

man's only hope—the Resurrection of our Lord—and would dissipate the light that now shines from the other side of Joseph's tomb, and would make the earth once more but the valley of the shadow of death. And he who would take away the miracles would repudiate the Lord's appearance after His Resurrection, His Ascension to the Father, the descent of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost and the Creation of the Body of Christ, and all the signs and wonders attending the permanent establishment of the Church. In fact, if the miracles are taken from the Bible, *its authority is gone*; its content becomes just another guess at the riddle of the universe. The Bible is enshrouded in the miraculous—thank God! It breathes forth the atmosphere of Heaven. It is clothed in garments of celestial beauty and glory. The reason is that the Bible is the Spirit-inspired record of God's progressive revelation of His Eternal Purpose, and revelation is always accompanied by demonstration. There is no other book in the world like the Bible in this respect. It is indeed and in truth THE BOOK.

Ultimately, then, he who would repudiate the miraculous element in the theater of God's revelation in history, would have us live in a world where the presence and power of the Holy Spirit is unknown. What a horrible world that would be!

2. "The Sing of Jonah the Prophet"

It remains to the everlasting credit of Jesus, and another proof as well of the perfection of His teaching, that He repeatedly emphasized the fact that faith in Him which was founded upon the signs and wonders which He wrought was of a lower order than faith in Him, and love for Him, *for what He was as a Person*, namely, the Son of God and the only Savior of men. Even though He fully recognized the significance of miracles as signs attesting Divine revelation, He affirmed again and again their secondary character in the engendering of genuine personal faith. A few Scriptures will suffice to set forth His teaching on this subject.

Take for example, in the first place, Jesus' statements to the Eleven, as recorded in John 14:10-12. In vv. 10-11, He says: "Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I say unto you I speak not from myself; but the Father abiding in me doeth his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father in me: or else

believe me for the very works' sake." That is to say, if they—the Eleven—were not willing to take His word for the sublime fact of His oneness with the Father, surely they should believe it if on no other ground than that of the works which He had wrought in the world. The reference here is not exclusively to miracles of course; as a matter of fact, *erga* ("works") is not to be identified with *sēmeia* ("signs"), although it may, and probably did, include the latter. *Erga* has reference to the works of Christ in general: His teaching, His deeds of compassion, His mission of redemption, His works of healing and other miracles, in fact all the sublime accomplishments of His incarnate ministry. Jesus then adds, v. 12—"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and *greater works than these shall he do: because I go unto the Father.*" This last affirmation has been made a proof text by those who insist on attaching physical healings to the proclamation of the Gospel; it is a favorite text especially of Christian Science practitioners. Does it have reference, however, to miracles of physical healing? I am sure that it does not. "Greater works than these [works of mine] shall he do, because I go unto the Father." If "works" has reference here to miracles of physical healing, I should like to ask what *greater works* of this kind did the Apostles, or any one else, ever do that could be called greater than the works which Jesus Himself did? Jesus healed all manner of diseases, cast out devils, gave wholeness to the cripple, sight to the blind, speech to the dumb, and hearing to the deaf, and even raised the dead to life. Do modern "faith healers" and "miracle workers" profess to do any greater works than these? I think not. What, then, did Jesus allude to, when He said, "Greater works than these shall he do"? And what did He mean by saying that these *greater works* should be done, *because* He returned to the Father? The answer is obvious. By His conquest of death and subsequent exaltation to the sovereignty of the universe, He "brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (2 Tim. 1:10), He made possible the preaching of repentance and remission of sins in His name unto all the nations (Luke 24:47), and He put into operation the provisions of the New Covenant whereby men are reconciled to God and receive *eternal redemption* on the ground of obedient faith. It follows, there-

fore, that any work which has for its end the healing of the spirit of man, his reconciliation with God, and his ultimate redemption in *spirit and soul and body*, is an infinitely greater work than the temporary healing of the body, and greater even than raising the dead. Such works as the preaching of the Gospel for the obedience of faith, the baptizing of believers into Christ, and the nurturing of Christians in the most holy faith—these are all greater works than miracles of physical healing. It is interesting to note, in this connection, that in so far as the record goes Jesus exercised His Divine power to raise the dead only on three occasions. Why was He so sparing of the use of this mighty power? Evidently because the use of it for such a purpose would not have contributed permanently to the happiness of mankind, and would have proven to be in fact, in the long run, a *misuse* of it. Surely it was no particular satisfaction to Him to raise people from the dead, for He must have known that He was raising them up *only to die again*. On the other hand, when men accept the facts, and obey the commands, of the Gospel of Christ as preached by faithful men, and continue thereafter to grow in the grace and knowledge of Him who died that they might live, they shall be redeemed ultimately both in *spirit and in body*, and shall be raised up from the dead *never to die again*. As a matter of fact, Jesus Himself makes it clear that in the performing of miracles, He exercised His Divine power not primarily for the purpose of healing, nor for the purpose of alleviating the sorrow of those bereaved: these were but secondary considerations. It is evident that He exercised His Divine power, rather, only on occasions when such a demonstration attested His own ministry and teaching and confirmed the fundamental truth which He was soon to make the creedal formula of His Church, the truth that He is the Christ, the Son of the living God (cf. John 20:30-31). Hence, when He said, "Greater works than these shall he do," He meant not that His disciples should perform greater miracles than He had performed Himself, but that by their proclamation of the Gospel and by their embodiment of the message of the Gospel in permanent form in Scripture, they should produce great moral and spiritual reformations in the world, reformations intrinsically more wonderful and more valuable than any effects which could ever be brought about by physical miracles.

