

THE PHILOSOPHY OF
CHRISTIAN BEING

WALTER E. BRANDENBURG

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being



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BY

WALTER E. BRANDENBURG, A.M.



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TO THE MEMORY OF
MY FATHER,
NOW IN HEAVEN, WHO READ WITH
SUPREME SATISFACTION MOST
OF THE MANUSCRIPT, AND
WHO WAS DEEPLY IN-
TERESTED IN THE
SUBJECTS HERE-
IN DISCUSSED

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INTRODUCTION

Christianity has fundamentals. They are the cardinal doctrines relating to Jesus Christ. Destroy belief in any of them, and all are reduced to devitalized formulas of thinking and living.

One of these fundamentals, central to all, is the resurrection of Jesus. Without his resurrection, sin has no atonement, and there is no hope for our dead. Christianity itself is supported by false witnesses, as declared by the Apostle Paul.

Co-related to that subject are the incarnation, doctrine of the Holy Spirit, the death and ascension of Christ. These have been presented so many times in familiar form that their attractiveness is sicklied over. A fresh presentation from the scientific viewpoint by sound reasoning will do good.

The chapters of this volume have been constructed out of sermonic material, begotten by a yearning desire to convince doubters, answer disbelievers, and confirm Disciples of Christ. To render this threefold service, the author submits facts, quotes utterances of thinkers, applies Scripture and argues to logical conclusions from the premises he submits.

INTRODUCTION

An empty tomb at Jerusalem was the objective for which the Crusaders in their zealous struggles under mighty leaders like Godfrey and Richard Cœur de Lion battled. The possession of that empty tomb could make no contribution to the world's thought or salvation. The living, regnant Christ who emerged from that tomb as Conqueror of Death alone can lead the world's forces to victory. His resurrection accounts for its emptiness.

Mr. Brandenburg's trained mind, ardent love of research and genuine motive to serve make his book worthy of study.

I. N. McCASH,
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Enid, Oklahoma.

PREFACE

The author, in his study of Philosophy, came to the conclusion that the distance made to appear between Christian teaching on the one hand and philosophy on the other was largely imaginary. He felt that many who had written in one or the other of these realms of thought had done so with too little regard to the principles and teaching in the other; that the tendency of this policy, in the reaches of the years, had resulted in an almost complete separation of two kindred and very closely related branches of learning. This situation had produced an impression among college professors and students generally that philosophy was a thing of the utmost importance, while Christian teaching was of little consequence, and that in all matters where there was conflict or seeming conflict, the voice and authority of philosophy was to be given the preference.

Thus no little injustice had been wrought upon both these branches of learning, for while philosophy seemed to have the advantage, yet that very condition made it a thing that was held in suspicion by large numbers of Christian people. Many seem to have the impression that if one is to study philosophy to any extent, his usefulness

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in the ministry will thereby be diminished, if not entirely destroyed. On the other hand, there are those, not a few in number, who hold that for one not to study philosophy would mean, not only that he is limited in his range of thought, but that he is limited also in his ability to think.

The writer soon came to the conviction that neither one of these two realms of thought has a monopoly upon any fundamental principle and its related truths; that in so far as philosophy is true, its truths are *universal truths*. But the truths of Christianity are likewise *universal truths*. This fact, therefore, relates these two realms of thought inseparably. Hence, any classification of knowledge that makes it appear otherwise is arbitrary, and not real. Furthermore, all such classification is apt to be detrimental, rather than helpful, to the gaining of real knowledge. In the author's view, all fundamental principles, with all related truths, should be but bridges, spanning the seeming chasms between any two or more realms of human thought.

It has appeared to him that philosophy could fittingly act as a background upon which to paint the great fundamental doctrines of Christianity; that this should be done by bringing into bold relief the doctrine of the Incarnation, the death and resurrection, the ascension and coronation, the incarnation of the Spirit, the beginning of the church, the law of its growth, and so forth,—these great first facts which were the soil whence

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Christianity sprang. Set in this relationship, neither philosophy nor Christianity would suffer, but both would be strengthened inherently, and would enjoy a degree of confidence which probably neither has at the present.

This little volume has been designed in response to the earnest solicitation of many colleagues, student friends, and Christian workers in all phases of religious work, to whom much of the subject matter has been presented in conferences, ministerial institutes, and convention addresses. The volume is sent forth in the hope and belief that all students in colleges and universities, who are preparing for the ministry or other lines of church work, will find in it a mine of suggestiveness if taken either as a brief course or in connection with regular courses in theology and philosophy. The book, with the possible exception of the chapter on philosophy, will be found to be so simple in its presentation of the various themes discussed as to be readily understood by any and all who may have been troubled with misgivings upon some of the great basic facts of Christianity. It is, therefore, recommended to all Sunday School teachers and workers, all ministers in active service of the church, all Young Men's Christian Association secretaries and their classes and to all others who wish for a deeper and clearer understanding of the fundamental truths of Christianity, as these truths may relate themselves to any true philosophy.

THE AUTHOR.

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I

THE PHILOSOPHIC BASIS FOR THE BEGINNING OF CHRISTIANITY

In attempting a discussion of so lofty a theme as the above, a writer naturally feels his unpreparedness in the field of philosophy as well as his unworthiness to deal with so glorious a period of Christianity as its beginning. Yet, in an age of material allurements, unscientific rationalism and unintellectual infidelity, if one could, by philosophic conclusions, cause a ripple in the already somewhat troubled waters of the stream of human thought in its onward flow, one would certainly feel amply rewarded.

Philosophy we shall understand in its usual meaning:

“Philosophy is a search for a comprehensive view of nature, an attempt at a universal explanation of things. It is both the summary of the sciences and their completion; both general science and a speciality distinguished from science proper; and, like its elder sisters, religion and poetry, forms a separate branch among the manifestations of the human mind.”¹

¹ WEBER — *History of Philosophy*; p. 1.

“But philosophy publishes results which claim to be universally valid if they are valid at all.”²

“Science is partially unified knowledge; philosophy is completely unified knowledge.”³

Christianity shall mean for us, in time, a life of internal peace and intense activity, resulting from one's being brought into right relationship with God through Jesus Christ, and which brings one, in eternity, into his complete self and into full harmony with his Creator. It is seen at once that the idea of Christianity differs from the ordinary definition or idea of religion, as such, by a difference as great as there is between the living voice, or the touch or companionship of a divinely energized individual on the one hand, and the cold, lifeless, abstract reasonings and experiences of a frail finite being on the other. Or in other words, any definition of Christianity that would leave out the Christ idea would not necessarily differ from the generally received idea of religion.

We are dealing with Christianity. So that our field necessarily limits itself. Not taking into account that vast field of religious experiences or of philosophic speculations on natural religion, only in so far as these may serve in the solution of the problem before us, namely, the application of philosophic reasoning to Christianity, in order to discover the basis for its beginning. It will

² JAMES — *Varieties of Religious Experiences*; p. 430.

³ SPENCER — *First Principles*; p. 119.

be seen that our problem further limits and simplifies itself by the fact that we are to discuss Christianity with respect to its *beginning* and not to its history. So that whether as applied to Christianity, politic or individual, our discussion need only cover a comparatively short period of time. If the application be with respect to the beginning of Christianity on the earth, then the problem is politic and would necessitate a careful scrutinizing of the phenomena in producing the first Christian. And if the application be with respect to the beginning of the Christian life in the individual, then the discussion turns upon that portion of the individual's life in which he is becoming a Christian. The problem, then, as I understand it, lies in these two fields. For the present, I think this sufficient as to the limitations of the subject. And yet, I am sure that further on we shall have to make this still more explicit.

Now as to the philosophic instruments which are at our hand and are for our use in this undertaking we may need to take every precaution, both in the selection of the instrument and also in its use; for a mistake here may result in taking the life of the very thing which we would restore to philosophic soundness. The question naturally arises, then, are we to accept out of the many some ready made philosophic instrument to the exclusion of all others? And if so, which one? Or are we to accept and use them

all; each in its turn as it may suit our fancy, or serve our purpose? If these different philosophic instruments were but so many component parts of the apparatus of one great philosophical laboratory, then prudence would suggest the latter. But since each instrument claims to be complete in and of itself, the second alternative is not open to us. Then as a third alternative, shall we thrust all these instruments into the crucible of human thought and recast them, separating all the alloy, and bring forth the instrument with which to perform this most delicate and no less important operation? This were too great an undertaking. The writer lays no claim to originality in the production of this instrument. If there is any merit or novelty in this undertaking, it is in the skill with which the ready made instrument is applied to the subject in hand. Hence, it is the former of the three alternatives that is open to us at this time.

Professor Josiah Royce, in the first series of his Gifford lectures, delivered in the University of Aberdeen, entitled "The World and The Individual," presents and discusses what he terms "The Four Historical Conceptions of Being." After a vigorous examination of three of these conceptions; viz.,—Realism, Mysticism and Critical Rationalism, in which Mr. Royce shows the weakness of any one, or all three, of these to fully satisfy and explain the phenomena of being, he presents what he terms the "Fourth Concep-

tion of Being." This is not wholly different from all of these other conceptions, but to me it seems to contain all of the elements of strength found in the other conceptions, and also to be void of many of the weaknesses which are so apparent in the other theories of being.

Of course it is not my intention to discuss or contrast these theories, for this would require a volume, not only materially but mentally as well; and while I could probably furnish the former, I do not claim the latter. I shall say, therefore, that, in the main, I accept this theory of being in so far as at present I understand it.

I proceed to state it as clearly and briefly as I can. It is a theory, not so much of the *origin* of being, as it is of the true *nature* of what it is to be or to exist. And yet, it seems to have within it a place for the origin of being also. The author's chief energy seems to be expended in an attempt to see and to explain things as they *are*. Or in his own opening words, "But the central problem of our discussion will be the question: What is Reality?"⁴ Or again, "My precise undertaking, then, in the following lectures, is to show what we mean by being in general, and by the special sorts of Reality that we attribute to God, to the World and to the human individual."⁵ "I shall dwell upon the *nature* of being," etc.⁶ Others might be cited,

⁴ *First Series*; p. 6.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

but these I think sufficiently set before us the author's thought that his chief problem will be to discover the real nature of being.

Mr. Royce's Fourth Conception of Being, as I understand it, is the final and complete expression or embodied form of the surviving purposes that have ideated in the consciousness of the being, whether we have reference to God, the world, or the individual. To use his words, "What is, or what is real, is as such the complete embodiment, in individual form and in final fulfillment, of the internal meaning of finite ideas."⁷

"And, therefore, we can say, never in the present life do we find the Self as a given and realized fact. It is for us an ideal. Its true place is in the eternal world, where all plans are fulfilled. In God alone do we fully come to ourselves."⁸

As I said, this theory does not primarily deal with the origin of being; and yet, there seems to be a partial treatment of the origin of being. This, however, will be treated further on in this discussion.

From this conception of being, it will be seen that in time there is all the while a ceaseless changing of this being. For ideas are being incubated at every instant; some to perish at once, others to be expressed in purposes which find their immediate expression, thus becoming a permanent part

⁷ *First Series*; p. 339.

⁸ *Second Series*; p. 290.

of being. Still others find expression in purposes reaching far into the future for their embodiment. So that as innumerable ideas spring up ceaselessly within the "stream of consciousness," so do these crystallize into permanent form in being in the labyrinth of the everyday experiences of the individual.

It is also seen that in this conception there is the connection of "internal and external meaning" or purpose. And that the uncrystallized or uncarried out purpose of the idea, if it be a true idea, is as truly being of the being as is the already completed purpose. Or that there can be no sundering of the "that" and the "what" in true being. "The *that* thus comes into unity with the *what*." ⁹

This theory teaches also that not only is there the linkage of "internal and external meaning," as pertains to human individuals, but that this same principle holds true with respect to God. That is, that in God all being is united and exists. "All appearance of isolation in finite beings, all the fragmentariness of their finitude, these are indeed but aspects of the whole truth." "The One is in all, and all are in the One." . . . "For God is the Absolute Being and the perfect fullness of life." ¹⁰ All being, all existence, all life, then, however much of seeming variety there may be, is but the expression of God. And if seen in its entirety, it would constitute God as the

⁹ *First Series*; p. 387.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 394.

One Absolute Being inclusive of all others. So that all that is, is but the outworkings of the purposes of God. In hell itself, the wicked will be in God, through all eternity, only working out the purposes of God. For we all are in this Absolute Being always.

We, however, as finite beings included in this Infinite Being, have all the liberty and freedom of will that we have capacity for using. And this is the only sense in which we may think or speak of any individual as having a free choice of will, or of being a free moral agent. And, therefore, to ask for or demand more freedom is to desire a different nature or constitution.

I will let this serve in general as a brief statement of my understanding of Mr. Royce's Fourth Conception of Being; and as I said, this is the philosophic instrument which I shall use in the present undertaking; viz., to discover the philosophic basis underlying the beginning of Christianity on the earth and also in the human individual.

And now, permit me to repeat my definition of Christianity. Christianity is, in time, a life of internal peace and intense activity, resulting from one's being brought into right relationship with God through Jesus Christ, and a life which brings one, in eternity, into complete embodiment and harmony with his Creator. "For which cause we faint not; but through our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day."

“For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, (time) worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal (eternity) weight of glory.” “While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.”¹¹ “For I am shortly to be sacrificed and the time of my departure is at hand; I have combated the good combat; I have finished the race; I have continued faithful; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will deliver to me at that day.”¹² “Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of man standing at the right hand of God!” . . . “Lord Jesus, accept my spirit.”¹³ “Even so, come, Lord Jesus.”¹⁴ These examples indicate the readiness with which the Christian is willing to quit time and enter eternity.

And now, I wish you to consider with me Professor Royce’s Fourth Conception of Being in the light of Scriptural teaching, in which I hope that we shall see that it is not far from the Scriptural idea of what it is to be.

But before we do this, we must ask the question, is it possible, according to this conception of being, for an individual to be in the Absolute and yet not know that fact? And just because of a

¹¹ PAUL — *II Cor.* 4:16-18.

¹² PAUL — *II Tim.* 4:6-8; *Living Oracles.*

¹³ STEPHEN — *Acts* 7:56, 59; *Ferrar Fenton’s Translation.*

¹⁴ JOHN — *Rev.* 22:20.

want of this knowledge on the part of the individual, to live a life of rebellion against that "larger self" the Absolute in which he exists? To both of these questions we must answer in the affirmative. Professor Royce feels this to be true. For in his Second Series he devotes one whole lecture to the treatment of the subject, "The Struggle with Evil."

And our answer is in perfect accord with Paul's words to the Athenians as he addressed them upon the topic found upon one of their altars of worship—"To The Unknown God." In the address Paul said, "Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you."¹⁵ Here were individuals, who, according to our Fourth Conception, were in God, and yet, according to their own testimony upon their altar of worship, they did not even know God; much less did they know that they existed in Him. And also, according to Paul, they did not know God. But yet, Paul states positively that they were in God. "For in Him we live, and move and have our being."¹⁶ We must bear in mind that these are not Christian people, and yet, Paul declares that they are in God. Now if they are in God, and yet, do not know God, they can not know the relation that exists between God and themselves. And hence, they will be liable to courses of conduct that are contemptible in the sight of God, and Paul intimates that this is ex-

¹⁵ *Acts* 17:23.

¹⁶ *Acts* 17:28.

actly the case. "For as much, then, as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone graven by art and man's device."¹⁷ This he said, condemning their conduct as wrong in the sight of God, in presuming to make and worship a likeness of God out of dead material. Of course this is particular. But Paul makes the same principle general in his statement to the Corinthians, "For when, in the Divine Philosophy, the world did not perceive the God through the philosophy, it pleased God to save the faithful by means of the folly of preaching."¹⁸ Paul claims with our Fourth Conception of Being, that we are all in God, and yet, he makes this statement of the world in general, that it "knew not" or "did not perceive God." "Awake to perfect sobriety and sin not; for an ignorance of God possesses some."¹⁹ Another utterance of Paul's, embodying the same thought, is in the Ephesian letter, "One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."²⁰ So much, then, on the thought of our being in the Absolute and not knowing it, and consequently of a liability to a course of deeds that is out of harmony with the purposes of the Absolute.

And now, we are ready to consider more particularly some of the Scripture references which,

¹⁷ *Acts* 17:29.

¹⁸ *I Cor.* 1:21; *Ferrar Fenton's Translation.*

¹⁹ PAUL—*I Cor.* 15:34; *Ferrar Fenton's Translation.*

²⁰ *Eph.* 4:6.

in general, corroborate the principles set forth by our Fourth Conception of Being. Chief among these principles is the idea of our incompleteness in this life, or the lack of our being fully embodied in our complete and individual form in this state of our existence. Or in other words, that we exist in time only fragmentarily; and that in eternity we will be completely embodied and fully expressed. John says that, "We are now the children of God; and it is not yet revealed what we shall become. But we do know that when He is manifested, we shall be like Him; because we shall see Him as he actually is."²¹

This scripture emphasizes three facts, all of which are set forth in our Fourth Conception of Being: First, that we are children of God and, therefore, necessarily *in God*; second, that we in this life are not complete, but only *partially so*, and are to *become* fully expressed after time; and third, that we now do not fully and completely know God.

Paul sets this forth in the following: "But as for eloquence, it will cease; as for languages, they will be silent; as for science, it will become useless. For we know imperfectly, and we teach with imperfection; but when the perfect arrives, the imperfect will become useless. When I was a child I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reflected like a child; but when I became a man, the ideas of the child were useless. For we look

²¹ I John 3:2; Ferrar Fenton's Translation.

now (in time) through a loop hole into the darkness; but then (in eternity) face to face: now I know partially; but then I shall know perfectly, even as I am perfectly known.”²²

So much, then, in general, on our fragmentariness or incompleteness in time, and our complete embodiment in eternity. And here also the Scriptural teaching seems to accord with our Fourth Conception of Being.

We now pass to a consideration of the origin of being. We can not think of Christianity as other than a state of being; a life that is lived according to our definition. And as our present undertaking has to do with Christianity in its beginning, both on the earth and in the individual, we see at once that this is the question in this discussion which is of chiefest interest for us. And as we are using the Fourth Conception of Being as a means or instrument in the solution of this problem, it is proper that we here acquaint ourselves with the origin of being according to this Fourth Conception.

As was remarked, a few lines back, the Fourth Conception does not deal so much with the *origin* as with the *nature* of being. Now this is particularly true with reference to the Absolute Being. But the theory does discuss the origin of the human individual, in time, as a type of being. And since in this production we are discussing a type of being existing within the human

²² *I Cor.* 13: 8-12; *Ferrar Fenton's Translation.*

individual, our Fourth Conception will be sufficient to meet the needs of our present undertaking.

