find it; and to those who would be crowned with him that they must go by way of the cross with him.

Hark thou the tune! The gospel muse Sings softly on the air

A glorious theme—and sweet refrain—

To charm the human ear:

God's Holy Son for man did die That he might life obtain;

Ho, Reapers, forth to fields now white

And gather falling grain.

Midday -is on, the morning's spent;

And lab'ers few indeed.

Life's insecure but may be spared Through faith in Abram's Seed.

O blessed Cross, whereon did die

The Chosen of the Lord,

We look to thee. Nought else we know (According to His Word)

Can from the soul the stain of sin Remove, and make it white.

O Blessed Christ, reign over us And save from endless night! This is Jesus, the son of Mary, humiliated "in the heart of the earth"; this is the Christ, the Son of God, crowned with glory in the heavens.

## The Resurrection of the Christ

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### The Resurrection of the Christ THE RESURRECTION OF THE CHRIST

By John T. Smith The outstanding event of world history is the resurrection of Jesus the Christ. No other is comparable to it. No event, upon either the sacred or the secular page, has wrought such marvelous changes upon the world of mankind. Verily, the resurrection of Christ is the center of the ages. All that went before it pointed forward to it. All things since point backward to it, and have been molded by it. His resurrection is the power which transforms the world, and forms the only ground for the Christian's hope of another life. Thus argued Paul, when he said: "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, your faith also is vain. ... ye are yet in your sins. They also that are fallen asleep in Christ have perished" (1 Corinthians 15:14-19). Thus everything depends upon the resurrection of Christ. It is the most indispensable fact in the experience of the human family. If Jesus did not rise from the dead, every soul takes a leap into the dark at death, and the black crepe of hopelessness hangs eternally from the door of every heart. If his resurrection be proven, Christianity is established; if disproved, the whole system is a "will-o'-the-wisp," offering nothing as an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast.

I do not flatter myself this morning that I shall be able to present a single new thought upon this great theme. But I do wish to reaffirm my faith in him as the risen Lord, and to reiterate and emphasize our answer to such as deny the resurrection of the man of Galilee. A number of different material facts concerning this extraordinary and remarkable man are as clearly and strongly attested as any occurrences of history. And it is understood that his enemies have never denied or even questioned these. These attested facts are as follows: There once lived such a man. He lived at the time assigned him in the gospels, and in the very country where gospel writers represent him as living, i.e. in the land of Palestine, in the reign of Tiberius Caesar. That he was arrested, tried, condemned, and crucified under Pontius Pilate, in Jerusalem. He was buried in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, the grave closed by a great stone and sealed with the Governor's signet, and to prevent deception, a guard of Roman soldiers was set to "make it as sure as you can." And then, wonder of wonders, the body was missing from the tomb on the morning of the third day.

"What became of the body of Jesus?" has constituted the battleground of the friends and the foes of Jesus from that morning until this morning. His friends declare he arose from the dead, and that "he showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs" (Acts 1:3). His enemies, Jews, atheists and modernists, deny this, and propose to account for the disappearance of the body on the ground of trickery and fraud, or some other basis than a resurrection of the body. Hence, to determine what became of the body is the task of his friends today. As before said: upon the settlement of this question hangs the hope of the world. To the battle then, ye foes of Christianity! You shall be permitted to strike first. What say you, became of the body of Jesus? How do you account for the fact that it was missing from the tomb on the morning-of the third day? And as far back- as we are able to trace, these enemies have had about the same three arguments or

explanations to advance through all the years.

First, they say the body was taken out of the tomb' by the authorities and placed somewhere else.: That it did not arise from the dead, but was removed to another grave or resting place by the Roman authorities. But is there the semblance of truth or reason in this assertion ? Can anybody accept this attempted explanation? If that were the truth, when the story was being spread to every nook and corner of the land that he had risen and was alive from the dead, why did they not produce the body and thus expose the fraud? How simple and easy that would have been, and it would have settled the matter and silenced forever the heralds of his resurrection. Does any sane, sensible man think for a moment that the Roman authorities, hating the Jews as they did, would connive with them to palm off a deception and a cheat upon the world ? Obviously, they would have done anything in their power to stop the spread of the story of the resurrection of this leader of the Jews. Why then did they not produce his dead body? Only because they could not. They did not possess it.