We all know, for example, that on the Day of Pentecost the apostolic preaching converted some three thousand people in one day (Acts 2:41), and it is said that a few days afterward the number of men who believed had increased to five thousand (Acts 4:4). It is evident, too, that the converts made by Paul must have greatly outnumbered those of Christ's own ministry. The clear implication therefore, in the affirmation of Jesus now before us, is that miracles of physical healing were of an order greatly inferior to the preaching of the Gospel and its effects, such as faith, hope, love, regeneration, sanctification, holiness, and eternal life. The Christian Gospel does not emphasize physical healing at all; its purpose is to effect the healing of the human spirit,—that change which in itself guarantees the ultimate redemption of the body to a glorious immortality. Personal faith which has its basis in miracles of physical healing; and which in virtue of this fact requires visible supports, is certainly not the highest kind of faith: it is a sort of barter by which service is rendered to God primarily in exchange for material and temporal benefits received from Him, rather than out of *pure love for Him* in the human heart, the love which pours itself out in service without any thought of reward. I need only point out the fact that this barter type of religion is universally characteristic of paganism; it is a "you-scratch-my-back-and-I'll-scratch-yours" kind of faith which is certainly of a very low grade in the sight of Him who gave Himself freely for all mankind. The highest kind of faith is that which is generated by pure love for God in the human heart. Precious indeed in the sight of God must those rare souls be who are able to attain such a high standard of personal religion. Cf. Hosea 6:6—"For I desire goodness, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt-offerings."

A second case which illustrates clearly the attitude of Jesus toward physical miracles was that of "doubting" Thomas (John 20:24-29). The story is well-known, of course. When the risen Christ made His first appearance to the Eleven, for some reason Thomas was absent. When he came back later, and the other disciples joyfully reported, "We have seen the Lord," Thomas simply could not believe it. "Except," said he, "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 continue to read "And after eight days again, his disciples were within, and Thomas with them. Jesus cometh, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and see my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and put it into my side; and be not faithless, but believing. Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God." Note well Jesus' reply: "Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed; *blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.*" Genuine faith is a conviction with respect to *things not seen* (Heb. 11:1). Cf. 2 Cor. 5:6-8: "Knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord (for we walk by faith, not by sight): we are of good courage, I say, and are willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be at home with the Lord." 2 Cor. 4:18—"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." Therefore said Jesus: "Blessed are they that have *not* seen, yet have believed." The implication is, clearly, that the faith that is engendered by, or has to depend on, physical miracles, is not of this high order; for signs and miracles, in the very nature of the case, are events which are *seen*.

One of the most significant statements that Jesus made during His entire ministry on earth had reference to this very subject. The Jews were continually importuning Him for a sign. As He Himself said, on one occasion, in reply to a "certain nobleman's" plea that He heal his son: "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will in no wise believe" (John 4:48). (These words were intended, of course, primarily for the people standing round about.) Or, as the Apostle Paul put it, later: "Jews ask for signs, and Greeks seek after wisdom" (1 Cor. 1:22). Jesus knew quite well, however, that in the vast majority of cases their demand for a sign was mere pretense. He had already wrought many signs and wonders before their very eyes, and in the hardness of their hearts they had even accused Him of doing so by the powers of Beelzebub the prince of devils (Matt. 12:22-32). He did not propose therefore, at any time, to employ His Divine power either to satisfy their idle curiosity or to cater to their blind,