“An explanation of the particular existence of *this* finite consciousness can be given, therefore, only in one of two forms: First, in terms of universal principles, in so far as without just this finitude the eternal purpose would not obtain the wealth of individual expression that it actually possesses; or secondly, in terms of the particular relations of each finite being, in so far as it is what it is in consequence of the presence in the world, and especially in the temporal past, of other finite beings, whose nature and acts required some aspect of its own life as their resultant.

“Consequently, any effort to give an account of the temporal origin and evolution of any particular finite being, such as one of ourselves, must follow the *second* of these forms of explanation, and cannot undertake to give an account of the origin of all finitude. The question about the evolution of new forms of finite life then becomes this: What conditions of the previous finite life of the world explain why, just at this point, a new Self should begin to appear? Or again, to put the question a little more generally, our former theory as to evolution accepted the thesis that humanity, as a whole, has sprung from some nonhuman process of experience which before our special type of selfhood appeared was taking place in the natural world. This previous process, we have said, was no doubt in itself a conscious

process, perhaps possessing a type of consciousness whose 'temporal span' was more or less different from our own just because its present interest was always expressed by a longer or shorter series of facts than we now at present take into account. But, in any case, it was not what we should have called a human process. How came it to give origin to a process of our type?"²³

"What interests us here is simply the problem; given such forms of finite striving, how could new forms, new selves, arise from them? What about their nature makes them fruitful of new types of individuality? What *constitutes* a new form of finite life and experience — a new sort of selfhood? A new form of selfhood means simply the appearance (as in our own case) of a *new type of interest in the world, in God and in finding the way to self expression*. A new individual is thus never a new *thing*, but a new kind of life-purpose, finding unique individual embodiment in experience by means of definite acts."²⁴

From the foregoing, two things, at least, are apparent: First, that new selves do originate in time; and second, that these new selves are never new *things*, but new life purposes.

So much for the first principle of the origin of being according to our Fourth Conception.

But now we wish to ask, does this accord with the Scriptural teaching relative to the origin of

²³ *Second Series*; p. 304-305.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 308.

Christian Being? And our answer, whether the application is to the beginning of Christianity on the earth or in the individual, must be in the affirmative.

And now, we are at the place where it will be necessary for us to understand more explicitly the limitations of our theme; or in other words, just what we mean by the beginning of Christianity on the earth and in the individual. By the beginning of Christianity on the earth we shall understand *beginning* in the same sense in which Peter expresses his understanding of it in the Jerusalem conference. "And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them (the Gentile household of Cornelius) as on us (the Apostles — Jews by nationality) at the beginning."²⁵ From this we gather that Peter understood that the coming of the Holy Spirit into the Apostles on Pentecost marked the *beginning* of the Christian era, or of Christianity on the earth.

And, indeed, does not this mark the instant in the life of each one of these twelve men, when he is lifted into a new universe? And in which he is filled with a new "life purpose"? And with a sense of new relations to God and to his fellowmen? A state in which he is not a "new *thing*" but an individual having a "new kind of life purpose," which impels him on, "finding unique individual embodiment in experience by means of definite acts"? This is the event in

²⁵ *Acts* 11:15.

which the chief interests of heaven and earth have been centered, from God's viewpoint, ever since man abused his freedom in rebelling against his Creator. Why should it not produce a new "type of being"?

So that, with respect to the beginning of Christianity on the earth, our problem is limited, in persons, to the twelve apostles: in time to the day of Pentecost.

As to the beginning of the Christian life in the individual we cannot be so explicit. It may help us here, however, to emphasize the fact that we are dealing with Christianity rather than that broader state of being; i.e., religion. A failure to differentiate just here has caused, on the part of many, no little amount of confusion in investigations of this nature.

For instance, Professor William James, in his lectures entitled "The Varieties of Religious Experience," has treated the subject of Natural Religion, from the psychological viewpoint, in a way that certainly merits our admiration. But, from the standpoint of Revealed Christianity, these lectures are of very little worth to us, aside from the psychological agility with which the author proceeds.

In fact, there is not to be found the account of the experience of one New Testament conversion among the many, many examples which the author reviews, so far as I have seen. This is remarkable in the face of the following statement

of the author: "The only novelty that I can imagine this course of lectures to possess lies in the *breadth* of the apperceiving mass . . . I may succeed in discussing religious experiences in a *wider* context than has been usual in university courses."²⁶ We naturally ask, should not this breadth have included at least one from among the ten thousand New Testament examples that are recorded?

On the other hand, the author gleans his examples almost entirely from the writings of comparatively modern writers, as the following shows: "These men of course are either comparatively modern writers, or else such early ones as have become religious classics."²⁷

He seems to ignore the principle that the fountain is purer and richer at its head than at any other place. "Interesting as the origin and early stages of a subject always are, yet when one seeks earnestly for its full significance, one must always look to its more completely evolved and perfect forms."²⁸

Of course one who is acquainted with the history of Christianity knows that it emerged from the Dark Ages colored with every tint of coloring that could be produced in the human heart during a long period of darkness; and from which reason ought to expect it to purify itself only

²⁶ JAMES — *The Varieties of Religious Experience*; p. 25. (The underscore is mine.)

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

after long, weary years. And so, for one to scrutinize numberless cases of the so-called modern conversions taken from the experiences of men living immediately, or even quite remotely this side of the Dark Ages, would mean very little, so far as getting at the real nature of true Christian being is concerned.

But the whole difficulty in the way of Professor James' lectures being a help to one in such an undertaking as the present, is the lack of discrimination properly between Christianity and religion; but he is not to be criticized in this regard, for his subject is that of natural religion rather than Christianity, as such.

So then, individual examples of men becoming Christians which will satisfy us in this discussion must not be found this side of the Dark Ages; neither can they be taken during these Dark Ages. And since we must go back of the Dark Ages, this will bring us so near to the fountain's head that we cannot resist the temptation to proceed into the New Testament time for our examples; for, in this field, so full of examples that are so rich in character and set forth in such straightforward, simple language, we feel sure that we can understand them, and we know that here we shall not be led astray. And so, for our individual examples we shall accept none but those in the New Testament. So much, then, for the explicit limitations of the two phases of our problem.

And now, having cleared the way, we are ready

to more fully develop the answer to our last question: "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold all things are become new."²⁹ "Except a man be born anew, he cannot see the Kingdom of God."³⁰ "As new-born babes," etc.³¹

These sufficiently bring before us the thought that in becoming a Christian, in time, one becomes a *new* self. But *new* in what sense, we ask. In precisely the sense in which our Fourth Conception teaches; i.e., new in "Life purpose."

But again, this theory teaches that we exist in a "larger self." This is true of the Christian being in a peculiar, or as we might say, double sense. Yet not so peculiar. For in the Supplementary Essay to the First Series, Professor Royce develops the idea of a Self-representative System, in which the largest self includes all the others. In a previous part of this production, this thought has been shown to accord in general with the Scriptures.

But now, we wish to notice especially the unique position of the Christian in this Self-representative System. Here we must call to mind our definition of Christian being, remembering that it is through or *in* Christ that we sustain our unique relationship to the Absolute. Let us note the following: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through

²⁹ PAUL — *II Cor.* 5:17.

³⁰ JESUS — *John* 3:3. R.V.

³¹ PETER — *I Peter* 2:2.

their word: that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us: . . . I in them, and Thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.”³² “I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No one can come to the Father, except through me.”³³ “For whom I have suffered the loss of all things and do count them refuse, so that I may win Christ, and be found in Him.”³⁴ “For you died, and your life is hid with Christ in God.”³⁵ “As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him; rooted and builded up in Him. . . . “And you are completed in Him.”³⁶ “And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”³⁷ “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”³⁸

Time and space fail us to catalogue and develop this type of New Testament teaching, in which it is the manifest intent to set forth the thought that the Christian is *in* Christ and Christ is *in* God.

But now, do we ask as to the benefit to the Christian of his unique position in relation to the

³² JESUS — *John* 17:20-23.

³⁶ PAUL — *Col.* 2:6, 7, 10.

³³ JESUS — *John* 14:6.

³⁷ PAUL — *Rom.* 12:2.

³⁴ PAUL — *Phil.* 3:8-9.

³⁸ PAUL — *Rom.* 8:1.

³⁵ PAUL — *Col.* 3:3. R.V.

Absolute? Indeed, this is the anxious desire of Philip: "Show us the Father and it will satisfy us." *It shows us the Father*, and we, with the Psalmist of old, exclaim, "We shall be satisfied, when we awake, with thy likeness."

So as we saw before, it is possible, and not only so, but highly probable, that individuals exist in God, and yet, do not know the relation which they sustain to the Absolute, and because of this they wander in the darkness, many times taking courses that are contemptible in God's sight. So we see that *in Christ* such a course is, if not impossible, highly improbable. "If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: but if we walk in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."³⁹ "And hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. . . . But whoso keepeth His word, in him verily is the love of God perfected; hereby know we that we are *in Him*."⁴⁰

So that the Christian's unique relation to the Absolute enables him to know the purposes of the Absolute in a way far beyond that of the ordinary individual; and because of this, he so fashions his own ways as to fit into the divine plan. He "so runs, not as uncertainly"; He "so fights, not as beating the air"; on the other hand, "He walks but faints not; he runs and is not weary."

³⁹ JOHN — I *John* 1:6-7.

⁴⁰ JOHN — I *John* 2:3, 5.

We now come to consider another phase of the origin of being: the real *process* in the origin of being. I am sure that the mere quotation of a few sentences from Professor Royce can, in no way, either do him justice or satisfy us on this point. But of course in a production of this kind that is the most we can do. But for one to comprehend the professor's teaching on this phase of the question, would necessitate a careful study of at least the Supplementary Essay to the First Series; and also the two lectures in the Second Series, entitled "The Human Self" and "The Place of The Self in Being."

I here present a few statements on this point that must suffice for the present. "I now make the wholly tentative hypothesis that the process of the evolution of new forms of consciousness in nature is throughout of the same general type as that which we observe when we follow the evolution of new sorts of plans, of ideas, and of selfhoods in our own life."⁴¹ "For imitation means that a new process results from the conscious union of the influence of *two* previous processes; and in case of imitation, as we have just seen, the new process lies between the original processes."⁴² "But further, the new living individuals in their development largely illustrate what we call the process of gradual *adaptation to the environment* by novel forms of structure and function."⁴³

⁴¹ *Second Series*; p. 315.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 316.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 317.

“But upon what does all imitation depend? First, upon an interest in discriminating between the doings of some other individual and the present deeds of one’s own organism; and secondly, upon an interest in seeking, through a persistent process of trial and error, to find a new course of action which, when discovered, shall constitute a *modification of the former deed of one’s own organism in the direction of the deeds of one’s model.*”⁴⁴ “*But I never repeat his act. Imitation is a kind of a trial series of acts.*”⁴⁵ “The finite beings whom we acknowledge in the concrete are always, at any temporal moment, such as they are by virtue of an *inattention* which at present blinds them to their actual relations to God and to one another.”⁴⁶ “And as we saw, it is an activity directed by nothing so much as by *an attention to the contents of experience when once they chance to have been discriminated.*”⁴⁷

These will have to suffice us as to the teaching of our Fourth Conception on this point. Now, from these we see that there is a “longing” for a different “life purpose” a “discriminating” between one’s deeds and the deeds of another — an accepting the other as a “model” for “imitation” and the setting about to “gradually adapt” one’s self to the “new environment” which has resulted from the new “life purpose.”

⁴⁴ *Second Series*; p. 310-311. ⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 307.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 311.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 310.

Indeed the individual comes to grasp the fact that he is what he is by "inattention" to things that would make him other than he is. And that by "attention" he shall become what he hopes to be. The way is open to him. He enters and runs his course.

But what has taken place? There has been the "union" of two selves, with the result that "gradually" will be developed a *third*, or "new self" lying "between" formerly existent beings. Now it is very apparent that this new creature cannot be just like both of the former beings. But he will be found to be made up of the characteristics of both, blended in a way too intricate for our discrimination. But we may rest assured on this point; that in spiritual realms, and where the "union" has been a mutual and congenial one, the Spirit which animates this "new being" will be the Spirit of the larger of the two selves. Or in other words, in this respect there will be the "survival of the fittest."

Now that this type of "new being" has been originated, it will possess the power of natural or self generation, else it could not properly be termed a type. And this is the point toward which we have been moving all along. This is the meaning of the words of the Savior — our model to His Apostles, "Abide in me, and I will abide in you; as the branch can not bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, no more can you,

unless you abide in me. I am the vine: you are the branches.”⁴⁸ “It was not you who chose me, but I have chosen you. And I planted you in order that you might take root, and become fruitful, and your fruit continue.”⁴⁹

From this we adduce the following: First, that in the *process* of the origination of a new type of being the *first product* will receive the Spirit of life of the larger of the two selves that have combined to produce this product of the “new type”; and second, that this first product will possess power to generate its kind.

And now to turn to the scenes of Pentecost. What do we find? Here is the first and finished product of this new type of being in the twelve apostles, as a body. And into this product is being infused the Spirit of the larger self. “During the celebration of the day of Pentecost they were all harmoniously assembled in one place; when, suddenly, a sound was heard from the sky, similar to that of a very violent tempest blast, filling the whole house in which they were seated. And they saw distributed to themselves fiery tongues, which settled upon every one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit; and began to speak in foreign languages, as the Spirit endowed them with clear expression.”⁵⁰

⁴⁸ *John 15:4-5; Living Oracles.*

⁴⁹ *John 15:16; Ferrar Fenton's Translation.*

⁵⁰ *Acts 2:1-4; Ferrar Fenton's Translation.*

As God, at the beginning of the human race, breathed into man of His Spirit and he became a new type of being (a mere clod of clay, animated with life and possessed with power to produce his kind, not as he was produced; i.e., miraculously, but in the natural way) so now, in the fullness of time, at the *beginning* of the reign of the King of Righteousness in the hearts of these men, God, from the effulgence of His glory, sends forth His Holy Spirit that he may abide a "treasure in earthen vessels," a pilot "to guide them into all truth," the haven of rest, and to possess them with power to produce their kind. Not as they were produced (i.e., miraculously), but through natural means.

This is the finishing touch of the *beginning of Christianity* on the earth. And this is the philosophic basis for the same. The first phase of our problem is solved, but in its solution is the key to the solution of the second phase.

Now that the type is complete, the *process* in the origination or generation of other individuals of this same type will be natural, not supernatural. Once we learn with certainty the *nature* of that process, the second phase of our problem is solved. As we said a few sentences back: we can not wholly trust individual experiences which have been the outgrowth of the internal longings, influenced more or less by the conditions of the times, and that are far removed from the fountainhead, in time. Such experiences can be ac-

counted valid in a discussion of this nature only in so far as they accord with those recorded in the New Testament. This is the more obvious when we consider the fact, that of the many New Testament examples of the *process* of the beginning of Christianity in the individual there is no discord. But all is harmony. The process is the same in all the cases. This is still more remarkable when we consider that within these examples are to be found individuals from all the different nations of the then inhabited earth.

In this, we are simply emphasizing with respect to the Christian religion that which Professor John Caird holds to be true with respect to religion in general.

“Religion must indeed be a thing of the heart; but in order to elevate it from the region of subjective caprice and waywardness, and to distinguish between that which is true and false in religion, we must appeal to an objective standard. That which enters the heart must first be discerned by the intelligence to be *true*. It must be seen as having in its own nature a *right* to dominate feeling, and as constituting the principle by which feeling must be judged.”⁵¹ “In estimating the religious character of individuals, nations or races, the first question is, not how they feel, but what they think and believe — not whether their religion is one which manifests itself

⁵¹ “Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion,” p. 174: Abridged.

in emotions, more or less vehement and enthusiastic, but what are their *conceptions* of God and divine things by which these emotions are called forth. Feeling is necessary in religion, but it is by content or intelligent basis of a religion, and not by feeling, that its character and worth are to be determined.”⁵²

We are appealing to “an objective standard” that shall be valid. That standard is the New Testament.

Now according to this authority, what is the *process* in the propagation of this new type of being which finds its first complete product in the twelve apostles?

Permit me here to preface the New Testament quotations with a few general statements: This Christian being can be produced only from human individuals. We may not speak of a rock, a bird, a flower, as belonging to this type of Christian being. Neither may we so speak of an idiot or an insane person; but of human individuals who are in full possession of their intellectual faculties, and with their understanding somewhat developed.

The process, then, of entering into this type of Christian being is one in which there is the response, internally in a state of mind, externally in acts, of the intellect, the will and the feeling of the individual; to words, either written or

⁵² “Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion,” p. 186: Abridged.

spoken, which embody the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

“And this Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations.”⁵³ “Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”⁵⁴ “But these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.”⁵⁵ “For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: For it is the power of God unto Salvation to everyone that believeth.”⁵⁶ “For there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”⁵⁷ “Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word.”⁵⁸ “But when they believed Philip, preaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.”⁵⁹ “And many of the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized.”⁶⁰

I will not continue these quotations, for these are sufficient to indicate the nature of the process of entering or taking on this new type of being. I may say, further, that these are in harmony with all of the many New Testament examples of this process.

Well, what have we? Here are these twelve

⁵³ JESUS — *Matt.* 24: 14.

⁵⁴ JESUS — *Matt.* 28: 19.

⁵⁵ *John* 20: 31.

⁵⁶ *Rom.* 1: 16.

⁵⁷ *Acts* 4: 12.

⁵⁸ *Acts* 8: 4.

⁵⁹ *Acts* 8: 12.

⁶⁰ LUKE — *Acts* 18: 8.

apostles of Jesus Christ, filled with the Holy Spirit given them from God. They, as a body, constitute the first finished product of this new type of being. In this body dwells the heaven given Spirit, to energize and give life to the whole body.

As this body takes on new material through the proclamation of this Gospel of Christ, the natural process, and as this material becomes assimilated to this body in a new type of being, this Spirit will energize every member of the body.

The process of the natural generation or perpetuity of this type of being is thus indicated. The second phase of our problem is solved.

Shall we now close with a homely and simple illustration? Here is a piece of material, it may chance to be a potato or any other product of the vegetable type of being. And here is my body, animated with a human spirit. The question arises, can this human spirit be placed within this material which is of another type of being? And if so, how? The answer is yes. And by one and only one process. And that is by masticating into, and assimilating to my body, this material, and then my human spirit will permeate this material in my body as it does all other parts of my body. And thus is it changed into a new type of being. And thus have I placed my human spirit within it.

Thus it is with one who enters into the type of Christian being. He is masticated into this

type of being through the fundamentals of the gospel. He is assimilated to this type of being by growth in the Christian graces.

“And besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you and abound, they make you that you shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.”⁶¹

⁶¹ PETER — *II Pet.* 1: 5-8.

II

THE WORD MADE FLESH

THE INCARNATION

In writing the Fourth Gospel, John goes back to creation's morning for his beginning. He states in the opening paragraph that Jesus had wrought with the Father in the creation of the world in its beginning. We are reminded of the statement in Genesis in which God said, "Let *us* make man in *our* own image and likeness."