Secondly, the foes of Jesus say he was not actually dead when placed in the tomb, but only in an uncon-scious state or a swoon, and that later he revived; regained consciousness, and of his own strength, es-caped. This also is too unreasonable and absurd to be accepted. He had been nailed to the cross, hands and feet. Had hung there many hours in pain and in agony. The centurion had been sent to see if he were dead, and had thrust a spear into his side, out of which came forth blood and water, indicating that he was dead. Also, he had been officially pronounced dead before he was taken from the cross. But granting that he was not actually dead, still in his weakened condition after the loss of so much blood, it would have been impossible for him to make his escape, since the stone which closed the grave was, as Mark (16:3-4) says, "exceedingly great." And had Jesus possessed the natural, physical strength to escape, the Roman guard would have discovered his attempt, and would have halted it. Hence, this story is unbelievable, and has no foundation in fact. The third subterfuge advanced by the enemies of Jesus is that his disciples stole his body from the tomb, and bore it away and concealed it. But the enemies of Jesus themselves had taken every precaution that this very thing might not occur. To prevent this or any other fraud, the Roman guard had been placed at the tomb. "The chief priests and Pharisees were gathered unto Pilate, saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, after three days I will rise again. Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away. . . . Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make it as sure as you can. So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch" (Matthew 27:62-66). But on the morning of the third day, the guard still confessedly present, the body was missing. Wonder of wonders! What became of the body? "His disciples came by night and stole him away while we slept," say the guards. But can we believe this statement? Is there any semblance of truth in it? If, as they confess, they were asleep when the body disappeared, how could they know whether it was stolen, or simply arose and walked away?

Moreover, if it were stolen, how could men, confessedly asleep, know who did the deed? Upon this one count alone their testimony is unworthy to be believed. But who believes their word—that "we slept"? These men were Roman soldiers, and they knew full well that the penalty for sleeping on guard was death, according to the Roman law. It will be recalled that when Peter escaped from prison, Herod commanded that the guards be put to death (Acts 12:19. See also Acts 16:27). Why

were the guards not punished if they slept?

We further inquire, what motive could the disciples have had for stealing the body ? It could not have been in order to preserve it, in anticipation of his resurrection, for they did not believe he would arise. When Mary Magdalene went and told the disciples that Jesus was alive and had been seen of her, they “believed not” (Mark 16:10-11. See Luke 24:1-11; John 20:9). There was nothing to be gained by pretending that he was alive, and therefore no motive to prompt these poor, weak, fainting disciples to steal the body. This is but another fabrication told to deceive. In his great Commentary on the New Testament, Dr. J. W. McGarvey says: “His enemies of that generation, men of learning and ingenuity whose honor was involved in the issue, were able to invent no better account of said disappearance than this absurd story, put into the mouths of the soldiers; and men of subsequent ages have made no improvement on this original falsehood.”

Then WHAT DID BECOME OF THE BODY? And a mighty chorus of voices breaks forth in thunderous roar, challenging the tempest’s loudest shock, and resounding to earth’s remotest bounds, “He arose from the dead.” “He is alive.” But is this testimony credible? Can we accept the evidence of these witnesses? It has been said there are two things, either of which would invalidate their testimony. These are: first, the witnesses were honestly deceived, or secondly, they were deceivers, dishonest men. They could not have been both deceived and dishonest. I repeat, what of the credibility of their testimony? Can we believe it? Come now ye enemies of the cross! Stand up like men, and fairly examine the testimony of the unconquered host who say, “Jesus arose from the dead, and reigns a king in glory.” They affirm, “We knew this man of Galilee intimately from the time of his baptism, throughout a period of three and a half years. That we walked and talked with him over the hills and vales of Judea, Samaria and Galilee. We sailed with him on the sea of Galilee, and were with him day and night. We heard his wonderful teaching and beheld his matchless life. We were with him at the last supper, and heard him announce that the tragedy was at hand. We went with him to the garden of Gethsemane, that never-to- be-forgotten night, and heard his prayers and saw his agony there. We witnessed his arrest, his trials, and saw him nailed to the cross. We believed this ended all. And even when we were told that he was alive, ‘we believed it not.’ To our great surprise, we learned from some who visited the tomb early on the morning of the third day, that he was alive, and had been seen by some. After this, he made a number of appearances, sometimes to a part, and at other times to all the eleven. He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: after that he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present . . . after that, he appeared to James; then to all the apostles.’ As before his crucifixion, we were with him much after his resurrection. We beheld him with our eyes, and handled him with our hands. We ate and drank with him, and talked with him of things pertaining to the kingdom. We were with him forty days, and then followed him out to Bethany, and saw him, after pronouncing a blessing upon us, taken up into heaven. Even while we were looking, a cloud received him out of our sight. And while we gazed steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, two men stood by us in white apparel, and said: ‘Ye men of Galilee, Why stand ye looking into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven’ ” (Luke 24:50-51; Acts 1:9-11). Answer now ye enemies of the cross! Is this the fiction of excited minds? Can his appearance be considered an hallucination ? Such a deception would be psychologically impossible, since his appearances were not in visions and dreams, or seances, but they saw him with their own eyes, more than five

