

# The Christ of the New Testament

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Greenwood Press, New York

1924

## #1

### OTHERWORLDLINESS AND MORALITY

1 - 2 This book defends the Council at Chalcedon, of 451 ad, affirming Christ was a person who embraced within himself the full nature of divinity and the full nature of humanity.

2 - This confirms our experience of Platonic dualism.

3 – And is against ‘higher criticism’.

4 – Higher criticism seeks to undermine all religion.

5 – Religion unites otherworldliness and morality. This is dependent on the duality of mind and the duality of good and evil.

7 – Where are your thoughts? Nowhere. We have Berkeley and Dr. Johnson

8 – Vibrating nerves don’t have thoughts.

11 – Not all thoughts have equal claim to reality. Take, for example, the 2 legged chair. This means the operations of the mind and world are in some respect independent of each other.

12 – Plato thought of the idea of a table, but didn’t see that tables and abstract ideas are different. “Justice” is not concerned with brute objects.

13 – Justice is not of man’s choosing. Yet, intuitively, man understands justice.

15 – In the mysterious dualism of otherworldliness and the equally mysterious dualism of morality lies the beginning of religion.

15- 16 “Reduced to its lowest terms the religious sense might be defined, in the language of Matthew Arnold, as the acknowledgement of a *power ourselves that makes for righteousness*. That is a great phrase, which comes close to the heart of the matter; but I am not so sure that Arnold was progressing quite soundly when, in the same treatise, he went on to find the higher meaning of religion in *morality touched by emotion*. Certainly morality without emotion is a dead thing, but in this supposed development we seem to be in danger of slipping into an irresponsible sentimentalism.”

He thinks we’re on firmer ground with Plato’s otherworldliness.

17 – Otherworldliness is the inmost shrine of religion. Without it there is no genuine spiritual experience.

19 – Sometimes otherworldliness and morality are disjointed. You get an immoral religion.

20 – And, like Huxley, there are moral men without religion.

21 – Interestingly, Huxley was forced to admit that morality and Darwinism have opposite values. Yet, he sees Platonic idealism as corrupt.

22 – Otherworldliness without morality degenerates into superstition or hypocrisy. Morality without otherworldliness loses its large emotional and imaginative values, and sinks into Epicureanism or pessimism.

Genuine religion requires a balance.

23 – Without reawakening a sense of spiritual values, we cannot check the growing empire of materialism.

Platonism gives us such a union. But it may not grasp the personality of God and become more inhuman and speculative than practical. This is why we need incarnation.

## **#2**

### **THE PREPARATION OF ISRAEL**

28 – Jews persisted via Law and prophecy.

30 – Jehovah goes from tribal God to universal monotheistic god.

31 – Isaiah feels a divine presence.

With the 10 commandments we get morality.

32 – And the moral code developed into a vast jungle of interpretations.

33 – All the prophets agreed on repentance being necessary. Turning again to the God of righteousness.

34 – They looked at the inevitable contrast between the actual and the ideal. God waiting for the conversion of the chosen race.

Jehovah commanded Saul to slay the Amalekites.

36 – As the frustration over the salvation of Israel grew, the tenets became more universal. And, then it became cosmic with a reckoning of the world.

37 – Persian dualism came in to make for fantastic exaggeration.

But even with all this overgrowth of the supernatural, the hope of national and material prosperity were not forgotten.

38 – By Jesus' time, Ezra sees the Roman Empire as a fantastic beast. The lion of Judah will kill it.

39 – It will be God or a great leader that will restore Israel.

41 – We have gone from a people, to a ruler.

42 – Sadducees, clung to the letter of the law, but denied the resurrection; the Pharisees accepted the resurrection, but overlaid it with extravagant traditions and interpretations.

43 – The Zealots thought the promised son of David was to be a warrior king.

Jesus was educated in this milieu.

44 – Jesus announced the Messianic kingdom, but did he announce himself as the Messiah?

45 – We must waive the more fantastic visions of the New Testament, but we cannot make Christianity pure myth and symbol either.

47 – Soon after his death, Jesus' disciples believed he claimed to be the Christ of prophecy.

48 – Mark makes him most Messianic and wrote earlier than the others. Matthew and Luke are later and have less coherence.