But John's purpose was not to write of the physical, but of the spiritual creation. Consequently, he adds but a brief paragraph upon this. Then he makes brief mention of the one who came as a witness, to bear witness of the Light that was the true Light, coming into the world bearing light and life to all men. He then takes up the particular purpose of his narrative, which is to give a deep spiritual and philosophical narrative of Jesus—the Word made flesh. I direct your mind to the following text for our consideration.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

. . . And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and of truth.”¹ In this he suggests to us the Mystery, the Mission and the Message of Jesus — the Word made flesh.

The mystery of his coming into the world has become a stumbling block to the curious spirits of a superficial and artificial age. Hence, the virgin birth of Jesus is no longer accepted by those who court the favor of modern scientists. That there was any mystery about his coming into the world is rejected by them as unworthy of serious thought. To speak to them of the incarnation of Jesus is postposterous.

In fact, there was no incarnation. Jesus of Nazareth was the son of Joseph. He was conceived and born just as other children, except that He was an illegitimate child in conception, but was legitimized by Mary's marriage before His birth.

When Jesus was on the earth He freely entered the synagogues of the Jews everywhere and upon all occasions. He was honored in many instances by being called upon to read out of the law, to speak and to teach. It might be said of Him that He grew up in the synagogue. He went into the synagogue “as His custom was.” He was found in the temple. He said, “Know you not that I must be about my Father's busi-

¹ *John* — 1:1, 14.

ness?" "They marveled at His teaching."
"For He taught them as one having authority."

Yes, He entered the synagogues freely; and all His critics and opposers were powerless to find a way to prevent Him. They knew all the time that their law forbade a "bastard to even enter the synagogue," much less to teach. Is it to be presumed that they would not have hurled this at Him upon every occasion had it been true? Yet, when His ringing challenge came, "Which of you convicteth me of sin?" they were helpless. In all their opposition to Him, this objection is never raised. He who "was tempted in every point," was also criticized in every conceivable way.

He graced the marriage occasion. He looked into the face of the water. Under His majestic presence it moved with the blush of life. He taught the sacredness of the marriage vow. The adultery of a heart that would "look upon a woman to lust after her." In parables He taught the purity of the church by comparison with the virgin, and the sacredness of the marriage relation. Yet, in all this He called forth no criticism upon His mother, no stigma upon His own character.

In the face of all this, our modern scientists see no inconsistency. They seem to feel that "scientific conclusions" can be drawn over irreconcilable inconsistencies. Jesus was never called upon to defend His character from the stain and

stigma which these so-called scientists seek to throw upon it.

These same scientists would teach us, and perhaps with a good deal of truth, that the sense of shame in the mother stamps itself indelibly into the life of the illegitimate child; and bars the way to greatness or distinction on his part. But where was any sense of shame on Mary's part? Where did it ever stand out in the life of Jesus? If He was peculiarly bold and emphatic in any one line of teaching, it was in the realm of personal morality and sex purity.

Matthew and Luke stated the fact of the virgin birth, but knew no necessity of arguing it. It was never questioned in their day by any who were competent to know. They knew the fact and presented it, as we would present as axiom in mathematics. To them this truth was made self-evident by every deed that He ever did; and enforced by every principle He ever taught.

The early church placed no particular emphasis upon it; did not make it an essential article of faith. It, like many other facts, was taken by implication in the statement of the great confession. "Thou art the Christ, The Son of the living God." If "the Son of God," in the sense in which this part of the confession was understood by all the early Christians, then He was not the son of Joseph. He was the only begotten of the Father, and the child of the virgin Mary. But this is not emphasized, nor indeed, need it

be. For the great confession is all comprehensive and all sufficient in its statements and implications.

Our creed makers in a later day made a blunder when they undertook to improve upon the simple, yet comprehensive, confession of the Apostolic Church.

It was not the virginity of Mary, but the divinity of Jesus, that concerned the early church. A clear note upon this, it seems to me, ought to be sounded in every pulpit in this day of rationalism.

“The Word became flesh,” says John. In this, he states the fact of a great mystery, but adds no word of explanation or argumentation. The great apostle to the Gentiles is content to recognize and state the fact without comment. “Great is the mystery of Godliness: God was manifested in the flesh.”² But our curious spirits of this age, confronted with and compelled to recognize mystery in almost every other realm, will have none of it in religion. Religion must conform to known natural laws.

What is there impossible about the mystery of the incarnation — the virgin birth — more than the impossible in scores of other mysteries recognized and utilized by these so-called scientists? Why should it be singled out and rejected?

Take John’s statement of this mysterious fact; and what have we? Simply a statement that the immaterial has passed over into the realm of the

² *I Timothy* — 3:16.

material. "The Word (immaterial) became flesh (material)." The mystery does not consist in the method, but in the thing accomplished. This being true, may we not ask, are not similar mysteries in evidence all around about us? Do we not think? Do we not cause our thoughts (immaterial things) to find expression in material forms? What about the inventor? The genius? The author? The great captains of industry?

Not only so; but we take of the material substances and cause them to pass into the immaterial realm. They become mental energy — sight — hearing — feeling — thought — power. They are ours to use in a great variety of ways in the immaterial realm. Thus in a thousand ways daily, in our human experiences, this mystery is before us. Material things are passing constantly into the immaterial realm, and *vice versa*. Millions of times within the life of any intelligent being these experiences are occurring.

Who are we, then, that we should assume to cry "impossible" when God chooses to cause His Word to pass over into the material realm and express itself in material form? "And the Word became flesh." Yes, the virgin birth is easily within the realm of mysterious probabilities.

But in the next place: the Mission. The Word not only "became flesh," but, it "*dwelt among us*." The first question that naturally arises is, what for? What was the purpose? What was the Mission?

Whatever may be said of the works and teachings of Jesus, His mission culminated in the great fact of His suffering upon the cross. Indeed, if it did not consist in this, His works and teachings were incidental to, and in anticipation of, the cross. This was the one thing He had to do. Many other things He may or may not do. But this He had to do.

In this day, when the meaningless cry is heard everywhere, "Back to Christ and His teachings," it is well that there be clear thinking just here. If He expressed the love of God toward mankind, when, by His touch and teaching, He put new content into old teachings, new life and health into dead and diseased bodies; by his suffering upon the cross, He expressed God's eternal hatred for sin. But more, He met the final issue of sin. He went to the extremest limits of sin's consequences. "He who knew no sin, was made sin for us."³ "He bore our sins in His body upon the tree," says Peter.⁴ When in the death agonies He exclaimed, "Why hast thou forsaken me?" He was in a place of utter abandonment, God-forsaken, sin-cursed, with all nature in revolt against Him. He was suffering alone the consequences of the sins of a world. He was paying the penalty. He was purchasing liberty, life and immortality for a world. No man ever has or ever can die as He died. At most, a man abandoned by God, could suffer condemnation

³ *II Cor.*—5:21.

⁴ *I Peter*—2:24.

only for his own sin. Jesus, upon the cross, drank the essence of a world's sin in order to redeem that world. Well may we sing:

Jesus, my Savior, on Calvary's tree,
Paid the great debt and my Soul he set free;
Oh, it was wonderful, how could it be?
Dying for me. Dying for me.

Approaching the cross, in that greatest of all prayers, Jesus said, "Father, I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do."⁵ In His last breath upon the cross He made the statement, "It is finished."⁶ So far as He was concerned, He had taken the place and performed the work assigned to Him to do in heaven's plan for the salvation of men. His resurrection, ascension, coronation, the sending of the Holy Spirit, the establishment of the church, and the Spirit's message — these are all in the hands of the Father; and are to be wrought out in the councils of heaven.

This brings us to the next thought — the Message. The coming of the Word into the world may be veiled in mystery, in the incarnation. The mission may pass into the realm of the incomprehensible, in the suffering upon the cross. But, standing in the light of the cross, we have a feeling that the message is clear. The dazzling beauty and the effulgent glory of the sun may forbid its analysis; but this need not make us stumble when walking in its light.

⁵ *John* — 17: 4.

⁶ *John* — 19: 30.

Standing in the light of that cross, John said, “(and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth.” Here is an individual, who “dwelt among men,” with a halo of glory round about Him, “full of grace and truth.” That is John’s adorned statement. Stripped of its adornment, the statement is, “The Word became flesh and dwelt among us full of grace and truth.”

The Word of God; that is, the thought, purpose, plan, intention, will, of God. It was this that became incarnate; and dwelt among us “full of grace and truth.” The message springs out of the fullness of the “grace and truth.” It did not come so directly out of what Jesus did and taught as out of what He was.

He did and taught many, many things of which we have no record. Much that He did and taught, we cannot do and do not teach. Of His recorded teachings, much as to the message was intended by Him as in no way final. It is not what He taught; it is what He *was*.

He taught no theory of the atonement. He *was* the atonement. He taught no theory of the resurrection. He said, “I am the resurrection.” He had no theory of life. He *was* Life. He left no specific message. He *was* the message. He had no theory of the gospel. He *was* the Gospel. He was “grace and truth.” Grace, mercy, pity on the one hand; truth, righteousness, justice on the other. Mercy and justice meet in Christ the Lord.

Paul says, "God set Him forth . . . to show that He (God) might be just and the justifier of him that believes in Jesus."⁷ That was the great accomplishment of Jesus. In Him, God is at once, all righteous and all merciful. He is "just and a justifier."

I repeat it, Jesus left no specific message. *He was the message.*

This is what Jesus left, in His last moments before leaving the earth. This was specific and final. He left a charge (command) and a promise to His chosen apostles. He promised them the baptism of the Holy Spirit; and the abiding presence and power of the Spirit to guide them into all truth.⁸ He repeated this promise and charged them to remain in Jerusalem for its fulfillment in a few days.⁹

The apostles returned to Jerusalem and assembled in the upper room. There they waited. After ten days Jesus redeemed that promise.¹⁰ The Spirit came upon, and entered into, the apostles. He guided them into all truth. He endowed them with all power necessary to the proper direction of the things of the kingdom. Through them, He enters into the lives of all Christians.

He gave to them a full message — a message full of grace and truth, for He revealed Jesus unto them. Jesus was the full message. He took of the things of Jesus and showed it unto them.

⁷ *Rom.*—3: 25-26.

⁹ *Acts*—1: 4-5.

⁸ *John*—16.

¹⁰ *Acts*—2.

They proclaimed that message as long as they lived, and wrote it when ready to die. In the providence of God, it has come through the centuries to us, and we have it substantially as they proclaimed it.

That message is Jesus the Christ. Not any theory about Him, but Christ, the babe in Bethlehem; Christ in the agonies of the cross; Christ in the tomb; Christ triumphant in the resurrection; Christ regnant on the throne; Christ in faith, in repentance, in confession and in baptism; Christ supreme in the heart; Christ dominant in the life; Christ in Mystery, in Mission and in Message; Christ full of grace and truth.

May the twentieth century find men — full orbed men — to proclaim this full message until the whole world shall be filled with this full message of grace and truth.

III

THE NATURALNESS OF THE RESURRECTION

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone.”¹ Immediately preceding these words of Jesus is this statement, “The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified.”² Following the text is the statement, “Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour.”³

Thus, getting the line of thought, we see that Jesus is here speaking of his death upon the cross, and of the results that will follow out to humanity and to the world because of that event. The death of Jesus and his resurrection are the two great facts in this text. These facts are here presented in the imagery of the deepest and most fundamental law of all existence: the law of sowing and reaping. I wonder if we have deeply and seriously thought how meaningful this law is when applied to the things of the kingdom, or more par-

¹ *John* — 12: 24.

² *Ibid.*, 12: 23.

³ *Ibid.*, 12: 27.

ticularly, when applied to the death and resurrection of Jesus?

I would direct your thought into a study of the Naturalness of the Resurrection. I am not unmindful that the very wording of my subject seems to be paradoxical in statement. In the very beginning of Jesus' ministry, he placed the fact of his divinity upon the reality of his actual bodily resurrection from the dead, when he said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."⁴ At the close of his ministry, he placed the condition of establishing his church on the earth upon the fact of his divinity, when he said, "Upon this rock, (the truth that he is the Christ) I will build my church."⁵ Thus, the church rests upon the fact of his divine sonship. And his divine sonship rests, humanly speaking, upon the reality of his bodily resurrection from the dead. Hence, the importance of our study.

The falling of wheat into the ground, and dying, in order that it may live, suggests to us the ground, the wheat, the sowing (falling into the ground), death and life. If it shall be seen that the death and resurrection of Jesus are in harmony with this most fundamental law of all life, then it must be conceded that, instead of being *unnatural*, the way of life in Christ Jesus is in full accord with the most fundamental of *natural* laws of which we have any knowledge; that it is in strict harmony with that most natural law of

⁴ *John* — 2: 19.

⁵ *Matt.* — 16: 18.

life known to the farthest limits of the human family. So that if a man will not lift up his eyes and gaze into the heavens, and there behold the beauty, the order, the power, the wisdom and the loveliness of his Creator; if he is determined to be "of the earth, earthy"; if he, like the ant that crawls at his feet, will know nothing but to fix his mind and heart and life upon the things of the earth, yet the Father would impel him, by the very intelligence with which he has endowed him, as he eats even the herbs of the forest, to familiarize himself with this most natural and fundamental law of life. If perchance, this might prepare him for an easier entrance into the way of life in Christ.

The ground into which this grain of wheat fell was of course the Jewish nation. This people had been prepared, through the many centuries of their history, for the coming of the Christ. In types and shadows: by precepts and commandments; by rewards and punishments; by protection and exposure; by slavery and freedom; by kingly greatness and national humiliation; by water and fire; in prosperity and poverty; through king and prophet; by signs in the heavens and wonders in the earth; by all of these, and a thousand other devices, through the centuries, the Creator had been slowly but surely preparing a field into which this kernel of wheat was finally to fall.

Under the lash of the Egyptian master, in that

most fertile of all agricultural lands, the Israelitish slave had learned the law of sowing and reaping, of death as the entry way into life, in all of its naturalness and beauty. In Palestine, a "land flowing with milk and honey," the "garden spot of the earth"—in freedom and national greatness, the Hebrew had beheld the "Rose of Sharon" and the "Lily-of-the-Valley," blossoming in response to this great natural law. He had beheld the "cattle upon a thousand hills," sustained by the same natural law. He had seen the "sower go forth to sow." He knew what it meant to see "the blade appear, and after that the corn, and then the full corn in the ear." He knew what it meant to "put forth the sickle at the harvest time." He had heard the tramp of the oxen upon the "summer threshing floor." With all of these things he was familiar in every detail. Yet, all of these things centered in this great natural law.

In tent, in tabernacle, in temple and in synagogue; by prophet, priest and king, Israel had been developed, in mind and heart, into a condition of readiness for the coming of this grain of wheat. Indeed, she had been lashed by the experiences of captivity and servitude into a desire for His coming. If perchance, his coming might be a means of deliverance. Fain would Israel have planted this "finest of the wheat" into the mellowed richness of her own, the "fairest of hearts," and rejoiced to have seen it blossom into

the Paradise of God. For, said Jesus, "From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." But no, the matter is not to be forced. It will take its own course. And that course will be in harmony with this most fundamental of natural laws.

The wheat must be such in nature, that when placed in the proper soil, it, like real wheat, will spring forth into life. We see the manifestation of life everywhere. Yet life itself eludes our gaze. We have never been able to say, "here is life." "This is life," or "that is life." Now, that which manifests itself so abundantly must have existence in and of itself. Life must be more than simply manifestations. There must be a fountain, a source, a head.

If life does, then, exist in and of itself, and we were able to find it at its source, let it be embodied in whatever form, manifested in whatever way. It is quite unlikely that we would be able to destroy it. If the fountain of life — life, and the very source of all life was incarnated in Jesus of Nazareth, His body might be crucified, placed in the grave — in the sea or anywhere else; and it will spring forth into life. As wheat, it possesses not only the germ of life, but life itself. This is what John is saying, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and

without him was not anything made that was made. In him was *life*; and the *life* was the light of men.”—“And this Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.”—This is what Jesus means when he says, “I am the resurrection and the *life*.” “You will not come unto me that you might have *life*.” This is what Paul means when he says, Jesus “brought *life* and immortality to light.”

It is into this prepared field of Jewish mind and heart and thought that this grain of wheat falls. It was placed there in the fullness of time, by the age working purpose divine. It remained for thirty-three years in the earth before it finally burst forth into life. Failing in their efforts to “take the kingdom by force,” the leaders of the Jewish people, like the young lover, disappointed when his proposals are not accepted, these leaders spring into a rage, take the life of the object of Israel’s love; and commit suicide for the nation.

As the leaders went from the scenes of the cross back into the senate chamber that day, there was no question in their minds as to the complete success of the plot into which they had entered. They felt that He, who would not accept their conception of things, and whom they would gladly have crowned as their king if only he had, was now removed from their midst. That no more would He trouble Israel with His teaching of new and strange things. In other words, they knew that He was dead.

As the whole nation, in the thousands of its representatives who were at the feast, passed by the cross and viewed his lifeless form; as they read the inscription,—“This is Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews,”—they all knew that he was dead. As the sun’s face was draped in mourning for the space of three hours in silent testimony, all nature seemed to be acknowledging this mighty fact — His death.

As the friends of Jesus returned to their homes, and as his followers even turned to take up their former occupations, the fact of his death was writing itself in the annals of that people as no other fact of their history had even done. Egyptian bondage; the ten plagues of Egypt; the death angel; the crossing of the Red Sea; Mount Sinai; the Decalogue; the brazen serpent; the conquest of Canaan; the crowning of the first king (Saul); the building of Solomon’s Temple; the Assyrian and the Babylonian captivities; all of these, and a thousand others, are facts no more firmly established than is this one. Thus, this grain of wheat had fallen into this field, and the inherent forces had acted upon it and killed it. Other peoples of other localities and other ages may hold whatever notions, relative to the death of Jesus, they may wish. But to the Jew, his death has never been questioned.

We now come to the place where the processes of this most fundamental and most universally known of natural laws are enshrouded in the deep-

est of mystery. No man has been able to explain these processes. The Master recognized that they were not known by men, and made no attempt to explain them. But said, "The kingdom of God is as if a man should cast seed into the ground . . . and the seed should spring and grow up, *he knoweth not how.*"

Perhaps it were well that no attempt at explanation be made. That we pause before the great silent mystery in frank acknowledgment that we do not "know how." But it were well also that we do not single out this mystery, of the death and resurrection of Jesus, and arbitrarily put it in a class by itself; and, then, make our own arbitrary classification the occasion for rejecting it. Is it not much more complimentary to one's intelligence, while recognizing in this the deepest of mystery, yet to frankly acknowledge the similarity of this whole matter with the processes of this great natural law?