hundred of them at one time. With every opportunity to see and to know, it was impossible for them to be deceived.

But, say the foes now, the witnesses were not honest men. It was not a matter of deception. They knew they were perpetrating a falsehood upon the world. They knew they did not see Jesus of Nazareth alive from the dead after his crucifixion. Thus they would disqualify the witnesses on the ground of dishonesty. They charge, "You lie when you say you saw Jesus alive from the dead." Yet those witnesses tenaciously held to their story, and defended their honesty unto their death. Was it ever known that a band of men would fabricate a story and all and every one of them maintain the same story, always and everywhere, through torture and even to death, without even relenting? That they did maintain their story through indescribable suffering and torture, and finally to death, is an undeniable fact. They were despised and rejected as was their Lord, They were naked, hungry, cold, and distressed. They were tortured in every possible way for their story—beaten with rods, scourged, stoned, imprisoned, but they never denied their first story, that Jesus of Nazareth arose from the dead. They maintained it first and they maintained it last; through life and through death. And it would require more credulity to believe them dishonest, than to believe their story—that he arose from the dead.

Since, therefore, in the face of all the facts, they could not have been deceived; and since their recorded teachings as to moral life and conduct bear every evidence of unmistakable honesty and integrity, and that they further proved their honesty and unbounded confidence in the story, by death, to the last man of them their testimony must be true and altogether dependable. Jesus arose from the dead. Thus are his claims established and the man of Galilee fully vindicated. Jesus has triumphed over death and the Hadean powers, and "Brought life and immortality to light, through the gospel." Peter says, "God hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you" (1 Peter 1:3-4).

Paul says: He was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Romans 1:4).

To the Corinthians, Paul wrote: "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward they that are Christ's at his coming" (1 Corinthians 15:20-23).

Jesus says: "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." Peter says: "Because it was not possible that he should be holden of death" (Acts 2:24). At his last recorded appearance, to John, on the isle of Patmos, he said: "I am the first and the last, and the living one; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of death and of hades" (Revelation 1:17-18).

Then, shout the glad news to the remotest bounds of the habitable earth, death no more hath power, the grave no more hath room. Today, we are mariners upon life's sea; but with the word of God as our chart and compass, hope as the anchor of our souls, and the risen Lord as our pilot, we shall weather every blast, and one day cast anchor in that blissful harbor beyond this stormy sea. For we travel to that land which God has said he will give us. Yea, "We hasten to that glad springtide where the winds do not beat, and the clouds do not drench, the spring of the glad

forever.” That land of which it has been said:

“Go wing thy flight from star to star

To world as far as the universe spreads its flaming walls;

Take all the pleasures of the spheres And multiply each through endless years

One moment of heaven is worth them all.”

## Christ Today, Our Mediator and High Priest

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### Christ Today, Our Mediator and High Priest CHRIST TODAY: OUR MEDIATOR AND HIGH PRIEST

By G. C. Brewer

Brethren and friends: The subject I am to use for this address is “Christ Today: Our Mediator and High Priest.” This is a big subject; in fact, we have three subjects included in this one. I have a sermon in print on “Christ, Our Mediator” and another sermon on “Christ, the Christian’s High Priest.” And because these sermons are in print, I shall touch lightly upon these phases of the subject in this address. “Christ Today” is the first part of the subject that is assigned to me, and that is susceptible of two interpretations; I was undecided at first as to which interpretation President Cox intended for me to put upon this phrase. We may think of Christ as he is regarded today by men—that is one interpretation of this language—and the other is “Christ As He Really Is Today.” I am sure this last mentioned view is the correct one because the rest of the subject has to do with the office that Christ is now filling and the work in which he is now engaged. We may, however, for a brief moment, consider Christ as he is regarded by men of this age.

