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## Christ, Christianity and the Bible

BY

**I. M. HALDEMAN, D.D.**

Pastor First Baptist Church, New York City

*Author of*

How to Study the Bible, The Coming of Christ, The Signs of  
the Times, Christian Science in the Light  
of Holy Scripture, etc., etc.

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# Christ

## IF NOT GOD—NOT GOOD

BY I. M. HALDEMAN, D.D.

“Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is God” (Matthew 9:17).

**T**HE world has accepted Jesus Christ as a good man.  
The evidences of his goodness are manifold.  
He was full of compassion.

He never looked upon the people as a crowd. He never thought of them as a mass. He saw them always as individuals. His heart went out to them. All his impulses were to pity them, sympathize with, and help them.

He went among them. He entered into all conditions, accepted all situations. He was present at a wedding, he ate with publicans and sinners and, anon, was guest at a rich man's table.

He saw the ravages of disease, the shame of sin, the tragedies in life.

He knew there was torture in body and anguish in spirit.

He took the mystery of pain and laid it upon his heart, until tears were his meat and his drink, by day and by night. He became a man of sorrows and an expert in grief. He took upon him the woes of the world till he was bowed and bent, as with the weight of years. The tears of sympathy grooved his cheeks, as when streams carve their way down mountain sides. Because of this men looked at him and saw neither form nor comeliness; neither was there any beauty in him that they should desire him.

He was a beneficent man.

Multitudes of men are benevolent, but not beneficent.

Benevolence is well wishing. Beneficence is well doing. He was always well doing, giving sight to the blind, healing the sick, cleansing the leper, feeding the hungry, raising the dead, unloosing the bonds of Satan—unwinding the serpent's coil.

He was absolutely unselfish.

He emptied himself and made room in his soul for other lives. He had no office hours and never interposed secretaries or major-domos between himself and the people. He received all who came unto him—ministering without money and without price.

There is one scene that might well be painted by a master hand.

It is evening. The western sky is all aglow with the glory of the setting sun. Far up in the dome of the infinite blue, the evening star swings golden, like a slow descending lamp let down by invisible hands. The street is in half-tone. It is packed by the strangest of throngs, by the blind, the lame, the halt, the paralyzed and the leper-derelicts of humanity—borne thither on a surging tide of life in which every wave is an accent of pain; they are driven and piled up in great, quivering heaps against a door which is partly shut, as in self-defence, by the sweltering crowd within.

Jesus of Nazareth is in that house.

He is healing the sick. He is giving health, and strength, and peace to all who seek him. He turns no one away. Compassion, sympathy, beneficence, the tenderness of a mother for her helpless babe—these are the characteristics which his daily ministry revealed.

No one ever brought a charge of evil doing or evil speaking against him.

The people who followed him said, "He hath done all things well."

Police officers sent to arrest him as a disturber of the peace found him in the midst of the people, speaking words that hushed their tumult, quieted their murmurings and gave them rest; and the officers returning to them who sent them, said, "Never man spake like this man."

Pilate's wife dreamed a troubled dream of him, and sent word to her husband not to lay hands on him—seeing that he was a just man. Thrice before heaven and earth—in a testimony that still echoes through infinite spaces, and is heard by listening worlds—Pilate himself proclaimed, "I find no fault in this man."

He lifted up his voice against sin and unrighteousness.

Against nothing did he so much speak as against religious hypocrisy. Nowhere, in any record, is language so terrible, so penetrating, so hot, so full of the flame of fire and scorching analysis, scorching and burning in its denunciation of those who on the outside (in their religious profession) were like whitened sepulchres, but on the inside (in their actual lives) were full of dead men's bones and corruption—nowhere, outside the twenty-third chapter of Matthew, does language fall with such tremendous vibration of thunderous indignation, and the accent of aroused and fully angered justice. "Ye serpents," "ye generation of vipers," are some of the phrases; and the words, "fools," "blind hypocrites," mingle again and again with the far-sounding, judicial menace, "Woe, woe unto you."

He seemed to be dominated and controlled by one idea—the idea of God. The God thought held and moved him. He could not go anywhere, or see anything, or utter the shortest discourse, that he did not, in some fashion, connect it with the infinite Father. Was a sower sowing seed, he saw in that incident an illustration of the fact that the true seed is the Word of God, and the true sower he who casts it into the mightier ground of the human heart. Did a flock of sheep lie at rest upon the hillside, guarded by a shepherd's care, at once he would unfold the shepherding of a Father's love. A tiny sparrow, flying an unnoticed speck in the distant sky, or falling ground-ward with its weary flight, was a winged witness that the Father knew and saw even the smallest details of human life. A lily in its lowliness, and yet a lily in its beauty shaming a king's array, a lily, toiling not, but upward growing, furnished him a text from which to preach the providence of God; and a wandering beggar boy far away from home and kindred, stained with sin and dark with sorrow, gave occasion for the wondrous story of the Prodigal Son and a father's changeless and tender love.

God! God! God! this was the supreme note of his life.

On the cross he gave utterance to words which reveal the inner character of his soul.

When a man has been lied about, falsified, his good evil spoken of and his reputation assailed (as was his before the Sanhedrin—in the mock trial given him there), when such a man has been hounded from one end of the town to the other, spit upon and jibed at and, finally, nailed through hands and feet to a torturing cross; when such a man with his heart bursting (because of the impeded circulation, driving the surging, tumultuous blood back upon it), with the sun scorching his bare temples, a crown of thorns stabbing him at every helpless turn of his restless head; when such a man, under such circumstances, can rise above the wickedness, cowardice and cheap treason that have nailed him to the cross, and pray (and pray sincerely) that his guilty murderers, villainous detractors and unscrupulous slanderers may be forgiven, that man bears witness that he has, at least, a heart of good.

And it was just such a prayer which came from the parched, dry, cracked lips of this man of Nazareth as he hung upon the cross and cried out,

"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Again he spoke from the cross.

There was standing near, a woman who had been chosen of God to give him birth. She was sobbing convulsively. She was realizing what had been foretold of her more than thirty years before—"a sword shall pierce through thy own soul, also." Mary, the mother of Jesus, stood there, brokenhearted. Jesus turned his head and looked at John, his cousin, bidding him take that weeping mother to his home, his heart and care, and be unto her henceforth a loving son.

O the man who, in the hour of his own agony, shall remember his mother, and crown her, make her the

queen of his life, and ordain that others shall love and reverence her, proclaims for himself the lustre of a manhood without spot.

Once more he spoke from the place of anguish—that moment on the edge of death. There his soul, rising from the depths of the overwhelming waves of agony, cries:

“Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit.”

He who in the hour and article of death can face God and eternity, and commit himself to the hand of supreme justice as a confident child to the arms of a loving father, bears witness that in his soul there is no ghastly memory of sin, no sharp, remembered pang, no fear of offended law. Such a confidence and such a committal of triumphant calm bear witness that the heart is at rest with God, and is conscious of its own good.

For two thousand years the world, without a dissenting voice, has borne witness that he is the one man who came into the earth and walked through it superlatively good.

Among the voices in the common consent of the world that Jesus Christ was a good man, there are those who with equal insistence deny that he was Almighty God.

They agree that he had the spirit of God; that he had it in measure such as no other man before or since. They announce their belief that he is the mightiest advance on humanity ever known; that all other religious teachers pale before him as the stars before the sun. They speak of his spotless life with fervent admiration, and draw special attention to his discourses as models of exhortation to righteousness and truth. To them the sermon on the mount is a *chef d’œuvre*. Out of that sermon they take the maxim about doing unto others as you would they should do unto you. They take that maxim and frame it about and make it the “Golden Rule” of human life. They exalt Jesus as the perfect example, telling us that if we shall govern our life by him, make him our constant copy, imitate him, we shall fill our daily existence with righteousness and truth. In fact, if we seek a panegyric on the humanity of Christ; if we desire to see his goodness exalted to the heavens, and his humanity put beyond compare with the sons of men—we must needs go to the Socinian, the Arian and the Unitarian—those who deny the deity of Christ. But this exaltation of the human Christ is simply setting up a man of straw that with one blow of deific discount he may be knocked down again. He is set up as man that he may be cast down as God.

They will not accept him as God.

God Almighty (we are told) cannot be confined or shut up in any one man. Man as man and, therefore, every individual man in his part, is the avatar of God. Each man is in some sense the incarnation of God. God is more or less enthroned in all men. God is to be found in all men as he is to be found in all nature.

A good man—call Jesus a good man—set him up as high as you please, build as lofty a pedestal for him as you will, but Almighty God—*Never!*

Over against this exaltation of Christ as a merely good man, and the persistent denial that he was God, stands the unmistakable claim which Jesus Christ himself made—that he was God.

He made that claim in many ways.

He claimed it by declaring his power and authority to forgive sin.

That was a striking moment when he proclaimed it for the first time. Four men had brought a paralytic to the house where he was preaching. When they could not get in because of the crowd, they climbed up on the roof, took off some of the tiling, and by means of ropes or corners of the mattress let the man down to the very feet of Jesus. When he saw *their* faith, he turned to the sick man and said, “Son (son of Abraham), thy sins are forgiven thee.”

At once there was an uproar. The leading men, sitting round and watching him, burst out with a protest, charging him with blasphemy, saying that God only could forgive sin.

And they were right.

No mere man can forgive sin. Again and again the Scriptures teach us that forgiveness is with God that he may be feared.

In announcing the man’s sins forgiven, Jesus clearly claimed the prerogative, power and authority, which belong to God.

He claimed this equality by declaring himself to be the Son of God. To the Jews, “Son of God” was equivalent to “God the Son.” It meant to them, the moment he styled himself by that name, an unqualified claim to essential equality with the Father. Because of this they raged against him and would have killed him, crying out that he had made himself equal with God.

He made this claim in terms which admit of no misunderstanding. He said:

“I and my Father are one.”

When Philip said, “Shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us,” he answered and said:

“Hast thou been with me so long time and hast thou not known me, Philip? From henceforth ye know him and have seen him.”

To Philip he had also said:

“I am the way and the truth and the life—no man cometh unto the Father but by me.”

By this statement he deliberately shut out all other men as the ground and means of approach to God. He declares that God, the Father, can be found in and through him alone; that he is the supreme way, the very truth and the very life; not that he knows some truth and has a measure of life in common with men, but that he is *the* truth—the *absolute* life. Such attitude, such claimed rights, privileges and powers, belong alone to God.

But he goes beyond this.

He testifies that he has been from all eternity the manifestation of the very selfhood of the Father. Hear what he says:

“And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.”

He traces his personality backward beyond the hour when the world was launched into space, before the stellar systems were created. He goes beyond time, he takes us into eternity, and in that unbegun and measureless distance declares with all the calm assurance of accustomed truthfulness that he had the glory, the visibility, the outward manifestation and splendor of the Father’s own essential selfhood; that his relation to him was that of one who was from all eternity his determination, definition and utterance.

Such claims as these are the claims of one who declares himself to be, and without restraint, nothing less

than Almighty God.

On one occasion when talking to the Jews he said that Abraham had rejoiced to see his day, had seen it and was glad. They turned upon him and reminded him that he was not yet fifty years old, how then could he have seen Abraham, or Abraham him—that Abraham who had been dead nearly two thousand years?

He faced them and said:

“Verily, verily I say unto you, before Abraham was, I am.”

The striking thing in the statement is not the claim of pre-existence—great as that is—not that he claimed to have been in existence already—not fifty years merely, but two thousand—no! all these utterances are remarkable enough, but these are not the astounding thing he said. The astounding, the unspeakably extraordinary thing he said is found in just two words:

“I am.”

There is one place in Holy Scripture where this phrase is supremely used. In the third chapter of the book of Exodus it is recorded that God manifested himself to Moses at the burning bush, and there declared himself to be the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. He commanded Moses to return to Egypt, appear before Pharaoh and demand the release of the Children of Israel from their cruel bondage; and when Moses inquired by what name he should speak to the people, he answered:

“Say unto them, I AM hath sent me unto you.”

“I AM.”

To the Jew these two words set forth the supreme name and title of the eternal God.

In saying, therefore, “Before Abraham was—I AM,” Jesus announced himself to be the eternal, self-centred, supreme being, Almighty God. When he said this, and because they understood him, because they knew exactly what he meant by these words, the Jews took up stones to stone him.

If I were seeking to demonstrate by object lesson, and in a fashion that would admit of no reply, that Jesus claimed to be Almighty God, I would summon the mightiest and most masterful artist the world knows to come and paint for me the scene which takes place a little later as a consequence of that moment when he emphasizes his claim by saying:

“I and my Father are ONE.”

The picture would represent a great crowd of scowling, fierce, angry Jews, their hands filled with stones—some of them drawn back, the whole figure intense with readiness to cast the fatal stone—and Jesus, standing a little distance apart, looking calmly on.

Underneath the picture I would have written in great golden letters (letters so artistic, so startling, so wonderful in form, that at the risk of art itself—almost at the risk of minimizing the picture at the first glance, subordinating it to interest in the letters and dividing the mind of the onlooker between the actual scene and the letters themselves)—I would have written in letters that should smite the eye and the innermost thinking of the beholder, the words recorded in the tenth chapter of John’s Gospel, given by the Jews in reply to the demand of Jesus when, speaking with amazement, he asks, “For what good work do ye stone me?” I would have every gazer at the picture read these words till they rose up in vastness against him, smiting his attention as the very stones in the hands of the Jews—these words:

“For a good work we stone thee not but for blasphemy; and because that thou BEING A MAN MAKEST THYSELF GOD.”

The Jews were not deceived.

They knew what he had done.

They knew that he claimed to be no less than very God himself.

There can be no doubt that he claimed to be God.

There need be, really, no discussion about it.

The New Testament records the claim.

I am not making any issue as to whether the New Testament is true, or reliable. I am saying thus far, only, that the New Testament (the Gospels of the New Testament), in language concerning which there can be no possible mistake or even ground for misinterpretation, records the fact that Jesus Christ did claim to be Almighty God.

If Jesus Christ were not Almighty God (as he claimed to be) he was not a good man (as it is said he was).

The proposition ought to be self-evident.

No mere man can claim to be God and be good.

He who, as mere man, claims to be God, robs God of the glory that is exclusively his.

He who thus claims to be God, and bids men go into eternity trusting him as God, is a deceiver.

No man who robs God of equality, and who deceives men into believing that he is God, can be good—he is a wicked and blasphemous deceiver.

There is only one way in which the character of Jesus Christ can be saved on this claim of his to be God—if that claim were not true.

It can be saved only by assuming that he was self-deceived; that he sincerely believed himself to be God, but was blinded and held fast by his own mistaken concept.

But the man who claims to be Almighty God, and claims it as he did, can be self-deceived only when he is a mental weakling, unbalanced in mind, or absolutely insane.

None of these things can be predicated of Jesus Christ.

On the contrary, he was the most intellectual man the world has ever known.

Mark how he met the wisdom and the genius of the men who surrounded him. Again and again they came to him with crafty and perplexing questions. With a word he solved their problems, flashed truth into their shame-smitten faces, and silenced them. In all the universe there is no soul meaner, more contemptible, more cowardly, and utterly lost to every sense of decent manhood than the man who, for the sake of entangling a good man in his speech, asks him questions in public, before an audience ready at every turn to misquote and misinterpret his slightest utterance; and that is what they did. They came to him, not with the desire to know the truth, but to confound him, cast him down and destroy his prestige with the people. To every question he gave an answer having in it spiritual truth, but bearing the unmistakable stamp of rare wisdom and intellectual superiority.

His words, the simple speech he used in the midst of them, or alone with his disciples, have been the

impulse of the mightiest intellectual activity the world has ever known. Out of his words have grown systems of theology that may well call for all there is of brain power and capacity in those who study them. Here are to be found the keenest speculations and the farthest outreach of metaphysical suggestion and the most detailed analysis of which the human mind is capable. Book after book, treatise after treatise, discourse after discourse, have been produced out of the simplest and most detached things he said. No man can read his speeches and not find the mind stimulated, shocked, quickened and impelled forward even upon the most daring lines of thought.

It would be easy to call the roll of the princes and kings in the realm of intellect, men whose thoughts burn and flame like great quenchless lights; men whose minds are the storehouses of knowledge, and whose utterances by word and pen have moved the quickest and most forceful lives in the world. It would be easy to call the long roll of these names shining like stars and constellations in the firmament of thought—princes and kings of intellect who acknowledge that Jesus Christ is not only superior to them morally and spiritually, but intellectually.

What man is there to-day with any degree of mental self-respect who would dare to stand up and assert himself the equal of Jesus Christ intellectually?

Without necessity of demonstration, it ought to be a truth beyond question that Jesus Christ was the most intellectual man the world has ever known.

Such a man as that could not be self-deceived.

If he were not Almighty God he knew it.

He knew it as well as these good Unitarians, and these wondrously advanced scholars who cannot get beyond the glamour of his humanity.

He knew it at first hands.

If he were not Almighty God—if he were only a man—he knew it, knew it through and through, in every fibre of his being.

There is no possibility then whatever for him to have been deceived.

If he were not deceived, if he knew he was not God, then—

HE WAS NOT A GOOD MAN.

This is his own argument:

A young man came to him and said, "Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may inherit eternal life? and he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good *but one, that is God.*"

The argument is simple enough.

"You call me good. God alone is good. If I am not God, I am not good."

Not good!

Nay! If he were not God, he was the most wantonly wicked man of whom I ever heard.

If he were not God, not only does disaster fall upon himself in the total destruction of his character, and in the consequent and final driving of him from the suffrage and consideration of men, but the disaster falls upon all who have put their faith in him.

If Jesus Christ were not God, then he never forgave the sins of a single soul, and all those throughout the two thousand years who have gone into eternity trusting in his name have gone into that eternity unforgiven and unshrived of God.

If Jesus Christ were not God, then he has not forgiven the sin of a single human being alive to-day.

You had sinned! There were memories of the sins you had committed. They allowed you no rest. They gave you anguish of mind. Others could not forgive you. You could not forgive yourself. The consciousness that you stood naked before the all-seeing eye of a holy God; that he knew the circumstances and every detail thereof, down to the very intents and purposes lying behind your deeds, and even your thoughts; that he looked into and saw all that was in your heart; in the consciousness growing clearer and stronger and more terrible each day that you had no excuse, no place that you could hold for a moment; that if he summoned you to his presence, you would stand in the white light of his unmixed holiness, and the inexorable and unrelenting wrath of his essential antagonism and just hatred against sin; all this consciousness taking voice in you and through you, cried out in your soul, "I am guilty and undone." And this filled you with a horror of great darkness and the utter blackness of a hopeless despair. Then you heard the voice of Jesus Christ saying, "Come unto me." "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." You came. You fell at his feet. You owned his death as your atoning sacrifice. You claimed him as your substitute. You claimed forgiveness through his blood. He said to you, as he said to the paralytic, "Thy sins are forgiven thee." You rose and went away as when one is released from a galling chain; as when a burden that was crushing to earth has been lifted from the sore, bleeding shoulder; as when one who has been tossed on a midnight sea enters the haven while the dawn is breaking, casts anchor and touches shore. For years you have had peace. The memory of your sins are there (for though God when he forgives forgets them, you cannot). Like David, perhaps, you cry, "My sin is ever before me!" The sin marks are there as the nail holes in the wall, but you have been able to look at them and have peace because you have said to yourself, "I am not an unwhipped of justice, my sins have been punished in my substitute; they have been fully answered for in his blood. He has forgiven me and justified me and made me clean. In him I stand clothed in the very 'righteousness of God.' I hate my sin and despise it for what it is in itself, for what it made him, my redeemer, to endure, but I have peace because he has fully satisfied in my behalf. I have actually satisfied in him and am delivered before God's court of holiness both from the guilt and the demerit of sin. I have, in short, *gone through the judgment with Christ on the cross*. He has pronounced forgiveness—absolution—upon me, and he has done so by virtue of his power and authority as the living one in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the godhead bodily—as my saviour and my God he has forgiven me and I am at peace."