If a stalk of corn or of wheat, or of any other of the grains from the vegetable kingdom had been crucified, so to speak, and then buried, would anybody have thought it strange if it had burst forth into life? You say "no." "But this was a man!" Well, what of *that*? Is a blade of *grass* to have rights and privileges in a world of God's ordering that are denied to a *man*? Is a blade of grass of more consequence than a man? "Is a sheep of more value than a man?" Jesus asked, in the long ago. He said, "Behold, are

not ye of much more value than many sparrows? ” I repeat then, is a blade of grass to have a monopoly on the uses of a great fundamental and natural law?

“ But,” you say, “ any grain of wheat or kernel of corn placed in the earth would spring forth into life.” “ But this is not true of any and every man.” All of which is quite true. But you would readily admit that there was a time when this law, in its application to the seed kingdom, had *its beginning*. That before that beginning could be, there was, of necessity, the preparation of a soil or field. That the inherent forces that work so mysteriously upon the seed all had to be arranged, all of these had to be placed in their mysterious interrelationships. Sun, light, heat, moisture, soil, with all its chemical properties. These, and no doubt numberless hidden forces which the eye of man hath never seen. (For it is the working of the hidden forces that veils this whole process in mystery.) All of these had to be in readiness before there could be any beginning of the application and operation of this natural law in the seed kingdom.

But more than this. You readily admit that, with all of these things in readiness, there could be no operation of this law until a seed has been prepared in which has been placed the inherent properties and powers to respond to these inherent mysterious forces within the field. Still more; after soil and seed, with all of their peculiar,

wonderful, mysterious forces and properties, have been prepared, they must be brought together in the proper way. So that the application of this law may be inaugurated, with assurance of its successful operation throughout the whole realm involved.

Now, it was the ultimate destiny of the whole human realm or family that was involved here. It was the beginning of the application of this great natural law to the human family. The Jewish people were the prepared field. Jesus of Nazareth was the prepared seed. His thirty-three years on the earth was the planting time. His death and resurrection were the beginning of the application of this law of life to the whole human family.

So that it is with farreaching meaning that Jesus says, with reference to himself, "Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone. But if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." If not in Christ, then, we ask, in what other person did this law have the beginning of its application to the human family? If he did not bring "life and immortality to light," who did? In the origin of the human family, some one became the first "living soul." In the development of the human race, some one became the first "life giving Spirit." Who was that some one if not Jesus of Nazareth? It is written of Adam, "He became a living soul." Paul adds of Christ, "He became a life giving Spirit."

It has not been our effort here to prove the resurrection. We have sought only to point out that the fact of the resurrection is a fact, while enshrouded in mystery, yet, which is no more *unnatural* than hundreds of incidents that pass before our attention every day. And which have become so common that we speak and think of them as belonging to the world of natural phenomena. All of which, including even this one, conform quite fully to this great natural law of sowing and reaping. The chief difference of course being that other phenomena are observed as *successive* links in a chain, while this one is the *beginning* link in the chain. With its one end linked to humanity and the other anchored in the eternal purposes of the Creator himself.

Once we come to know His purposes, we feel that it is more *natural* that such a great and fundamental law should be applied to the human family than to any other realm in His whole universe. The more so when we consider the purpose for which it is applied. So it would seem that the death and resurrection of Jesus are in harmony with this most fundamental of natural laws. And is the most *natural* thing that could have been in the heart of the Creator.

IV

THE RESURRECTION MEETS DEMANDS OF PSYCHOLOGY

Having shown that the fact of the resurrection is in full harmony with the deepest and most fundamental law of all life, we now wish to show that nothing short of the actual fact of the resurrection could have met the demands of the science of psychology. But some object that psychology is a new science, and can have no place in determining a fact of history. To which we answer, quite true. It is new. But the principles upon which it is founded are as old as the human mind. The science of physiology is, likewise, quite recent in discovery and development. Yet the principles are as old as the human body. The law of gravitation was discovered only recently, yet its principles are as old as the universe. Many, in fact most of the sciences, have been worked out in recent years. Yet the principles upon which they rest, reach back into the very beginning of things.

I suppose few now would deny that Jesus was crucified and that He died upon the cross. The "swoon theory" seems to have gone by default in recent years, even among critics and skeptics.

Now if psychology, the science of the mind, or the laws by which it works, is to be of any help to us in a matter of this kind, it cannot be by considering how our own minds may work on the case. But it can only be by watching the movements of the minds of those associated with Jesus and His cause at the time the resurrection is said to have occurred. And those also who were implicated in His crucifixion. It matters little what attitude our minds may take toward the resurrection, as a fact. Removed as we are, in point of time, and biased more or less by the rationalism and naturalism of the day, it is to say the least very difficult for us to be absolutely fair in the handling of evidence both for and against the fact of a physical resurrection.

It is not the province of this chapter to discuss the discrepancies of the gospel narratives. That belongs to the exegete and the harmonologist, and has been dealt with by many of our ablest writers.

Our question has to do, mainly, with the changing attitude of the mind of the friends and enemies, also of those who were neither friends nor enemies of Jesus, on account of His death on the cross and that which followed.

Attention is called first to the changing attitude of mind of His friends. If the Scriptures are to be relied upon, His friends did not think He would die, and when he expired upon the cross, the expectant hope that they had followed for the three years of His ministry was shattered and vanished.

There was a psychological change wrought in them. They passed from an attitude of simple, trustful followers, to chagrined, hopeless, yes even despondent individuals. They were willing to show any act of respect or of kindness to the body of Jesus. Because, though lifeless (and this fact had stamped itself indelibly into the mind of every follower of Jesus), yet this body represented to them all that was left of a forlorn hope. They would now return to their former callings, after their three years' nightmare, to recover the shock and to meet the rebuffs of the foes of Jesus as best they could.

The mind of the followers of Jesus, with reference to his death and resurrection, is perhaps most clearly expressed in Mark 9:10 in recording the incidents following the transfiguration. Jesus charged the three to tell no man what they had seen, until "The Son of man should arise from the dead." "And they kept the saying, questioning among themselves what the 'rising again from the dead' should mean."

Peter voices the same state of mind, perhaps general among His followers, when Jesus "began to teach them, that the Son of Man must suffer many things, be rejected — and killed — and rise again. . . . Peter took Him and began to rebuke Him." ¹ And although severely rebuked by the Master Himself for entertaining such thoughts, yet this same thought, now settled into a deep con-

¹ *Mark* — 8: 31-32.

viction and expressive of a state of mind held by the friends of Jesus, flashes from the point of Peter's sword when Jesus is arrested.² It would seem from Luke 22:49 that the question of *defending* Him was being discussed by *all* His friends who were present. I mention this to show that, from their state of mind, He was not to die. Not dying, of course, there was no conception in their minds of His resurrection. I need not take the space to examine all the Scripture references. But suffice it to say (and I say it without fear of its being questioned), that in each and all of the many instances when Jesus raised the question with His disciples of His death and resurrection, if they gave any expression as to the state of their minds (and they did in a number of cases), the expressions show either that they did not understand what He meant, or that they expected some way to open up whereby He would avoid death. In either case, the Scriptures all show that He never, in all His teaching upon the subject, brought their minds to a state of reconciliation to the thought of His death and resurrection. They had made no plans for His burial. That was left to two who were not open and avowed disciples, but secret friends of Jesus.

Peter rushes to the ultimate consequences of this state of mind when he breaks out into bitter cursings, and denies that he ever knew Jesus. He sees Jesus betrayed into the hands of his enemies.

² *Mark* — 14.

The fearful fact of his death begins to image itself, for the first time, into his very soul. He is not fortified for any such an experience. There had been no mental conception, no anticipation, of any such a thing. He feels keenly the humiliation that will come to him. This feeling was shared, no doubt, by all the eleven. The feeling was a perfectly natural one. One that has been experienced by hundreds of men who have seen religious hopes vanish as air bubbles before their eyes. Have felt themselves left with nothing but an exploded hope. We hear the echo of that same forlorn hope from two others of the apostles in the conversation with the "stranger." "*We had hoped* it was He who should redeem Israel."³

Thus, with the crucifixion, every hope they had had in Jesus vanished. The three hours' exposure upon the cross "so fixed the fact of His death upon the sensitive plates of their understanding as to bring to naught all previous conceptions."

They lingered near the cross till His life went out. They left the cross with a hope as dead as was the individual in whom they had trusted. The great fact of his death, as a reality, had written itself against their wills in the deepest current of consciousness. It was there, indelibly written. It haunted them by night. It was the all dominating fact in their day dreams.

This, then, is the state of mind with which they came to the resurrection morning. Something oc-

³ *Luke* — 24: 21.

curred that morning which either erased or neutralized this fact of His death in the minds of these apostles. I now ask, *what was it?* I am not now asking what you think or believe about the resurrection. I am not now even concerned as to what I think about that. But I am asking the deeper, the more difficult question. Yes, the one which, when answered, will give the correct answer. What necessarily had to happen if the fact of His death is to be erased or neutralized in their minds?

From the psychological viewpoint, this is the crux of the whole matter. These were men, mature in mind. Their minds would work the same as yours or mine under similar circumstances. It is not a question of how our minds might work in weighing testimony and drawing conclusions at this distance. But how our minds would have worked had we been there or in their places at the time. It is safe to say that we would have done just as they did.

“But,” some one says, “they did not want to believe that he was dead.” (And I grant the assertion.) “Therefore; it was easy for them to believe in his resurrection.” The conclusion does not follow the premise. They did not want to believe that He was dead. Therefore they did not believe it until it forced its awful reality into their consciousness. Here, conclusion follows premise.

“Easy for them to believe in his resurrection!” That statement was never made by one

who has gone down into the shadow land, and clasped the hand of a friend and held it, while the awful unwelcome fact of his death was burning its way into his very soul. Did you ever stand beside the casket of your mother, brother or friend? If you have, stand there once more and try to make yourself say, "It is easy for me to erase this experience from my mind." If you have never passed through such an experience, then your opinion may not be very weighty when you say "it is easy to erase the fact of death" from the mind.

But I ask the question again. What necessarily had to happen if the fact of his death is to be erased or neutralized in their mind? I answer, in the first place, by saying that it never could be erased. In the second place, I may state that it could have been neutralized only by an experience founded upon a *related* fact no less real. What was that fact? A fact real enough to neutralize the thought of His death in their mind? Or if you have looked into the lifeless face of your sainted mother, what fact can ever neutralize that fact in your mind? Just one, my friend. That is, an actual resurrection by which you shall be enabled to meet her in life again. No apparition; no hallucination; no vision; no hearsay; no anything but the actual living presence and association with her. Again I ask, what was the related fact, big enough and real enough to cover up the fact of his death in the minds

of these apostles? Psychologically, there is but one answer. The science of psychology demands the actual resurrection. Its demands are unmet by anything less than this.

It matters not what I may *think*. What my attitude toward *miracles* may be. I simply cannot account for the state of their minds apart from the actual resurrection. Here is a mental phenomenon. As a psychologist I am asked to account for it. This I simply cannot do apart from the actual resurrection. It baffles analysis and explanation upon any other theory.

But now, as to the foes of Jesus. It will be remembered that they clamored for His death. That when Pilate was minded to let Jesus go a great multitude of them cried, "Crucify him." Then Pilate washed his hands and said, "I am free from the blood of this just person." Then all the multitude answered and said, "His blood be upon us, and upon our children." So that when He expired upon the cross a few hours later, the fact of His death was one of the most welcome impressions that had been produced in their minds. It was a fact that they would gladly retain in consciousness as long as they lived. They would be as reluctant to relinquish that fact as the disciples had been stubborn in receiving it, and much more so. It is true, the disciples felt humiliated in His death. But, aside from their tender regard for Him, there was only the humil-

iation and disappointment born of blighted hopes. But with His enemies it is far different. If He remains dead, they are justified. They have put out of the way a disturber of the religious peace. But if He *lives*, they are all criminals of the worst type. They are murderers. Consequently, they will hold to the fact of His death as to no other related to Him. If we could feel that there could have been any possibility that the disciples were mistaken as to His *actual death*, not so with these, His enemies. They are going to be satisfied with nothing short of His real death. Not until this fact is firmly fixed in their consciousness do they leave the cross.

Fifty days from that time Peter, with the other apostles, faced a large gathering of these same people in the city of Jerusalem. He then told them that "God hath made that same Jesus whom *ye* crucified both Lord and Christ." Jesus had spent forty days mingling freely with the people in and around Jerusalem, so that the fact of His resurrection had become generally known and accepted. Three thousand, many of whom had participated in His crucifixion, surrendered the fact of His death and accepted the fact of His resurrection.

A few days later Peter addressed a still larger gathering, and said, "But you denied the Holy one and the just one . . . and killed the Prince of Life, whom God hath raised from the dead;

whereof we are witnesses." Five thousand men now openly acknowledge the fact of His resurrection.

We need not take into consideration each case. But it probably will not be disputed that within a few months of his resurrection, most of the people who had participated in His crucifixion openly acknowledged the fact of His resurrection. Now, the question is again a psychological one.

With the fact of His death so willingly and prominently in their minds, and desirous as they were that it remain there unchanged, what did happen on the resurrection morning if He did not actually arise from the dead? Why did they change their minds in that regard? Would they have changed their attitude of mind in and of themselves? Or was it a change which they could not avoid? How do you account for this mental phenomenon, apart from the actual resurrection of Jesus? This is a psychic phenomenon. As a psychologist, I am asked to account for it. Again I can do this in no other way than upon the theory of the actual resurrection.

Attention is finally called to the state of mind of those who were perhaps neither essentially friends nor enemies of Jesus at the time of the crucifixion.

There were thousands of loyal, honest, well meaning Jews, who simply did not know what attitude to take toward Jesus during his ministry. They recognized in Jesus a mighty miracle worker

and a master teacher. Yet they were un-schooled, unsophisticated. They would gladly have followed Jesus, but, like the parents of the blind man whom Jesus healed, they feared the rulers of the synagogues, for they "had agreed already that if any man should confess Jesus to be the Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue."⁴ Membership in a synagogue had a meaning then not to be compared with membership in our churches of today. It is not improbable that to this class belonged the very cream of the Jewish Church.

Then there were the Josephs of Arimathæa, the Nicodemuses and the Gamaliels. Stephen also was in this class. Stalwart men intellectually. Men high up in official position. Men of great heart power who, in the time of religious controversy, are too big to be seen. Yet who, in the hour of need, are too little to be seen for the bigness of the things which they do. These always constitute the real power in any community, age or movement.

Multiplied hundreds of these answered the first call of the gospel on Pentecost and later. So that the early church was literally filled with this class of people.

What was it that moved these from a state of noncommittal to an attitude of open avowal of the cause of Christ? Nothing short of the fact of the resurrection can again satisfy the demands of

⁴ *John* — 9: 22.

psychology in the change wrought in their minds.

Here, then, are the three classes. Friends of Jesus, who do not want to believe the fact of His death, and who having been forced to accept it, relinquish it only when a greater related fact has neutralized it. The enemies of Jesus, criminals, murderers, glad to receive and eager to retain the fact of His death; yet forced by the other greater fact to relinquish it and accept Him as the living Savior. And finally, the well meaning, honest, upright class who had been noncommittal in attitude, because of a fear of being dismembered from the synagogue, or some other unknown cause. These are brought to a positive, open attitude of friendship toward Jesus.

Now we ask once more, in the face of the divergent psychic phenomena here evident, what happened that forced a blending of all these into a unified attitude of love and loyalty to Jesus?

The actual resurrection of Jesus is the one thing that can meet the demands of the science of psychology in this matter.

V

THE RESURRECTION

ITS PLACE IN SCRIPTURES AND FORCE OF LOGIC

We have shown that the resurrection is in full harmony with the deepest and most fundamental law of all life and existence. That instead of being *unnatural* it is, therefore, the most *natural* thing that we could expect from Him who is the Creator of life and the author of its laws. We have shown that nothing short of the actual resurrection could have met the demands of the science of psychology. That the divergent psychic phenomena, so in evidence at the time of the crucifixion, could not have been unified in the attitude toward Jesus apart from the actual resurrection. That, therefore, these psychic phenomena are in-explainable upon any theory that eliminates the actual fact of the resurrection.

We now wish to speak of the position, from the Scriptural viewpoint, which the fact of the resurrection had in the beginnings of Christianity; and the conclusion to which we are impelled by the force of logic.

Matthew tells us that the Roman guard was

placed to watch the sepulcher. This probably consisted of sixty soldiers, with the night divided into four watches. Fifteen soldiers would be on guard during each watch. At the critical moment (which in this instance of course was the last watch of the night before the morning of the first day) it would be arranged for the whole guard to be upon the scene. The statement of Matthew, (who himself had been in the service of the Roman government, and who to some extent knew the craft of office) is that these soldiers "became as dead men," in the presence of the resurrection. That they afterwards came into the city of Jerusalem and told the chief priests the whole story of the resurrection, just as it had happened, as nearly as they could. That the priests and the elders then got together and held a counsel. That in this counsel they entered into an agreement to bribe the guard. That this cost them a considerable sum of money. And a pledge that if it became necessary, they would stand between the governor and the soldiers. The soldiers were to say that the disciples stole the body away while they were asleep. On the statement of Matthew they were "as dead men." On their own public testimony they were asleep. But in neither event can their testimony be admitted as evidence in the case as to what really happened on that morning.

When Jesus appeared unto the Apostles after his resurrection, we are told by John

(20:24) that Thomas was not present. That when they told him that Jesus had arisen; that they had seen him; he said, "Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, *I will not believe.*" We learn from Luke (24:9-11) that when the women, who were first at the sepulcher, told the apostles that He had arisen, "their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they *believed them not.*" A few days later Jesus stood in the midst of the disciples, Thomas being present, and said, "Thomas reach hither thy finger, and see my hands, and reach hither thy hand, and put it into my side; and be not faithless but believing." And Thomas, the doubter, said "My Lord and my God." Jesus said, "Because thou hast seen me thou hast believed; blessed are they who have not seen and yet have believed."

When the women first brought the news of the resurrection to the apostles, Peter and John ran to the tomb. They saw the open and empty tomb. They saw the burial clothes. Peter entered into the tomb and saw the napkin that had been about His head, folded and lying in a place by itself. Then John entered and saw the same things. "And believed."¹ Peter and John left the tomb that morning convinced of the resurrection. This conviction passed from the realm of *belief*, founded upon the testimony of the women, the empty tomb,

¹ *John* — 20:8.

the burial clothes, the folded napkin, etc., into the realm of actual fact when in the evening Jesus "stood in their midst," the doors being shut, and asked them to examine His hands and His side.

For the next forty days Jesus is with the apostles, in the most intimate relationships. He showed Himself to be alive by all kinds of "infallible proofs." He taught them during these days, specifically, of the one great subject of His whole ministry; viz., "The kingdom of God." He finally commanded them to wait in Jerusalem until the coming of the Holy Spirit upon them, with the instruction that the Spirit would guide them in all the work of the coming kingdom. He was then received back to the Father, where he was coronated the king of this kingdom.