#### I. Christ Today.

We sometimes think that people of this age have entirely deserted our Lord and denied the deity of Christ. It is true that the people of our times are not following Christ as they should and only a very few know him as a personal Savior. Bruce Barton wrote about “The Man Nobody Knows.” He has assumed that no one knows our Savior, and yet everybody talks about him. Barton himself gave no evidence of acquaintance with Christ, but he joined the multitude in talking and writing about him. We may give him credit, however, for treating Christ with reverence and for indicating that his character is so exalted that ordinary mortals cannot know him. This is the attitude that the present day world takes toward Christ, and of this we speak now. No name that is known to history is exalted to the place that has been given Jesus of Nazareth. Infidels and atheists of all types join Christians in praising the character and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth. Some of them may deny that such a man ever lived, but even at that they praise the character that has been created in the mind of some writer of the mythical Jesus. Whatever may be the ideas of men concerning the personality of Christ or his deity, they all agree that his character and teaching are without equal. We have dated our era from the birth of Christ. What other man known to history is so honored? We make Sunday or the Lord’s day a legal holiday, and that very fact is an honor to Jesus and a testimony of his resurrection. Men may not respect the Lord’s day as they should, but as a nation, we and many other nations have made this a legal holiday, and this shows the influence of the religion of Christ over the nations. If we should eliminate from the music of earth those compositions that have been inspired by religion, we would rob the human race of the sweetest melodies that have ever inspired a soul. If we should eliminate from art all the paintings that are based on religious stories and inspired by the teaching of Christ, we would rob our art galleries of

the finest productions that the world has ever seen. The name of Christ is revered even in lands that are not recognized as Christian countries. The following illustration taken from "The Preacher and His Missionary Message," by Stephen J. Corey, pages 114-115, will serve to enforce this point:

"The other illustration, which has to do with the same city, is described by Dr. Robert E. Speer, of the Presbyterian Foreign Board. It is of a company of Madras barristers who were having a social gathering one night. They had secured a public jester to aid in their entertainment. In the course of his buffoonery he took occasion to speak jestingly of the immoral escapades of certain Indian deities and religious leaders, as recorded in their religious literature. The barristers were convulsed with laughter and uproariously showed their pleasure at the jester's salacious sallies. With such encouragement the man grew bolder and began to invent like stories with regard to Jesus. As he proceeded silence fell on the group, then he was hissed; still attempting to go on, they expelled him roughly from the room. They would tolerate filthy tales with regard to their own deities, for much of the background of their religious literature is unclean, and the temple worship of today is often linked with the grossest immorality; but Jesus was in a different class and, although they claimed no allegiance to him, they would not tolerate a slur at his spotless personality."

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## II. Christ Today in the Bible Sense.

But, we come now to consider the, other view of the, meaning of the expression. Christ Today. This is the New; Testament teaching on what Christ is today and what his relation-ship to the human race is now. This cannot be altered by the views of men or by the treatment which nations may accord Christ. He does not change with the changing seasons and his attitude toward man remains the same whether man bows to his authority and worships him or whether he tramples his word beneath his unholy feet and blasphemes his worthy name. It is an inspiring thought to know that our Lord is interested in us now and that he is spending his time, if we may think of the Lord as limited by time, in the interest of the human race. It is generally understood that our Lord Jesus Christ once did something for us. Everybody has at least a subconscious knowledge of the fact that once in the long ago Christ Jesus was interested in humanity and suffered and died for a sinful race. I wish tonight to disabuse your minds of the thought that Christ once did something for you. I want to replace that thought with the very vivid view that the Lord is now doing something for you. Our Lord did not complete the work of redemption when he left the earth and went back to share the glory that he had with the Father before the world was created. He had, of a truth, obtained eternal redemption for us when he died and arose from the grave, but that eternal redemption can be enjoyed by us only through the continued interest and advocacy of our Lord. He did not, therefore, disconnect himself from the earth when he ceased to abide here in the flesh. He not only sent his Spirit back to be an abiding guest in the hearts of his people and keep them, but he himself promised to be with us even unto the end of the world (Matthew 28:18-20). Everything that we see concerning him in the New Testament confirms the idea and deepens our conviction that he is now vitally interested in what we are doing and is cooperating with us and supplying us strength for our tasks. At the stoning of Stephen, we get a glimpse of our Lord and of his solicitude for his suffering disciples. As Stephen fell before the onrush of the infuriated mob