All this you have said within yourself and testified.

But I ask you now to face the terrible fact—if Jesus Christ were not God—this terrible fact—that you have been deceived.

You have had a false peace.

You have been living in a fool's paradise.

You are before God an unpardoned and as yet unpunished criminal awaiting your doom. All this is absolutely your state—

IF—

If Jesus Christ were not Almighty God.

If Jesus Christ were not Almighty God, he had no authority nor power to forgive your sins. NO! And if Jesus Christ were not God I know not where to bid you turn. You must carry the load of your sins all your days; and when you die, go into eternity and face a holy God who tells you by every law and fact of nature that he never forgives in a single case till he has first punished the sin and with it the sinner.

If Jesus Christ were not God, his death was not an atonement.

And this surely should be plain enough.

Only God can atone to God.

Only an infinite being can satisfy an infinite being.

If Jesus Christ were not God he could not make an atonement.

If he did not make an atonement, then the world has never been reconciled to God nor brought up on mercy ground. Instead of being lifted up to the plane of grace and mercy, the world is still under the condemnation and judgment of God, no longer under a suspended sentence, but sheer and defenceless, with nothing to hinder the crash of doom at any moment.

There is no hope. There is no daysman. There is no one to offer unto God what he demands, and unto man what he needs. There is no mediator between a holy God and a sinful man.

If Jesus Christ were not God, then he did not rise from the dead. He did not bring life and immortality to light, and, as for me, the preacher, I have no light to hold out to you in the all-embracing gloom and night of death.

There is no hope.

If a man shall tell me there is no hereafter, that death ends all, I shall take up the law of induction and argue him to a standstill along the line of unfathomable mysteries and inexplicable psychological phenomena in the constitution of man, and the inexplicable absence of the phenomena in the state of death, inexplicable upon any known materialistic ground, and I shall laugh at his inability to maintain his thesis beyond the poor shred of a hypothesis. If a man shall tell me as the result of pure reasoning that he concludes for the endless existence of the soul after death, and shall do this even upon the plane of induction, I shall turn and tell him that all his argument is based upon inference and not fact, finding its largest emphasis in the region of the unknowable and guessable—in the things he cannot explain, where certain conclusions can neither be successfully affirmed, nor successfully denied, and where, by consequence, he may console himself, if he wish, with his side of the guess; and I shall feel a keen sense of sorrow at his inability to hold his premise in the final region of the sure.

And what does all this mean?

Is it playing fast and loose with the mind? Am I turning in upon myself and playing the mere harlequin in the arena of mental gymnastics?

No! there is sane meaning to this double method—it is this: *as much may be said along one line of reasoning as the other*. Each is a *non-sequitur* to the other. Each negatives the other and leaves us with reason's torch inverted—the light out, the darkness deeper than ever; and standing on the threshold of the grave we are forced to cry out in the sharp agony of a continual self-smiting perplexity:

*"To be or not to be—that is the question."*

Question it is—always a question—always coming back from the side of every dead body—always coming back from the clod-filled grave—coming down from age to age, coming back a question no man, not the wisest mere man who ever lived, could answer, or any living wise man can answer to-day.

If Jesus Christ were not God it cannot be answered; for if Jesus Christ were not God, he did not rise from the dead and by divine power carry himself out of the region of death forever.

If Jesus Christ were not God, you may go and sit by the tomb of your dead and weep bitter (because hopeless) tears.

If Jesus Christ were not God, then he was not a redeemer and saviour. All the beautiful things that have been taught about him as such are false. All the hopes of heaven, the beauty of the celestial city, the tree of life, the river of crystal, the company of the saints, the arch-angelic song, the meeting and the knowing of those who long ago have left us—none of these things are so.

If he were not God, then it is not true that he sits upon the throne, high and lifted up, listening to the complaints of the weakest heart that shall trust him, and hearing the sound of every falling tear.

If Jesus Christ be not God, then the whole system of Christianity built upon his person and work falls to the ground, is broken into fragments, and like wind-swept dust can never be gathered.

If Jesus Christ be not God, the New Testament record of him is untrue. The New Testament impeached in its prime particular becomes a worthless book—a book full of exhortations to holiness and truth, in the name of him who is proven to be (if he ever lived at all) a blasphemer, a deceiver of men and the concrete of human wickedness. If the New Testament is not true, neither is the Old; for the Old Testament finds its meaning and value only in the Christ of the New Testament. Take Jesus Christ out of the Old Testament (which you must do if you set aside the New; for he alone fulfils the types, the symbols and the prophecies of the Old Testament; he alone makes its testimony and history intelligible; he alone gives unity, harmony and authoritative meaning to its exhortations)—take Christ out of the Old Testament and you take away its one and only key.

And mark you—when *Christ goes out of the Bible as God—God goes out of the Bible*. The deity which has preserved it, the power which has made it living and unchangeable in the midst of change and death, will have been dethroned.

Without Christ as God you are without any sane and satisfying knowledge of God.

Where will you turn to find God and know him to your comfort? You might as well look into the bottomless pit as into your own heart.

No more satisfactory will it be to look into the heart of others. We are all built on the same plan.

The difference is only in degree or extension.

The basilar fact is, God cannot be found in any natural man.

You cannot find or know him to your heart's content in nature.

What kind of a God does nature reveal to you?

I will answer for you—a God who puts you in this world and does not tell you whence you come, whether

from the all mud or the Almighty, from an angel or a devil, from jelly or genius, from the heights of heaven or the depths of hell. A God who puts you here and fills you with questions he alone can answer and—refuses so to do. A God who calls you into the world and gives you eyes to see everything but yourself. A God who hides you from yourself, so that you do not know whether you are a function or a soul; whether you are matter or spirit; whether you are a personality or a cellular part of a general whole—called man. A God who gave you mind with seemingly infinite possibilities in thought, and gave you a body that is finite and temporary in construction. A God who gives you an intellect which grasps after eternity, and is always saying on the summit of any endeavor achieved, “What next?” and yet is limited to a few inconsequent years. A God who sets you face to face with the imminency of death, and never allows you to know at what moment you must go, and gives you no hint of the beyond—or whether there is a beyond.

In France they do not tell the man who is to be guillotined till a few moments before the fatal hour. He is sleeping on his couch. He is dreaming of pleasant fields, of running streams, of boyhood’s days, of to-morrows that shall be better—a heavy hand is laid on his shoulder—he starts up in bed—the gray light of early morning is filtering in through the barred window of his cell—stern-faced men are standing before him—they say, “Your hour is come; follow us.”

It is terrific.

But this is the case of every human being.

No one can tell when the summons may come—or where.

A man was sitting in his room at close of day. It had been (so he said) the best day of his life. He had said to his wife that he never loved her more than he did then (and they had been married many years), never did he feel more content that they had chosen to walk together through life than then. He was full of plans for himself and for her (saying with great earnestness that their last days should be their best days). She answered back that she was glad with a great gladness that it was so. She turned away for a moment to glance in another direction, still speaking to him. When she looked back he was gone—gone while the love words and the hope words were still on his lips—the finger of death had touched his heart—a voice had whispered in his ear, “Come.” There was only a lifeless bit of clay where a moment before had been a body pulsing with life, with love, with hope.

It is terrific—doomed—and not knowing how soon the bolt will strike. What sort of a God is this who laces your body with a network of laws, the breaking of the slightest of which—all unknown to you—may send you forth upon a path of diseased and tortured existence—in which the body from whence you cannot escape shall be to you as a chamber of horrors—a place of the thumbscrew, the rack and the fagot. What kind of a God is that who allows the aged to linger out in a miserable prolongation of wretched days, a burden to themselves, a burden to others, and takes away the widow’s only son—her only support? Who is the God who creates one man with all the equipment for life, and another man with all the lack of it? What kind of a God is this who looks down out of the heaven of day and the heavens of night, and sees all the sorrow, the anguish, the pain, the unspeakable tragedies, and sends no wing of angel to cleave the pitiless sky, no voice out of the silence to console, no hand to help?

What man is there of you, if he had the power, would not banish sickness, sorrow, pain and death?

What man is there of you who, if he could, would not make every human being well and happy?

What then? What is the conclusion of the matter concerning you? Simple enough—you have *the heart to do it, but not the power.*

What is the conclusion concerning this God of nature? *He has the power—but does not manifest the heart.*

What will you say of this God of nature in such a scheme?

What can you say but that your heart is better than the heart of the God which nature reveals?

Can you hear, understand and love a God like that?

Can you climb through nature up to nature’s God and say, “I have found him, I know him?”

You can climb up, but where will you find him?

You will find him wrapped in the black thundercloud or girded with the robe of the lightnings: You will find him the God who splits the earth in twain with the earthquake’s riving blow, loosens the bands of the sea, sends tidal waves in surges of destruction, pours out the lava streams from the volcano’s cone, as kings pour wine from an earthen cup, spilling the wine and breaking the cup; the God who turns an earthly paradise (like Messina) into a fire-smitten desert, and a city of the living into a cemetery of the unburied dead.

When your heart aches, will such a God care for you? Will his thunders console you? When your soul is dark, will his lightnings illumine it? When you yearn for love, will his inexorable law supply it?

Ah, sirs, without Christ you are without a God whom you can love, whom you can trust, to whom you can go, and in whose strength you can lie down and—at last—be folded in peace.

If Jesus Christ is not God, if the only God to whom you can go is the God of nature, then you might as well fall down in the sand at the base of the far Egyptian sphinx, open your eyes for a moment to the blue sky that spreads away to the horizon before its staring face, its cold, chiselled, inscrutable smile, and the next moment shut your eyes against the pelting dust the idle winds blow thither.

Ah! Nature is a sand-dune—and the God of nature is a Sphinx.

Do you care to kneel and worship there?

If Jesus Christ be not God the disaster is not alone to him, but to you—to me.

If he were not God, then we are in a world where the very day is no better or brighter than a starless midnight.

If Jesus Christ were a good man, a supremely good man and a supremely intellectual man, then he was and is (as he claimed) Almighty God.

The New Testament says he was a supremely good, and a supremely intellectual man.

For two thousand years the most brilliant men in the world have corroborated this record by freely testifying that Jesus Christ was a supremely good and a supremely intellectual man; all this being so, I change the conditional form of the proposition to the indicative and declarative and now say:

Since Jesus Christ was a supremely good and a supremely intellectual man, he was, therefore (as he claimed), Almighty God.

He could not be a supremely good and a supremely intellectual man and claim to be God unless he were God.



Since he claimed to be God, therefore, he was God.

Yes; he was God.

The evidences are manifold.

He was *sinless*.

He said:

"Which of you convinceth me of sin?"

For two thousand years he has been in the concentrated light of a hostile world's merciless investigation. The light has been turned on the land in which he lived. Every rod of ground over which he travelled has been dug up, or surveyed, or trodden. His words have been weighed, balanced to a nicety against any probability of error, mistake, imagination, fancy or misquotation. His words have been split open as men break open rocks. All the contents of his words have been put in the crucible of criticism. Every thought has been insistently and unsentimentally assayed for, even, the suspicion or the slightest hint of an alloy. His teachings have been chemically dissolved and turned into their component parts. The saline base of truth has been sought for at any risk to the compounded speech he made.

And after all! not one self-respecting, authoritative lip has uttered a charge against him.

In the hush of a world that cannot even murmur, he steps forward and once more rings down his challenge:

"Which of you convinceth me of sin?"

He stands out among his fellows as a white shaft under a starless midnight. He rises above the passions of men as an unshaken rock in the midst of a wild, lashed sea. He is to man's best character as harmony is to discord, as a smile is to a frown, as love is to hate, as blessing is to cursing, as a garden of lilies to a desert of sand, as heaven is to earth, as holiness is to sin and as life to death.

If he were sinless, he was *absolutely holy*; he was so holy that his very presence brought out the sin in others. Sinful men and women fell at his feet and confessed their sins. At sight of him demons tore their way out of the bodies they possessed and fled as clouds of darkness before the sun, crying as they fled, "Thou art the holy one of God—hast thou come to torment us before the time?" Tormented as they were even then, as sin always is when confronted by holiness; as vice is before virtue; as a lie is before the truth.

He was sinless.

He was holy.

His sinlessness and holiness cannot be accounted for on natural grounds.

All his natural ancestry were sinful.

His sinlessness cannot be accounted for unless he were God; for, sinlessness and holiness come alone from God and, as essential qualities, take their rise alone in God.

His power over nature proved him God.

His look changed water into wine, his word gave sight to the blind, healing to the deaf, speech to the dumb. At his word the lame man leaped as a hart, the leper was cleansed. He said, "Peace, be still," and the wild tempest of the sea was hushed, and there was a great calm, a calm like unto the stillness of the unruffled rest of God.

For two thousand years his regenerative power in a world of sin has been the proof that he was God.

For two thousand years, in every age, in every clime, among all classes of men, from the refined infidel to the vilest sinner, from the cold atheist to the brutal idolater, men have been changed—transformed. Men who have been the bond slaves of passion, whose daily lives have been the output of iniquity, whose deeds have been for destruction, whose words have been poison, and whose inmost thoughts have been as the vapors of miasma—these all—have been transformed into fountains of purity, into angels of mercy, or as illuminated missals have been written full of the name and the glory of God; men whose every fibre was as the coarse and tangled threads of a brutal unrefinement have become men whose every line of character was as the woven gold of Ophir—and the speech that once smote with discord the ears that heard it has become as the sound of singing across silent waters and under listening stars. And you ask these transfigured human beings, as you find them travelling along the highway of twenty noteful centuries, what it was that so changed them, put such new force and impetus in them, making them to be as men new created, and they will tell you that Jesus Christ came along that way, they saw in his face the stain of blood, the marks of nails were in his hands and feet, he had the appearance of one who had been cruelly slain. He stopped, looked at them and said: "Come unto me." They obeyed, they fell at his feet. He touched them, a strange, keen sense thrilled through them. He said to them, "Arise." They arose and found themselves new men—men *twice begotten*.

Ask the drunkard who tried to be sober, broke every pledge and drank in his cup the very life blood of those he loved and who loved him—how at last he found strength to say a final "no," turn from the accursed thing, and enter a world all new in which to live, a freeman and no more a slave—he will tell you, "Jesus Christ did it all."

Ask any of the bond slaves of passion, men who have been gripped by every form of human desire, and whiplashed, and stung, and tortured by their gratification, and driven to fresh and maddening excess by the never satisfied and always burning lust within (ever crying like the horseleach's daughter, "Give, give"); ask them how it is that to-day they are freemen and walk as kings, and they will tell you that Jesus Christ laid hold of them, and by the might of his power, the tenderness of his love, and the wealth of his grace, made them free.

And this has been going on for two thousand years.

The story has recently been told of a great thinker lecturing one day before a large audience of medical students—some eighteen hundred men who pressed in to hear him. He took from his desk a letter, and holding it up before him, said something to this effect:

"Gentlemen! I have here a letter from one of your number, in which he tells the story of his life—a record of shame, of sinful indulgence, that makes me shudder even to look at the letter. At the close of this fearful confession he asks, 'Can your God save such an one as I am?'"

Stopping for a moment and surveying his audience, the speaker said: "When I came to the city this afternoon (it was the city of Edinburgh) there was a beautiful, fleecy cloud spreading itself like a thing of glory in the upper sky, and I said, 'O cloud, where do you come from?' and the cloud answered me and said, 'come from the slums and the low, vile places of the city. The sun of heaven reached down and lifted me up and transfigured me with his shining.'"

Looking about upon the now deeply impressed throng, the speaker, after a solemn pause, said:

"I do not know whether this young man is here or not, but if he is, I can say to him that my Saviour and my Master, Jesus Christ, he who is our great God and Saviour, he can reach down from the highest heaven to the lowest depths into which a human soul can sink, and can lift you, and lift you up and up, till he shines in you and through you, and transfigures you with the light of his love and glory."

He can.

He does.

He is doing it now.

And who is he who can do this but the living God alone?

That Jesus Christ was God is the testimony of the men who lived in intimate communion with him and knew him best.

John leaned on his breast at supper. John heard and knew the beating of the Master's heart, and John says:

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God (God was the Word). The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. . . . And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth."

Again this same John writes:

"Jesus Christ . . . THIS IS THE TRUE GOD."

Writing to the Philippians, Paul declares, that Jesus Christ was in the "form of God," laid aside his glory as such, took upon him the "form" of sinful man, became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, carried his humanity through hades and the grave, rose out from among the dead, and took that humanity to the throne of the highest. There God the Father re clothed him with the unbegun and uncreated glory which he had laid aside, gave him a name which is above every name, even the name of Jesus, and has highly and eternally ordained that every knee in the wide extended universe shall bow, and every tongue confess, that he is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

In his epistle to the Colossians, the Apostle Paul announces that this "same Jesus" is the "image of the invisible God; by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers; *all things were created by him*, and for him."

To the same Colossians he further writes:

"In him dwelleth all the fulness of the *Godhead bodily*."

To the Hebrews he says: "He is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the *express image of his person*" (the word "image" is *χαράκτις* and signifies an "engraving," the very engraving of God in the flesh, *the engraving of God in humanity*) and upholding all things by the word of his power. "Upholding all things!" this earth in its orbit about the sun; the sun in its orbit about some other sun; all suns and systems in their orbits of splendor, whirling onward in ever-widening distances over highways of infinite spaces, through extensions that are measureless, and where time does not count. In that unmeasured expansion where the points of the compass are lost and "dimension" is a meaningless term; in that incomprehensible and indefinable vastness, filled with the might and the majesty of form, of weight, of motion and limitless power—all things—are hanging on his word and obeying his will.

Not only does the New Testament proclaim him God—the Old Testament does likewise, and with unmistakable speech.

The prophet Isaiah says:

"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, *the mighty God, the everlasting Father*."

Micah, the prophet, glorifies the little town of Bethlehem, least as it is among the thousands of Judah, and foretells that he who shall be born there, and is to be ruler in Israel, is he "*whose goings forth have been from old, from everlasting*." He who has been the outgoing and the forth-putting of the invisible God; and who is, and who alone can be, the *visibility of God*.

When we turn to the New Testament once more, we are given a vision of him, in Patmos, where he appears to that beloved John who had leaned so heavily on his heart in the days of the earthly pilgrimage. It is a vision of wonder, of glory, and divine splendor. He is seen as a man—as one who had *become* dead, who was now alive, who had conquered both death and the grave. His face shone with the light of the noonday sun, his eye glances were as a flame of fire, and when he spoke, his voice was as the sound of many waters; and this is what he said for himself:

"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, *the Almighty*."