49 – But the German higher criticism hold that nothing supernatural can be true and Jesus was the spirit of truth, therefore, Jesus could not have made any supernatural claims for himself.

50 – This is pathetic.

51 – We do know, Jesus lived and suffered death on the cross, preached repentance in view of imminent kingdom of God and that to the earliest Christians he announced himself the Messiah or Christ who should reign under God.

### **#3**

#### **THE EARLY YEARS**

Was Jesus 1) Fully aware of his divine charge from the beginning of his ministry? This doesn't go with Mark's version of things. 2) He was totally aware of his mission, but only revealed it slowly; or 3) Jesus, early on had no clear idea of his mission, but it dawned on him, (which agrees with Mark).

57 – Might he have had doubts about his being the Savior? I am but a youth! There was a rumor of a new prophet in Israel. But what of him?

58 – John announced the prophet had come. When Jesus heard this, it was exciting, but did he know who it was?

60 – Perhaps John was the prophet and Jesus the Messiah?

61 – In Mark we learn that post-baptism Jesus withdrew into the desert and faced temptations.

63 – He was given the allegory of the 3 lusts; power, knowledge; and sex.

65 – It was after the imprisonment of John that Jesus came out of the wilderness with a clear sense of obligation.

66 – He oft repeated, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” What did he mean by ‘kingdom’ and ‘repent’?

## #4

### THE KINGDOM AND REPENTANCE

67 – Clearly the great event of the Bible was at hand. Jesus said not one generation would pass prior to the fulfillment of his promise. The Church has allegorized this because it didn’t happen.

68 – Paul was repeating the same eschatology of the prophets, and Christ did the same.

69 – Christ introduced a new element into the religion of his people; but, again, his eschatology was simply that of his country and his age.

(It is, btw, a cop out to say the kingdom of God is only within you).

70 – Jesus kingdom was both political and spiritual. He distinguished between the oppressed and the oppressor; the pious and the hypocrite; but there was nothing revolutionary in that.

72 – Alternating between universalism and nationalism runs through the later prophetic books of the Old Testament.

73 – In earlier prophets the kingdom was entirely secular and about those living at the time and Jehovah. But the dualism of Iran filtered into Palestine with the dark and light of Zoroastrianism.

74 – Where will the reckoning happen? On earth or in the cosmos? In Enoch, and later apocalyptic books, it is uncertain.

75 – This vagueness carried on into Christ and More thinks came from Christ himself.

Jesus says he’ll drink no more of the fruit until he drinks it new in the kingdom of God.

76 – He says they’ll drink together in a new kingdom and then we get no record of excitement. This is incongruous.

The vision, going back to Amos, was both bloody and pastoral.

78 – How good will be the drinking of the blood?

79 – The Gospels give very few details of actual life in the kingdom. But what we see shows Jesus was imbued with the old prophetic imagery.

81 – But bloody or whatever, it was the sphere of God’s rule.

82 – A liberation from doubt was needed, the summons to repent is equivalent to a command to have faith. This would render the ‘oul to its own birthright as would render it the master instead of the slave of physical law. Faith is a living realization, by what may be called the spiritual imagination.”

83 – There is some truth in the assertion that the whole inner history of the Church is a long procrastination over the “Parusia” that never occurred. The myth dominated the mind of Paul in the first generation of the Church.

84 – Socrates says the logos is already in the soul of every man. This is in the cave.

“Christianity is marked by a slow merging of the eschatological otherworldliness of Jesus with the philosophical otherworldliness of Plato.”

85 – The kingdom of heaven lost its mythical actuality and became transformed into a name for life in the eternal world of ideas.

The 4<sup>th</sup> century sees this in its writing in Cappadocia.

86 – St. Basil’s conception of the otherworld is more philosophical than Christ’s.

87 – Christ’s otherworldliness was the one absorbing reality, and it could possess this reality for him and for others only by standing forth in palpable living images.

87 – Plato had the ideal in his Symposium. But there was needed something more than Plato’s poetry to stir the sluggish heart of the world, and that something was given by Jesus. And behind his symbols lay the reality of an everlasting truth.

88 – Judgement and immediate disaster have their usefulness.

## **#5**

### **PURITY AND HUMILITY**

89 - “Repentance is remorse for disobedience to God and a lifting of the mind from present things to faith in the imminent coming of the kingdom of heaven.”