Beginning at nine o'clock on the first Pentecostal morning, after the resurrection, the proclamation of the resurrection of Jesus went forth to the world. It went forth from Peter, the one commissioned to be "first among equals." It went forth as a part of the gospel message. It was proclaimed *by* those who ate, walked and talked with Jesus for forty days after His resurrection. Those chosen to be eye witnesses of His resurrection. It was proclaimed *to* those who had participated in His crucifixion, many of whom had seen Him after His resurrection, and all of whom had the opportunity to know of the truthfulness of the proclamation.

Assume for a moment that this proclamation is

not true. We can then see how entirely out of place it was to proclaim it in Jerusalem, the very city in which every citizen had the opportunity to know or find out as to the truthfulness of the resurrection. We can see how easily public sentiment would have been set against the apostles and the church. But on the contrary, the statement is made in this very connection, that "they took their food with gladness and singleness of heart praising God and *having favor with all the people.*"² It might have been excusable to have preached this falsehood in some locality far distant from Jerusalem. For there the people could not have known positively, and would have been left to their acquaintance with and confidence in the speakers. But how foolish it was, from the viewpoint of common sense and general principles, to expect to build a church on a falsehood by proclaiming that falsehood first in the one city where all the people knew, or could know, it was a falsehood.

But if the ordinary citizen could know, how the foolhardiness of these apostles is multiplied when we consider that they proclaimed this as a fact to the identical individuals who crucified Jesus, and who had guarded and watched the tomb at every tick of the clock, and who could have rebuked the lie in the very teeth of him who was speaking it. If lie it were! He who assumes that these apostles are proclaiming a falsehood, throws

² *Acts* — 2: 47.

this whole matter from the realm of logic, and makes the whole procedure of the apostles imbecilic.

When one was chosen to fill the place of Judas, Peter laid down the rule that he must be from those who had followed Jesus from His baptism to His ascension. One who had been an eye witness of all the details of Jesus' ministry, and who could testify as an eye witness of the resurrection. The resurrection was preached in the first apostolic sermon. It would be difficult to find a paragraph from an apostolic sermon that does not contain, either by statement or direct implication, the fact of the resurrection. The church was established and grew upon that truth.

Paul says ³ that the gospel message is the *death*, the *burial* and the *resurrection* of Jesus. It was so understood by Peter, James and John; by Stephen and Philip; and was so proclaimed by all who "were scattered abroad." And who "went everywhere preaching the word." Now if there had been any weakness about the fact of the resurrection, the early preachers would certainly have known it and, therefore, would not have presented this as the *leading* and *first fact* in the entire chain. It is not what *I* think about miracles; not what *you* may think. But seriously, what would common sense and the logic of the whole situation have impelled them to do in the matter? On the assumption that they were rogues and entered into a

³ *I Cor.*—15: 1-4.

conspiracy to deceive, would they not have had sense enough to have held the matter of the resurrection in the background? To have touched upon it carefully? How does the attorney handle the weak link in the chain of his evidence? Does he hold it before the judge and jury first, last and always?

Jesus' body was not in the tomb after that morning of the first day. This is conceded by friend and enemy alike. There are then three possible hypotheses relative to His body. First, He could have been stolen from the tomb by His friends. Secondly, He could have been stolen from the tomb by His enemies. Thirdly, He could have arisen and walked forth into life.

To have stolen the body, the disciples would have had to pass in, break the Roman seal and pass out with the body, in the presence of the Roman guard. This in itself would be highly improbable. But more than this, they would have had to conceal the body, so that no one was ever able to find it. Another most difficult thing. They then would have had to enter into a league to perjure their own conscience on the matter as long as they lived. This would be the most difficult of all. When we consider the number and character of the people involved, this would be next to impossible. No motive can be assigned, as none existed, sufficient to justify any such procedure.

If He were stolen, it must then have been by His

enemies. They arrested Him. They influenced Pilate to give permission to crucify Him. They called for the release of Barabbas instead of Jesus. They said they were willing to accept the responsibility for His blood. They finally crucified Him. They were murderers. Therefore, none too good in character to have stolen the body from the grave. They themselves, indeed, suggested the thought of stealing the body from the tomb. They had the tomb sealed. They placed the guard. The guard was under their instructions. They talked first with the guardsmen after they left the sepulcher. They had access to the sepulcher all the time. They had the only available opportunity to steal the body. Logic would impel the conclusion, therefore, that if any living persons removed the body from the tomb, they were from among the enemies of Jesus.

Then He either arose from the grave, laid aside the burial clothes, and walked forth into life, or He was carried from the tomb by some of His enemies. It was only three days from the time of His burial till all Jerusalem was filled with the talk of His resurrection. There were but the two classes. Those who enthusiastically proclaimed His resurrection; and those who were against it. The line was drawn. The issue was clear cut. If He had been yet in the tomb, all Jerusalem could have visited the tomb (as hundreds no doubt did) and could have seen for themselves. He was not there. Where was He?

When the disciples began to preach that He had arisen; and when thousands began to flock to and accept their teaching, do you not think that the enemies and unbelievers in their extremity would have produced the dead body of Jesus in order to have nailed the falsehood and thus brought to naught the whole movement? Yes, you know they would have done this if they could. There has never been a day since that resurrection morning, nor a community on the face of the earth, in which the enemies of Jesus would not have quickly produced the dead body of Jesus in order to silence the teaching on the resurrection if it had been in their power to do so.

My point is, that *these* enemies and unbelievers in Jerusalem had the power and the opportunity (on the supposition that he did not arise) to produce His body. That before they would have allowed the preaching of the resurrection to have succeeded, they would have done this. That the fact that they did not do so is a manifest evidence in itself that He had arisen from the dead. Every sermon preached was a direct challenge to every enemy or unbeliever to accept its truth, or present the dead body of Jesus, or at least explain where it was. In the absence of the body, and in the failure of the unbelievers to make any reasonable explanation as to its whereabouts, we are impelled by the very force of reason and logic to the conclusion that He arose from the dead.

The enemies and unbelievers thought to meet the

challenge by hurling back at the disciples the counter-challenge, "You produce the living body." This the disciples did by pointing to the Church of Christ, or body of Christ, as they called it in many instances in the New Testament. Thus it is, that the issue over the body of Jesus has moved down through the centuries. While infidels and unbelievers in all ages have been unable to find and present the dead body of Jesus, yet they have always pointed the finger of scorn at the church and have denied that it was the body of Christ or that there was anything divine about it. I presume this will continue till the end of time.

Here, then, the matter rests. The body of Jesus was practically in the hands of His enemies from the arrest until the morning of the resurrection. He then appeared to, and continued with, the Apostles for the next forty days, forcing them, against their own first thought in the matter, to accept the fact of His resurrection. He commanded them to wait in Jerusalem for the coming of the Spirit. When the Spirit came, they knew that this was evidence of His acceptance and coronation at the Father's right hand. All things were ready then for the Spirit's public proclamation, through Peter, that He had arisen from the dead; and had been made both Lord and Christ. This occurred in Jerusalem on Pentecost. In the very city where He was crucified. It was proclaimed to the very people who had participated in His crucifixion. Many of these accepted the fact

of the resurrection. Every sermon became a challenge to unbelievers to accept the resurrection or produce the body of Jesus. Finally the church stood forth as the mystical body of Jesus on the earth, and was pointed to as the divine institution in which dwelt the Spirit of Christ.

If infidels and unbelievers in all ages have been unable to produce the dead body of Jesus, then they ought to keep still in this matter. But that in no way releases the believers from the responsibility of producing the living body, the church, on the earth, and using every available opportunity to extend its power and influence as the ages move on. It was the living body and presence of Jesus in and around Jerusalem during those forty days that paralyzed the infidels of that city, and made them helpless in their opposition to the church. He has had that same effect in every community in all ages when he has really lived in His body — the church.

“ When the trumpet of the Lord shall sound and time
shall be no more,
And the morning breaks eternal bright and fair;
When the saved of earth shall gather over on the
other shore,
And the roll is called up yonder, I’ll be there.

On that bright and cloudless morning when the dead
in Christ shall rise,
And the glory of his resurrection share;

When his chosen ones shall gather to their home beyond the skies,
And the roll is called up yonder, I'll be there."

Standing before the lifeless form of Lazarus, Jesus said to his sisters in discussing the question of the resurrection, "I am the resurrection and the life."⁴ Paul says, "But now hath Christ been raised from the dead and hath become the first fruits of them that are asleep. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead."⁵ Even so may it come to all who love life and righteousness in Christ.

⁴ *John* — 11:25.

⁵ *I Cor.* — 15:20.

VI

THINGS PERTAINING TO THE KINGDOM

ACTS — 1:3

We have passed the Easter time, so-called, in the events of the life of the Savior. We have dealt with the resurrection as the greatest fact in the chain of Christian doctrine, first as to its naturalness in the light of modern science; secondly, psychologically; and thirdly, as to the logic of the facts in the case. It will be in order now for us to take up some of the important matters which come in the history succeeding the resurrection.

First in order is the forty days between the resurrection and the ascension. We are told in our text that Jesus was seen for forty days by the apostles whom He had chosen, and that He spoke to them during this time of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God. One short chapter in each of the synoptics, two in John, and eight verses in the opening chapter of Luke's Acts of the Apostles, are all we have in the inspired record of Jesus' association with his apos-

bles after the resurrection. Certainly very brief for so important a period of the stay of our Savior upon the earth. A period in which everything pertaining to the kingdom was taking its final and eternal form, that is so far as the establishment and development of the Kingdom of God among men is concerned. Had not John preached "the kingdom of heaven is at hand" during his ministry four years previous to this? Did not the Master enter upon His ministry three and a half years prior to this, preaching from the same topic? Did He not select, qualify and send out first the twelve and later the seventy, instructing them to preach upon the same topic? Had not "all Judea" repented at John's preaching? What, then, was there new in this teaching of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God? What was the new element or force in this teaching? Yes, there was the new element. The unknown quantity in the human side of the equation has become known. It is not a thing to be determined now by future history; but a thing that is to determine future history. Teaching that had previously been based upon the prospective will now be based upon the retrospective. As everything had looked forward to the cross and resurrection in anticipation, so now everything will look back to the resurrection in realization.

The kingdom is to continue until the end of time, and is to subdue all things. And in the teaching concerning the kingdom, the resurrection

is to be the dominant fact, the ever abiding and constant element. It is the one gigantic fact of the gospel.

In the second place, in this kingdom are to be permanent institutions, first among which is to be the initiatory rite into the kingdom, Christian baptism. There had been the various washings and dippings of the Hebrew people for various purposes. Also the baptism of John, which had had its day and fulfilled its mission. All of these had been temporal. There is now to be instituted a baptism that shall be as eternal as time. Though not differing in its form from John's, yet it will differ in almost every other essential. The form even will have new significance. It will set forth in picture, beautifully, the death, burial and resurrection of the Savior; thus keeping ever before the mind the big fact of the gospel. John's was to prepare the way. This is for the purpose of entering into that way. John's was upon the confession of sin. This is to be for the remission of sin. John's was to prepare for the kingdom. This is for the entrance into the kingdom. John's was for the penitent Jew. This is for the penitent of every nation. John's was upon a pledge of belief in Him who was to come. This is upon the confession of Him who has come. John's was to get one ready to accept. This is to prepare one to serve. John's was to agitate the conscience. This is to clarify the conscience. John's was a call to a principle. This is a call

to a person. John's was to entitle one to good standing in the Jewish church. This is to constitute one a member of the church of Christ. John's was a worthy closing to the old dispensation. This is to be a beautiful beginning of the new. John's was the "outward sign of an inward grace." This is the entrance of a new personality into the life.

There is a new term in the Christian baptismal formula. Men have known the Father all through the Jewish age through the work of the prophets and other great leaders. They have known the Son in His mission and ministry in the world. But this new personality that is placed in the baptismal formula, the Holy Spirit. What place is He to have in this coming kingdom? What is to be His function, His place of operation, the agency through whom He is to accomplish His work? These were interesting questions in a discussion of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God. And we do not have to stretch the imagination to conceive of Jesus' taking them over this subject and teaching it to them as fully as it was possible for Him to do in their limited vision of the great and eternal things of the kingdom. Teaching them that they, as his chosen apostles, were to be the first ones to meet this new personality that has appeared in the new baptismal formula. That He shall come to be not only with them as the Savior had been, but in them, filling them with all divine power and wis-

dom to meet the problems of the coming kingdom, becoming in them, what Jesus had been to them. That His coming upon them was to be the long promised "baptism of the Holy Spirit." That Jesus was to ascend back to the Father, to be coronated the King in this coming kingdom and from His throne there in the presence of the Father; and by the Father's authority to administer this baptism upon His chosen ones in His holy city. And further, that when thus baptized, they are to constitute the kingdom. God dwelling in them in the Spirit, and they dwelling in the earth in the human family, thus constituting the Kingdom of God among men. This also would be the Kingdom of God within them even as He had said, "The Kingdom of God is within you." But still further, that He would seek to explain to them, as pertaining to the kingdom, how this new personality, this Spirit that dwells in them, so potent and powerful, is to pass into the lives of all those who come penitently and submit to this new and eternal baptism of the kingdom, that He may there work the regeneration and transformation of the life and out from that, as a citadel of power and influence, reach other lives until He has conquered the world for the King.

But there was another eternal institution that was destined to play no small part in this coming kingdom, and as the baptismal ordinance is to be a powerful teacher of the great facts of the gospel — the death, burial and resurrection — so this

one also, the communion service. And Jesus must have a final word with them upon this institution. When as a family they shall meet together there is to be an institution that shall be a deep searcher of the heart motives, a powerful rectifier of the daily walk, deeply devotional, religious and spiritual. This institution, when the heart is in deep, serious, solemn, prayerful meditation; when the heart is beating in accord with other loyal hearts, in sweetness of fellowship, in the sacredness of the Lord's day, with the holy sentiment of sacred song, with the reading from the sacred word, with all these hallowed influences focused upon the heart, this institution — the communion — is to take advantage of this opportune time, this most teachable moment, to impress upon the heart the deep significance of the Lord's death. True, Jesus had broken the bread and partaken of the wine in their presence. Had even given it to them to eat and to drink, anticipating the cross. But the bread and the wine are to be taken "new in my Father's kingdom." That is, with new significance. Yes, Jesus must speak to them of this institution. The how and when and where it is to be observed. His death and resurrection are to speak through this institution to the thousands of generations yet unborn in shaping the future history of the world in this coming kingdom. Thus is this institution to have such an abiding and prominent place of influence in the coming kingdom that it

may powerfully "show (proclaim) the Lord's death till He comes again." In the church, then, on the Lord's day, when the congregations of disciples have come together, this will be the proper and fitting time for the observance of this eternal ordinance. If not in the preaching of the word, if in no other way, if only in the deep, silent, solemnity of the occasion, yet they are never to come together upon the Lord's day without each one becoming a participator in the proclamation of their Lord's death and resurrection. This simple, sacred service is to be the thing that is to cause the Marys and the Salomes to meet at the sepulcher of their Lord upon the first day of the week. This holy service is to be the power that is to attract the Peters and the Johns and cause them to hasten to the sepulcher (the death and resurrection) of their Lord upon the Lord's day. This service, the flower with sweet incense with which His grave is to be decorated upon each Lord's day. Not only is this service to be powerful in strengthening the individual disciple and in edifying the congregations of disciples everywhere and always, but it is to be a potent proclaimer of the Lord's death to the unbeliever who may chance to be within the congregation. And this leads us to the consideration of the next abiding and permanent institution in this coming kingdom, the living ministry.

God had chosen in this coming kingdom that by the "foolishness of preaching" those who believe

should be saved. In each of the synoptics Jesus gives His final word upon this abiding institution of the gospel age substantially as it is given by Matthew, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." John gives His final words to His apostles as follows, "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." John also records the incidents of Peter's leading the disciples on a fishing expedition; the sleepless and fruitless night having been spent, Jesus came unto them in the morning and had a testing and interesting conversation with Peter upon the things pertaining to the coming kingdom. During this interview, Peter is pledged not once, not twice, but thrice to feed the sheep. So that the function of this permanent institution in the coming kingdom is somewhat twofold in its nature, evangelizing and shepherdizing. The teaching of "all nations" and the teaching of "all things commanded." Accordingly, we hear Paul speaking in a later day, with a clear understanding of the things that Jesus was at this very time doing. For it is the "forty days" just preceding His ascension of which we are speaking; and during which time He "spake to the apostles

of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God." Paul says, "When He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." In the distribution of these gifts to men, in the beginning of this coming kingdom, the apostle goes on to say, "And He gave some (gifts qualifying certain individuals as) apostles; and some (qualifying others as) preachers; and some (qualifying still others as) traveling evangelists; and some (gifts qualifying others as) pastors and teachers." The reason for this is not difficult to see. The time had come, with the opening of this coming kingdom, when by reason of the unfolding of God's purposes to the children of men through the Hebrew people, that "they ought to be teachers, that they had need that some one teach them again the rudiments of the first principles of the oracles (purposes) of God." And to supply this need, the King must give special gifts, conferring them upon certain individuals temporarily, to supply a present need that was twofold in its nature: First, the supplying of efficient leaders, teachers, ministers, etc., to guide and direct the infant church or kingdom in its growth and development; secondly, the supplying of individuals who could by miraculous deeds attest the divineness of the kingdom. These were the first ministers of the church. This was the first ministry of the church. And it is this of which we speak as an abiding institution in the church. It had its beginning in miracle, as we

have seen — gifts miraculously conferred upon individuals in the origin of an institution, the living ministry. So far as we are concerned, this is the divine order in all things. Things begin in miracle, or by an act of the Divine power and will; and then are placed under the principles of natural law, to grow and develop accordingly. Under natural laws (and in this connection, by natural laws is meant the laws of the kingdom or the laws natural to the kingdom) men are now to be trained for this ministry, as is clearly shown by the apostle in this same connection. In fact, this seems to be the chief function of the church. Perhaps we had thought that the church was an institution into which people are gathered and thus saved; and this is of course true in a sense. But we will have a far clearer conception of the church if we think of it as an institution into which people are gathered in order to be trained “for the work of the ministry.” As the apostle says, these, the first ministers of the church, were qualified so that they might “edify (train) the saints unto the work of the ministry.” In our own day there is a great dearth of men for the ministry, due largely, apologize for it as we may, to the fact that the church has lost the art, has ceased to perform the function, of “training its saints unto the work of the ministry.” There is a vast difference between a church’s training a sinless saint unto the work of the ministry and ac-

cepting the services of a saintless sinner, as that of the ministry.