This is the climax.

He claimed to be Almighty God while on earth.

He claims it from heaven.

He says I am God—he says that because he declares himself as embracing the whole extent of being.

Listen:

"I am he that *is*"—that is to say, the self-existing one; for the statement is the cognate of that, "I am that I am," which is the pre-eminent appellation of deity.

"I am he which *was*"—and this extends being into the past; that past he himself defines. He does not say I am in the beginning, but I am *the beginning—beginning itself—the origin* of things and, therefore, himself unbegun, eternal, from *everlasting*. It is the echo of that far-flung phrase of old: Even "*from everlasting to everlasting thou art God*."

"I am he which is *to come*"—this includes eternity future—the unendingness which stretches without a horizon beyond the present.

Here is fulness—and the fulness of the Godhead *bodily*.

In saying these words upon Patmos, then, our Lord Jesus Christ says:

"I am God—I am Almighty God."

Nor is this a mere conclusion from the premise here!

He says it directly, plainly and squarely himself.

He says not only that he *is*, and *was*, and *is to come*—but he says—  
“I AM THE ALMIGHTY.”

And Paul, the special apostle of the Church, unites with Thomas (the believing, but material evidence demanding representative of the elect remnant in Israel) in proclaiming the deity of God’s Christ.

Thomas falls at his feet and cries:

“My Lord and *My God*.”

Paul bows his head in adoration before him and writes:

“*Our great God and Saviour—Jesus Christ*.”

Upon the august throne of the universe he is seated.

He who lay a babe upon a woman’s breast; who, although he was infinite, became an infant; who being in the form of God, did not hesitate to put off the divine glory and put on mortal humanity that (as an infinite person) he might, through the “prepared” body of his mortality, offer an infinite sacrifice for men; who died under a malefactor’s doom, but with his nailed hands, in the hour of his agony, saved a thief from hell—opening to him the gates of Paradise; he who refused the deliverance of angels when they bent above his cross, that by his cross he might give to men the deliverance angels could not give; lie who was buried in a borrowed grave; who rose as an immortal man, ascended as the *Second Adam*—the *New Head of Humanity*—the *Life Giver* to a world, and took his seat on the *Father’s* throne, as witness of redemption achieved and salvation secured—he sits there now, and having taken to himself the glory which he had with the Father before all worlds were, having clothed his *immortal* humanity with that “*form of God*” which ever was his, now sits the centre of a world’s adoration and heaven’s amaze, as the GOD MAN—the highest form of God and the ultimate form of man; the proclamation that man in Christ is the archetype of God and God in Christ the archetype of man.

As we thus gaze upon him in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily; as we meditate upon him, seek to reason about him, are touched by his love, held by his power, and filled with his life, we say with the inspired apostle: “Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: *God was manifest in the flesh*.”

“*Our great God*,” repeats Paul, and he adds, to balance the wonder of it, “and *our Saviour Jesus Christ*,” he who, in some glad day nearer than we think, is coming back to this old, sin-stained, grave-digged world—to be owned and saluted by all nations, peoples, kindred and tongues as—

“THE GOD OF THE WHOLE EARTH.”

With all this glory and this wonder he is, as the angels said. (who spoke of his ascension, session and Second Coming), “THIS SAME JESUS,” full of tender mercy, and loving compassion; by virtue of his perfect sacrifice able to save unto the uttermost all who come unto God the Father by him; saying from heaven as he once said on earth: “Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out”; but saying at the same time, and with unfailing faithfulness: “No man cometh into the Father *but by me*”; saying it faithfully because, of a truth, only in the *Son* can the *Father* be found.

Let me exhort all who may read these lines, if you have not already done so, to fall down at his pierced feet, and with deep contrition for all your transgressions and for your very *nature* of sin which helped to nail him to the accursed tree, say with voice of unfailing love and unflinching faith:

“My *Saviour* and my *God*.”

If you have already owned him as your Saviour, then, as Thomas of old, with the voice of deep devotion say:

“My *Lord* and my *God*.”

To those of you (if there be such) who still deny his deity and persist in calling him good, he, himself, is asking you from heaven as he asked it aforetime upon earth:

“*Why callest thou me good?*”

In asking you that he is putting upon you the responsibility of the terrible conclusion of your own premise:

IF NOT GOD—NOT GOOD!

Are you willing to face him in eternity with that inexorable alternative:

“IF NOT GOD—NOT GOOD?”

## Christianity

### WHAT IS CHRISTIANITY?

**W**HAT is Christianity?

The question seems a belated one.

It never was more pertinent than now. Its pertinency rests upon two facts.

First: the modern drift in Christianity and its absolute failure.

Second: the phenomenal triumph of primitive Christianity.

The modern drift is antagonistic to doctrine and repudiates the miraculous.

It sets aside the virgin birth, has no toleration for atonement by sacrificial death, and positively refuses to accept the bodily resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It holds that God is the Father of all men. Each man is inherently a son of God. He has in him all the elements of the divine lineage. Exercise and culture are alone needed to reveal these elements and demonstrate this lineage. Salvation is not the redemption of a child of the Devil, but recovery of a child of God from the hands of the Devil. Salvation is the restoration of the individual to the consciousness of this relationship; but salvation is effectively individual only as it is primarily social. The time has passed (so we are told) when the individual may be discussed and his social condition ignored. To seek out an individual here and there and endeavor to redeem or recover him while the environment remains unchanged, is a waste of force: as foolish as it would be to spend millions on remedies for people sick with malaria in a pestilential and malarial district, and ignore the condition of the district. True wisdom would demand first of all that the district be purged, the environment made healthy, the cause of malaria destroyed.

Human beings are neither sinning nor suffering because a possible first man away back somewhere ate forbidden fruit at the insistent appeal of his too persistent wife. Men are sinning and suffering because social

conditions are all wrong. These wrong conditions fill the multitude with discouragement and depression. They are unable to breathe an inspiring life force. They cannot obtain sufficient impulse to live above low levels. The laws, the customs, the inequalities of life, hedge them like brutes in a corral. This corralling and hedging of humanity *en masse*, while the few pull away from the crowd and create an environment satisfactory to themselves at the expense of the crowd, is the *raison d'être* for all evil conditions. Let us have right legislation. Let us make right laws. The moment the social condition enables a man to discover the divine things in him, he will live right by preference. We are no longer to spend eloquence, prayer and time on revivals, and now and then, here and there, get an individual to live fairly right in spite of hindering conditions. The sermon of the preacher should appeal to the law-maker rather than to the law-breaker; it should arouse men, not to the danger of a hell far off, but to a hell near at hand, the hell of unjust laws, of sanitary neglect, of oppression of man by man.

Social redemption! that is the watchword.

Social salvation! that is the crying need.

All this (we are told) is to be accomplished by appealing to the divine in man, to his hitherto ignored resources. This appeal can be made of avail only by setting up some human figure in which this divine life has been fully proved and clearly portrayed. In the nature of the case, for a modernist Christian, such a person is to be found alone in our Lord Jesus Christ. By such he is now hailed, and continually announced, as the advanced man, the quintessent demonstration of evolution as applied to humanity, the way-shower, the exemplar and true copy. He is incarnate altruism. His whole life was self-denial. His daily interest was in social conditions. To him society was the objective, the individual an incident. His teachings, when fairly construed, involve the overthrow of the old, and the bringing in of a radically new society, in which the divine life in man may have an opportunity to unfold. His doctrines, when analyzed, are explosive; if practically carried out would be revolutionary. He is, in short, the true socialist. If we follow him as such, if we work out his intent, we shall have individual salvation, but we shall have it as a consequent of social redemption.

There may be shining worlds beyond this. There may be holy cities with golden streets. There may be robes of righteousness and trees of life. What we need to do, as Christians, is to take care of the world in which we now live, build first-class holy cities here, see that the streets are well paved, and the sewers in order, put fit clothing on the backs of the poor, fill the mouths of the hungry with actual bread, make the hours of labor minimum, and the hours of personal culture maximum, and thus weave a garment of civic, social and individual righteousness that shall stand the test of this world or any other. In other words, we are to live the life that now is—and let that which is to come take care of itself.

This is the trend of the modern drift.

It is an endeavor to bring the church down out of the clouds, place it on the level of human experience, meet present human needs in practical ways, and establish a system of natural, rational and universal ethics.

And yet—in spite of this widely heralded liberalism; in spite of the effort to accommodate itself to the rationalism, the unbelief and downright infidelity of the hour; in spite of the determination to cut loose from the primaries of the first century and ally itself with the fast-going advance of the twentieth, this movement in the name of Christianity has not succeeded in winning and holding the multitude either to a personal and modified Christ, or to a reorganized and elastic church.

The churches in which it flourishes; the churches which have renounced faith in the supernatural and miraculous; the churches which have swung the doors wide open on the hinges of worldly wisdom and easy tolerance; the churches which have substituted natural generation for supernatural regeneration, evolution instead of revolution, the working out of human life, instead of the coming in of divine life; the churches which teach that man is to go up and take hold of God, instead of God coming down to take hold on man; the churches which are broad enough to allow men of all faiths, and men of no faith at all, to occupy their pulpits, are not overcrowded, nor have righteousness and holiness extraordinarily increased in their neighborhood.

On the contrary, in face of every effort to conciliate the naturalism in man, men look upon these churches, and the Christianity they advocate, with suspicion. They see these churches have their goods still marked with the words, "supernatural," "miraculous." It is true, these churches may practically put such goods out of sight; even then, men will not be attracted beyond the expression of a condescending tolerance; and while admitting, as they will, that the church is earnestly endeavoring to get rid of its ancient incubus of theology, free its hands and take hold of the plow handle of progress, ready, if needs be, to drive a furrow deep enough to bury all memories of primitive faith, yet will they turn away from that kind of a church and that sort of Christianity, with the feeling that all this action on the part of the church is but another feeble effort at competitive morality. They will turn from it and seek their own organizations wherein no issue of the supernatural has ever been raised; where the quasi personality and questionable existence of an unseen God are not at all discussed; and where man and his present life are the only subjects deemed worthy of consideration.

If this drift as thus indicated shall continue another ten years, and enlist the support and open advocacy of leading and representative thinkers in the church; if the theological seminaries shall continue to turn out on graduation day, with their all too mechanical regularity, men who do not believe in the virgin birth, who find no real reason why our Lord Jesus Christ should have died at all, except the fatality of his genius that he was too far ahead of his time and was "caught by the whirling wheel of the world's evil and torn in pieces"; if the repudiation of the Bible as the final and inerrant revelation of God for this age shall continue so short a space as a decade, by that time, at the present rate of development, we shall have not only a very modern Christianity, a Christianity without miracles, without even a hint of the supernatural, but a Christianity without spiritual power or moral authority, standing as a delinquent on the street corners, and amid the hurry and rush of more vital things, begging permission simply to exist.

Over against this modern drift and its amplitude of failure stands the phenomenal success of original and primitive Christianity.

And yet, the conditions which confronted this nascent faith were appalling.

It was the era of materialism. Force was the prime minister, self-gratification the supreme legislator. Exaggerated superstition was balanced by decaying faith. It was a time of coordinately high mental activity, an intellectuality that cynically rejoiced at its own failure to solve the riddle of the universe, maliciously suggested new difficulties, raised barriers against its own research, and prostrating itself in the name of mere

brutism, worshipped nature as the ready panderer to its worst passions, while owning it as a cruelly smiling and pitiless sphinx.

The one hundred and twenty men and women who faced the Roman world with the determination to impinge their faith upon it, seemed the most audaciously unwise of all forlorn and hopeless fanatics. They had neither wealth nor social standing. Their culture was at zero, their knowledge indifferent. Localism and tradition envired them, and the story they had to tell was not only an affront to the course of nature, but a direct repudiation of old faiths and cherished religions. Itself a *religio illicita*, Christianity challenged governmental law and invoked, logically, the keenest persecution. The mountains which surrounded Jerusalem were not so high, nor so difficult of ascent, as the prejudice far and near over which they needs must climb, even if they would gain but a tolerated hearing.

Yet they went forth! and so preached, that they not only saved and transfigured individuals, but so molded and transformed society, that in its every-day achievements, Christianity itself seemed like a miracle to astonished and silenced onlookers.

Startlingly enough this moulding of society, this overturning of old conditions—this bringing in of the radically new, so that their enemies said of them they had “turned the world upside down”; this repudiation of brutality and the exaltation of unselfishness; this building up of a condition in which a community now judged itself by the standards of chastity, righteousness and neighborly kindness; this renovation of whole centres of life till the erstwhile deserts wherein not a flower of gentleness had bloomed, now blossomed as gardens of delight, watered with never-ceasing streams of brotherly love—were produced, not by an appeal to society itself, not by denunciation of laws and customs, however bad, but by laying hold of a human soul, estimating it in value by the weight of a whole world, and changing the individual life.

This was the triumph of original and primitive Christianity.

In view of such a triumph and the unqualified failure of the modern drift which claims the name of Christianity, it should seem a perfectly legitimate and altogether pertinent question to ask,

“What is Christianity?”

The answer is given by the apostle Paul in his second letter to Timothy, his son in the faith, the preacher of his own ordination. He says:

“Our Saviour Jesus Christ . . . has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel.” (2 Timothy 1:10.)

According to this declaration, the Gospel is the good news that our Lord Jesus Christ came into the world to accomplish three things—abolish death, bring in a new life and reveal immortality. As the Gospel is the heart beat of Christianity, then the three things which proclaim its constituent and objective characteristic are:

The abolition of death.

The gift of a new life.

Immortality.

First—The abolition of death.

Death is a black fact. It is the shadow the sun never penetrates, the robber who steals the treasure more precious than gold, the guest who never waits to be invited, the intruder who feels at home whether in palace or in cot, has no respect of persons, and lays his hand with equal familiarity on the king upon his throne, or the tramp by the wayside, saying “come” to the sick, “tarry not” to the well, is sure of the old, and revels like a reaper in the harvest of the young. It breaks the plans and disorganizes the relations of life; and then, like a coarse comedian or a heartless satirist, compels those who survive to turn away from the memory of their dead, reorganize their lives and live on as though those who once lived with them and formed an intimate part of their daily experience had never existed.

Unless God himself shall intervene, death is the certain end of the longest life.

Side by side with the certainty of death are two things which give it emphasis: the brevity of life and its uncertainty.

How brief it is! what are sixty or seventy years as measured by hopes and fears, by splendor of genius, by forecasts that outreach the ages, by thoughts that climb and climb with ease to the infinite, by energy of mind, which, rising superior to the combined hindrances of every day, is always peering beyond the last endeavor, and stretching itself towards unbroken continuance, cries, “What next?” Extract from the allotted time of three score years and ten, the puling days of infancy, the immature years of youth, the hours of indecision as to the route to take, the right profession to follow; take the hours given to eating and drinking (that eating and drinking which in spite of the glamor we throw about it is simply repairing the mechanical waste and renewing the chemical energy that will enable us to go on a little while and a little way farther); take out the time spent in sleep—in practical nonentity—and the remainder is a pitiful handful of years, so few, that to number them seems like a mathematical mockery, like numerical trifling.

And the uncertainty of life! What man is he who can assure himself of ten days? In that time he may die, be buried and be forgotten by the world that scarcely heard the tolling of his funeral bell, and had no time to stay and hear the falling of the grave clods upon the coffin lid.

This emphasis of brevity and uncertainty has affected men more or less from the beginning. In the hour when Christianity was born it affected them well nigh unto delirium. So brief was the vision of life, so tumultuous its incidents, so conscious were men of its uncertainty, that they played with it as gamblers throw dice. It became cheap, cheaper than the ground in which their bodies were so soon to be laid; and in derision of its cheapness they built great monuments to hold their scattered dust, monuments that should outlast by centuries their latest breath; with light laughter they rode past these chiselled tombs and scorned themselves as the builders of a longevity their own being could never know.

This fact of death is impressing men now.

In proportion as life increases in knowledge; in proportion as men become masters of nature’s forces; in proportion as they measure the universe, make daily incursions therein, and bring back always some conquered thing, some new discovery as a tribute to the limitlessness of mind, in this proportion the unequal brevity and the disintegrating uncertainty of life, lead men to ask with more and more insistence, whether, after all, it is worth while. Is it worth while to carry burdens which force us to look down into the dust of the highway, and not up and out to the wider landscape? Is it worth while to put so much force of soul and spirit,

brain and heart into things from which we may be summoned without a moment's notice? Is it worth while to live, and then go to pieces through the effort at living, live on day after day like a machine out of gear (held together oftentimes only by the surgeon's skill), then break down completely, give a final sigh and be hurried away to add a lot of useless fragments to the already accumulated scrap heap of the still more useless graveyard?

Into this emphasis of brevity and uncertainty, there enters another element which increasingly raises the question—"Is it worth while?"

That added element is the silence of the grave.

The grave is terribly silent.

You can hear the gravel rattling out of the grave digger's shovel with a thud upon the coffin lid; or, you can hear the crunching, jarring sound as the casket is slid into its place in the receiving vault, and you can hear the turn of the key and the snap of the bolt as the gate or door of the sepulchre is shut and locked.

You may stand above the simple mound of the churchyard, in front of some monumental shaft, or before the sculptured urn; it may be the dust of a king, a scholar, or some nameless beggar which is heaped within—the silence will be unbroken—except by the sound of your own voice as you ask:

"Where are they? What are they? ARE they?"

Although the sun may be shining in full splendor over row after row of graves, no light will be there in which to read the answer to your questions.

Instead of light there will be thick darkness upon the graves, and gross darkness within.

Men peer into this darkness. There is no vision—no speech—and they ask: "Is it worth while to toil, to labor, to accumulate, to make great advance in knowledge, to build higher every day the conning towers of science, and then leaving these high points of achievement, enter into that realm where no surveyor's chain has ever measured the extent, where no geographer has ever named a headland, and where the one supreme fact that meets us on the threshold is ignorance—a black, blinding, all-pervading ignorance as to the next moment after death; so that at the end of our reasoning, deduction and amplification, the one thing remaining to the scholar and the fool alike concerning death is a guess, a guess in which the wish of existence is father to the thought, but where the hope of to-morrow is, easily, the despair of to-day."

With life so brief, so uncertain, and ending in the starless night of silence, men in one form of utterance or another are, in substance, calling to each other and saying, "Let us eat and drink—for to-morrow we die."

Thus the contemplation of death and its impartial and unprejudiced analysis leads to a belief in materialism and a greater or less surrender to mere sensualism; for, if men cannot go up they will go down; if they cannot live in the spirit, they will grovel in the flesh.

What then shall we say concerning this fact of death?

Shall we say it is a part of nature's economy—as legitimate as birth? Because we know nothing of any pre-existent state and are content to go forward in life, shall we now balk and hesitate to discharge our functions or meet our opportunities, because we have no evidence of an after existence?

Is death really natural?

Absolutely it is not!

The whole being of man revolts against it, morally, intellectually and organically. Every law of nature in man is against it. Pain and suffering are its protest. To say that it is as natural as birth is to be guilty of pure bathos; even the worm crushed and quivering denies the sentiment. Schwann, the author of the cellular theory, says: "I really do not know why we die."

There is no reason in nature.