and as his body was mutilated by the blows from the stones and as the crimson stream of life followed these jagged stones away, Stephen looked up into heaven and exclaimed, "I see Jesus standing at the right hand of God." Jesus was not only looking down upon this tragic scene but it would appear that he arose from his seat at the right hand of the Majesty- on-High and stood as this terrible crime was being enacted. He was interested in this scene and he sympathized with his servant and the servant was granted a vision that enabled him to see the Lord and the Lord's eager interest in his death; and so the martyr cried with his last breath, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." When John, the beloved apostle, was in exile on the Isle of Patmos, he, too, was granted a vision that at first struck him with awe and he fell as one dead; but a little later this fear must have departed and his was once again the privilege of communicating with his Lord and of receiving from him a message that has come down over the ages as a benediction to the people of God and refreshing our hearts like a breath from heaven. This story is so well known that only the briefest allusion to it will bring back to your minds all the necessary details. When John, the aged apostle, in his loneliness on that barren isle, was "in the spirit on the Lord's Day," this vision was granted to him. He heard a voice behind him like the voice of many waters and he turned to see who it was that spoke to him. When his eyes saw this personage, he fell to the earth as one dead; he, however, took in at a glance, enough of this being to describe him for all generations. But despite the fact that the majesty and glory of this personage was so great that it awed the apostle and humbled him to the earth, he yet saw a likeness to the Son of man. He knew not who this was but he said he resembled the Son of man. This is enkindling to our hearts for two reasons:

First, the now glorified Lord had not lost all the personal appearances that he had when he was here in the flesh. John still saw these features that his memory had retained for half a century. There had been a marvelous change, yet the features were still there. John had once walked with the Lord as a companion; he had talked with him in intimate conversation; he had reclined upon his bosom at the last supper; he was as intimate with the Lord as two friends can be in this life. Yet now when this once familiar friend appears, John falls at his feet; he does not rush to him and embrace him as long separated friends do when they meet. This shows the great change that had taken place when our Lord passed from a mortal man, an earth dweller, back to the spirit world to be glorified with his Father. But he retained his features. John saw a resemblance in this august personage to the friend he had once known and loved in the flesh. Here is a point in favor of future recognition.

Second, we see that the Lord's heart had not changed and his feeling for John was what it had been when he was here. John -feared him but he did not scorn John; he did not, assume an air of superiority or .of majesty, but walked over and laid his right hand upon his trembling apostle. The touch of that hand must have banished the fear of John and reassured him of the Lord's love and continued friendship for him. In appearance, our Lord had changed but in reality he is the same yesterday, today and forever; and he therefore loves us as much today as he did the day that he went to the cross for our sins. When our Lord began to show John lessons which appeared in symbols he allowed him to see seven golden candle-sticks and he saw the Lord standing in the midst of these candle-sticks. Then John was told that the seven candle-sticks represented the seven churches. Here we see presented in this beautiful symbol that our Lord is in the midst of his churches. He walks among them and lives in them. How then shall any of us ever allow Satan to deceive us into thinking that our Lord is not interested in us today ?

III. Christ, our Mediator. That Christ is our Mediator is so plainly said in Scripture that we need not argue the point at this time. Paul tells us that he is the one mediator between God and men (1 Timothy 2:5). He also tells us that he is the mediator of the new covenant (Hebrews 8:6; Hebrews 9:15; Hebrews 12:24). The fact that he is serving as our mediator further illustrates the point that has just been made in reference to his work today. As a mediator, he is the author of the new covenant. It is through him that God speaks to the world in "these last days" (Hebrews 1:1). He is therefore the mediator not only for Christians or for any limited number of men but for the entire human race. A mediator is one who stands between persons who are estranged from each other and the work of the mediator is to reconcile these estranged persons. A mediator is therefore a peace-maker. Man has been estranged from God, was an enemy of God, hated God, and shut God out of his knowledge (Romans 1:28-30; Romans 5:8-10). To break down man's enmity and then to woo him back to God, Christ came. He came as a manifestation of God's love for man for it is through this love that God wins the love of the human race.