So we are sure that Jesus did not speak the final word to His apostles "of the things pertaining to the coming kingdom," without speaking to them in regard to this most essential and no less vital institution of the kingdom. He who doubts need but take a look into the history of the newly established kingdom when these apostles are putting into practice, as the Spirit brings to their remembrance, the "things pertaining to the kingdom" which Jesus had taught them. He will there see the seven saintly, spiritual men appointed to care for the widows and orphans, a holy ministry for which they are fitted and one that will tell mightily for the extension of the kingdom. The Stephens and the Philips will arise before him in ever increasing numbers. The Barnabuses, Timothys, Aquillas and Priscillas, indeed, will come before him in countless numbers as he reads that "they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word." All the saints, trained in the highest sense of the term "for the work of the ministry," and understanding the urgent importance of doing that work.

But we must speak a definite word in regard to that part of the work of the ministry which has to do with evangelizing. These saints trained for the work of the ministry, then in this phase

of their work, which is indeed not a small part, are to be trained to preach the gospel. This is an everlasting gospel, to be proclaimed by an everlasting and ever abiding institution within the coming kingdom or church. Paul says "though we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you . . . how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried and that He arose again the third day according to the Scriptures." This, then, is the gospel which this living ministry is to be trained to preach.

How beautifully significant: how harmoniously Divine! These three abiding institutions within the great institution, the church (the baptismal rite, the communion and the living ministry) are to unite their testimony, to exhaust their powers, to focus their light upon the cross of Calvary; and in the proclamation of His death, burial and resurrection until He comes again. Well may we sing with the poet —

" In the cross of Christ I glory;
 Towering o'er the wrecks of time;
All the light of sacred story
 Gathers round its head sublime."

VII

THE TEN DAYS OF PRAYER

ACTS — 1:14

Following the resurrection and the “forty days’ teaching of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God,” we have a short period which we shall designate as the ten days of prayer.

We are told that at the end of the forty days, while in the attitude of blessing the disciples, Jesus was taken up from their midst and received into heaven. The ascension is twice recorded by Luke and once by Mark. Luke tells us that when the company returned to Jerusalem from Olivet near Bethany, the scene of the ascension, the apostles resorted to the room where they were abiding. Specifically naming the apostles as abiding together in the “upper room,” he says, “These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brethren.”¹ It is ten days yet before the kingdom is really to be established among men, of which they had heard so much and seemingly understood so little. The watchword for these ten days is “Tarry ye

¹ *Acts — 1:14.*

in Jerusalem." They who could not watch "one hour" with Him at Gethsemane's gate in the very shadow of the cross, who could not hopefully tarry near the sepulcher for three short days, are able now, by the influence of the fact of the resurrection in their minds, to "tarry" patiently for ten days. How different now the state of mind of the apostles! What a note of certainty now as compared with the uncertainty of their state of mind during the entombment! No fishing expedition now. No absent Thomases now. No Thomas's declaration of unbelief. No talk of "idle tales" in these prayer meetings. How fitting that these be days of prayerful waiting! "Tarry ye." "These all continued with one accord in prayer." Tell us not that the fact of the resurrection has not dominated every other fact in their minds. Changes have been wrought in their minds and lives that must now be reckoned with. And no *theory* of the resurrection will account for the change. The fact, and nothing short of it, will satisfy the demands of these changes wrought in the minds of these eleven men. The resurrection, as a fact, is beginning already to do the work in the minds of these which it is destined to do, increasingly so, in the lives of all disciples of the Master until the end of the ages. They are not in the attitude of turning back to their old calling of fishermen, but buoyant in the hope of the new. They are now to be "fishers of men."

During their prayers and supplications they take up the matter of choosing one to fill the apostleship vacated by Judas, the betrayer. This is a forward look rather than a turning back. It is a manifestation of confidence in the coming kingdom; that the Savior's promise that they "shall receive power," will be redeemed.

It was at one of the regular prayer meetings that Peter, when a goodly number of the believers had come together, a hundred and twenty we are told, brought the matter before them. After speaking of the betrayal, the vacancy in the apostleship and the prophecy concerning its being filled by another, he then states the qualifications whereby one would be eligible to the office, and also the purpose for which he is to be chosen; viz., that he may be a witness with them of the resurrection. They then pray in an appropriate manner and proceed to the election of one to fill the vacancy. The vote is taken; Matthias is elected and "numbered with the eleven apostles."

Naturally enough, when Peter makes known the qualifications, and they begin to cast about among themselves to see who is eligible, there seems to be but two among the whole number of the believers who are eligible. This is only as we would naturally suppose when one of the requirements was that he must have "complicated with them all the time that Jesus went in and out among them, from the baptism of John to the day of his ascension." While there were, no doubt,

many who had been with them nearly all the time, perhaps among the women many who had been with them all the time, yet among the men we would naturally expect to find few who had been with them all the time between these two events. This would cover a period of almost four years. So we are not surprised that seemingly there were but two of the men who were eligible — Joseph and Matthias.

But this calls up another question which ought to have at least a passing notice; the question of "apostolic succession." Claims have been made by certain religious denominations that there was to be in the church a succession of apostles. That when Peter, who was the head, died the headship succeeded to another, and so on down to the present time. That in the matter of apostolic succession the headship has succeeded to those identified with this, that or the other religious sect as the case might be. For instance, if the Roman Catholic sect, it succeeded to the pope as head and his cardinals as subordinates. But if the Episcopal sect, then the bishop, with his subordinates. If the Mormon sect, then Joseph Smith as head, with his twelve apostles. If the Eddy sect, then it is Mrs. Eddy, with her under puppets. If the Advent sect, then it is Mrs. White, with her under corps of servants. And so on, until you have gone the rounds. The strange thing about the apostolic succession claim is that those sects putting forward this claim are as a rule the farthest

from the teaching of the apostles in the New Testament. But this is only a natural consequence of the claim. Believing, as they do, that the head men in the church have succeeded to the apostleship, they do not need to heed the authority of the New Testament apostles since they have apostles of their own who can give them apostolic teaching at any time.

But the question ought not to give us serious difficulty when once we come to see clearly that Peter lays down a rule in the matter of eligibility that has never been changed, and by reason of which every claimant in a later day would be ruled out. The pretensions of any claimant can easily be overthrown by simply saying to him that upon the authority of Peter he is not eligible, since he did not accompany the disciples from the baptism to the ascension. That he did not see Jesus arise from the tomb. That he has never seen Him since His resurrection, save possibly in the sense in which all believers have seen Him, by faith and research into the testimony of history.

In a later day, when one was to be grafted into the apostleship this rule was not violated. He did not *succeed* to the office, but by special miracle he was caught up and privileged to *see Jesus*. And we hear him retort, when his apostleship is questioned at Corinth, "Am I not an apostle? *Have I not seen Jesus?*" Will any claimants in these days reply in a like manner when their apostleship is questioned? Let them be tested by the

same rule; if they can substantiate their claim in this particular and can back up the claim by genuine miracles, as did the New Testament apostles, Paul included, then we will listen to them. But otherwise, we shall dismiss the question of apostolic succession as unworthy of serious consideration.

Peter states the purpose of this appointment in the clearest possible manner; simply that the one so chosen could be a witness with them of the resurrection. Tell us not in the face of this statement that the resurrection is not the all dominating and absorbing fact in their consciousness. It is to be the great fact of the coming kingdom. But pray tell us how a man is to be a valid and competent witness of an event that he did not see; that he only knows by hearsay or by historical testimony?

But there is another phase of the choosing of Matthias which has troubled some, and we must not pass it without a word. There is a feeling that inasmuch as the apostles were told to "tarry in Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high," and as this had not yet occurred, this appointment was out of order and was without Divine sanction; and hence, was not valid. That in the Divine plan Paul was later chosen to supply this vacancy. That his selection bears the stamp of Divine approval. Therefore, the choosing of Matthias was simply a blunder of impetuous Peter.

First, it is not altogether improbable that this is one of the very things that Jesus had taught them in the "forty days'" teaching; secondly, there is nothing in the New Testament that would cast the slightest reflection upon this appointment or upon the validity of Matthias' apostleship. True, he is never specifically mentioned afterwards. But this is no less true of others of the apostles. He is mentioned with the others later.

Being numbered with them, he was with them in the room when on Pentecost the Spirit came. And we are told the Spirit sat upon each of them, that "they were all filled with the Spirit," and "that they spake as the Spirit gave them utterance." When Peter arose to speak upon that occasion he is said to have "stood up with the eleven"; he being the twelfth one. "The apostles" is a common expression, used in a collective sense frequently in the Acts, and unless otherwise modified, must be taken to refer to the twelve. When the complaint came concerning the neglected widows *the twelve* called the multitude of the disciples together and had the seven appointed. There is no more reasonable way of understanding these passages of the Acts than to think of Matthias as being with the apostles and one of them. The more so since there is no evidence that he was not there.

But the chief feeling against the apostleship of Matthias, I believe, is the fact of the Divine call

of Paul to the apostleship. And of this we must speak a word. First, must the number be twelve, no more and no less? Is there anything that forbids there being thirteen, or even more, provided they are Divinely chosen? Of course there were twelve tribes of Israel, also twelve of the patriarchs. It will be perfectly in order to have an apostle for each tribe. But there is a whole world of Gentile people to be saved. They must hear His voice and must come, "and there must be one Shepherd and one sheepfold." Is there anything to forbid the calling of one, or a dozen for that matter, to be apostles especially to the Gentile world? True, the twelve were commissioned to "go into all the world." This would not forbid the calling and qualifying of others also for that great task. I am sure we all agree that whatever the Apostle Paul was, or was not, to the Jew, he was first, last and always the apostle with the universal gospel, to the Gentile as well as to the Jew; that his primary mission field was the Gentile world. He seems to be the specially "chosen vessel of the Lord to bear His name before the Gentiles." This being true, and since in his own defense of the Gentile world he tells us that it was a branch taken from an "olive tree, wild by nature, and was grafted into the tame olive tree contrary to nature," is it then a wonderful thing that he who is to dedicate his life to the grafting in of this "wild olive branch" into the tame tree — is it, I say, a wonderful thing

if he himself shall be grafted into the apostleship unnaturally and out of order? Accordingly, we hear him saying of his apostleship, "and last of all He was *seen of me* (note the significant statement), as of one born out of due time" (or irregularly). So that his work having to do largely with the grafting in of a "wild olive branch," it will be only in harmony with the whole arrangement for him to be grafted into the apostleship. With this understanding of the matter, then, we have twelve the natural and proper number for the Hebrew people, chosen regularly and in due time, and one grafted in "out of due time" in perfect harmony with the arrangement whereby the Gentiles are to be grafted into the "household of faith" under his apostleship.

We must speak next of the ascension as one of the great facts in the chain of Christian doctrine. Shortly before the crucifixion, according to John, while talking to the apostles of His departure, Jesus told them that they "knew where He was going, and the way." They astonished Him by saying that they did not know where He was going, nor did they know the way. He then enters into quite a lengthy explanation of the matter,² ending with his prayer in the seventeenth chapter. He tells them that He is going away. That it is expedient that He go away. That He will give them another comforter. That this comforter will guide them into all truth. That he

² *John* — Chapters 14, 18.

will abide with them forever. That he is the Holy Spirit. That he shall come from the Father. That Jesus is first to return to the Father and then send him to them from the Father. That when he comes, he will bring a message of testimony to them from the Father's presence concerning Jesus.

Having seen Jesus pass through the tomb and stand forth triumphant in the resurrection, they needed no further testimony so far as Jesus' mission in the world was concerned, nor did they want any. But they did need a message from the Father to tell them whether "this same Jesus" whom they had known and loved so tenderly on the earth had actually ascended back to the Father. And had actually been received of the Father. And was the actually crowned and anointed King of this kingdom. And this is the bit of *new* testimony — the connecting link — the evidence which the Holy Spirit is able to bring them from the Father concerning this newly crowned King. The Holy Spirit is able to say to them that all is well in heaven as well as on the earth concerning this same Jesus. He is able to say to them that when Jesus passed beyond their vision, He was escorted into the presence of the Father, and there the angelic chorus burst forth into singing —

"All hail the power of Jesus' name,
Let angels prostrate fall:

Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown Him Lord of all.

That being dispatched, He (the Holy Spirit) had come to bear this message to them and to redeem the latest promise Jesus had made in coming to abide with them forever. To endue them with all power, and to lead and guide them into all truth.

VIII

THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

ACTS — 2:1-13

The text here cited contains an account in brief of the events of the first Pentecost following the resurrection.

We shall designate the first event of this memorable day as “the baptism of the Holy Spirit.” This day might also be called, and properly so, too, the birthday of the church or the inauguration of the kingdom of Christ among men. It has also been designated the beginning of the fulfillment of prophecies spoken by many of the later prophets in Israel. All of which is but to say the same thing of this occasion, the greatest event of which was the marvelous outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

However great and necessary we have seen the resurrection to be, this event is certainly not less important. It differs in nature and belongs to a different class of miracles; yet, miracle it is, nevertheless, and wonderful in its interest and significance to us.

If it were necessary that Jesus should enter

the tomb, the strongest hold of Satan and the greatest fear and foe of the human family, and come forth into life again, that the possibility of the resurrection might be thus demonstrated in theory, it was no less necessary that this miracle should occur so that that which had had a theoretical demonstration might have a universal application. If man's faith must rest upon one positive demonstration of the resurrection, in the person of Jesus, man's active service is to be secured and, consequently, his soul saved, by the practical and universal application of the Spirit of life, applied first to the apostles and through them to the whole human family.

Moreover, a mere theory of the resurrection, demonstrated in one who was not only "Son of man," but already "Son of God," could not fully satisfy those of us who are simply and only sons of men. To suffice, the theory must be given universal application to those who are simply and only "clay of our clay" and "bone of our bones." Hence, this great miracle is not less in importance, when we consider the real place which it occupies in the scheme of human redemption, than the resurrection itself.

Furthermore, if Jesus arose from the dead, it was to say to his disciples, "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is myself." "Handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as you see me to have." In simple words, "I am the same Jesus now that I was before my death."

That he walked with them forty days, conversed, ate and drank, thus mingling with them in the most intimate way, there can be no doubt. That they knew him as the same Jesus whom their rulers had crucified there is no question. The miracle of the resurrection had wrought no noticeable or essential change in him. He was neither more the "Son of God," nor was he less the "Son of man," by the experience of the resurrection miracle.

But here is a miracle, probably not less in importance, though differing in nature, since it fills an entirely different gap, performs a different function relative to the salvation of men. A look into it discloses wonderful changes wrought upon the individuals. So much so that they are not the same individuals, save in physical appearances, that they were before the experience of this miracle.

These changes are deep and vital, going to the very heart of things and creating new personalities. The apostles, by the experience of this miracle, are radically changed in all the most important essentials that go to make up a personality, so that they are different beings after this miracle than they were before. The thought of former occupation is forgotten. The plan to return to their homes in Galilee is submerged in consciousness. Their feeling of timidity, in the absence of their Leader, is obliterated. The custom of giving place to some Jewish rabbi in the

assembly is trampled beneath their feet, with no consciousness on their part of having done anything improper or out of order.

But this is not all: they now possess characteristics that were unknown not only to their former personalities, but hitherto unknown to any individual simply a human being. They are speaking in a universal language, or in a language so as to be universally understood. If there had been the *confusing* of languages centuries before at the tower of Babel, and the scattering of the human race to the four winds of the earth, here is the *fusing* of the languages of men at Mt. Zion, in the city of our God. And it is to be the means by, and medium through, which all peoples and kindreds and tongues are to be gathered into one commonwealth — the kingdom of the Lord and his Christ — and are to be taught to speak the one language of the Prince of Peace — peace on earth and good will to men.

But, further, these men now have power to think the thoughts of God and express them in simple language, so as to be understood by men. This had been a difficult matter at times, even for the great Master Teacher. To think the thoughts of God was both easy and natural to him. But to express them so as to be understood by men was not easy at times. Consequently, it is said of him at different times: "Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the things which he spake unto them." Or

again: "What I do, thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." Of his auditors it is often said: "They knew not what the things were which he spake unto them." But here are men possessed with a power to speak the truths of God in a way easily comprehended by all. And these are men that, before this miracle, were the most ordinary, even illiterate. How do we account for it? Not only so, but here are men possessed with a power to speak the Word, and even the most unwieldy laws of nature bow in humblest submission. The diseased are cured. Miracles are wrought in every realm of nature. Men are blessed or cursed at the word of the apostles. They, like Jesus, are able to pass out or in, "the doors being shut." They have ceased to be the same beings that they were before this miracle. The world has lost its fascination to them. They are living in the realm of God's ideas. They are reveling in the realm of his purposes now. Their chief desire is that God's plans shall now be put into operation among men; that the will of the Father shall be done on earth as it is in heaven. They now have a superhuman vision, a superhuman purpose, a superhuman tongue, a superhuman knowledge, a superhuman power of touch and a superhuman boldness.

We must now seek for the significance of this wonderful change and demonstration of seeming divine favor upon these twelve men. They are human beings, but they are more — they have been

taken up from the human into another and higher realm. They are a *new type* of being now. A *new species*, if you please. They are the first complete and finished product of a new species in the realm of being. Individually, they are members, parts or variety of the whole. Collectively, they constitute an organic unity or whole — the body of Christ — the church — in the world, with his Spirit dwelling in and fully possessing the body.

This view of the incident is in perfect harmony with God's method, both in nature and revelation, so far as we are able to see; viz., that things begin by miracle and continue by natural law. Here, however, is where the issue is taken with Mr. Darwin and his disciples of the evolutionary hypothesis. We do well to note this issue in these days when the evolutionary theory has been cunningly and stealthily worked into all the natural sciences and philosophies of the educational systems and institutions of learning of Germany and England, and in many of our own land, by the craftiness of these evolutionary rationalists. In many instances it is not only in the secular, but in the religious institutions of learning as well. So much so that good men, in hundreds of instances, have come, seemingly unconsciously, to *assume* that the evolutionary hypothesis has been proven or is susceptible of successful demonstration. To verify this, one need but to glance at the articles in many of the leading magazines of

the day, in most of the late books of fiction or, in fact, in largely all of the new books that are being put out, except, occasionally, when a religious writer has the courage to speak his convictions.

The evolutionary hypothesis teaches, contrary to fact, reason or experience, either in nature or in revelation, that *new species* come into being as a result of slight variations according to the principle of the survival of the fittest (strongest). It allows, however, for the *possibility*, not to say probability, of a miracle in the creation of the first organic life. But it will not admit of any such unreasonable and unthinkable thing as a miracle after the creation of the first life-cell.

On the other hand, our principle holds, as above stated, that the various species and types of being with which we are everywhere surrounded in nature and revelation have been produced by miraculous acts of a wise, providential, benevolent God. That these species, having originated in miracle, continue by natural law. In other words, our explanation of nature and revelation is of such a character as to allow God to work in nature and revelation both by miracle and natural law, or in any other way, for that matter, which He may choose or which, by the facts, He is shown to have done. The evolutionary theory assumes to prescribe for God the exact way in which He shall work in nature and revelation.