The process which renews the body every seven years—so far as any law in nature shows—might go on indefinitely; there is no reason in itself why it should cease, and the soul within is never conscious of the added years. No one ever thinks of asking, "Why do we live?" Always, and involuntarily, we ask, "Why do we die?" Always we are seeking to continue life, inventing something to make it immune from death. To live, therefore, is natural. Not to live is unnatural. Being unnatural, it is an interference with nature. An interference with nature is superior to nature. That which is an interference of and superior to nature is a direct imposition upon nature. An imposition upon nature could not be possible without the permission and will of God. If God allows and wills it, then the imposition is for cause; being such, it is a judicial act, a judgment, and becomes, necessarily, a penalty. Penalty stands for violated law. Violated law is transgression. Transgression is sin. Sin, in final analysis, is lawlessness, and lawlessness is treason against Jehovah. Death is, therefore, an imposition of God, and is his penalty against the treason of sin.

This, then, is the explanation of death—it is the penalty of sin.

This is the definition which Christianity gives—as it is written: "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men." (Romans 5:12.)

Again it is written:

"It is *appointed* unto men once to die." (Hebrews 9:27.)

In thus determining and defining death, Christianity reveals both its essence and its mission; for, through its Gospel, Christianity brings the good news that the issue of sin and death as between God and man has been settled by our Lord Jesus Christ; that he has settled it perfectly and forever according to the terms of divine righteousness by dying as a sacrifice for sin and as a substitute for sinners.

In order to be a substitute it was necessary that our Lord Jesus Christ should be a sinless man; otherwise, his death would be only his own execution under the penalty of sin, and could not avail either for himself or others. None of Adam's race is sinless; a sinless person must be of another race. To be of another race and be human would require a new creation and would be a new and distinct humanity.

Our Lord Jesus Christ was sinless. He was, therefore, of a new and distinct humanity. In incarnation, God did not take the humanity of Adam into union with himself, the humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ was the repudiation of the humanity of Adam. By that incarnation God was saying: "I have tried the old humanity. I find nothing in it that responds to my claims. At its best it is sinful, only sinful and fit for judgment—the end of all flesh is come before me—and that end is death."

The humanity of Christ is, therefore, not an evolution, but a new creation; it is not an invitation to the natural man, but a condemnation of him. It does not say to him, "Follow me, imitate me and you will be like me"; it says: "I am from above, ye are from below. I am from heaven and God—ye are from the earth. My

humanity is as distinct from yours as the heavens are from the earth."

Such a man is not an example, a copy to be set before men.

And never, not once, do the apostles so set him before the natural man. Always they set him before the natural man as the man who came into the world—not to live as an example—but to die as a sacrifice for men; as one who was fit to die because he was free from the stain and penalty of sin.

But in order that the death of Christ should be of infinite value, he must himself be an infinite person. The value of a deed depends upon the person who does it. The quality resides not alone in the act, but in the actor. The value of the death of our Lord Jesus Christ is not to be measured by its duration, but by himself—by what he was in himself; it does not depend upon the length of time in which as a substitute he suffered the punishment of those whose place he was taking, but the essential quality of his person. Did our Lord suffer but a moment of time on the cross, the value of his suffering as a satisfaction to the law, government and being of God would be infinite.

An infinite person is God.

Always as such do the apostles present our Lord Jesus Christ. Their testimony to his deity rings out like the blast of far-sounding trumpets. In terms that are precise, and so strong and clear that he who runs may read, they proclaim that he is God of God, very God of very God.

As God the Son, in co-operation with God the Father and God the Spirit, he who is presented to us as the Lord Jesus Christ, took a cell from the substance of the virgin Mary, made it a mould and with generating power wrought from it a real humanity—a new and distinct humanity—and united it to his eternal personality; so that he stands forth as the eternal God endowed with a human nature—with two natures, human and divine, in one body and one person forever—the infinite God-man.

Never do the apostles present him as a mere man. They present his humanity as the background for his deity. His humanity in its most literal revelation is always declared by them to be the revelation and the manifestation of God. Never do the apostles attempt to reason about the incarnation, with superb affirmation and sublime dignity they declare, "Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh."

And it is this God whom Christianity presents as coming down from the heaven of glory, and clothing himself with a new, a distinct, but a mortal humanity in which to die as an infinite substitute for guilty men, that through death, he might abolish death for men.

Having died as a sacrificial substitute, death considered as a penalty, and the guilt and demerit of sin which induced the penalty, have been set aside for all for whom his substitution avails.

Nor does Christianity leave us long in doubt as to those for whom the substitution obtains. In full and precise statement of doctrine it tells us that this substitution is on the behalf of, and for, all who individually claim our Lord Jesus Christ on the cross as a personal sacrifice for sin, and who by faith offer him to God as the sacrifice and sin offering which God himself has provided.

Thus it follows, that for every believer—death as a penalty has been abolished, brought to nought.

This is the first great and joyous proclamation of Christianity, *Death has been abolished as a penalty for every believer.*

It has been abolished *de jure*, not yet *de facto*.

The Christian still dies, but his death is no longer penal, it is providential and provisional.

In the hour of death the Christian is not seized as a culprit and hurried away to execution. On the contrary, when the hour of death sounds for him, a voice inspired from heaven assures him that he has reached the threshold of the "far better"; he arises and "departs," that he may be "absent from his home in this body and present at his home with the Lord." His death is not a defeat, but a begun victory, and, inasmuch as both soul and spirit are delivered from the underworld and the shades of death, he has the assurance that the penalty will yet be completely abolished concerning his body: it is both the assurance and the prophecy of it.

Christianity is, then, primarily, the good news, and the doctrinal demonstration, that death as a judicial sentence has been abolished for the Christian.

But Christianity is something more than the abolition of death—it is—

Second—The bringing in and revelation of life.

Through the Gospel, we are told, life has been brought to light.

In the nature of the case this cannot mean natural life.

There was no necessity that it should be brought into light.

It has never been in darkness.

It is manifest everywhere. Light and life are synonymous.

There is not a condition in which in some form or other it does not exist. While one class of life may not live in a certain environment, there are other forms to which this environment would be as a hotbed for their production. Life is, indeed, universal, and may be said to be omnipresent. You will find it in the deepest depths of earth, and in the highest reaches of air. It expands on the mountain top, it dwells in the sea; it is organized in the infusoria, it exists in the infinitesimal, and reveals itself at last, in the beauty of woman and the strength of man.

As natural life has always thus been in evidence; as it has never been in the dark at all, then the life which our Lord Jesus Christ has brought to light is not natural life—it is new life—a life unknown to the world before.

It does not come from the natural man. It is not produced by natural generation. It comes from our Lord Jesus Christ and by supernatural generation. It did not come from him while he walked the earth. At no time during his earthly career did a human being receive it. The disciples who followed him—he who leaned upon his breast at supper and was the disciple whom Jesus loved—knew nothing of it. This new and unique life was brought into the light only when that light shone from his empty grave. He gave it forth and communicated it to men only when, as the risen man, he ascended up on high. It comes from him as the second man, as the last Adam, that Adam to whom the first was only as the clay model to the completed statue, as concept is to consummation. It comes from him who is both God and man, in one body and one person forever; and who, as such, is the head and beginning of the new creation of God.

By him it is communicated to those who own him as their atoning sacrifice.

The instrument is the word of the Gospel.

The agent is the Holy Spirit.

The Word is preached—it falls into the heart of the believer as seed into the ground.

The Spirit quickens it—the new life is germinated.

That new life is the life and nature of the risen one, our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ, the man in the glory; it is the mind of him who is called Christ, and it is, therefore, in final term—"the mind of Christ."

It is wrought, not in the soul, but in the spirit of the believer.

By no slow process does it enter—this life of the risen Lord—but by absolute fiat—the fiat of him who said—"Lazarus, come forth."

It is fiat life.

Its entrance into a human being is as light flashes into darkness.

It is as instantaneous as when God of old said, "Let there be light," and light burst over a world cataclysmically fallen into chaos.

It is as transforming as when morning awakens the sleeping earth and hill and dale, river and sea, shine forth in their beauty.

It is as startling as when Lazarus himself, obeying the voice of his Lord, rose from the dead and came forth.

Behold the illustration of it.

Here is a man who grovelled in the lowest animalism.

He was a husband and father. What a husband! and what a father!

She who was his wife fled oftentimes at the very sound of his footsteps, shivering with the same fear, as though he who had solemnly sworn to love and protect her, were a mad brute intent on gratifying his own fierce lust, and ready with unchecked sensualism to trample her in the mire of his bestiality. A father, whose very name made the cheeks of the children grow white and their pulses almost to cease with terror. A drunkard, who drowned in his cup, not only wife and children and home and all outward decency, but every characteristic of truth and honesty and manhood of his own soul. A man, who through self-indulgence and the incessant yielding to unspeakable desires, had become little better than a human sewer, through whom the slime and indescribable filth of fallen and degraded humanity found its unhindered course. A human being, who had become a Lazarus spot, a walking pest, whose inmost thought rotted and putrefied his own mind; and whose words without license were a poison and contagion to every one whose ears caught their unwelcome sound.

Mark the change in that man!

The wife now watches at the door with a gladsome smile to greet his return. The children, who once in their rags trembled with fear, now clean and wholesomely clad, and gay with laughter, gather at his knee, the moment he enters his home. He is himself well dressed. He holds his head erect, his eyes, no longer bloodshot, meet your gaze with frank and open glance. His tones are soft and modulated, his speech gentle. The Bible, the one book he always hated, is his constant study. His mouth once filled with cursings that might well have chilled the blood to hear, now give utterance to the voice of prayer and earnest thanksgiving. The church he never entered and always avoided has become the centre around which the best activities of his life are continuously moving. He who was once shunned, despised and feared, is now honored and respected of all.

The man has been transformed.

Those who saw him in former days and see him now might in all reason ask, "Is this he, or some other man?"

It is both he and yet another man. The same person, but possessing another character.

What is the secret of it all?

Let the answer be graven on every heart. He has received a new life, a new, a pure, a holy and spiritual life. He has received that life from above, from the second Adam, the Lord in heaven. He is now a twice-begotten man.

And herein is the glorious, distinctive feature of Christianity in so far as it touches a human soul.

To that soul it brings the good news that a new generation is possible; the good news that any human being may start over. The good news that, no matter how much you may be handicapped by your original genesis; no matter what the terrific law of heredity may have transmitted to you, you may be generated again. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, you may have a genealogy that shall carry your name above the proudest of earth; a genealogy by the side of which the bluest blood of most ancient kings shall be as the palest and poorest of plebeian stuff. This Gospel of Christianity brings the good news that you may receive from the throne of God life from God, as directly as did Adam when God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul. In an instant you may be recreated morally and spiritually, and have in you all the assets which, when fully capitalized by the grace of God, shall insure your sonship with God here, making you master over every disturbing and disquieting passion, and guaranteeing to you an eternal entrance into the endless inheritance of God, wherein you shall be, indeed, the heir of God and joint heir with our Lord Jesus Christ. In short, you may have the bequeathed ability to glorify God and enjoy him forever.

This is the life which our Lord Jesus Christ has brought to light.

The Gospel is the good news of this life of which the life giver himself has said, "I came that ye might have life, and that ye might have it more abundantly." That is to say: "I came that ye might have this spiritual life and have it without limit here."

And this Gospel of the new life brought to light by and through the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ is one of the elemental facts and forces which definitely answers the question—"What is Christianity?"

But Christianity is something more than the abolition of death as a penalty and the bringing in of a new and spiritual life. Christianity is through its Gospel—the good news that—

Third—Immortality has been brought to light.

The word here translated "immortality" is "incorruption"; but it signifies in final terms the fact of immortality; for, as mortality is identified with corruption and is its consequent, so immortality, which is the opposite of mortality, is the consequence of incorruption and is inseparable from it.

This word "immortality" is greatly misunderstood, and almost always misapplied.

It is continually applied to the soul. It is a common thing to hear or read the expression, "immortal soul."



The truth is, that phrase cannot be found in Holy Scripture. The terms are misleading—their conjunction is false. Applied to the soul, the word “immortal” is a misnomer. Throughout Scripture the original word and idea relate to the body—never otherwise. The word “mortal” is never used of the soul; you never read in Scripture the expression, “mortal soul.” You will find the words “mortal body.” A mortal body has for its opposite an “immortal body.” A mortal body is subject to corruption and death. An immortal body is incorruptible and not subject to death—an immortal body can never die.

The mortal body is the scandal of the race and the open label of sin. A mortal body puts us in the category of condemned criminals awaiting execution. The scandal is not only moral, but organic. To be filled with disease, with pestilence, with fever, and then die and the body turned back to its component parts—this is a scandal in construction; as much a scandal as when a house not properly built falls down; a dead body, whether of man or dog, is the most shameful blot on the face of the earth, and with the gaping mouth of the graveyard, justifies the estimate and the declaration of the living God, that death is an “*enemy*,” not a welcome thing like birth and life—but an *enemy*. Such a scandal is it, indeed, that when our Lord Jesus Christ came to the grave of Lazarus, he was himself moved with indignation; for the words, “groaning within himself,” miss the true force. The Greek verb used signifies that he was inwardly filled with indignation and a sense of outrage at the sight of the grave and the announcement that the body of Lazarus was already corrupt. Whatever groaning came from his lips and whatever tears fell from his eyes as he wept—these were his protests against death and the grave; for he recognized this dead body not only as due to the penalty of sin, but as the work of him “who had the power of death, that is, the devil.” (Hebrews 2:14.)

Even though the Christian as to soul and spirit be delivered from death; even though he does not go down to Hades, but at death is safely housed and at home with God in heaven—yet the fact that this body, which was not only the dwelling place of his soul, but the temple and shrine of the Holy Spirit, should become a banquet for worms, a thing of repulsive decay, a residuum of forgotten dust, is a scandal, even to the Christian, and gives emphasis to the shame of death.

The Son of God came into the world to remove this scandal.

He died and rose again, not only that he might have power and authority to give a new and spiritual life to men, a character befitting them for the high things of God, he died and rose again that he might have power and authority to give an immortal body to all who would receive from him this new and spiritual life.

He brought this immortality to light when he rose from the dead.

He brought it to light by rising from the dead in the body in which he had died.

If our Lord Jesus Christ did not rise from the dead in the body in which he died, then immortality in the New Testament sense of the word has never been brought to light.

But he did so rise.

He made that clear on the first Sunday night after his resurrection.

The disciples were gathered together in the room.

The supper table was spread.

No one cared to eat.

The story had been going all day that Jesus had risen.

The women said so. They persisted that they had seen and talked with him.

Two men claimed, also, to have seen him, walked, talked and broken bread with him, that very afternoon.

The disciples did not believe it.

They were afraid to believe it lest it should prove to be untrue.

Then, suddenly, he stood in the midst.

They thought it was his ghost.

This was a proof to them that he had not risen; for a ghost is a disembodied thing.

He was a ghost—he was disembodied—therefore he had not risen.

So they felt—each one of them.

They did not say it—but they thought it.

He knew their thoughts.

He asks them why these thoughts arise in their hearts. He upbraids them for their unbelief.

He tells them plainly, a ghost does not have flesh and bones.

He says, “I have flesh and bones.”

They are still silent.

Then he stretches out his hands towards them. He shows them his feet.

There are great marks in them—there is around these marks as the stain of blood, or of wounds whence blood had flowed.

Still they do not speak. They are afraid to believe; it is too good to be true.

He says to them, “Handle me and see—take hold of my feet—feel me—examine me for yourselves.”

They are as immovable and speechless as men changed into stone.

He turns upon them quickly and says, “Have you anything to eat?”

They point to the untasted supper.

Then comes the climax.

He goes to the table.

He sits down.

He eats before them.

It is of record that he did eat *broiled fish* and an *honeycomb*.

Either this is the worst fable ever palmed off on the church of Christ—on the credulity of aching human hearts—or it is the truth of God.

Call it the truth of God—then the body in which our Lord Jesus Christ rose was the body in which he died.

That body, stamped and sealed with the stigmata of the cross, is the living, quivering definition, and indisputable demonstration of immortality. Immortality is the living again in a body which was dead and dieth no more; or, it is the change of the body in which we now live into an incorruptible, glorious body which shall never die.

In that body which he raised from the dead, and which never saw corruption, our Lord Jesus Christ now sitteth at the right hand of God.

He is there as the vision and standard of immortality.

He is there as the forerunner, the prototype, the sample and prophecy of immortality for the Christian.

Until the Christian is made immortal his redemption is not complete.

The Christian who dies is transported to heaven.

His estate there as compared to this is "far better."

But "far better" is not the "best." It is only a comparative.

The superlative requires that the Christian shall have a body. Without a body the Christian is neither a complete human being nor a perfect son of God.

The divine ordination is "*spirit, soul, and body.*"

Unless the Christian receives an immortal body the victory of our Lord Jesus Christ over death and over him who has the power of death (that is the Devil) is not complete.

Satan as the strong man armed holds the goods and keeps them secure within his house.

The instrument with which he is armed is the law. That law which requires that it shall be "appointed unto men once to die." The goods are the bodies of the saints, and the house is the dark and dismal grave.

O the pitifulness of it! that our Lord Jesus Christ should possess the Christian as a ghost in heaven, and the Devil hold his blood-bought and spirit-sealed body in the grave.

A risen Christ in an immortal body, surrounded by disembodied Christian ghosts in heaven forever—that is a concept too hideously grotesque to consider.

An immortal Christ who redeemed his own body from the power of the grave, but is unable to deliver the bodies of those for whom he died—to think it is blasphemy! to believe it—impossible!

If the Devil be the strong man armed, the risen Lord is the one "stronger than he," who has met and equalled all the demands of the law, and by his death nullified its ultimate power over the bodies of those for whom he died.

In the very nature of the case, then, full redemption requires that the body of every Christian shall be delivered from the grave, and that every Christian, whether living or dead, shall be clothed finally with an immortal body.

This is the great objective of salvation—not just to save men from vice and immorality here; not just to fit them with an antidote against the poison of sin; or give them an impetus to holiness and truth for a few brief years in this mortal body, then let them die under various circumstances of suffering and pain and be carried away to heaven to live there as attenuated, invisible ghosts forever!

O no! it is not that!

It is true men are to be saved here and now in such moral and spiritual fashion as that each saved person should make the world sweeter and better and nearer to God for living in it. All that is true, but it is only a part of the glorious truth. The supreme objective—the *ultima thule* of redemption—is—

*Immortality*—the Christian eternally and incorruptibly embodied.

And this immortality, this eternal embodiment, is to be accomplished for every Christian. The fact that death has been abolished officially as a penalty for the Christian is a demonstration that abolition of death means abolition for the whole Christian; as a whole or complete Christian must have a body, then the abolition of death for the Christian means abolition of death from the body. The abolition of death from the body is immortality; by virtue, then, of the abolition of death, immortality is assured to every Christian.

Not one will be forgotten even though centuries may have broken into dust above his grave.

This immortality will be brought to pass by him who is the Resurrection and the Life.

It will be brought to pass at the Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

He is coming to this world again. By every law of necessity he *must* come. He is coming to complete redemption, to bring on the capstone amid shoutings of "grace, grace unto it."

He will raise the dead who have fallen asleep in his name. He will change the living ones who are his at his coming. He will make the body of each incorruptible, deathless, immortal, like unto his own glorious body, as it is written:

"We shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." (1 John 3:2.)