"We love him because he first loved us" (1 John 4:19). This is why God saves us through the gift of his Son. If God could have saved us any other way, it would be difficult for the human mind to imagine a way that would challenge the attention and appeal to the heart of men in a way that could equal this unspeakable gift. In acting as a mediator, Christ has to prepare men for fellowship with God; and that means he must be able to cleanse them from sin. He could not bring us back to God unless we were prepared to enter the presence of God and to enjoy him forever. Christ, therefore, became a propitiation (Romans 3:24-25). Here we see again an illustration of the beauty and power of the gospel. Gospel means good news, and the good news that has been sent to a recreant race is that provision has been made for their sins and that salvation has been offered freely through the grace of Christ. A mediator necessarily must be a dispassionate or unbiased person. A man who favors either side or is unable to understand either side could never serve as a mediator between any persons. The question now arises: Where in all the universe could there be found a person who could understand both God and man? Who can know the Holiness of God and his attitude toward sin? Who can understand the love and mercy of God and his desire to save the human race and at the same time understand the weakness and ignorance of man and his attitude toward a Holy God? Who can sympathize with man in his superstition and sin, his proneness to err and his blindness toward things that are Holy? Where, we ask again, - can one be found who can serve between an infinite God and a finite man? The conclusion is irresistible that such a mediator would have to be both God and man. This we have in Jesus. He is Immanuel, God with us. Here again we see the beauty of the gospel story and we see how the gospel is utterly devitalized by a denial of the deity of Christ or a rejection of the vicarious atonement. Since God gave Christ to be a propitiation for our sins and caused him to be lifted up on the cross that we might be drawn to him, let us, therefore, never fail to so present him to the world as to win the hearts of men to him.

IV. Christ as Our Priest. As a priest, Christ also is engaged in our behalf. The primary meaning of the word "priest" is "one who speaks to God for the people"; one therefore who intercedes for others. Christ does not need to be between God and angels; he does not need to intercede for heavenly beings; he, therefore, functions in the interest of men. This again brings us to the conclusion that Christ is now doing something for us. He is our high priest (Heb. 2:14-18; 4:14-16). He entered into the Holy place for us (Hebrews 6:20). He appears before God in our behalf

(Hebrews 9:24). He advocates our cause (1 John 2:1-3). It is because of his continued interest in us that we are able to be saved. Through him we find grace to help in the time of need (Hebrews 4:14-15). He is able to save to the uttermost those who come unto God by him (Hebrews 7:25) ; this is because he has his priesthood unchangeable. He ever lives to make intercession for us. Because he never dies, because he will never go out of office, because he will never change his attitude toward us, he is able to save to the uttermost. That means that he will go with us all the way; there will never be an experience through which we must pass that he will not be with us. There will never be a temptation that he does not make a way for our escape. There will never be a burden that he is not willing to bear for us. There will never be a sorrow that he does not understand. It is because of his understanding of our infirmities and our needs and because he is ever living and ever present and always ready to offer us the help that our needs require and the mercy that our hearts desire, that he is able to save to the uttermost. Should we not then continue faithful to our Lord in grateful appreciation of the rich provisions that he has made for us? And should we ever turn our view from these gracious provisions and this marvelous divine arrangement and begin to trust our own strength or to depend upon ourselves alone to achieve salvation? When we do this, we will certainly become discouraged because we will see our own inability to reach the goal or to achieve the mastery. Let us not think for a moment that our Lord expects us to save ourselves. Let us see that we have a Savior. A Savior is one who saves. Let us rejoice because we have this Savior and trust him to the point that we will know the "joy that is unspeakable and full of glory." Let us commit our souls unto him (1 Peter 4:9; 2 Timothy 1:12), and hold on to him by faith. We live by faith and it is only the man whose faith fails or is overthrown that is lost. We do not achieve salvation by right doing. That would be works and not faith. We would then have saved ourselves and made useless a Savior. Your life could never be holy enough or perfect enough to entitle you to heaven. No, that is not the good news we carry. The gospel tells of a Savior who saves to the last hour. He now lives and acts that we may be saved. Put your case in his hands, my friends, and trust him to the end. Let his love constrain you, his goodness bind you and his abiding presence bless you.

Though I forget him and wander away,  
Still he doth love me wherever I stray;  
Back to his dear loving arms would flee,  
When I remember that Jesus loves me.

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