90 – Christ’s teaching in regard to the kingdom is relatively obscure and sporadic, whereas his insistence on righteousness is clear and continuous.

In fact, the repentance and coming kingdom merge.

“Whoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel’s, the same shall save it.” This quote goes into “he cometh in the glory of his Father.”

92 – And in the verse we transition from ‘life’ to ‘soul’

93 – He would have men balance the desire of the spirit against the desires of the flesh.

94 – Christ did not get rid of the old rules, he spiritualized them.

95 – The Christian principles of purity and humility in the Beatitudes are the Christian way to otherworldliness. It isn’t just the ‘no adultery’, but the thought of it.

96 – There is a wide difference between the ‘do as you desire’ and the Sermon on the Mount. The difference between liberty and license.

97 - It is a liberation from lust and wealth desires.

When he told the man to sell all he had, he was astonished.

98 – This wasn’t the law of charity, but the law of the soul against the law of things.

99 – Except for the metaphor, the meaning of Jesus and Plato are the same.

100 – He who was first shall be last. Humility. Pride and apostolic ambition shall be punished. The poor in spirit might be lifted, but not so they may be proud.

101 – No spiritual pride, which has a twin root, in the intellect and in the imagination. So humility of the spirit is double.

It has not pleased god to give his people salvation via the dialectic. Humility is more important.

102 – The intellectual can produce nothing of religious value.

The wisdom of Greece failed to move the world. It is as hard for the philosopher to enter the kingdom of heaven as a rich man.

103 – Humble Jesus found those who thought they knew the most, were the dimmest. Philosophers are skeptical, Christians, humble.

Under the pride of intellect, morality and otherworldliness of religion shrivel.

104 – Not the Rabbi’s but the little children will enter heaven.

106 – Wonder is the beginning of philosophy and religion.

108 – In humility we find the golden rule. Judge not that ye not be judged. We have no special immunity from the universe. Loving thy neighbor as thyself is an act of humility. It is very Platonic.

## **#6**

### **THE GREAT COMMANDMENT**

111 – The other Golden rules and their sources are negative. Christ’s formulation is positive. This allows an emotional content.

112 – The church stressed love more than it appears in the New Testament. To Paul this was greater than faith or hope.

In English it is one word, in Greek, 3 or 4 different words. We make it work hard.

113 – It is mawkish and full of pious inanities. It is something more than the bare altruism of charity.

114 – It is not service to man that ignores the love of God; that dotes on material well being and ignores the spiritual needs.

Comfort and consolation are part of it. But we want more;

116 – Yes we are to feed the poor, but “Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.”

117 – We see this in Luke’s admonition that a disciple must hate his mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters.

And, Christian love does not sanctify the love of the flesh.

118 – Pedantry is also bad, as in the German conceit of Kant. Kant’s metaphysics spells death to philosophy, it is full of base hypocrisy.

120 – The problem comes from the false assumption of reason, that ignores dualism and desire. It is not just love of God and neighbors, but the love of self we need.

121 - This is dualism and a message of eudaemonism. It is not metaphysical or sentimental, nothing Christ preaches is easy going, but a strenuous appeal to character. For no other class of men did Christ show as much contempt as for the weak and shifting and undecided, those who put their hand to the plough and turned back. He proclaimed a religion of will, rather than of sentiment.

122 – It is not effeminate slackness, charity does not inculcate an indiscriminate condoning of evil and baseness. Remember the adultery woman he said, “Sin no more” to her.

And there is no ‘hate the sin and love the sinner’, because evil is not superficial. It is not a garment you can take off and put on.

And he seems to be in favor of sinners, but that is in contrast to the extra righteous. This is the conceit of Plato, that knowledge can lead to perfection. It cannot. It makes you complacent. Repentance is as important as salvation.

123 – Love is the outreaching power of the imagination by which we grasp and make real to ourselves the being of others.

124 – It is the active, as you would correct a friend; It is not something as pallid as the ‘power not ourselves that make for righteousness,’

Newman was right when he said that the one supreme difficulty of faith was the belief in God and all else was easy after that.

125 – It is not ‘not judging others,’ it is judging them unimaginatively. There is nothing incompatible with justice in hanging a man at the same time offering consolation. The precept against judging does not imply any relaxation of the moral law. Punishment for improving a soul is a Socratic truth.