And again it is written:

"We are citizens of a country which is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change the body of our humiliation, that it may be fashioned like unto the body of his glory, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." (Philippians 3:20, 21.)

At the last he will regenerate the earth. He will make it over. He will make all things new. He will set this race of redeemed immortals within it. Perfectly recovered from the spoliation of sin and death, they shall inhabit it forever. God shall get his own world again.

Paradise lost shall become paradise regained, and God's purpose to make man his constitutional, governmental, moral and spiritual image shall be fulfilled. Man shall be God incarnate, and incarnation shall be seen to be the beginning and the ending of the purpose of God.

This is the consummation to which Christianity leads us—a perfect race of immortal beings in a perfect world, a perfect world in which no man shall say, "I am sick"; where sin is unknown; where the funeral bell does not toll, and a grave is never dug. Where God is all in all.

This is the hope and the ultimate Christianity sets before us. Not once in all its record does it offer us heaven or bid us prepare for it as the ultimate, but always it exhorts us to look for and wait patiently for immortality and glory at the Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

This is the Christianity of the primitive centuries.

This is the Christianity of the New Testament.

It is the Christianity that fully met the needs of men.

It met the needs of men who gave themselves up to unrestrained passion, to the gluttony of every appetite; who lounged away their day in cool marble halls, or leaned half drunken from the cushioned seats of the amphitheatre, while the sands of the arena were reddened with human blood to give them a holiday. Look at them there. They passed their unsatisfying hours in idle jest, wreathed themselves with freshly plucked, but swiftly fading flowers, drowned their senses from moment to moment, still deeper in the spiced and maddening wines, gave unbridled freedom to their lust; and then, at close of day, in the splendor of the sinking sun, went forth to cool their fevered brows in the Campagna's freshening but deadly air, and drove

with furious pace and brutal laughter along the Appian way between rows of monumental tombs whose chiselled epitaphs told the hopeless end of human life; then back again they drove with still more reckless haste to spend the night in wild debauch and meet the gray dawning of another day with its mocking routine and disgust. Loathing their very joys, revolting at their own gratification, these men asked: "Is there nothing better than this, that we drain the cup of pleasure to the dregs, open our veins, watch the life blood ebb away, and laugh, and mingle our laughter with curses that so cheap and easy an ending should have cost so much to reach?"

O the woe, the horror, the emptiness, and the crying, agonizing need of lives like these.

And Christianity fully and richly met the need of lives like these.

It met the needs of men who in the midst of an environment of the flesh, with the wild beast of appetite struggling within, now and then had longings for a power that should enable them to put their feet upon the neck of passion.

It met the needs of men who, standing above their dead, asked again the old and oft-repeated question of Job, "If a man die, shall he live again?"

Christianity met all these needs.

Through crowded streets of populous towns and lonely lanes of silent villages, in lordly palace and before straw-thatched hovels, to listening throngs and wayside hearers, it rang forth its wondrous proclamation.

It told men that a man had been here who had proven himself stronger than death and mightier than the grave; a man who had burst the bars of death asunder, spurned the sepulchre wherein human hands had laid his body, had ascended up on high, and now, from heaven's throne, had power to impart to men a life that hated sin, rejoiced in virtue, could make each moment of earth's existence worth while, and carried within it the assurance and prophecy of eternal felicity.

Far and wide, over land and sea, it rang the tidings that this perfect life might be had by king or cotter, by freeman or slave, without money and without price, for so simple a thing as genuine faith in, and open confession of, him who had died and risen again.

With rich, exultant note it announced that he who as very God had clothed himself with a new and distinct humanity, who had loved men unto death and died for them, had not forgotten the earth wherein he had suffered, his own grave from whence he had so triumphantly risen, nor yet the graves of those who had confessed his name; but, on the contrary, was coming back in personal glory and with limitless power to raise the dead, transfigure the living, make them immortal, and so change this earth that it should no longer be a swinging cemetery of the hopeless dead, but the abiding home of the eternally living sons of God.

Men held like Laocoon in the winding coils of sinuous and persistent sin, and who vainly sought to escape from its slowly crushing embrace, heard the good news and turned their faces towards the rising hope of present deliverance.

Men standing in the shadow of the tombs and waiting their turn smiled until their smiles turned into joyous laughter as they said: "If we die, we shall live again—the grave shall not always win its victory over us."

Do you wonder the world stopped, listened, and that multitudes turned and followed after?

Do you wonder that this Christianity of the primitive centuries triumphed so phenomenally?

This is the Christianity we need to preach today.

It is full of a great body of doctrine.

It is full of the supernatural.

Miracle and miraculous are woven into its texture from beginning to end. You cannot touch it, or handle it, or look at it from any angle of vision that it does not suggest the miraculous. The moment the miracle is out of it it is no longer the Christianity of the first century, it is not the Christianity of the New Testament—the Christianity that has a miraculous Christ for its centre and the miracle of an infinite God for its environment.

A Christianity of doctrine!

A Christianity of miracle!

And why not?

It is as superior to the Christianity, so called, that sets aside miracle and doctrine, turns its back on the hereafter, makes its appeal in behalf of the present alone, and grounds its claim to authority, not on a "thus saith the Lord," but on a "thus saith science and reason"; a Christianity that owns the law of evolution as its present force and defining motive; it is as superior to that sort of Christianity and as high above it as the heavens are above the earth.

One night this summer I stood upon a mountain ridge and watched the revelation of the starry sky. The great constellations, like silver squadrons, were sailing slowly and majestically to their appointed havens; from north to south and from south to north again, the Milky Way swept upward from its double horizon to the zenith like a highway paved and set with diamonds—a highway over which the wheels of the king's chariot had sped, leaving behind that cloud of dust in which every gleaming particle was a burnished sun. I gazed spellbound until it was as the vision of an unfathomed sea, an ocean tide of light, where the shimmering foam was the rise and fall of single and multiple systems, the surf beat breaking on the shores of converging universes. I gazed on this wealth and congeries of far-flung worlds, in which some that appeared the most insignificant and twinkled and trembled as though each glimmer would be the last, were actually so great that beside them our own poor little world was but as a mole hill to earth's Himalayas; as I gazed I thought of the distance from world to world—measured as light travels—till the count of years fell away, and there were no more numbers with which to count, and I knew that at the end of this calculation I had but entered the suburbs of that realm for which we have but one word, whose inadequacy we all confess—the Infinite. I listened, the silence seemed to utter forth majesty and might and honor and omnipotence, the air had in it the breath of sacred and adoring things, and unwittingly I cried out, alone in the night there, "The heavens, O God, declare thy glory and the firmament showeth thy handiwork."

And when I look at this Christianity set forth in the New Testament, and anticipated in the Old, the constellations of doctrine, this Via Lactea of truth in which every statement is a sun of splendor; when I begin to get the sweep of the divine purpose coming up from the opening pages of Genesis and culminating in the book of the Revelation; when I see that Christianity is the presentation to us of the ways and means whereby the original thought of incarnation (and this was the very first thought stamped upon the first pages of the Genesis record of the creation of man; for incarnation is conceived in Eden before it is brought to the birth in

Bethlehem)—when I see this original thought of incarnation, in spite of sin and failure, and the world's captivity to the Devil and his angels; when I see this high purpose of God at last realized, and realized so completely that each redeemed soul is in final terms the glorious enthronement of God in humanity, and that God in Christ and in the Christian, gets his own world again, I cry out with full tribute of heart and intellect: "O Lord, this is the Christianity which thou hast wrought, thy name is written in every doctrine, every line justifies, as it proclaims thee, the infinite and gracious author."

This is the Christianity to preach.

Let the preacher preach a Christianity of doctrine.

There are three important things every preacher should preach. The first thing is doctrine. The second thing is doctrine. The third and pre-eminent thing is doctrine. The church is starving to death for the want of it, the preachers are becoming emasculated apologists for lack of it, and the world, looking on, is laughing at a limp, genuflecting thing calling itself modern Christianity and for want of vertebrate strength, unable to stand alone.

It was doctrine believed in and preached which sustained the martyrs and gave courage to missionaries. He who believed in the sovereignty of a redeeming God, the certainty that God would get his elect, the Coming of Christ, the millennial triumph, and a rebel world surrendered at the feet of God, could endure the agony of the stake, the privation of the wilderness, and all the discomforts and all the discouragements of fields of endeavor well sowed but scantily reaped.

Let the preacher preach the supernatural—the things that are miraculous, and be unafraid.

He need not be afraid. The world wants that sort of preaching. It is growing tired at heart of mere machinery and this eternally running up against a formula of the laboratory or a mathematical calculation and analyzed force, as explanatory of everything in heaven and in earth. It would like, if it were possible, to believe in something a little beyond the length of its eyelashes and the touch of its finger tips; something that cannot be summed up always in *avoids*; something, indeed, beyond the ability of man.

Let the church get back to the old-fashioned doctrinal, supernatural, miraculous Christianity that underwrites itself with the name of God. Let it be boldly proclaimed that Christianity is miraculous, because it is, first and last, the Christianity of that God who is himself—the eternal miracle.

The very salvation of the church as a church depends upon this retrograde.

If the church hesitates, compromises, seeks to accommodate its formulas to modern nomenclature. If it is willing to carry its baggage at half weight; if it is willing to make its proclamation a continual denial of all that it has heretofore professed as fundamental; if it believes the twentieth century has the call on the first, and that modernism outranks primitivism; if, in short, it looks upon primitive and apostolic Christianity as the feeble hint which the modern thinker has known how to modify and improve, then, as already suggested, the days of its spiritual and moral bankruptcy are in sight, and the sooner good business arrangements are made to hire out its meeting houses for ethical and social culture the better.

Let the church persevere in turning its back upon the hereafter; let it continue the folly of ignoring the eschatological emphasis of Christianity; let it keep on giving to men the anodynes of mere moral maxims; let it direct all its energies to improving and perfecting a society which God has already judged and condemned at its best, and presently these drugged and befooled people will awake, the drugs will no longer be effective, and they will turn in indignation upon a Christianity which began by professing to be a revelation from God and ends by confessing to be nothing more than an evolution from man.

It is time for preachers to arouse if they would have the hearing, and not the indifferent ears.

Let them refuse to apologize or defend.

Let them have the courage of divine conviction.

Let them refuse to admit into their fellowship men who are willing that a bar-sinister shall be stained across the birth hour of the Christ; who are ready to smile away such a title as "the Blessed Virgin"; who can read no deeper meaning in the cross than a brutal murder, and who do not yet know that in the garden of Arimathea there is still an empty tomb. Let them refuse ministerial ordination and partnership with men who, bearing the university brand, claim the authority of a self-elected scholarship to make the Word of God secondary to the word of man. Let them go forth and proclaim to the world with the voice of assurance which permits of no debate and will accept no recall, the Christianity that is summed up, is perfectly defined and holds inclusively all its splendor of doctrine in the three immense facts which its Gospel proclaims:

The abolition of death, the gift of a new and spiritual life, and the guaranty to every believer of a resplendent immortality like unto his who sits on yonder throne—both eternal God and immortal man—Coming Bridegroom and Triumphant King.

Let them preach this. Let them tell the guilty sinner that the blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ meets his case and can make the foulest clean; let them tell the slave-bound sinner that in a moment, in the flash of an eye glance, a risen Saviour can deliver him and set him free; let them tell the dying that death has lost its sting, and at death a convoy of heaven's host shall bear him away from his home in this mortal body to be at home in heaven with his ascended Lord; let them cry above every Christian grave, louder than the sound of any falling tear: "Jesus is coming to raise your dead and change the living and clothe each saint with immortal beauty"; let them look abroad upon a world full of the storm of sin, the tumult of high passion and long rebellion against our God, and shout aloud that victory cometh in the end; that Christ is God as well as man; that the days of his glory are at hand, when the "God of the whole earth" shall he be called; and when all beneath a perfect heaven in a perfect world shall know him as Lord and God from the least to the greatest. Let them preach this, and with unbroken confidence repeat the exultant words of Holy Writ, the words which shall warrant all their speech, that "our Saviour Jesus Christ hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel"; and it will be this Gospel echoing forth with all the music of its joyful tidings that shall answer infallibly and beyond all dispute the question of the hour—"What is Christianity?"

## The Bible

THE WORD OF GOD

"When ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of man, but as it is in truth, the word of God." (1 Thessalonians 2:13.)

**T**HE Apostle here testifies that he believes himself to be the bearer of a revelation direct from God; that the words he speaks and the words he writes are not the words of man, but the Word of God, warm with his breath, filled with his thoughts, and stamped with his will.

In this same epistle he writes:

"For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord." (1 Thessalonians 4:15.)

The preposition "by" is the dative of investiture as well as means, and is Paul's declaration that what he is writing to the Thessalonians are not his ideas, clothed in his own language, but ideas and thoughts whose investiture, whose very clothing, is no less than the word of the ascended Lord—he who is none other than the "Word of God."

Writing to the Corinthians he says:

"Which things we speak, *not in the words* which man's wisdom teacheth, *but* (and grammar requires us to understand) *in the words* which the Holy Ghost teacheth." (1 Corinthians 2:13.)

According to Paul's testimony, therefore, the fourteen epistles which he wrote to the churches are not letters written by a mortal man, giving expression to the ideas and thoughts of man, but are the very words of the infinite God, giving utterance by the Holy Ghost to the thoughts of God.

An examination of the other epistles of the New Testament will show the same high and unqualified pretension. The apostles write (all of them) not as men who are giving an opinion of their own, but as men who know themselves under the domination of the Spirit, and as giving authoritative expression to the mind and will of God.

Nor is this peculiar to the writers of the New Testament.

Constantly, the writers of the Old Testament introduce their message with the tremendous sentence: "Thus saith the Lord." Again and again they declare the Lord has spoken "by" them. David says: "The words of the Lord were in my tongue." Jeremiah says the Word of the Lord came to him and the Lord said: "Take a roll of a book and write therein all the words that I have spoken to thee." Then we are told that "Jeremiah called Baruch, the son of Neriah; and Baruch wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the Lord, which he had spoken unto him, upon a roll of a book."

After these words had been read to the princes of Israel, they asked Baruch, saying, "Tell us now, how didst thou write all these words at his mouth?" Then Baruch answered them, "He pronounced all these words unto me with his mouth, and I wrote them with ink in the book."

The process is clear enough. The Lord spake his words in Jeremiah. Jeremiah received the words direct from the Lord, dictated them word for word to Baruch, Baruch wrote them as they were pronounced in a book; and when written, the words were the written words of God.

Ezekiel declares when the Lord commanded him to speak to the children of Israel, he said to him: "Speak with *my words* unto them." Ezekiel not only speaks them, he writes them in the book of his prophecy. Ezekiel gives an account of how the Lord spake to him and inspired the book which bears his name. He says: "The Spirit entered into me when he spoke to me; . . . the spirit entered into me and spake with me." The Spirit said unto him: "When I speak with thee, I will open thy mouth, and thou shalt say unto them, thus saith the Lord."

The Apostle Paul, speaking in commendation of Timothy because from a child he had known the Holy Scriptures (and by Holy Scriptures the Apostle meant the Old Testament from Genesis to Malachi—these were the Scriptures Timothy as well as every Jew knew as such), tells him that all Scripture (and of course any decent exegesis of the passage with its weight of context would recognize that the Apostle was referring to the Scriptures Timothy had known from childhood, the Scriptures as we have them to-day from Genesis to Malachi)—Paul tells Timothy in the most precise terms that all these writings are inspired of God.

The Apostle Peter, corroboratively speaking of these very Scriptures of the Old Testament, says they came not "by the will of man, but holy men of old spake as they were moved (literally, carried along) by the Holy Ghost."

Thus, this book we call the Bible comes to us with the enormous and uncompromising claim that it is not a man-made book, but a book whose real and sole author is the living and eternal God.

This claim stands face to face with human need.

Here we are from birth to death, pilgrims on the highway of time, not knowing whence we come, nor whither we go. We need a guide to lead us, a light to shine when we stand at that parting of the ways—where eternity becomes the end of time.

This book meets us and claims to be all that—a guide through time, a light to shine upon the road that leads to God and to be, in every line and accent, the inspired, incorruptible, infallible Word of God.

How may we know it is all it claims to be?

Never more than now did we need to know it.

Voices in the air are crying that we have been deceived; that this book upon which our fathers pillowed their heads when at the end of life's journey, they laid them down to die; this book we have held as a lamp to our feet and a light to our path is, after all, at its best, only the word of man and not the Word of God at all.

Every now and then resounding blows are heard as they strike against the old foundation. Those who pretend to be working in the interest of the truth bid us stand aside, lest we and our hopes be buried in the impending ruin.

We need to know at any cost whether this splendid and sustaining faith has deceived us; whether this book we have looked upon as holy and divine is nothing more than the word of man, spoken with his stammering tongue and written with his stumbling pen.

We must know, and know for a certainty that will leave no peradventure to arise as a troubling after-ghost, whether this Bible is, as Paul says it is, in truth, the Word of God; and the question will insistently repeat itself:

"How may we know the Bible *is* the Word of God?"

The question need not make us tremble.

The answers are at hand.

The evidence is so great, its very wealth is an embarrassment.

That evidence stated, detailed, analyzed and elaborated, would require—not a few pages—but whole libraries.

One broad and general proposition may be laid down.

It is this:

The Bible is proved to BE the Word of God when it is shown to be NOT the word of man; and it is proved to be not the word of man when it is shown to be—not such a book as a man WOULD write if he COULD; nor such a book as a man COULD write if he WOULD.

That it is not the word of man—not such a book as a man *would* write if he could, is made clear enough by the picture it paints of the natural man.

This picture is so sharply drawn, the figures stand out in such living and apt delineation, that no one can mistake the import.

According to the Bible, man came direct from the hand of God. God created him body, soul and spirit—a tripartite being. The soul was the person, the seat of appetite and passions. The spirit was the seat of the mind, the centre of reflection. Spirit and body were the distinct agents of the soul. The spirit, the agent to connect the soul with God—the body, the medium of the soul's manifestation or materialization in this world, and the instrument for its use and enjoyment. The mind, seated in the spirit, was intended, under the influence of the spirit, to be the governor and regulator of the soul—enabling the soul rightly to use its appetite and legitimately to satisfy its passions.

Thus organized, God set man up in the world to be his constitutional, moral, spiritual and governmental image—his likeness morally—his image (his representative) administratively.

Man turned his back on God, listened to the appetite of his soul, and surrendered to the demands of sensual hunger.

The soul, at once, sank down into the environment of the body. The mind sank down into the environment of the soul and became, henceforth, not a spiritual mind, but a mind “sensual,” “devilish,” a mind continually suggesting to the soul fresh and unlimited gratification of its desires. With the breakdown of soul and mind, the spirit lost its vital relationship to God, lost its function as a connecting link with, and a transmitter of, the mind and will of God; so that it could no longer enable man to know and understand God; and feeling the influence of the mind, instead of influencing it, followed it in its downward course into the environment of the soul.

Out of this dislocation the soul came forth dominant over mind and spirit. Soul appetite and soul desires became supreme; the body, the willing and active agent thereof. From this period on, man was no longer a possible spiritual being, but a “natural” man. The word “natural” is “soulical.” In Scripture it is twice translated “sensual.” The much-used word “psychological” is a derivation of it. In the Bible sense of the word, a psychological person is just the opposite of a pneumatical or spiritual person.