Prescribing for Him, it thus *proscribes* Him. This no Christian writer will knowingly do.

So, as God in the beginning miraculously made a perfect man (Adam; not a cell, moneron or a monkey), that he should be a first and complete product of a *new type* of being — a human being — full grown and fully developed, with all the powers of manhood, and then placed him under the laws natural to his nature, so has he here miraculously created another *new type* of being — a *Christian being* — full grown and fully developed, with all the powers of Christian being. And he immediately places him under the laws natural to his Christian nature, in the church, with the divine ordinances and Christian services, as a realm in which he can grow and exercise his powers.

There is a popular belief that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is for all who would be Christians, and should be experienced by each as evidence of genuine conversion, pardon and acceptance with God. Now, it is plainly to be seen that such a contention is as illogical, unphilosophical and unnatural as it would have been for Adam's children to have refused to live because they were not miraculously created full grown, as their father had been. No; Adam was *created*; they are *born*. Adam was created *full grown*; they are born and must *grow* to manhood if they are ever to become men. Adam *had* to be a man; you and I *may* or *may not* be.

These apostles were miraculously created full-grown Christians; you and I are born into the household of faith — infants in weakness — and must grow if we would attain to mature Christian being. They *had* to be Christians; you and I *may* or *may not* be.

Jesus said to Peter, “When thou wast young, thou girdest thyself and walkedst whither thou wouldest; but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not.” This he said signifying the martyr death by which Peter should manifest the power of the all-impelling Spirit that was soon to take possession of him and impel him, through his apostolic career, to a martyr’s death and to a Christian’s crown. Accordingly, we hear Paul saying, “For necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel.” Yes, they *had* to be what they were — Christians. You and I may or may not be. It is optional with us. Not so with Adam or with these apostles. They were what they were by *necessity*. We, by the exercise of our own free wills.

Not only so, but Jesus says to these apostles, “Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon *you*; but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high.” They tarried. This is what occurred. Jesus says also, speaking to the apostles, “John baptized with water, but *ye* shall be baptized with the Holy

Spirit not many days hence." Ten days from the making of this promise it was redeemed in the Pentecostal scenes which we are discussing. When Peter arose to speak upon this memorable occasion he is said to have "stood up with the eleven" and defended *them* against the charge of drunkenness. If the baptism of the Holy Spirit were for all, it would seem that it ought to have been administered to all in the company upon as important an occasion as this. But it is clear from the record that no one except the apostles received it. When Peter had completed his discourse the multitude, being "pricked in their heart, said unto Peter and the rest of the *apostles*, 'Men and brethren, what shall we do?'" The language is clear and indicates, unmistakably, that only the apostles were baptized in the Holy Spirit.

So, then, the Holy Spirit is to be received now through the natural processes and natural laws for the development of the kingdom. It would be of interest to us to take up the consideration of these natural laws under which this new type of being is to be placed. But for the present we will not pursue the subject any farther. We shall close this discourse with an analogy calculated to illustrate the principle here involved. While we are well aware that analogies are not proof, yet this fact does not lessen their value in the field of forceful illustration. So we use this one as a fitting close to the present study.

Here is my fleshly body, animated by my human spirit. My body is a living organism. It is an organic unity. The human spirit animates, governs and directs every member of the organism. These statements no sane person will question if only he knows that I am sane. Now, here is another fleshly body of a different and lower order than mine. It is a different species, a different type, than I am. It may chance to be of the bovine type; but it is, nevertheless, a living organism, an organic unity, with its own indwelling spirit animating, governing and directing every member in the organism.

Now, the question arises, can my human spirit be put into the bovine organism? And if so, how can it be done? To which we answer, Yes; and by only one process known to man. Yet, so simple is that process and so common in nature, that we had hardly thought it worthy of serious attention in this connection. In the first step, the bovine spirit must yield the control of its organism. Or, in plain words, the bovine must die. Then, through the process of mastication and assimilation (the natural process for the building up of my body), the material of the bovine organism may be made a part of my body. But when this is done, lo! the miracle is performed! My spirit, which animates every particle of my body, will now permeate the material that was at one time in the bovine organism. True, this ma-

terial had to be changed, transformed, re-created — regenerated, so to speak.

Now for the analogy. Here are these apostles, constituting the body of Christ — the church — animated, controlled and directed by the Spirit of Christ or the Holy Spirit. This is the new species or type of Christian being. Here is my body, an organic unity, a species of a lower order, animated by my human spirit. Question: Can the Spirit which animates this new type of Christian being be put into my body? And if so, by what process? *Yes; and by a simple and natural process.* In the first step, my human spirit must yield the control of its organism; it must die, so to speak. “The old man, with his deeds, must be crucified.”¹ My body, then, (my life) dead to sin, can be taken into the sinless body of Christ by the process of mastication — faith, repentance, confession and baptism and assimilation — virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, love — wherein dwells the Holy Spirit. But when this is done, lo! the miracle is performed. The Holy Spirit is permeating me now in a transformed, recreated and regenerated state. Henceforth, “It is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live in the faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself up for me.”² That is all.

¹ *Rom.*— 6: 6.

² *Gal.*— 2: 20.

And so the "first man, Adam, was made a living soul; the last Adam [Christ] has become a life-giving Spirit," so that now we may fitly sing together:

"Holy Spirit, faithful guide,
Ever near the Christian's side,
Gently lead us by the hand,
Pilgrims in a desert land.

"Ever present, truest friend,
Ever near thine aid to lend,
Leave us not to doubt and fear,
Groping on in darkness drear."

IX

THE PROBLEM AND PROCESS OF GROWTH FOR A NEW TYPE OF BEING

ACTS — 11:14-40

We have considered thus far in this series the basis for Christian being, the incarnation, the resurrection, the forty days' teaching, the ten days of prayer and the baptism of the Holy Spirit. In the last named subject we saw a new type of being brought into existence in the personnel of the twelve apostles. If this is a new type of being, it follows that there will be a new problem and a new mode of existence. To note this problem and to understand the law whereby this new type of being is to perpetuate and mature itself will be our task in this present discourse.

As to the problem. If an organism has been miraculously created full grown, it is evident that it has not had the experience of growth through the different stages of development from infancy to maturity, from weakness to strength. It is also evident that the food best suited to the

proper development of the individuals within the species, in the various stages of growth, will be a big problem. It is only by costly and prolonged experiment that we come to know what kind of plant life is best suited to the various altitudes, longitudes, fertility of soils, regularity and length of seasons, etc. Only by prolonged study do men come to know the kind of food best suited to the proper growth of domestic animals in their different stages of development. So also in the working out of a schedule for the gradation of children in educational systems.

The proper fortification of the individuals against the external forces that may seek to destroy, neutralize or swallow up this new being in the days of weakness will offer no little problem in finding a place for itself in the great world of being. The more so since we are taught that "nature abhors a vacuum." This being true, it will be necessary for this new life force to make for itself a place in the world of nature. In this it will have to intrude itself into, or infringe upon, the territory already occupied by other beings. This phase of the problem will be enlarged if it shall develop that there are other species of being in nature which are very similar to this new form. Thus we can see that the nearer the approach to identity, the greater, more complex and more delicate is this phase of the problem. Yet, if this new order shall approach very nearly to identity with other species in nature, but still main-

tain its own distinctive individuality, it will thereby manifest the power of its virility.

Now what are the facts in the case? First of all, the apostles were miraculously created fully developed products of this new type of being — Christian being. I anticipate that it may be urged that they had been with Jesus during His ministry of over three years and had thus grown to maturity. To this it may be answered that the problem of Jesus' ministry was not only to explain the coming kingdom or religion, but also properly to interpret the religion that had been; the Jewish religion.

If His ministry formed a fitting prelude to the coming religion, it was no less a postlude to that which was passing. If there was in it seemingly the fusing of the two, there was also apparently the confusing of not a few, with respect to the latter. This is seen in the conversation with Nicodemus, the young lawyer, and in many instances with the Pharisees. It is also apparent in the conduct of Peter, in the use of his sword at the arrest of Jesus, in his denial at the trial. In the fishing expedition after the crucifixion and also in their question to Him at the last meeting just before the ascension.

It is true that the things that Jesus had said to them were to be brought to their memory by this new personality who was soon to take possession of them. But this could not be said to be of the nature of a normal growth or development.

Rather was it the miraculous illumination of their minds, and the Spirit's interpretation of the things Jesus had said, in the light of the latest developments. "He shall take of the things of mine and show (interpret) them unto you."

The point which I am wishing to bring out is that these apostles had not come up through the system of Christian ethics by which one is now to attain to Christian maturity, by normal and natural processes; but that they had attained Christian maturity by the aid of miracle, and that their problem is now to produce and develop to maturity Christian beings by some natural and normal process.

In the second place, they do not have a personal experimental knowledge of the food best suited to the proper growth and development through the various stages to maturity.

In the next place, it will take a powerful mantle of protection for this infant, lest he be swallowed up by some external foe or annihilated by some force or combination of forces out in the great world of nature. An infant in the jungles of Africa would stand little show of coming to maturity unless protected in some way. Moses in the bulrushes of Egypt had little chance of life until the hand of providence, in the person of Pharaoh's daughter, spread the mantle of the royal palace over him as a shield and protection. Joseph would never have been heard from had not the hand of providence led him up the way into

the palace royal. Our "infant industries" of a few generations ago would never have become the gigantic monopolies that they are today had not our government thrown the mantle of its protection over them years ago. You would not be the man you are today had not the loving hands of a kind mother shielded you in the days of youthful tenderness. So also the church, which is an aggregation of individual Christian beings, could never have become the fully developed and powerful institution which it grew to be except under the protection of the apostolic mantle. The odds were all against it.

How different the children of the second Adam (spiritually speaking) from those of the first. In the beginning, Adam and Eve were created full grown. They never knew the toys and joys of childhood's days. They understood not the proper training of children through the different stages of development to proper manhood. And what mistakes they made. What sorrow, shame and disgrace — yea, what blackness of remorse must have enshrouded their declining years. Their home is the haunt of a murderer and at the same time the scene of the funeral rites of his victim. All this nerve wrecking and heart breaking woe, because Adam and Eve had not come through the experience of normal childhood and growth to maturity. Consequently, they had not the art of properly developing and cultivating the temper in their children. How different with

the infant children of the second Adam! Even though the number runs up into the thousands, born in a day, yet are they "together and have all things in common." There is no fussing over the things which they possess or the service which they render. Where sin *disgraces* the first Adam's children, virtue graces the children of the second Adam. Thus the apostles are qualified with power and "spiritual gifts" to nourish and develop, to shield and protect the church in its infancy.

But another and perhaps more difficult phase of their problem is, how is this new organism to find a place for itself in a nature already overcrowded with similar organisms? Are there not many strong religious organisms already in possession of all the space there is for such organisms? What hope can there be that this newly born infant organism can find a place to exist? What hope that it can live beyond the days of infancy, in a world of struggle; and in which there is the "survival of the strongest"? How strongly entrenched behind the magnificent temple service, the pagan priests! How vividly they and their gods live in the hearts and lives of the people throughout the entire pagan world! How jealous their eyes, how ready to bloodshed their hands, at the rise of anything that shall even remotely appear to be a rival religion! What place, then, is to be found for an organism whose chief element is meekness and humility, in such

a world of struggle? But if there is no place, seemingly, for a new type of religious being in the pagan world, is the problem easier when we turn to the Jewish world?

By no means. For while it would seem that here ought to have been a field already well cultivated and ready to bring forth abundantly of this new type of being, yet the facts are against such a conclusion. The rejection of Jesus by the leaders of the Jewish people in Jerusalem had, in a very large measure, set the great mass of their leaders in all the synagogues in motion against the new order. In many instances it had closed the doors of the synagogues against the missionaries of the cross. So that of the great mass of the Jewish nation "only a remnant" accepted the teachings and principles of the new order. But still more.

The very similarity of the new order to the Jewish religion complicated their problem tenfold. Do not the Jews worship the same true and living God? Do not they believe and teach, honor and revere, the same eternal Word of Truth — the Old Testament Scriptures? Was not this the only authoritative writing of the new order at this time? Do not they also believe that prophecy had pointed to the coming of the Messiah? How, then, are these apostles to lead people to discriminate between the Jewish religion on the one hand and the Christian on the other? They have so many points in common and so few

of difference that the ordinary person will not stop to discriminate on so small a point of difference. The thought of the average person will be to classify them as one and the same type of being. And as nature is no place in which to multiply separate aggregations or families of organisms of the same species, all nature will arise in rebuke to the audacity of this new type of being in its insult to nature in assuming to force a place for a separate existence in nature.

This will be sufficient, then, to indicate the scope of the problem which confronted this new type of being. What then is the law or process by which this problem in its various phases is to be solved: that increase and maturity shall be given to this new order of being?

We have indicated before that the process is to be normal and natural. But we must understand more definitely in what it consists. First of all, the gospel; the death, burial, and resurrection, the ascension and coronation of Jesus is to be the outreaching force by which this new body shall manifest its hunger for food. The only food by which this hunger may be satisfied is the lives of men and women surrendered and consecrated to this body. The proper preparation of such food for this organism is a deep and abiding faith in the Person of this gospel, a genuine longing for God in deep and contrite repentance, a public statement of this condition of the heart in the great confession and a passing

through the likeness of Jesus' death, burial and resurrection in the rite of Christian baptism. Then one has been brought into this new body or type of being. This is what we see occurring as the second group of events on Pentecost.

Peter preaches a sermon, setting forth in as clear language as it is possible for one to do, the death, burial, resurrection, ascension and coronation of Jesus. The mass of the people present, being moved by faith and repentance, express that condition of their hearts by the great question, "What must we do?" And three thousand of them sealed their convictions in the rite of Christian baptism upon that occasion.

We would be glad to have had the record of the "many other words" with which Peter led them to discriminate between the "crooked generation"—the Jews on the one hand and this new order on the other. And by means of which he finally persuaded these three thousand to withdraw from the one and join themselves to the other.

But is this all? When they have been thus taken into the body is this all there is to the process of increasing and developing this body?

Oh no! This is only one part of the process. And though important, perhaps not more so than the other. Certainly it is not complete without the other part of the process. If in mastication there must be the breaking up into particles, the analytic, so to speak, there must also be the build-

ing into, by the process of assimilation, the synthetic, if you please.

For it is apparent to all that if one organism has been taken into another without the process of assimilation having done its work, its proper work, that a deadly conflict sets in which must sooner or later end in the death of one or perhaps both organisms.

It is in Peter's second general letter that we find him giving the category of Christian graces in this law of assimilation, as indeed, he may have done upon this same occasion, for aught we know.

Taking faith as standing for the whole process (mastication) whereby we come into this new type of being and using it as a foundation, we are to build into the life the various graces enumerated. By a glance at the category it is apparent that these are of a nature well calculated to change and transform the entire personality into which they are inwrought.

But does some one say that this system of ethics, this category of Christian ideals may be duplicated in numbers of instances in the great ethnic religions? To which we answer, then the burden of proof is upon you. How do you account for the distinctiveness of this organism, the Christian religion, through the centuries? But further, giving utterance to such a statement is a manifest evidence of a gross misconception of the whole order of things in this new type of being.

To summarize then. The apostles had before

them a grave problem, reaching in some of its phases a network of complexities the finest of which it is possible to conceive. The process by which it was solved and the body given increase and maturity was simple, natural and common; viz., through mastication (faith, repentance, confession and baptism), as broken up particles of a personality that once lived in the flesh (in sin), men and women are brought into this new body where dwells the Spirit of life. For is it not contained in the Psalms:

“The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart;
And saveth such as be of a contrite spirit?”

Being brought into the body, the great master builder, the Spirit, takes these broken up particles, the “broken heart and the contrite spirit,” as material, and with the cement of virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and love, fashions it into this new building according to His workmanship divine. So that “we are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God. And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth into an holy temple in the Lord; in whom we also are builded together for an habitation of God in the Spirit.”

“ Love divine, all love excelling,
Joy of heav'n to earth come down!
Fix in us thy humble dwelling,
All thy faithful graces crown.

“ Finish then thy new creation,
Pure and spotless may we be;
Let us see our whole salvation,
Perfectly secured in thee!”

X

CHRISTIAN LIBERALITY MEETING AN EMERGENCY

ACTS — 2:45-46

“And all that believed were together and had all things common, and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.”

The phenomenon set forth in the above text and other similar texts is thought by many to indicate that the early church practised communism in all material things. That this was a necessary law of existence for this new type of being; consequently, it is held that any organization disregarding this law is not true to the original type and is, therefore, not Christian being. Relating itself, as it does, to the very beginning of Christian being, it demands our attention. The Spirit has entered the apostles. Peter has preached the opening sermon. The invitation and exhortation have been given. Three thousand have been masticated into the body of Christ, the church. The Spirit is animating the entire body of believers. This is what the Spirit influences them to do.

It is fitting, therefore, that we seek to ascertain the meaning. If this is one of the fundamental laws by which this new being is to exist, we must know it. We must ascertain how it is to work, etc. On the other hand, if it is not, then we must understand how it came to have the place of prominence given to it here in the very beginning of this new type of being.

At the very beginning of our problem, we must try to see this whole situation as it necessarily was. We must know that we are in Jerusalem at the Pentecostal feast of the Jews — one of the three great feasts in the year. We must know that this is an affair that law and custom have made a great occasion. That the male population of the Jews is bound by law and urged by custom to attend this feast. That they gather into Jerusalem from all parts of the inhabited world. That in the passing of the years the people in Jerusalem have become so accustomed to these feasts that every home has its “guest chamber.” That every home, nearly, is open to receive guests or delegates during these feast days.

We do not know just what the custom was relative to the entertainment. Perhaps it was worked out to suit the conditions in the various homes, along a great variety of ways. Probably not unlike the entertainment of a great convention in our time and country. The people had to be cared for in some way. They would have to have lodging and meals.

The greater number of course would find lodging in Jerusalem. Though some, no doubt, would go out to the villages and wayside inns near Jerusalem for lodging and such lunching as might be provided. It was Jesus' custom to go out to Bethany. We read of two of the disciples that were going to Emmaus, or the hot springs. Coming to Jerusalem year after year as many of them did, some, no doubt, would have their lodging, etc., arranged for in advance. The thing that we need to see here is that the matter of providing entertainment for these people at these feast occasions, while it came regularly, was nevertheless no little undertaking. It is not improbable that there was some system whereby the matter was looked after by the people of Jerusalem through a committee or some such plan. Many would want to entertain their own friends and acquaintances. Others would need to rent their rooms. Hence, would probably have them listed in such a way that those desiring rooms could be directed to them.