126 – The Golden rule demands a man should look into his own soul. Christ condemned harshly.

John Edwards noted that minds should be drawn to mental experiences, there is a secondary level of beauty in harmony and regularity.

With Christianity we move from the perception of ideas to the knowledge of God. St. Basil said, "By community of faith men are led to spiritual union." We move towards other human souls.

128 - Does faith make or follow this spirituality.

129 – More thinks it comes from comprehension, not volition.

## **#7 AUTHORITY**

At the end of the Sermon on the Mount, people said Christ spoke with authority. There is nothing new in his sermon. Repentance or the morality.

131 – Almost all of it comes from the Old Testament.

132 – But his genius was in his rhetoric; was that 'of a great literary artist'?"

133 – His gift is in pithy condensation. He used perfect images.

135 – If we feel anything impracticable in Christ it is due to the ephemeral doctrine of the kingdom, which only has value as a symbol of the otherworldliness.

136 – Aristotle's morality is humanistic; and Plato the religious.

137 – But with the humanistic Golden Mean, it is hard to tell what the point of moderation is.

138 – Do we turn the other cheek or go violent?

139 – The possibility of compromise depends on moral humanism. But, if you wish to be a saint, the ultimate self-sacrifice is there.

War is horror. It would be a sorry world but for the few who have been very set on the eternal. We would be poorer without Newman.

141 – Jesus pronounces without compromise. Thus he has the same sense of authority he had 2,000 years ago.

## **#8**

### **THE MESSIANIC SECRET**

143 – Jesus said repent and prepare yourself for the great and terrible event.

Yet, in Mark he reveals himself privately to the apostles, but nowhere announces his mission publically until the trial scene.

In two other Synoptics, the secret is less carefully concealed. And, in John the secret is not kept at all. But, Mark is the oldest.

145 – Perhaps this was because it was somewhat unbelievable that a carpenter's son would be the messiah.

This is possibly why he adopted the vague 'Son of Man' mantle. When used unmistakably as a reference to a messiah, it is in the future and so not necessarily about the speaker.

147 – When demons recognized him, why did he command them to keep it a secret?

148 – He even asks for secrecy when a crowd witnesses a miracle.

152 – He is vague to John when asked if he's the messiah – (tell him of the miracles).

Luke says there were 70 followers, not 12, were sent out to disseminate the gospel. They were to sound a warning throughout Galilee, and take nothing with them, but they come back and not much happened, and what did had conflicting reports.

154 – Then, post reporting, they left by ship. And, more and more, Jesus sought to be alone with friends. He went north to Mt. Hermon. Why?

155 – People came and listened to him and left.

156 – He went to the mountain with Peter, James and John.

157 – They learned he was the Christ; but again he commanded them to keep it a secret.

159 – From that time on he set his face towards Jerusalem.

160 – He rebukes Peter as Satan and then talks of Losing and saving one's life.

On the road to Jerusalem, he knows what is coming, but curiously, his followers can't get it.

161 – Perhaps this is because in the literature, there is no talk of a defeated messiah. It is a profoundly original idea.

163 – It goes back to the idea of the suffering servant of Israel, perhaps. But, the image of the servant had never been associated with the Messiah.

164 – Was the suffering needed to draw men to God "as his words had so signally failed to do?"

165 – Here he would lose his life and gain the world.

169 – Jesus never once made an open claim to being the Messiah during his days in Jerusalem.

170 – Judas' crime was likely not showing the Romans where Jesus was, (this was easy to know), but in revealing to the high priests, the secret of his Messianic pretensions. This reading helps us understand what happened at the trial.

He finally confirms his mission and the trial questioning ends.

## **# 9**

### **SAINT PAUL**

172 – As great as Paul was, More finds his self-assertion renders some of his epistles "painful reading".

173 – Peters ministry was likely as big, but Paul appoints himself as almost the exclusive apostle to the gentiles. His churches were comparatively obscure.

174 – Peter seems to have done the Roman church. Odd that the Romans canonized Paul so.

But, for his egoism, he is profoundly religious.

175 – He revolts against transience and death with every fiber of his being.

176 – In him death and sin battled the passion for life and holiness: The essence of religion at all times and places.