Man was now psychological, soulical, sensual. He had been transformed into a being no better than an *intellectual* animal, and the slave of his physical functions. Instead of being the master of his appetites, he was mastered by them. His passions intended, under right use, to be blessings, became curses; instead of angels, they became as demons. Instead of dwelling in the midst of his endowment in harmony with it and able to direct it, he found himself at its mercy, incessantly smitten by it and suffering his own equipment. Repudiating faith, walking by sight, talking of reason and governed by his senses, he threw himself open to invasion by the world, the flesh and the Devil.

As a result of his fall, man has become a degenerate, full of the germs of evil, “every imagination of the thoughts of the heart only evil continually”—an incurable self-corrupter.

In him there is not one thing that commends him to a holy God; and even should he succeed in living a life of perfect morality, his best righteousness in the sight of God would be no better than a bundle of filthy and contagious rags.

There is no power within him by which he can change the essential character and determined trend of his life. Men do not gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thistles. All the effort that the most devoted and laborious of men might give to the culture of a hedgerow of thorns would not succeed in producing one grape. Though men spent life and fortune in cultivating a field of thistles, they would not gather a single fig. No sooner (says the Bible) can the natural man bring forth the fruit of righteousness unto God. The Ethiopian may change his skin, the leopard his spots, before a natural man can change himself into a spiritual man. “The carnal mind is enmity with God; for it is not subject to the law of God, *neither indeed can be.*” “The natural man (the word ‘natural’ is ψυχικός, soulical) receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: *neither can he know them*, because they are spiritually (πνευματικῶς, *pneumatically*) discerned.” “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?” meaning thereby that God alone can sound the depths of its measureless capacity for sin and iniquity; therefore, he says: “I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins.”

The end of man is to die.

Such an end is not natural.

It is unnatural.

It is violent.

It is penal.

It is an appointed punishment: as it is written: “It is *appointed* unto men once to die.” “By *one* man sin entered into the world, and death *by sin*; and *so* death *passed* (literally, *passed through, pierced* man;” the seeds of death entered him for himself and all his posterity). When he dies, therefore, be he never so moral and upright, his death is judicial, his taking off is the execution of a criminal.

He is to be raised from the dead as to his body (in the meantime, his soul is “dragged” downward to the prison of the underworld, where in conscious suffering he awaits the second resurrection and the judgment hour), he will be raised, judged, found guilty and cast forth into the lake of fire (which is the second death), from whence there will be no resurrection of the body (the body will perish in the fire—for an immortal body belongs only to the sons of God—the participants in the First Resurrection); then, as a disembodied spirit—a ghost—he will go forth with an inward, deathless worm, and an inward, quenchless fire, to be like “a wandering star unto whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever,” an exile from God, outside the orbit of divine grace, love and life—a hopeless, an eternally hopeless—human derelict, upon the measureless sea of

night and space.

That is the Bible picture of the natural man.

Is that the picture the natural man paints of himself?

I trow not!

Man looks upon himself as a son of God by nature, having in himself all the elements of divinity, and all the forces necessary to shape his life aright. He is proud of himself, and talks of the dignity of human nature. He describes himself in panegyric, magnifies his virtue and minimizes his vice.

He flatters himself in his own eyes.

The two concepts—that of the Bible and that of the natural man—are as far apart from each other as the heavens are from the earth.

To man, the Bible concept is false, belittling, wholly disastrous and degrading, the death knell to any possible inspiration for human effort and attainment. It is a concept against which he revolts with all the nature in him, and hates with an exceeding great hatred.

In the very nature of the case, then, the Bible concept of man is not due to man; it is not such a concept that he *would* write if he *could*.

The picture which the Bible paints of sin is not such a picture as the natural man has ever painted.

The Bible declares that sin is something more than fever or disease or weakness, it is high treason against Jehovah, it is a blow at his integrity, a rebellion against his government, a discord to his being and a movement whose final tendency would be to dislodge him from his throne.

The Bible hates sin and has no mercy for it.

The very leaves of the book seem to curl and grow crisp under the fire of its hatred. So fearful is its denunciation that the sinner shivers and hastens to turn away from a book whose lightest denunciation of sin has in it the menace of eternal judgment. Like a great fiery eye it looks into the very recesses of the heart and reveals its intents and purposes. It sees lust hiding there in all its lecherous deformity and says, he who exercises it solely in his mind is as guilty in God's sight as though he had committed the act. It looks into the heart and sees hate crouching there with its tiger-like fangs and readiness to spring, and says that he who hates his brother is already a murderer.

The Bible has no forgiveness for sin until it has been fully and fearfully punished. In this it simply echoes the law stamped and steeped in nature. Nature never forgives its violated law until it has punished it. The Bible demands satisfaction, complete and absolute, before it offers even the hint of forgiveness. It takes the guilty sinner to the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ and shows him God's hatred of sin to be so great, that the moment his holy and spotless Son representatively takes the sinner's place, he smites him and pours out upon him a tidal sweep of wrath in a terror of relentless judgment and indignation so immense, that the earth quivers like an aspen, rocks to and fro, reels in its orbit till the sun of day refuses to shine, and the moon of night hangs in the startled heavens like a great clot of human blood.

The Bible declares that forgiveness of sin can come to the sinner only by way of the anguish and punishment of the cross; and that no sinner can be forgiven till he has accepted the downpour of the wrath of God on the cross and the substitutional agony of the Son of God as the punishment he himself so justly deserves.

The Bible teaches that in the awful cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" the sinner should hear the echo of his own agony, as of one forsaken of God and swept out of his presence forever; and that the only ground of approach to this righteous God is the atoning blood of his crucified Son; that he who would approach God, find forgiveness and justification, must claim that crucified Son of God as his sin-offering, his vicarious sacrifice, his personal substitute. By the hell of the cross alone can he find the heaven of forgiveness and peace.

Is this man's attitude to, and definition of, forgiveness and peace?

It is not.

Man does not hate sin. He loves it. He rolls it as a sweet morsel under his tongue. He condones it in its worst form. To him it is genital weakness or an overplus of animal life—an exuberance of the spirit. It is a racial inheritance and not an individual fault. It is temperamental and not criminal.

The Bible concept and the natural concept of sin contradict each other; both, therefore, cannot have the same author.

The Bible concept of holiness is not the concept of the natural man.

In the Bible, holiness is not goodness and kindness, nor even morality. Holiness as the Bible sets it before us is the correspondence of the soul with God, the soul reflecting the intent, desire and innermost character of God; so that, were God to enter into the soul, he should find himself as much at home as upon his own exalted throne.

Such a definition as that makes human perfection and all its claims to holiness seem no better than a painted wanton dressed in the garb of purity and mouthing the words of virtue and chastity.

Whence comes this wisdom of holiness which makes the loftiest ideal of man no higher than the dust of the roadway, his best righteousness criticizable goodness and altogether a negligible quantity?

If it is from man, it must arise from two sources—human experience or human imagination.

It cannot come from human experience! no natural man in the past has experienced it—none today experience it.

It cannot come from imagination; for a man cannot imagine what he has not seen, known or experienced. As he has not experienced holiness he cannot imagine it.

In the nature of the case—the Bible concept of holiness did not originate with man, and that much of the Bible, evidently, is not of man.

That the Bible is not the word of man is shown by its statements of accurate science, written before men became scientific, and while as yet natural science did not exist.

The record of creation is given in the opening verses of Genesis.

Whence came the wisdom which enabled the writer in a pre-scientific age to set forth a cosmogony in such a fashion that it does not contradict the latest findings of the geologist?

The Bible says the earth was without form and void.

Science says the same thing. Over a hot granite crust, an ocean of fire, and beyond that an impenetrable





Rome should be the last universal empire till Christ came?

Ezekiel, the prophet, said that the great and populous city of Tyre should be taken, cast down, and never rebuilt; and that the Lord would make it to be like the top of a scraped rock to spread nets upon.

The city was taken and destroyed. The people moved to an island just off the mainland and there built a new city. Two hundred and fifty years after Ezekiel made his prophecy, Alexander came, besieged the new city; and, in order to take it, built a causeway from the mainland. In doing this he tore down and utterly demolished the ruins of the old city; took its stones and timber and cast them into the sea; and then, actually, set his soldiers to work to scrape the very dust that he might empty it into the waters. From the hour when it was overthrown to this, the city has never been rebuilt; and for centuries it has been, and is to-day, like *the top of a scraped rock*—a place where *fishermen spread their nets*.

Where did Ezekiel get this knowledge?

Certainly not from man.

It will not do to say he guessed it!

Egypt was a land of cities and temples. The cities were populous, the temples and monuments colossal. Avenues of gigantic sphynx led to gateways whose immense thresholds opened into pillared halls, where the carved columns seemed like a forest of stone. Pyramids rose as mountains, and their alabaster-covered sides flashed back the splendor of the cloudless skies. The land bloomed as a garden. The papyrus grew by the banks of the Nile. The fisheries of the mighty river filled the treasury of kings with a ceaseless income. Art, literature, knowledge and culture were enthroned supreme—yet was it a land of false gods and a people given over to their worship.

Speaking in the name of God the prophet announced the coming desolation of Egypt. It should be cast down. Its fisheries should be destroyed, its papyrus withered, its cities and temples overthrown and the ruins scattered over the plain, no native prince should ever again sit upon its throne, it should become the basest of kingdoms.

It has become such.

Its cities are destroyed. Its temples are roofless, its columns fallen, the statues of its kings lie face downward in the dust, the pyramids, stripped and bare, stand scarred and silent in the sun. The singing Memnon are as songless from their chiselled lips as the tongueless Sphynx half buried in the yellow sand. The fisheries are gone, the papyrus has withered; for centuries no native prince has been seated on the throne. It is a land of the dead. The dead are everywhere. At every step you stumble over a mummy, the mummy of a dead cat, a dead dog, or a dead and shrivelled Pharaoh. Its greatest asset is its departed glory, and every grain of sand blown from the mighty desert, and every wave of reflected light flung back from the Lybian hills, proclaims the terrific fulfilment of the prophet's words.

The prophets foretold the final siege and destruction of Jerusalem. It should be trodden down of the Gentiles. The people should be carried away captive and sold into all lands. They should be scattered from one end of the earth to the other. All nations should despise them. They should become a by-word, a hissing and a scorn. They should be hunted, hounded and persecuted. Their sufferings should be unparalleled, horrible, unspeakable. The sound of a shaken leaf should startle them. They were to become the people of the trembling heart and the wandering foot.

The prophecies have been singularly fulfilled.

Jerusalem was besieged by the Romans. The city was taken. The city and temple were destroyed. Hundreds of thousands perished by famine, by fever, by fire and by sword. Titus, the Roman conqueror, drove a ploughshare over its smoking ruins. The people who remained alive after the general slaughter were carried away captive. They were scattered from one end of the earth to the other. They have found their dwelling place among all nations. They dwell everywhere and are at home nowhere. They have been a by-word, a hissing and a scorn. Every hand has been turned against them. They have been hunted on the mountains. They have been chased through the valleys. They have been walled up in the narrow and filthy ghettos of cities. Their goods have been stolen. Their wives and daughters have been ravished. They have been whipped and racked and tortured. They have been broken on the wheel, burned at the stake, buried alive, and sent to sea, thousands of them, in sinking ships. Every cruelty that the ingenuity of man and the inspiration of fiends could suggest has been practised upon them, until the heart revolts and the soul sickens at the mere recital of their blood and woe; and to this hour, through twenty long centuries, Jerusalem, as announced, has been trodden down of the Gentiles; all nations have tramped through her streets, overridden her people and torn down her walls.

The prophets said God would make a full end of the nation which persecuted them; but he would not make a full end of them, he would preserve and multiply them.

The promises have been kept.

Rome has become a past tense. With thoughtful steps we pause amid her ruins, painfully locate the palace of her kings, the arenas of her pleasure, the abodes of her vice; on fallen column or broken tablet, we read the story of her past victories, her mighty conquests, and standing beneath a crumbling triumphal arch, gaze on the sculptured figures of Jewish captives who once followed in an emperor's triumphal train, more enduring to-day with their stony faces than the ruined city which lies prostrate at their feet; for while Rome has passed away, the Jew still lives, he has been preserved and has multiplied. The Jews to-day number twelve millions of people; and these represent but two tribes out of the twelve; so that the two are four times as numerous as the whole nation when it came out of Egypt under Moses. Their vitality is phenomenal—it is miraculous—their multiplication is against all the laws and precedents of history. Persecution and trial have but increased their fecundity. Like the burning bush ever burning but never consumed, they continue to exist; and when you draw nigh and consider their strange story, out of the midst, as of old out of the bush, the voice of him who is the "I am, that I am" is heard saying—"These are my disobedient but covenant people, whom I have sworn shall be to me as the 'apple of mine eye'"; saying, "Whosoever toucheth them toucheth me."

It was foretold that in the closing hours of this age and as a prelude to their final restoration, they should bud and blossom and fill the face of the whole world with fruit.

If to-day you seek a representative person in every department of human genius and achievement, you will find that representative in a Jew.

The Bible testifies, and testified it centuries ago, that in the closing hours of this age, the Jews should turn

their faces towards Palestine and ask (or plead) their way to Zion.

The prophecy has been, and is being, fulfilled to the letter. The faces of thousands of Jews are being turned towards Palestine; thousands of Jews are asking how is it possible to return to Zion. Zionism has passed from the realm of dreams to the solid ground of fact. Everywhere over the earth societies are formed among the Jews to emphasize the return to Zion and the setting up of the Jewish State.

It was further foretold that many should return thither in radical unbelief and open materialism; that at the entering in of the gates of Jerusalem land should be bought and sold and speculation become rife.

To-day there are more Jews in Palestine than at any time since the return from Babylon. Land is bought and sold at the gates of the city, and speculation in real estate values is running high. There is the hum of expectation in the sacred city. Palestine is being colonized by Jews. The Turkish government has taken off the ban, the Jew is owned as a citizen and may become a representative in its administration. The deserted cities are being occupied. Millions of Mulberry trees are being planted, the desert and the waste places cultivated. The lowing of cattle and the bleating of sheep are heard once more. In Jerusalem, the wailing place of the Jews is more crowded than ever. The penitential psalms are recited, tears are shed and the cry goes up with keener lamentation that the city, beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, has become the prey of the Gentiles; that the walls are broken down, the holy places laid waste, "our holy and beautiful house," they cry, "where our fathers praised thee, is burned up with fire: and all our pleasant things are laid waste. Wilt thou refrain thyself for these things, O Lord? Wilt thou hold thy peace, and afflict us very sore?" And the prayer ascends with ever-increasing supplication that Jehovah will again make bare his arm in the sight of the Gentiles, build up the place of the holy assemblies, beautify Jerusalem and establish his people. Synagogues are built within the shadow of the sacred rock, the one-time threshing floor of Ornan, which David bought and whereon the holy temple stood. The latter as well as the former rains are falling. Everywhere it is evident that the land is reviving, and the thought of Judah as a kingdom and power among nations, finding utterance on the lips—both of Gentile and Jew.

And all this activity and Zionward movement taking place with the Jew in a condition of spiritual blindness, unbelief and godless materialism—as foretold. The very leaders of Zionism (some of them) the most outspoken in their repudiation of our Lord Jesus Christ as Messiah of Israel.

The Bible foretold that the Jews as a people would never receive the Gospel: "As concerning the gospel they are enemies for your sakes" (the Gentiles). On the other hand, it was announced that the Gentiles, who despise the Jews, should receive the Gospel, accept a rejected and crucified Jew as Israel's king, and own and acknowledge him as the redeemer and saviour provided for themselves.

This prophecy has been fulfilled.

For nineteen hundred years the Jew—as a Jew—has steadily rejected a crucified Christ. Here and there an individual, paying the penalty of scorn and contumely from his own people, has believed the Gospel and owned the crucified and despised man of Nazareth as his very Lord and God. He has done so according to that election of grace which the Bible foretells (an elect remnant is seen through all the ages, under one dispensation or another, responding to the call of God—like the seven thousand who would not bow the knee to Baal; and belonging to that election of grace the believing Jew stands out marked and sealed of God) but the Jew as a nation with unbroken solidarity refuses to-day the only Jew who can establish him in the land of his fathers and fulfil the covenant promises.

Equally fulfilled is the other side of the prophecy.

The Gentiles, who, racially considered, despise the Jew and everything of the Jew, to-day own and accept this rejected and crucified Jew of Calvary, not only as Israel's Messiah and king, but as the redeemer and saviour provided of God for Gentiles; so that the Gentile world now worships and adores him as very God, holding up the cross of his shame and death as the symbol of highest honor and most radiant glory.

The Bible has predicted the final characteristics of the present age in terms precise and clear.

By type, figure and direct prophecy it announces that the last *form* of government among the nations just previous to the Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ will be *democracy*—the rule of the people: "The government of the people, by the people, and for the people."

That prophecy practically has been fulfilled.

Democracy is, nearly, the universal mode of government. England in some respects is more democratic than the United States. France, Portugal and Switzerland are republics. Spain, Italy and Greece are constitutional monarchies; that is to say, the people are recognized as the ultimate authority. The Northern nations, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Holland and Belgium, are liberal kingdoms. The monarchy is simply a fashion—the people are the rulers. Germany is a military nation. The Kaiser, speaking at times as the war lord, gives the impression that he is absolute emperor. He is far from it. The socialists count their votes by millions, and while the German people accept the empire, they do so because it is the most satisfactory agent for their business and prosperity. The German people behind the throne are the absolute power; and the voice of democracy makes no more radical utterance and demand than in the German *kaiserreich*. Recently, in a public interview, the Kaiser is reported to have said, he expected his son to be the last emperor of Germany, as within fifty years the whole world would become democratic. Austria is still more or less under the influence of Cæsarism, but beneath the surface, the various peoples and nationalities constituting that empire are restless, feverish, and full of democratic ideas. Turkey has been shaken by a revolt of "The Young Turks," and the demand for more popular government. Japan has broken loose from the customs and traditions of centuries—her flag is the symbol of the rising sun, and indicates that she is seeking to take her place in the new dawn of popular sovereignty. China, the oldest civilization and the mightiest population, has become a republic, her young men returning from the universities of Europe and America having sown broadcast the seed of democracy and the claim of the people. Russia, alone, remains absolute in name, but the absolute has been shattered even there—it is supported only by bayonets and drawn swords. Every now and then a sullen sound is heard, dying away to be renewed in deeper tones; it is the voice of the people, in spite of the knout, the prison and Siberian exile, calling for what they claim to be their "rights."

Everywhere the evidence is manifest that the prophecy of Daniel announcing the rise of the "*clay*" (Daniel's symbol of the people) and the warning of Isaiah that "the nations should rush like the rushing of many waters," and "make a noise like the noise of the seas," are being fulfilled.

After "Clay," or Democracy, there remains only anarchy, or power in the hands of an absolute ruler. That

absolute, world-wide ruler is declared by all the prophets to be the Son of God, and his kingdom is symbolized by a *stone*—a stone is the very opposite of clay.

THE CLAY IS HERE!