Of course it will not be overlooked that we are in a city that is strictly Jewish. It is as Jews that these people have thrown their homes open to receive these, their Jewish brethren, during their stay in the city. Although the Pentecostal festivities proper lasted but one day, yet many would go to the city before that day. And many would tarry after the day was passed. Especially do many tarry, having seen the turmoil into which things have been thrown by the coming of

the Holy Spirit and the preaching of the apostles. They wish to see the thing through. To know how it is going to come out.

The apostles, led by the Spirit, continue a vigorous presentation of the gospel, and especially of the fact of the resurrection. At the close of the first sermon three thousand have renounced Judaism and accepted Christianity. At the second sermon, the number is increased to five thousand men. The apostles are preaching in the temple, in the synagogues, in the streets, in the homes. All Jerusalem is being filled with the doctrine of the resurrection.

Jerusalem is the home of the Sanhedrin. This is the body that is responsible for the crucifixion. They are moving behind the curtains. Most of the inhabitants of Jerusalem have been brought, either voluntarily or through fear, under the influence of the Sanhedrin. Many will hesitate to do anything or take any attitude that could be interpreted as disloyalty to this august body. Hence, if those who have come to Jerusalem, who have been received into Jewish homes and who are recipients of Jewish hospitality, now turn their backs upon the "traditions of the elders" to accept this fanatical teaching, they will have to provide lodging and entertainment for themselves in any way they can. They are unwelcome longer in homes that are strictly Jewish. They would have to go or they would be ordered out.

Now these people, large numbers of them, are

from the commoner walks of life among the Jews. They have attended the annual feasts for years, no doubt. They have heard the palaver of the priests. They have seen them go through the various forms, thus performing religion. They have had a feeling that the whole performance was one that was set to fine acting. A fine system indeed. Almost perfect in its plans and operations. They have felt, indeed, that many of the actors were very clever in the part which they took. The "money changers," for instance, were a most kind, courteous, clever set of vulturous, parasitical thieves. They would rob a man in broad daylight, with a cleverness that always brought a hearty "Thank you" from the one robbed. But after all, they had returned from these feasts with a feeling of depression at times. They had watched the priests perform religion so long that they had become almost total strangers to the Word of God, as contained in the Old Testament Scriptures, and the religion which it revealed.

When the Spirit through the apostles began the interpretation of the Old Testament Scriptures in the light of the cross of Christ, the fact of His resurrection, and the radiant hope of life and immortality for those who accept Him, a school was opened to these yearning, hungering hearts which they were loath to leave. They had come to Jerusalem with no preparation to stay beyond a few days. They now desired to remain under

the teaching of the inspired apostles until they should be led from their old misconceptions, to a clear understanding of the Old Testament Scriptures and of the Will of God as revealed in Christ. The apostles were explaining to them "the mystery of Christ, which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men as it was then revealed unto the Holy Apostles and Prophets by the Spirit."¹ In the face of this simple, clear cut, vital teaching, thousands of these converted Jews determine to remain right there indefinitely, or until they feel that they can return to their homes with clear conceptions on these matters.

It is in view of these circumstances and conditions that it became necessary for them to be "together and have all things in common, . . . to sell their possessions and goods and divide them to all men, as every man had need." The closing verses of Acts 2 must be understood rather as *summary* statements of what is taking place in the days succeeding Pentecost than as a specific account of what takes place upon any particular day or days. There seems to be no way by which we can tell the length of time covered by these summary statements.

There is another element that enters as an influencing factor in the situation here. Either in their loyalty to Christ and enthusiasm for the work, or because they expected his immediate return, or possibly both, many thousands of the

¹ *Eph.*—3:5.

first adherents of the gospel became preachers. So that in a later day, when the vast congregation that had been built up in Jerusalem by the preaching and labors of the apostles was scattered, it is said of them, "Therefore, they that were scattered abroad, went everywhere preaching the word."² Two things may be pointed out here. First, it will require a considerable length of time, even under the teaching of the apostles, for one to be qualified to go out as a preacher of the gospel; second, if one is going out as a minister of the gospel, he will not care for nor want to be burdened with his property. He will, therefore, sell it and place the price in the apostles' hands, to be used in meeting the general expense or in providing for the needs of others who may want to enter the ministry, but have not the means to do so.

It is not many days after Pentecost till the disciples are thrown upon their own resources and have to provide for their own expenses in every way. Those who were property owners in Jerusalem, and who had become disciples, were taxed a hundred times beyond their ability to entertain all those who desired to remain in the apostles' school; yet, with the opposition which the Jews are manifesting toward the cause of Christ, there is nothing for the infant church to do but provide for its own. It is an emergency that must be met. And it is to be said to the

² *Acts* — 8:4.

praise of these people, and in evidence of the genuineness of their faith, that Christian liberality arose to meet the emergency.

We read in this connection that "the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one soul. Neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common. And with great power gave the apostles witness of the *resurrection* of the Lord Jesus. And great grace was upon them all. Neither was any among them that lacked. For as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles' feet, and distribution was made unto every man, according as he had need." Special mention is made of one Joseph (better known as Barnabas, the preacher, exhorter and missionary companion of Paul) who having a possession, sold it and gave the price to the apostles. (Probably he did this, expecting to dedicate his life to the work of the church.) Many others did the same thing.

Then we are told also of one Ananias, with Saphira his wife, who sold a possession and entered into an agreement to attempt to deceive the apostles and the church. They brought a part of the price; and lied to the apostles by saying that it was all. They paid the penalty for their falsehood with their lives. The first attempt at deception and hypocrisy in the church was thus

rebuked by death. But the question that concerns us in this is, did the apostles require that one give all his material means as a necessary condition to entering into this body of Christians? While from the incident some might so infer, yet the language of Peter is clear and unmistakable on this point.

“Why hath Satan filled thy heart to *lie* to the Holy Spirit; and to keep back a part of the price of the land? While it remained, was it not *thine own*? And after it was sold, was it not in thy power? . . . You have not *lied* unto *men*, but unto *God*.” It is clear from the language, that Peter knows that Ananias knew he was under no law or obligation to give all his means to the church unless he wished to do so. But it is also clear, that as a member, he was under the most positive obligation to speak the truth under all circumstances. It is highly important that the church have enough material means to meet its necessary expenses. But it is vastly more important — yes, it is absolutely imperative — that the church, which is the “pillar and ground of the truth,” shall have a truth telling membership. It is not the property that Peter is concerned about, but the absolute falsehood that has been told. This was a violation of one of the fundamental laws upon which all Christian being rests.

In the many instances in which individuals are inquiring the terms of admission into the kingdom, no apostle or early disciple ever made the

matter of selling one's property and giving it to the church a condition of entering into the church. In all instances where the matter of giving to support the work of the church is emphasized by the apostles, it is always assumed that it is to be done on the basis of a man's willingness and in proportion to his ability. There is no mention of a communism related to the church outside the city of Jerusalem; indeed, if we grant that this was communism, even there.

We think it will be granted, then, when the whole situation is taken into consideration, that this was simple Christian liberality arising to meet an emergency. That it was no essential part of the fundamental law of Christian being. That it has been repeated hundreds of times in the development of Christian history. And that it will continue to be a phenomenon relating itself to Christian conduct. That wherever the need is great, there great Christian hearts will overflow in a liberality that will meet the need.

XI

A MIRACLE WROUGHT THAT THE KINGDOM MIGHT GROW

ACTS — 3:1-26

We direct your attention to the study of the third chapter of Acts. This is the first recorded miracle wrought by the apostles after the establishment of the church; and is followed by the second discourse. The general statement is made near the close of the second chapter that "many wonders and signs were done by the apostles." This statement is made in connection with the statement that "they were constantly attending to the teaching of the apostles," "that they continued daily in the temple," etc.

Now these we take to be general summary statements of the things that were happening in Jerusalem in the days following the establishment of the church on Pentecost. It was during these days that the liberality of the early church was so manifest in meeting the needs of the circumstances, as we have seen in our last discourse.

But now in this third chapter, the author, having made general statements, takes up a particu-

lar incident — the miraculous healing of a cripple. He holds it up to our view, with the results that follow; viz., the preaching of a sermon and the conversion of “five thousand men.”¹ So that we have as our subject, “A Miracle Wrought That the Kingdom Might Grow.” As it was said of Jesus, “This beginning of miracle did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His majesty (power), and His disciples believed on Him”; so may it now truly be said of the apostles, “This beginning of miracles did the apostles in Jerusalem, and displayed the majesty (power) of the church, and thousands believed on Jesus and became Christians.”

But standing as this does at the genesis of the new age or order of things, there are certain questions that press upon us. If we were at the beginnings of the old age and saw a man miraculously brought into being, full grown, the question naturally would arise: how is this new order to be perpetuated? If we wish to reproduce a man in this new order, is it to be always by miraculously bringing forth a full grown man? Or standing at the genesis of the new age and beholding a miracle wrought upon the poor cripple, we naturally ask to what purpose has this been done? Is the preaching of the gospel always to be attended by the working of miracle? Or are there attending circumstances that furnish the occasion for miracle? We have spoken in general

¹ *Acts* — 4:4.

upon this previously. But as this is a specific case we deem it not out of place to give it special attention; the more so since it is the genesis of miracles in the new age.

Peter and John are going up into the temple at the afternoon hour of prayer. The incidents of Pentecost, the preaching of the apostles, and the conversion of thousands from the old Jewish faith to the Christian faith, have caused great commotion in Jerusalem. Thousands of the Jews, who came to Jerusalem to attend the Pentecostal festivities, have remained, breathlessly waiting and watching the developments in this new order. Hundreds, and even thousands, are coming out of Judaism into Christianity as the days go by. The members of the Sanhedrin are not a little exercised over the turn which things have taken. They would gladly sing the doxology and pronounce the benediction if they could thereby disperse the people. But they cannot.

A few days ago these same people saw the Sanhedrin triumphant and supreme, while Jesus bowed low in death upon the cross. The Sanhedrin was loud in its praise of God, while Jesus was silent within the tomb. But a mighty change has taken place. These same people have seen Jesus triumphant in the resurrection, and the Sanhedrin has gone into the tomb (their private chamber in the temple) never to come forth into life and power again. But entombed as dead men while yet living, they are destined to do considerable

squirming around before they give up the ghost. And this they do, as seen in the persecutions instigated in and directed from their council chamber a few days later.

As Peter and John appear before the beautiful gate of the temple, there comes to their notice this poor cripple, whom kind hands had brought and placed at this conspicuous entrance to the temple that he might become an object of pity and compassion to those entering for worship, and thus receive whatever alms they might give.

Hundreds of people are pressing the entrance to the temple. If something can be done by means of which the mind of the people can be concentrated and the attention rivetted upon the apostles, it will give them opportunity to speak to the multitude. It will put them, so to speak, between the multitude and the Sanhedrin. Peter and John are quick to discern the situation. No sooner do they discern than they launch into it with all the earnestness of their souls, energized by the Spirit of their Master.

The miracle, then, was the cause of turning the mind of the multitude from the thought of entering the temple for prayer to the apostles, and furnished them the opportunity of preaching to the people. It was, therefore, no essential part of the gospel as some are wont to claim.

But there is another phase of this subject that needs a word. In our modern cults, which claim that miracles of healing are an essential part of

the gospel and should accompany the work of the church of today, there is a loud demand for faith upon the part of the one who is to be healed. In all unsuccessful attempts (of which there are many) the responsibility for the failure is explained as due to the lack of faith upon the part of the patient. So we are led to look into this phase of the subject just here at the beginning of miracle in this new order of being.

Did this cripple have faith that he was going to be healed? Was there any expectation of being healed upon his part? Indeed, does not the whole appearance of things teach us that the opposite was true? If he knew or even believed strongly that he was going to be healed, immediately, he would not be at the gate begging for alms. For he was a man grown, and able to earn his bread if he had not been a cripple. But in the very moment of being healed, he looks upon Peter "expecting to receive something." And as if to make the case still stronger against these modern faith healers, Peter's opening words make it clear that he knew the thoughts of the cripple at that very moment, nor did Peter utter one word of rebuke to him for his lack of faith and his thought of receiving financial aid. Peter tells him, plainly though kindly, that he had no money; but that such as he had, he would give to him freely and unconditionally. Then he commands him by the authority of Jesus Christ to arise and walk, and he did so. Here is a mani-

festation of the power of Christ that will impel a cure, without the requirement of faith; and even, if necessary, against faith. Here is an attestation of the divineness of the church that will cause men to take notice, and that will "multiply the believers." So the faith or worthiness of this man, even granting that he was worthy, which perhaps no one will question, yet these must not neither can they properly be assigned as the reason why he should be favored with this special divine blessing of healing. There were thousands of others, no doubt, who were as worthy as he. And no reason can be assigned why he should become a subject of divine favor, aside from the fact that his healing will afford an occasion for the preaching of the word to the multitude.

The fact that the miracle of healing was followed by the immediate preaching of a sermon, the normal method of extending the kingdom, is further evidence that the miracle of healing was only incidental.

So we shall understand that miracles in the apostolic age had just about the same place that the helping hand of a mother has when her infant is learning to walk. She gladly assists so long as he strives to walk alone. But she confidently expects him some day to be able to walk without her aid. Nor is she usually disappointed in her hopes. So, too, our Savior was willing to aid the church by miracle in the days of its in-

fancy. But He did so confidently expecting that the church would one day stand out in all the strength and fullness of its majesty; and so commend itself to every man's conscience as not to need longer to hobble along upon the crutch of miracle. Nor was He disappointed in this, for even at the close of the apostolic age the church had largely laid aside the aid of miracle and was going into all the world, standing upon its own merits; viz., the gospel of Jesus Christ and the life it produced in the hearts of Christians.

Before the close of the apostolic age Christ was reigning so supremely in the hearts of Christian people everywhere that from this citadel of power and influence He needed not the aid of miracle to bolster up the work of the kingdom. This was as it should be. The time was to come that when the gospel was proclaimed the strongest inducement to its acceptance was to be, not miracle, not temporal "loaves and fishes," *but the Christianized life* in the virility of its resurrection hope — a life transformed by the power of Christ's presence continually abiding in the heart by faith.

We hear Paul saying to the Corinthians, "You are our epistle . . . known and read of all men . . . written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone, but in fleshly tablets of the heart." Yes, the gospel was *preached* by the apostles and early disciples, but in a practical and popular sense; it was read in

the lives of the early Christians long before it was ever written or read in the New Testament. Christ was proclaimed in the gospel message, *true!* But it was from the lives of consecrated Christians in the humble walks of life that He spoke His most telling and forceful message.

So it is today and ever will be. The minister speaks his message of Christ to the world. But Christ speaks His own message to the world from the lives of all Christians. After all, this is the message which the world hears and heeds. The ministry numbers few, but Christians are legion. The minister speaks once in the week; the Christian speaks each day and each moment. "What you do speaks so loudly that I cannot hear what you say," is perhaps truer of Christians today than ever before. What a church does, speaks so loudly in the community that the people seldom ever hear what the minister says. So we are in the day not of the infancy, but of the maturity of the church. Whether it will or not, it must stand upon its own feet — its own merits — its own deeds. It must walk without the aid of crutches.

But we must look at the sermon, briefly, before we close. When the Spirit came upon the apostles we are told that the appearance was in tongue form "like as of fire." The tongue would indicate the instrument they were to use in the proclamation of the message. The fiery appearance would indicate the purifying power of the

gospel in the heart of the believer. We are not to presume that we have here the full sermon. Perhaps only a brief summary. But we see Peter using those forces whereby there is to be the normal increase of the church. The tongue as the instrument; the death, burial and resurrection of Christ as the message of God unto salvation.

The preaching is substantially here as in his first discourse. Perhaps the closing exhortation is more to the point. Having preached to them that they were the betrayers and murderers of the "Prince of life," he therefore exhorts them, as in his former sermon, to change their minds in repentance and their state in obedience to Christ. "Repent ye, therefore, and turn again (to the Lord in obedience) that your sins may be blotted out, that so there may come seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord." The last clause is not found in the Pentecostal sermon. We will therefore notice it briefly.

What condition of mind were they in that they needed "seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord"? Peter was not talking for oratorical effect. Nor was he "beating the air." But as any faithful minister will do, so had he done. He had moved around among the people to whom he was to preach. Had learned something of the condition of their minds at that very time. He knew that but little more than fifty days before these same Jews (many of them at least) had been there at the great "Passover

feast." That that innocent man, Jesus of Nazareth, who was living not only according to the letter of the law, but who was also living a spiritual interpretation of the law that was the marvel of the age, had also come to the feast. That he had been hounded by these Jews; followed by day and by night, overshadowed and arrested in the darkness and secrecy of the night. That the Sanhedrin had called an irregular and illegal session. That a heresy trial had been hurried through in the night time. That the innocent man had fallen a victim to official bigotry and religious prejudice and was condemned by the highest ecclesiastical tribunal. That when the crucial moment came (and all the powers and sentiment available had been brought to bear upon Pilate; and he yet was vacillating and undecided) that when he finally was minded to let him go and asked the mass of the Jews, "What shall I do with Jesus?" that, with blood in their eyes and murder in their hearts, they had cried out with one accord, "*Crucify Him.*"

He knew that Pilate, still hesitating and receiving the message from his wife, came out before the multitude and washed his hands, saying to them, "I am innocent from the blood of this just person. . . . See ye to it." That they then, with one voice, cried, "*His blood be upon us, and on our children.*"

Peter, with sword in hand, had been through all these scenes a few days before. He knew that

many of these Jews to whom he was speaking, had been in the mob at that time. He knew that under the mighty weight of their guilt they had spent the intervening days restlessly and the nights sleeplessly. That their consciences were goading them by day and haunting them by night. That there had been no rest for them since the rash deed had been committed. It is in the knowledge of these experiences that Peter says, with a volume of meaning to the words, "Change your minds and the relationship of your hearts toward the Holy One of Israel, that so there may come seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord."

Yes, they needed seasons of refreshing sleep. And seasons of quietude of mind and peace of heart during the day. Yes, the blood of Jesus was mightily upon them: there was no escape from it for them, seemingly. Nor is there for you and me. It may be appropriated, but it cannot be repudiated. It will follow us by day and by night even as it did them. If not appropriated, it will haunt us in death; and condemn us in eternity.

He that despised Moses' law died without mercy upon the testimony of two or three witnesses: "Of how much sorer punishment suppose you he shall be thought worthy that hath trodden underfoot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing."

The miracle is wrought. The sermon is

preached. The exhortation is given. And the blood is appropriated by the thousands who heard. For we are told that "the number of *men* came to be about five thousand."

"There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins:
And sinners plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.

"The dying thief rejoiced to see
That fountain in his day;
And there may I, though vile as he,
Wash all my sins away.

"O Lamb of God, thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransomed Church of God
Be saved, to sin no more."

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