181 – Paul fills out the coming of the Lord. And, we get a clear picture of Christ's coming back with burning fire and angelic hosts. He gives full details.

185 – This part of Judaism developed, via Persia, when the enemies of Jehovah were not those of the earth, but of the air.

186 - Jesus held this and to Paul it was intensely real.

187 – With Jesus the kingdom seems to have been pretty definitely on this earth, though later Synoptics, here and there may reflect another tradition. Paul is vague on this.

188 – Paul's vision comes from views current at the time.

189 – After Damascus, for a season, we're told, Saul went to Arabia.

190 – When he returned he was sure he was the anointed prophet. And, Christ promised total salvation now in taking the place of us sinners, by coming to earth. He is now Christ crucified.

192 – There is a tension between grace and faith in Paul's scheme.

Grace in Anselm's hands became classic for the occident.

193 - This is a judicial process in which man is passive. But if God could do so without any act by man, why was the crucifixion necessary? And, how does this deliver us from sin?

194 – Scholars, Philo for example, used double genesis creation to impose a platonic distinction between a phenomenal and ideal humanity; man now formed and created below.

And Adam was the first man and Christ is the second man, perfected.

195 – So grace becomes not so much a pardon as a regeneration.

196 – So by baptism, we put on Christ.

197 – But this is not universal; salvation belongs only to the remnant.

199 – And so justification via grace comes to require justification via faith.

200 – And, it was Paul who made Christianity essentially a religion of faith. The revolt from transience and death, which gave strength and to the longing for permanence and life. He imported this view of faith to adjust the original Jewish law to the mythology of last things.

From Adam to Moses there was no law. With law came knowledge.

201 - Men had only, epicureanism; But the Law by awakening conscience prepared the way for the operation of faith.

Faith is the inner law of our being, distinguished from the external act of grace, wherein we appropriate Jesus' victory over sin and death.

202 – This is sound psychology. Paul gives us purity, and faith that worketh through love.

203 – Paul even says we should not take his vision of Last Things with too much literalness.

204 – German scholars overlook his spiritual realism.

205 – We can only understand things via the spatial and temporal; hence story beats metaphysics. The realism of St. Paul works unconsciously.

206 – The metaphysics from Luther and Kant are vacuous. It easily passes into agnostic materialism.

207 – Paul's work hovers between realism and metaphysics.

208 – Paul ultimately takes grace over faith. But, his genius is to make a place for faith as the bith of a conscience troubled by the impossibility of fulfilling the law.

209 – There is no separating faith and works, and no antipathy between them, as a man is judged by his fruits.

The temporary determinism of grace is like a tonic to the will; but he ultimately drives the mind away from the dualism of religion to a pure naturalism, the halfway house of a humanitarian Christianity.

The Eastern church didn't worry about grace v faith so much. They worried about the incarnation.

## **#10**

### **THE FOURTH GOSPEL**

211 – From Paul to John we go from intense personal to impersonal contemplation. The eschatology is nearly eliminated and instead we have eschatology.

In John there is lots of doubt free messiah talk. Since Mark is more historical, we must believe that the reputed John did not write this gospel.

215 – The author of this gospel seems to have had the others in front of him as he wrote.

217 – He had to meet certain heresies, such as adherents of John, which it takes pains to show is only a forerunner of Jesus. It appeals to gnostics.

218 – But the largest goal is to reinforce the divine nature of Christ; it is manifest in every line, and there are not just healings, but lots of miracles.

219 – And after a blind healing in Mark, “The sins be forgiven thee;” In John He nor his parents sinned, this was to show God.

Thaumaturgy; the working of wonders or miracles.

222 – In John we get a lot of repetition which suggests the loving and beautiful old age of an unrestrained intellect.

225 – We have original sayings that seem to come from long marinating on sayings Jesus did say. But, inside we also have true sayings of Jesus.

228 – Different listed claims about Jesus show John’s habit of running text and commentary together.

229 – Lazarus is only in the 4<sup>th</sup> gospel .

233 – The author borrowed from the philosophical schools of Alexandria.

## **# 11**

### **THE SON OF MAN**

238 – Jesus said, “Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is, God.” Matthew 19:17.

241 – Jubilation compared to the semi-canonical book of Sirach, is the words of a man compared to abstract wisdom.