Centuries ago the Bible declared that in the closing hours of this age the whole world would be under arms, preparing for a gigantic and final war; that each nation would turn itself into a vast army, and that the whole earth would become a military camp and field of manœuvre.

This prophecy is being fulfilled.

A universal preparation for war is going on with maddening haste. Nations are seeking to outdo each other in their colossal preparation for the approaching strife. Armies are no longer mere levies or hired cohorts, every man in the nation capable of bearing arms or in any wise doing military duty is enrolled, and must take his place as a soldier. During the summer immense armies move out of their barracks and play seriously the game of war. Each nation has its field manœuvres and theme of attack and defence. On every side is heard the tramp of marching feet, the sound of bugle call, the rumble of artillery, the sharp word of command.

Nations are vying with each other in the endeavor to cover the sea with the swiftest and most powerful battleships. Millions are being put into guns and ammunition. The money of the people is being poured out like water to obtain war material. Forges and foundries are working to turn out the most destructive implements. The arsenals are being gorged with cannon, with shot and shell. Enormous sums of money in gold are stored away in impregnable fortresses that, as the sinew of war, it may be ready to respond at a moment's notice. Never before in the history of the world has there been such a spectacle.

On land and sea men are silently, ceaselessly preparing for the irrepressible and impending conflict. Each nation feels its existence is at stake; not a thinking statesman who does not feel assured that, sooner or later, the clash will come. All feel it will be fierce, titanic, fateful and final.

The Bible foretold the great apostasy as manifested in the Roman Catholic Church, the rise of Protestantism, its ultimate breakdown in rationalism and open infidelity (that condition of which it should be said, "they will not endure sound doctrine"). It foretold the rising again of Romanism into the place of power and authority (as we see it to-day in the United States, where it holds the balance of political power and is fast becoming a social triumph).

Who would have had the hardihood to prophesy in the hour when Protestantism was delivering its terrible blows against Romanism, overturning the tables of the priests, who sold their infamous wares of papal indulgences, breaking idols and images in the churches, and driving the church of the priesthood, the mass and auricular confession swiftly downwards to the waters of the Mediterranean and, while it was repudiating this apostate church (which set up saints and images in the place of the Son of God, exalted works of merit instead of the cleansing power of the blood) continually cried aloud the glorious doctrine of justification by faith, and whose supreme watchword was—"The Bible and nothing but the Bible"; who, under such conditions as these, would have had the courage to proclaim that in the closing hours of this age, this aggressive and biblical Protestantism should break up by self-division, become fragmentary, its leading thinkers and teachers repudiating the Bible as the infallible Word of God? Who would have dared to say that Rome would come back, ascend into the place of authority, sit upon the throne of the world's respect and receive its honors? Who would have said that this church which has set itself up above the Bible, claimed the right to change times and seasons in defiance of a "thus saith the Lord," and has burned men at the stake for their love and devotion to this very Bible, should, at the last, by reason of the infidelity of Protestantism, its recognition of divorce and its indifference to a "thus saith the Lord," come forth as the defender of the Bible, the champion of the home and the guardian of the sacredness of marriage, concentrating all its thunders against the shame and indecency of divorce?

Yet these prophecies are written on page after page of this book, and their complete and amazing fulfilment looks us in the face.

What a picture is painted for us in the words that follow:

"This know, also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof."

"The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine: but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned to fables."

It is a picture which finds its counterpart in the Protestantism of to-day—a Protestantism full of worldliness, having a form of godliness, a great religious profession, but denying its only power (the Holy Ghost), repudiating doctrine and listening to every fable of rationalistic philosophy sooner than to the truth of God.

In the letter to the church at Thyatira it is written:

"That woman Jezebel which calleth herself a prophetess (a teacher) to teach and seduce my servants to commit fornication (fornication in the book of Revelation signifies idolatry—image worship and, also, union with the principles and ways of the world) and to eat things sacrificed unto idols."

Jezebel was the Pagan wife of Ahab, king of Israel. Jezebel stands for the union of Paganism and Judaism. But Jezebel here represents a professed church of Christ. In Jezebel, therefore, you have a professed church of Christ in which there is a combination of Paganism and Judaism. This symbolic Jezebel teaches the servants of Christ to commit fornication—that is, not only identification with the world, but idolatry (image worship).

In its full detail, then, we have a professed church of Christ in which may be found a mixture of Paganism and Judaism. A church where the professed followers of Christ are taught to worship by means of images.

Could you find a better, more accurate delineation of the apostate Church of Rome—a Church which borrows the priesthood of Judaism and the idolatry and image worship of Paganism?

In this book of the Revelation there is still another picture.

In the seventeenth chapter a woman is seen seated upon a scarlet colored beast. She is arrayed in purple and scarlet. She is decked with precious stones and pearls, and in her hand holds a golden cup full of the abomination and filthiness of her fornication (idolatry). She is seen to be drunken with the blood of the

martyrs of Jesus. The woman is, also, said to be seated on seven mountains and is, finally, spoken of as that great city which rules over the kings (nations) of the earth.

The woman is called "MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH."

In the twenty-fifth chapter of the book, the BRIDE OF THE LAMB, the true church of Christ, is symbolized by a city—THE NEW JERUSALEM. Babylon and Jerusalem stand always opposed to each other. Babylon is the centre of Satanic power and testimony—its name signifies mixture, confusion. Jerusalem is the centre of God's dealings and testimony—it signifies peace and righteousness. If, therefore, the city of New Jerusalem is a symbol of the true church of Christ and the church of Christ is called a "mystery," then this woman called Babylon, said to be a City and also called a "mystery," is a symbol of the *false* church of Christ; and, being a harlot, and the mother of harlots, or churches like herself (and thus the *Mother Church*), and harlot signifying fornication, and fornication, idolatry—image worship—then a professed Church of Christ, which teaches and practises image worship.

The great city ruling over the kings of the earth in John's day and situated on seven mountains, or "mounts," is ROME; as the city represents the woman Babylon who is the symbol of the false Church of Christ, then you have a false church of Christ seated (and remember, the word is "*seated*") in Rome. A Church seated in Rome is a *Roman Church*; and as the city rules over the earth, over the world; and a world-wide rule is a universal rule; and the word for universal, worldwide, is, also, "catholic," you have a catholic church; and, *seated* in Rome (Rome its capital centre), THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH.

This Church is said to be drunken with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus; and the pages of history glued together with the blood of these same martyrs, and the burning, blistering record of the "Holy Inquisition," affirm that the astounding picture is true in all its crimson and scarlet details.

But the striking feature in the picture, and the one that is first presented to us, is that the woman (the Church) is carried by a beast. This beast is a symbol of government and teaches that the Church "rules" over the governments of the world, is sustained by the State, has attained to "temporal power." As the picture occurs in the *third division* of the book, and that division relates to things still future, we have here a distinct prophecy that this Apostate Roman Church shall again attain to temporal power, become a State Church, supported and carried officially by the nations of the earth.

The exactitude with which the picture has been painted, and that, too, at a time when Rome had not yet come into the place of full-blown apostasy and power; the startling way in which, step by step, the prophetic outlines have been fulfilled even in our day, are tremendously suggestive concerning the possibility of its complete and final fulfilment; and bid us ask most earnestly—whence came the mental eyesight which enabled the writer of the book to sketch out for us centuries ahead of time, that which the page of after history reveals to us as facts?

The social, financial, governmental, religious and moral condition of the present time have been portrayed in the book we call the Bible. The coming of a special class called "rich" men as a particular characteristic of this age, the revolt of labor, and its cry against the wrongs of capital, were all set forth in the epistle of James, nigh two thousand years ago, with an accuracy that is not to be explained on natural grounds. So absolutely unnatural is it, that it is perfectly safe to say—these things are not such as a man *could* write if he *would*.

That the book is not to be explained on natural grounds is evident from the fact that it is not a CONSTRUCTION, but a GROWTH; not an ORGANIZATION, but an ORGANISM, growing up from Genesis to Revelation like a tree from root through trunk and branch to leaf and fruit.

Each book of the Bible will be found on examination to stand related organically to one another; and that each occupies its necessary and sequential order.

In *Genesis*, you have the beginning of things, the germ and outline of everything afterwards revealed.

*Exodus* gives the redemption by blood of a people foreseen and covenanted in Genesis, their deliverance by the hand of God from the power of the king and the dangers of the land.

In *Leviticus*, the redeemed people draw nigh to God by virtue of the blood of sacrifice and find access to the presence of God through the intercession of a priest.

In *Numbers*, this blood-redeemed people are seen on their journey to the better land; we read of their trials, their temptations, their unbelief, their backslidings and continual moral failure by the way, and the never-failing grace and love of a covenant-keeping God who leads them in a pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night.

In *Deuteronomy*, the people have the way over which they have come, and the dealings of God, rehearsed to them, and are instructed and prepared for the land whither they go.

In *Joshua*, the *second* generation (which stands always for regeneration) gets into the promised land.

*Judges* tells how, after being blessed with all covenant blessings in the covenant land, the people fell into a state where every man did that which was right "in his own eyes."

*Ruth*, the Gentile woman, becomes the bride of a Hebrew Lord; and the covenant promise of God concerning Israel goes straightway down from a Gentile mother and a Hebrew father towards the throne which is set up in David and owned of God as the throne of Christ.

The books of *Samuel*, *Kings* and *Chronicles*, take up the story of the kingdom, and the Old Testament leads us on through symbol, figure and open prophecy, to a Coming Messiah and a glorious kingdom till, when we reach the last verse in Malachi, we lean across four centuries of prophetic silence, waiting to greet that promised Christ who shall be born in Bethlehem; and who is to be called the Son of the Highest; who is to sit on the throne of his father David, "to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even forever."

We listen for the angelic song and the salutation to men of good will; and we are expecting, later on, to see Zion's king riding up the slopes to the Holy City and all the people coming forth to cry, "Hosanna to the Son of David," and "Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

When you open the New Testament you find four books—Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

The order of these books is fixed—it cannot be changed.

If *Mark* be substituted for *Matthew*, then the New Testament begins without an account of the birth or genealogy of our Lord Jesus Christ; no intimation is given that he is born king of the Jews, and is the expected Messiah.

If *Luke* be given the place of *Matthew*, little mention will be found of the Jewish kingdom of heaven; and our Lord will be seen with a leaning towards the Gentiles.

If the Gospel of *John* begin the New Testament instead of *Matthew*, then we shall read of him who is Son of God rather than King of the Jews, and the expectation raised by Malachi will seem unfulfilled.

But the moment the order named is followed all is perfect, all is harmony.

*Matthew* presents our Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of *Abraham* and Son of *David*; heir of the covenant land, and the covenant throne, and at once links the New Testament with the Old.

*Mark* announces that this King of the Jews came into the world to be the *Servant* of God and a blessing in his service to men.

*Luke*, although he announces our Lord Jesus Christ as King, sets him forth pre-eminently as *The Man*, going among men, eating and drinking with them, and speaking in such plain and simple terms that the "common people heard him gladly."

In *John*, this Jewish King, this Servant of God and men, this Man among men, who received sinners and ate with them, is revealed as the Mighty God, the eternal *Word*, the Holy One of Israel, who came down to visit his people, was made flesh and "tabernacled" among them, as of old he dwelt in the tabernacle of the wilderness in the Shekinah glory above the Mercy Seat and between the outstretched wings of the golden Cherubim.

Take away the book of *Acts*, and nothing can be known of the origin of the church and its apostolic history. Without the book of Acts the epistles are wholly unintelligible when they refer to the Church.

Do without the *Second* epistle to the *Corinthians*, and you have no revelation of the state of the Christian dead either as to their location or condition.

Without the *Second* epistle to the *Thessalonians* you cannot fix the identity of the Antichrist.

Leave out the epistle to the *Hebrews* and there is no key to *Leviticus*.

Without the book of *Daniel* it is impossible fully to understand the book of *Revelation*.

No matter at what period the book of *Revelation* may have been written, it can have but one place in the Bible, and that the last. It must have this place because it shows us the foreview of Genesis fulfilled: the seed of the woman has bruised the serpent's head, Satan has been bound and Paradise is regained.

The Old and New Testaments stand related to each other as the two halves of a perfect whole. In the Old Testament the New is *concealed*; in the New Testament the Old is *revealed*.

*Genesis* finds its key in the first chapter of *John's* Gospel, and identifies the creator of heaven and earth with him who was made flesh and dwelt among us as the Son of God.

*Exodus* is explained by the *First* epistle to the *Corinthians*, in which we learn that "Christ" is the "Passover sacrificed for us."

*Leviticus* is expounded by the epistle to the *Hebrews*.

*Numbers* has its correspondence in the book of *Acts*.

In *Numbers* you have the experience of the Children of Israel in their journey through the wilderness. In *Acts* we get the story of the Church in its pilgrimage through the world.

*Deuteronomy* is to be read with *Colossians*.

In *Deuteronomy* the people of Israel are being prepared for an earthly inheritance. In *Colossians* the Church is being prepared for a heavenly inheritance.

*Joshua* stands over against *Ephesians*.

In *Joshua* the redeemed people have to fight with flesh and blood in order to possess the covenant land. In *Ephesians* "we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against wicked spirits in the heavenly places."

*Judges* may be understood by reading the *first* chapter of the *first* epistle, and the *twelfth* chapter of the *second* epistle to the *Corinthians*.

The book of *Ruth* is illuminated by the *third* and *fifth* chapters of the *Ephesians*.

In *Ruth* you have the Gentile bride of a Hebrew Lord, the kinsman, redeemer and advocate; who presents his bride to himself in the gate before all the assembled judges.

In *Ephesians*, the Gentile Bride is seen to be the Church, the kinsman, redeemer and advocate, our Lord Jesus Christ, who, having loved the Church and given himself for it, will "present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing."

The books of *Samuel*, *Kings* and *Chronicles*, may be read with the four *Gospels* and the book of *Revelation*.

In *Samuel*, *Kings* and *Chronicles*, you have the story of David, the anointed king, man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, triumphant warrior, exalted king—Solomon, prince of peace, ruling over the established kingdom and the queen of Sheba coming from the uttermost parts of the earth to own and celebrate his glory.

In the Gospels we get the story of our Lord Jesus Christ as anointed king and man of sorrows. In *Revelation* he is seen coming forth at the head of the armies of heaven, a mighty warrior, a triumphant king and, at the last, as Prince of Peace ruling in splendor over his established kingdom; while the Gentiles, coming from the uttermost parts of the earth to Jerusalem, bow the knee before him and acknowledge his glory.

*Ezra* may be read with the latter half of the *second* chapter of the *Ephesians*.

In *Ezra* you have the building of the material temple. In *Ephesus* the building of the spiritual temple.

*Nehemiah* can be read with the twenty-first chapter of the *Revelation*.

*Nehemiah* gives us Jerusalem below. *Revelation*, Jerusalem above.

In the book of *Esther* the name of God is not once mentioned; but it shows us the unseen God acting in his secret providence to deliver his covenant people, the Jews, from the hand of the Gentile oppressor, and setting them in the place of authority and power over the Gentiles.

The *eleventh* chapter of the *Romans* explains the book of *Esther*.

In the eleventh chapter Paul shows that God has not forgotten the people whom he foreknew. The nation as such has been set aside. It is now, as Hosea says, *Lo Ammi*, "not my people," not the people of God.

An election according to grace is going on among the Jews. These are being called into the Church and will form a part of the Body and Bride. The Gentiles have come dispensationally into the place of Israel, and God is sending his Gospel among them—calling out those whom he has foreseen and known among the Gentiles. The nation as such would seem to be cast aside. The people are walking in darkness and the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their true God and only Saviour, is not owned among them; but while the Lord is thus denied by

them, he has not forgotten them. His providences are round about them in their preservation and multiplication, and in his judgment of the nations which persecute them. Their present condition nationally is temporary. Paul warns the Gentiles that the Jews have been cut off and set aside because of unbelief. The Gentiles have been brought in, and stand alone by faith. It is well for them not to be "high-minded," but "to fear"; for so surely as God spared not the nation and set it aside because of unbelief, just so surely will he deal with the Gentiles if the Gentiles fall into unbelief.

The Gentiles must not be wise in their own conceits. The blindness and the setting aside of Israel will last only till the "fulness of the Gentiles be come in," that is, till the election among them is complete; then the Lord will take up Israel as a nation again, and precisely as he delivered Mordecai and the Jews of Esther's and Ahasuerus' time and made them to be accepted and feared, so, it is written, the Lord himself will come forth in behalf of his ancient people. "There shall come out of (unto) Sion the Deliverer," and, "so all Israel shall be saved."

The book of Esther read in the light of the eleventh chapter of the Romans is illuminating as to the unchanging faithfulness of God and his unceasing love for the nation and people of his choice.

Thus book after book of the Bible may be studied; and the more they are examined and studied, the more manifest will be the intimate relation and marvellous correspondence between the Old and the New Testaments.

When you realize the fact that these Old and New Testament books, so remarkably related and inter-explanatory of each other, have been written by different authors, without possibility of collusion or agreed plan; that each part fits into the other; that it cannot have one book less or one book more; that to take from it would destroy the completeness, to add would mar the harmony; that it is perfect in itself, having the key of each book hung up at the entrance; that it gives but never borrows light; that it cannot be explained or interpreted outside of itself; that to him who diligently searches it, it will reveal itself and make him wise both for this world and for that which is to come; when all these facts are faced, it ought to be evident that in the Bible we have a living thing and not a mere handiwork wrought by man; that man can no more claim to be the actual author of it than of the mountains that are round about Jerusalem or the heavens that are high above them.

The unity of a book demands unity of objective.

This book has a great objective—a supreme theme.

That theme is not Israel—although two-thirds of the book considered as a whole are taken up with the history of that people. The great theme is not the Church of Christ—although the Church in this age is the supreme thing in the sight of God. The one great theme, the one immense objective of this book towards which it moves through history and prophecy, through figure and symbol, through self-sustained prose and musical song—the one great objective is—

OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

It seeks to present him in his person, his work, his present office and coming glories.

It sets him before us as,

The Child born.

The Son given.

The Counsellor.

The Mighty God.

The Prince of Peace.

The Everlasting Father.

The Lily of the valleys.

The Rose of Sharon.

The Branch.

The Lord our Righteousness.

The Lord's Fellow.

The Man of God's Right hand.

He whose Goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.

The Burnt Offering.

The Meat Offering.

The Peace Offering.

The Sin Offering.

The Trespass Offering.

The Sum of God's Thoughts.

The Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief.

Son of Abraham.

Son of David.

Son of Mary.

Son of Man.

God the Son.

King of the Jews.

King of Israel.

King of Kings.

Lord of Lords.

God the Creator.

God manifest in the flesh.

The Second Man.

The Last Adam.

The First and the Last.

The Beginning and the Ending.

The Way, the Truth, the Life.

The Light of the world.

The Bread of life.

The Good Shepherd, who lays down his life for the sheep.  
The Great Shepherd who came again from the dead.  
The Chief Shepherd, who shall appear with his flock in glory.  
The Sin-bearer.  
The Rock.  
Our Great God and Saviour Jesus Christ.  
He who is.  
He who was.  
He who is to come.  
He who before Abraham was, is, by his own announcement, the "I am."  
The Almighty.  
THIS SAME JESUS.