244 – In Mark, rather than apocalyptic assurances, we get an appeal to personal loyalty.

To the historical critic, the outstanding point is that Jesus prophesized that which did not come to pass.

245 – Was he a braggart or wrong?

246 - He did claim it.

248 – Those who strip the supernatural are wrong. There is a higher nature in our human nature.

249 – The way to reconcile his supernatural abilities and his being wrong is to remember that he was both man and God, as the Council of Chalcedon decided.

251 – He lived under the conditions of humanity. He was tired, he wept; he accomplished nothing of himself; he was made flesh. He was on all points tempted and yet without sin.

“No, the hated paradox of dualism cannot be avoided,” rationalism cannot supercede it.

How can they be one without cancelling each other out? I will say frankly that I do not understand, just as I don’t understand how my own body and soul co-exist.

252 – Unless we descend to a purely humanitarian view of Christ or lose our hold of reality in a metaphysical theology, we have simply to accept the mysterious fact in the humility of faith.”

This condensation is like a grown man who joins a group of children for play. He knows he is playing.

Kenosis is the self-emptying of Jesus’ own will becoming entirely receptive to God’s divine will.

253 – And suppose he only slowly became aware of his divine nature? His consciousness would be colored by his environment.

There is a double consciousness in Jews being the chosen folk and the universal message.

254 – We all know that that Jesus could have only done what he did when Rome made the world one. But we don't consider that his message could only have been delivered in Israel with its tradition of prophecy. He couldn't have had it happen in Greece, who was totally baffled by her mythology. And it only could have happened in Israel at that juncture of history.

And he could have only gotten people to repentance via preaching about the immediately expected kingdom.

## **#12**

### **MIRACLES AND THE RESURRECTION**

256 – What do we mean by miracle? If it is inexplicable you want, we come at last on a consciousness that cannot be explained.

257 – But miracle is not only the inexplicable, but the order of mysterious which tests our credulity for two reasons: It runs counter to a preconceived theory or contributory evidence doesn't force it on our belief.

And there are two attitudes towards the miraculous: the rationalist and the skeptical, or Platonic, dualist.

The rationalist insists on reducing all to order, and limiting all in what can be expressed in mechanical and mathematical terms. But he knows, if he keeps his senses, that all things end in mystery, and that mass and energy he can't go beyond. But in the ordinary world, there is no mystery.

258 - All here would be a miracle and he rejects it out of hand.

On the other hand, we have the skeptical dualist. He sees discontinuity and division, two realms of mystery which cross each other. SO there is no clear cut line between mystery and miracle.

This is in the Phaedo.

259 – What of raising my arm? Here the dualist sees the concurrent operation of two radically distinct orders of existence. The dualist does not pretend to know how this works.

This is not a miracle, as familiarity only makes it a wonder.

260 – The rationalist says the two realms (thought and arm) are not distinct. There can be no miracles. It will be explained.

What of words impacting other's actions?

261 – Napoleon saying ‘war’? Is this under the law of mechanics? Newton said movement is only when one body pushes another. The rationalist ought to say this is a miracle, but leaves it entirely out of his account.

The Platonist doesn’t see a miracle here but only a continuation of the mysterious dualism which Socrates maintained against the Anaxagoreans.

What of telepathy? The dualist says perhaps, the rationalist denies its possibility.

263 – What of the power of my mind to move an object? Telekinesis. The dualist will be skeptical of this, not because it would be impossible, just their isn’t much evidence.

The dualist is skeptical of miracles, the rationalist denies them on dogmatic grounds.

263 – Bible criticism is rationalist and denies any possibility of miracles.

264 – When it comes to healing, the skeptical dualist is open minded knowing the power of faith has an impact on the body we do not yet know about fully.

265 – We hear again and again, ‘Thy faith hath made thee whole.’ Then, ‘Go in peace.’ For grace ‘faith’ was necessary. Without belief, Christ could do nothing in Nazareth.

Jesus rebukes people for little faith and said with it we could move mountains. This may seem too much. But it is not much different than his saying, ‘All things are possible to him that believeth.’

If mind can make any change in physical phenomenon (the arm), why should we be appalled at wider possibility? It is a question of faith. Without faith, mind cannot make the body move (as we see with the hypnotic).

267 – More says personally he doesn’t care much about miracles. But what of the virgin birth and the resurrection?

Well the virgin thing is so obviously a late edition, we needn’t discuss it. Paul makes no mention of it; Mark doesn’t mention it, in fact he sees Mary trying to restrain Jesus from his ministry. Matthew and Luke repeat it without noticing it is incongruous with the virgin story.

268 - The intros of Luke and Matthew give genealogies which mention no miracles. John leaves the virgin birth out.

269 – We can give up the virgin birth with no damage to the idea of the Incarnation. But we must retain the resurrection.

Why? It was totally and widely believed in the early community. Paul and others witness it. And the effect was tremendous.

270 – It turned a number of disheartened and scattered adherents into a committed band of resolute missionaries.

Did it happen? Was it a hallucination?

The literal interpretation is difficult to defend. The four accounts give inconsistencies and contradictions.

271 – The body goes through doors, but eats solid food. It lowers spiritual life to semi materialism and should be dropped.

2) The trance theory. Jesus didn't die on the cross, but went into a trance or coma type deal.

272 – A guy with holes in his feet walking just fine is hard to swallow.

273 – The hallucination theory, some 500 saw him!

274 – Paul didn't see a body as palpable as Thomas did or the one that ate.

275 – In Mark, the early Gospel, the two Mary's go, see the stone rolled away and were afraid. And it ends, because the authorized ends are not authentic.

276 – 77 We can make a good case for hallucination, until we reflect. Does hallucination work this way? Do we find any other parallels in history?

278 – The hallucinations happened to people in different places, sometime around 500 folks. And it all happened in 40 days (Paul excepted). Why then so much hallucination then silence?

279 – But what if (body aside) his spirit lived and went to God? Then we would have spirit speaking to spirit. They would have the warranty of knowledge that he whom they mourned as dead was living with God.

The appearance of Christ may be regarded as subjective, but not therefore as a vain and illusory dream. Then the word 'hallucination' loses its ugly sting.

Then resurrection would be the supreme act of grace, the confirmation of our faith in the otherworld as an ever present reality behind these veiling clouds of phenomena; We should take a profounder Platonic skepticism of the 'visions and revelations of the lord.'

## **#13**

### **CONCLUSION**

281 – No matter what we think of the resurrection, the fact is that Christianity began with a belief in a superhuman founder.

He appeared in memory as a man and more than a man.

282 – His memory was preserved in a double aspect, human and divine. This was not a metaphysical theorem, it was a conviction born of experience.

At first his diving nature took for them, as Jews, the eschatological form with which they were familiar. Paul added to this with his profounder sense of eternal design providence and the pre-existent Christ.

283 – With this the soul of man, with its hopes and fears, its sense of sin and longing for salvation, was caught up into a celestial drama.

284 – The doctrines of predestination, grace, faith and law, went away for a tad and never reemerged in the Greek church; but in the Occident it came back with Tertullian and Augustine, and struggled throughout the Middle Ages and burst back out with Luther and Calvin. This being due to Paul's legalistic mind.

It would have been very Jewish, but it went through Asia minor and Hellenistic communities. Then it went to St. John and the cosmic scope continued but took another color.

285 – Jesus came out not as Hebrew, but as the personification of logos, grafted onto the largely Hellenized Jews anyhow.

In this the eschatology fades and we get focus on God's continuous manifestation of himself .

John is Hellenized but not total metaphysical.

286 – The faith of Jesus and idealism of Plato had merged.

We need the incarnation and faith.

Jesus stood more with John than Paul.

287 – The eschatology was needed for it to work and spread in Israel. But, in time it has become a symbolic expedient.

To become a world religion, it had to become more spiritualized, more Greek.

288 – Docetism is the belief that Jesus was only a God and not a man at all. This greekness

289 – Thus at Nicea (not the council) in 451 his dual nature was affirmed.

291 – If Christianity is not affirmed, we have no religion, only Plato's conjecture, because religion requires mythology.

292 – The peculiar strength of Christianity is that all overgrowth is swept away and in Jesus God appeared to man. Compare this to Greek mythology.

293 – Comparative religious studies may threaten all religions, but Christianity least of all.

294 – We should not act as if we believed because the reality of his incarnation is not important; we must acknowledge his dual nature and ours.