And to these might be added more than five hundred other names and titles, together with their cognates, to say nothing of the various characteristics assigned him, the things predicated of him, until it is found that he is the very warp and woof of the book.

To proclaim him, exalt him, make him known, set him forth in his many roles, his functions, his offices and his covenant glories, prophets recite their visions, a Psalmist sings his rarest songs, and apostles unfold their matchless doctrines.

When you contemplate the fact of this one objective; this tremendous unity of intention in the book, you have an overwhelming demonstration of the unity of its inspiration. Whether the inspiration be a true or a false one, it is beyond all question one inspiration. A book whose construction extends over centuries, written by men separated by time and distance from each other, with no possibility of personal or mental relation to each other—all writing to one objective—and that to set forth the Christ of God in his varied relations—a book with such a unity of purpose demonstrates in the most self-evident fashion that the writers were moved by a common impulse and, therefore, a common inspiration.

And this unity of objective and inspiration coordinates with the wonderful fact that the book has but ONE KEY.

The key which can alone open this book and make every line intelligible from Genesis to Revelation is Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Take Christ out of the Bible and it is a harp without a player, a song without a singer, a palace with all the doors locked, a labyrinth with no Ariadne thread to guide.

Put Christ into the Bible, and the harp strings will be smitten as with a master's hand.

Put Christ into the Bible, and the voice of song is heard as when a lark from the midst of dew-wet grasses sings, as it soars aloft to greet the coming dawn.

Put Christ into the Bible, and all the doors of the palace are swung open and you may pass from room to room, down all the ivory galleries of the King, beholding portrait and landscape, vista of beauty and heaped-up treasures of truth, of infinite love and royal grace.

Put Christ into the Bible, and you will have a scarlet thread—the crimson of the blood—that will lead you through all the winding ways of redemption and glory.

Put Christ into Genesis, into the verses of the first chapter, and it will chime like silver bells in harmony with the wondrous notes in the first chapter of the Gospel of John, and tell you that he who created the heavens and the earth is he who in the beginning was the eternal Word, the voice of the infinite silence, and who, creating for himself a human nature, and clad in mortal flesh, walked on earth among the sons of men as Jesus of Nazareth.

Put Christ into the twenty-second, the twenty-third and the twenty-fourth chapters of Genesis, and you will have placed before you in perfect type the birth of Christ, the sacrifice, the resurrection on the morning of the third day, the setting aside of the Jewish nation as the first wife, the coming of the Holy Spirit in the name of the Father and the Son to find a Bride for the Son, the calling out of the church, the endowment of the church with the gifts sent from the Father in the name of the Son, the pilgrimage of the church under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the Second Coming of Christ, the Rapture and meeting of Christ and the church in the "field" of the air, and the marriage of the Son.

Put Christ into the driest and dullest page of the book of Kings and Chronicles, and it will bloom with light and glory; and if you watch in faith, you will see the King's chariot go by, and catch a vision of the King himself in his beauty.

Put Christ into the Tabernacle, and it will cast its treasures like a king's largess at your feet.

You will see the brazen altar to be the cross, the brazen laver, the bath of regeneration, even the Word of God. In the Holy Place the table of shew bread will speak of him who once said, "I am the bread of life." The golden candlestick will remind you that he said: "I am the light of the world." The golden altar and the priest with his swinging censer of burning incense standing thereat will proclaim him as the great high priest. The beautiful veil of fine linen embroidered with figures of the cherubim in blue, purple and scarlet color is (according to a direct Scripture) the symbol of his flesh, his mortal humanity while on earth. Every board and bar, every cord and pin, the coverings, the curtains, the blue, the purple and the scarlet color, the golden vessels as well as the furniture, each and all, proclaim him, illustrate and illuminate him in his person, his work, his present office and coming glories.

All these are analogies, types, pictures, are so related to Christ that he alone explains them; the explanation is filled with such perfection of harmony in every detail, the relation between them and our Lord Jesus Christ as the Antitype is so strikingly self-evident, that any discussion of it would be useless.

When you find a key and lock which fit each other, you conclude they were intended for each other.

In the light of facts already cited, what other conclusion can be drawn than that Christ and the Bible were intended for each other?

And when you see this Bible coming together part by part, foretelling the Christ and explained alone by him, what sane conclusion is possible other than the book which is opened and explained by him who is not only the Christ but the Personal Word of God, *must be*, and *is*, THE WRITTEN WORD OF GOD!

Let your mind dwell for a moment on the style of the book.

It is so simple that a child may understand it; so profound, that the mightiest intellect cannot go beyond its

depths. It is so essentially rich that it turns every language into which it is translated into a classic. At one moment it is plain narration; at another, it is all drama and tragedy, in which cataclysmic climax crashes against climax.

It records the birth of a babe, the flight of an angel, the death of a king, the overthrow of an empire or the fall of a sparrow. It notes the hyssop that groweth out of the wall and speaks of the cedars of Lebanon. It shows us so pastoral a thing as a man sitting at his tent door in the cool of the day, and then paints for us a city in heaven with jasper walls, with golden streets, and where each several gate that leadeth into the city is one vast and shining pearl.

It is full of outlines—outlines as large and bare as mountain peaks, and then it is crowded with details as minute as the sands of the sea. There are times when clouds and darkness float across its pages and we hear from within like unto the voice of him who inhabiteth eternity; in another moment the lines blaze with light, the revelation they give is high noon—and all the shadows are under the feet.

It is terrible in its analysis and cold and emotionless in the hard impact of its synthesis. It describes moments of passion in passionless words, and states infinite conclusions without the hint of an emphasis. It shows us a man in hell (hades) and, although it describes sufferings more awful than mortal flesh can know, causing the soul to shudder at the simple reading of it, it takes on no quickened pulse, no feverish rush of added speech.

In a few colorless lines it recounts the creation of the heavens and the earth. In language utterly barren of excitement it describes the most exciting and soul-moving event that can occupy the imagination—that moment when the heavens shall be on fire, the elements melted with fervent heat, the earth and the works therein burned up, and a new heaven and a new earth brought into view.

It is a book of prose and yet a book of sublimest poetry.

The book of Job is a poem by the side of which the hexameters of Horace, the drama of Shakespeare, the imagination of Milton, are not to be compared.

In all literature the book of Job alone introduces a spirit into the scene and reports its speech without utterly breaking down into the disaster of the commonplace.

Listen to the account which Eliphaz the Temanite gives. He says:

“In thoughts from the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth on men, Fear came upon me, and trembling which made all my bones to shake.”

Then a spirit passed before my face; the hair of my flesh stood up; It stood still, but I could not discern the form thereof; an image was before mine eyes; there was silence, and I heard a voice, saying, “Shall mortal man be more just than God? Shall man be more pure than his Maker?”

Here is the threshold of the unseen. Before he sees or hears anything, the Temanite has the sense of fear—the fear of something more than human. The unknown weighs upon him and presses him down, all the life and energy in him are at low ebb—he feels as though the tides of life were running out. A spirit passes before his face. It is like a breath of scarcely moving air out of the night. The hair of his flesh (mark the psychological and physiological fact), the hair of his flesh stood up. It was as if a current of electricity had passed through him. Then the spirit stands still. It is as though this breath of air out of the night were no longer moving. He cannot discern any form. There is nothing fixed or stable enough for him to perceive. An image is before his eyes. He makes no vulgar attempt to describe it—it is indescribable. There is a great silence; then, as the margin has it, he heard a still small voice—not a loud and jarring voice—but a voice low, soft, still; and yet! the utterance of that voice! what immensity of self-conscious power what authority and dignity—the dignity of infinite integrity: “Shall mortal man be more just than God? Shall man be more pure than his Maker?”

How the night is full of a sudden law of proportion. Mortal man and eternal God. You feel the distance widening and widening between them there in the stillness of the night. The justice of man! man! the unjust—the law breaker; man, who is of yesterday and is gone to-morrow—mortal man, more just than he of whom it is said, “Justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne.” Fallen man, man full of iniquity, shall he be more pure than he who made him; he who breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and made him a living soul; he whose name is holiness and righteousness and very truth? As the question lingers man shrivels and sinks into the dust, and the whole night is filled with stillness—with the stillness and immensity of the all-pervading and holy God.

Read the thirty-eighth and thirty-ninth chapters.

They record the highest reaches of human language, so great that our own version cannot dim their splendor. Nothing ever written surpasses them, not only in the felicity of expression, but in the sense of deity pervading them. Each succeeding verse sustains the other and, at the last, you feel that God, very God, indeed, has spoken.

The Almighty answers the complaining Job.

He answers him, not out of the midst of a deep, unbroken calm, but out of the whirlwind; and yet, from the centre of that mighty vortex of unlimited force and energy and power, the voice comes forth with the calmness of one who knows himself superior to the whirlwind and the storm.

“Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?”

This is the abrupt and sudden question. It is the fitting question of him who knoweth the end from the beginning. In the very asking of it all the boasted knowledge, the attainment, the self-consciousness and vanity of man fade away, and man himself is as nothing—God alone remains upon the vision—all knowing—all wise—supreme.

This Bible is a book of history.

It will spend page after page in describing the doings of a rebellious king, and then compress the story of twenty-five hundred years into a few dozen lines, but will do this in such a way, by means of exact symbols, that the twenty-five centuries thus compressed will reveal a clearer outline and fuller vista than thousands of ordinary volumes could set forth in detail.

Mark the providence that has guarded the book.

Kings and potentates have sought to destroy it. It has been thrown into the flames. Volume after volume has been burned. But always, and at the critical moment, some copy has been preserved—here in the cottage of a devoted peasant at the risk of his life, hidden in the crevice of a rock from the inquisitor’s search, or cast aside by a careless hand and forgotten amid a pile of swept up dust in a neglected corner of some



impregnable castle; from whence it has come forth to be copied by slow and painful, yet loving, toil, passed from house to house secretly as a priceless treasure, then printed on concealed presses and at last cast forth as living and fruitful seed.

Men have denounced it and demonstrated that it is false both in history and science; then, unexpectedly, the stroke of a pick or the turn of a shovel uncovers some startling witness of its exact truth and the excuseless folly of those who deny it.

The fourteenth chapter of Genesis has been set aside by the critics as historically worthless. The excavations in Babylon have brought to light a tablet with the name of Arioch, the fourth king mentioned in that chapter, stamped upon it.

The statement in Exodus that Pharaoh forced the Children of Israel while building his treasure cities to make bricks without straw, has been treated as a fable. The treasure chambers themselves have been found, the rooms divided by brick partitions eight to ten feet thick—and great quantities of these bricks *made without straw*.

Luke says that Sergius Paulus was pro-consul of Cyprus. The critics denied it and proved thereby the fallibility of the New Testament.

The homely but truth-telling spade, and without consulting the critic, dug up some coins in the island of Cyprus itself, and on the coins were stamped both the image and the name of Sergius Paulus.

Luke declares that Lysannius was tetrarch of Abilene; and again the critics denied it and more than ever discounted Luke as an historian.

Renan, the plausible and analytical infidel, read the record carved on the stones of Baalbeck, and announced, openly, that Luke is correct.

From the ruins of Nineveh and Babylon, Tyre and Sidon; from the trenches of Tel el Armana; by the key words of the Rosetta stone and the black but speaking face of the Moabite stone; from newly discovered papyri and parchment, and the mystic page of cracked and crumpled palimpsest; from the rocks of earth, the depths of the sea and the heights of heaven—and from the latest discoveries of science, there arise amazing witnesses, which speak in tones that cannot be hushed, with facts that cannot be denied, and bear testimony beyond all possibility of dispute to the truth and accuracy of the book; so much so, indeed, that such an one as Sir John Herschell, the great astronomer, has said: "All human discoveries seem to be made only for the purpose of confirming more and more strongly the truths contained in the Sacred Scriptures."

Consider the vitality of the book.

In less than ten years a text-book is out of date, a cyclopedia worthless, and a library a cemetery of dead books and dead ideas; but this book keeps living right on—keeps abreast of the times, has a testimony for every day, and every day borrows its youth afresh as from the womb of the morning.

Science has laughed it out of court. Two hundred and fifty years ago Voltaire said: "Fifty years from now the world will hear no more of the Bible." Self-elected scholarship has pronounced it out of date and dead. Again and again its funeral services are held. Kind and condescending eulogiums are uttered over its past history and its good intent. With considerate hands it is lowered into its grave. The *resquiescat in pace* is solemnly pronounced and lo! before the critical mourners have returned to their homes it has risen from the dead, passed with surprising speed the funeral coaches, and is found—as of yore—in the busy centres of life, thundering against evil, revealing the secrets of the heart, offering consolation to the sorrowing, hope to the dying, and flashing forth from its quivering, vital pages the wonders of coming glory.

While copies of the classics—Virgil, Xenophon, Cæsar, Sophocles, Pindar and Martial—are to be counted by a few thousands, and are cast aside by students as soon as they have graduated, and are forgotten in a twelvemonth, this Bible goes on printing every year millions of copies in all languages and dialects of earth; so far from casting it aside, when once read, men take it up and read it again and again, study it through life, dig into it as for hid treasure, and make it the pillow on which to lay their dying head.

With each succeeding year the demand for it increases and voices are continually crying—give us *The Book*.

It is the supreme book.

It is the book we need when the fire of sin gleams in our eye and its poison burns in our veins. It is the book we need when the heart is sore, when our soul is troubled, and when peace is no longer a guest in our home.

It is the book we need; for from its pages alone do we behold the light which shines from a Saviour's empty grave; from its pages alone do we receive assurance of the resurrection of the dead, of immortality and the life to come; and from its pages alone do we hear the tender and welcoming words which seek to greet us and to comfort us while we struggle here oftentimes beneath the burden's growing weight, those words of heavenly music: "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest."

What author on earth would think his book dead and out of date if year after year the publication of it taxed the printing presses of the world? What author would deem his book out of date when the voices of everywhere proclaimed it the book of books, and multitudes unnumbered confessed that from its pages alone they found the way of life and peace?

Such a book is neither out of date nor dead; and its throbbing vitality tells of a life impulse and inspiration that are not of man.

And, finally,

This book inspires men for God.

Every year books on morality and essays on conduct are written and published. They get as far as a first edition and are never heard of again; but this book, which binds all its parts about the person, the work, the office and the glories of Christ, changes the life, the character, the time and the eternity of men.

Place this book in the midst of the vilest and most abandoned community of desperate and devilish men and, sooner or later, you will hear a cry coming from the depths of sin and shame, bitter cries of repentance and yearnings after God; and by and by that community will be transformed, men will no longer be demon filled, but possessed with a spirit of truth and love; and God will be found to reign and rule in the midst.

Whatever there is of sweetness and truth and righteousness in the world to-day; whatever there is that gives hope and comfort on earth and holds men back from very madness and despair, is due directly and indirectly to this book.

Take up a map and find the lands where sin and vice skulk in the darkness; where virtue is honored and purity enthroned; go mark on the map the lands where the men are the most manly and the women the most womanly, and you will find it in those lands where the Bible is exalted, not as the word of man, but, in deed and truth, as the Word of God.

Find the men and women who know most of God, who have the deepest consciousness of him in the soul, and who walk every day with the assurance of his *real presence*—to whom the unseen becomes from hour to hour the thing that is alone real—and who live as kings above their prostrate passions—and they will be those who make this book the supreme authority in their daily lives; who hear it when it speaks to them as the very voice of God.

A book which thus inspires men *for* God is, indeed, a book which, by every law of logic, must have been inspired *by* God.

From the evidence cited two things are apparent:

1. The Bible is not such a book as a man *would* write if he *could*.
2. The Bible is not such a book as a man *could* write if he *would*.

By these conclusions, therefore, the Bible is shown to be *not of man*.

As the book is thus shown to be not of man—either by inclination or ability; and as from the beginning to the end its object is to glorify the unseen God in the revelation of his incarnate Son, then this book *is of God*; and being the utterance of his mind and will, is his Word; so that the statement of the apostle concerning it is justified. It is to be received as he says: “Not as the word of man, but as it is in truth, THE WORD OF GOD.”

To him who so approaches it—who puts his shoes from off his feet as on holy ground, and with the silence of expectant faith listens and looks, it will disclose itself, speak to him, and so lay hold of the inner recesses of the heart that he shall know he has been face to face with God, has had glimpses of the delectable mountains and the city foursquare that lies beyond; from henceforth he shall walk, not as one in a vain show or in the mixing of darkness and light, but where the night shineth as the day; where the road is no longer paved with the stumbling stones of doubt, nor the signboards filled with a guess, but where the way leadeth on and up—shining more and more bright unto the perfect day.

Take up this book, O friend. Do not read it with a hurried glance. Let thine eyes rest a while upon some single word, and if thou art patient, it will bud and blossom and bloom and grow unto thee as a tree of life; and the leaves shall be as medicine for the healing of thy hurt. Take it into thy mouth and learn a lesson from the meadow kine who chew the tender grasses, and turn them over, and chew them again, till they have extracted sweetness and life therefrom. Chew the words of this book over and over again (it is impossible to do so with any other book), meditate upon the words (to meditate, to reflect, are highest functions), mediate upon their meaning—upon their direct and cognate meanings; let the thoughts they suggest find full and free reaction in thy soul, and from some simple word or phrase thou shalt draw the sweetness of divine love, and more and more the consciousness that thou hast received into thine innermost being very spirit and very life.

Read it on bended knee. Take up the words and breathe on them with the warm breath of sincere desire to know their intent, and music will come forth as from the fabled horn of old—music that shall have in it all the hallelujahs and hosannas of the heavenly host.

If you will take this book to your heart, you will find it bread such as kings' ovens never baked, water more crystal than that which bursts from mountain springs, wine the like of which was never pressed from purple grapes, meat which cattle on a thousand hills never furnished, and fruit no man ever gathered in royal gardens—the fruit of the Spirit. You will find it a lamp unto your feet and a light unto your path, a hammer for breaking the flinty rocks by the way, a fire that will burn out the stain of sin, and warm benumbed fingers for quickened service in His Name.

Give it the first place in your life. You will want to hear from it as the last thing when you go hence. The words of loved ones will be sweet in your ear as you leave these mortal shores (if our Lord Jesus Christ should not hasten his coming, you must go), but you will want to hear its utterance above all the tones, even of those you love, speaking the final word of hope and cheer to you.

Be very patient with it. It has great things to say to you—and you will not always be fit to hear them. You will not always—at the first—be able to understand them; but if you do not understand to-day, to-morrow, or other morrows after that, it will speak to you and you shall fully know. Perhaps it will wait till the unshed tears are in your heart, and the moan the common ear has never heard—then it will speak—and the words will fall into the sore place of the soul, as though angel lips had touched it; it will wait, perhaps, till the storm is high, and your frail craft (life's poor, frail craft) is tossed as though it would go down in the whelming waters (and the shore so far away), and then it will speak and say, “Peace—be still,” and in that driven life of yours shall be a great and holy calm.

Do not attempt to cross-question it as though you hesitated to believe all it said. To accept some parts and reject others will be fatal to you. God does not reveal himself to those who doubt him. He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is the rewarder of all them that diligently seek him. So must you approach this book—with reverence and submissive faith; for this book, O friend! is not the word of man, but in very truth—THE WORD OF GOD.

\*\*\* END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK CHRIST, CHRISTIANITY AND THE BIBLE \*\*\*

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