wilful unbelief: the powers of God are never to be utilized in vain. Hence, when "certain of the scribes and Pharisees" came to Him, on another occasion, and said, "Teacher, we would see a sign from thee," He replied as follows, Matt. 12:38-40: "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and *there shall no sign be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet*: for as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the sea-monster, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart [interior] of the earth." Cf. Luke's version, Luke 11:29-32: "Even as Jonah became a sign unto the Ninevites, so shall also the Son of man be to this generation. . . . The men of Nineveh shall stand up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, a greater than Jonah is here." These words are of far-reaching significance, as is evident from the tenor of New Testament teaching as a whole. Jesus tells us here that the wonders which God wrought through the prophet Jonah were intended to be typical of the wonders to be wrought by God the Father (by the agency of the Spirit, of course) through Him: 1. As God had kept His ancient prophet alive for three days and three nights in the belly of the sea-monster (Jon. 1:17), so God would keep His Son alive. (i.e., preserve His body from corruption) for three days and three nights in the bowels of the earth. Psal. 16:8-10: "I have set Jehovah always before me: Because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: My flesh also shall dwell in safety, For thou wilt not leave my soul to Sheol; *Neither wilt thou suffer thy holy one to see corruption.*" Cf. Peter's sermon on the Day of Pentecost, Acts 2:29-31: "Brethren, I may say unto you freely of the patriarch David, that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us unto this day. Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins he would set one upon his throne; he foreseeing this spake of the resurrection of Christ, that neither was he left unto Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption." 2. As God had brought His ancient prophet forth from the belly of the sea-monster at the end of his three days' and three nights' sojourn therein (Jon. 2:10), so God would bring His Son forth from the grave at the end of a

like period of time (Matt. 16:21). 3. As Jonah had preached repentance to the Ninevites (Gentiles) after his typical "resurrection" (Jon. 3), so repentance and remission of sins would be preached in the name of Christ, after His resurrection from the dead, unto *all* the nations (Gentiles as well as Jews): cf. Luke 24:45-47. The implication is too clear to be overlooked or misunderstood, namely, *that according to the Divine Purpose and Plan the Resurrection of Christ was to be the only miracle performed to attest Christianity once for all time; in a word, that the Messiahship of Jesus, and in fact the whole Remedial System, was to be authenticated by, and established upon, the historicity of the Resurrection. Moreover, regardless of what men have said or written on the subject, this implication is corroborated by the teaching of the Bible from beginning to end.*

The same idea is clearly set forth in the well-known conversation between Jesus and the Twelve as recorded in Matt. 16:13-20. Here Jesus is said to have put to them the all-important question: "Who say ye that I am?" Immediately Simon Peter answered: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus answered and said unto him, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven" (i.e., has revealed *this truth* unto thee). To this declaration Jesus then added the following most significant statement: "And I also say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it" (vv. 15-18). Note the change here from the masculine gender (*Petros*, in "thou art *Peter*") to the feminine (*petra*, in "upon this *rock*"). What, then, was the "rock" in the latter instance? Certainly the *truth* (*alētheia*, the Greek word for "truth," is feminine; in fact, practically all such abstract terms in Greek are in the feminine gender) which Peter had just voiced: the truth that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. Upon this *truth*, said Jesus, "I will build my church, and the gates of Hades" (not "hell," the word for which is *Gehenna*) "shall not prevail against it" (literally against "the same," *autēs*, again the feminine form). It is well-known that *Hades*, in Scripture, is the *grave*, or perhaps the *underworld*. The word, as used by Jesus here, was obviously in adaptation to the prevailing popular view that

the physically dead person went to the world below the grave; in all Greek literature *Hades* was the name either for the god of the underworld or for the underworld region of departed souls over which the god ruled. The equivalent term in Hebrew was *Sheol*. Cf. Psa. 16:10—"Thou wilt not leave my soul to Sheol; Neither wilt thou suffer thy holy one to see corruption," that is, of his *flesh* (quoted by Peter, Acts 2:25-28, as foretelling explicitly the resurrection of the Messiah). Cf. Psa. 139:8—"If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, thou art there." What did Jesus mean, then, by the declaration, "the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it"? That the gates of the grave or underworld should not prevail against *the Church*? Probably not, except perhaps inferentially or in the sense that the resurrection of Christ would be a guarantee of the ultimate resurrection of His saints. (1 Thess. 4:15 1 Cor. 15:54-56). It seems evident, however, that He meant primarily that the gates of the grave should not prevail against the truth upon which He would build His Church, the truth that He is the Christ, the Son of the living God. Had He gone into the grave and not come forth, He could not have been the Christ, the Son of the living God. Had He not come forth from the grave, that of itself would have proved Him to be a man and nothing more. But the fact that He was raised up from the dead by the mighty power of God, that He did come forth conqueror of death and the grave, was the final crowning proof that He was what He claimed to be—the Christ, the Son of the living God. As the Apostle Peter put it later, to the rulers of the Jews, in reference to his healing of the lame man at the Gate Beautiful of the Temple, Acts 4:10-11, "Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even in him doth this man stand here before you whole. He is the stone which was set at nought of you the builders, which was made the head of the corner." (The reference here is to Psalm 118:22-24.) Who were the builders? The Jews. Who was the stone which, rejected by them, was made the head of the corner, or chief cornerstone of the spiritual Temple (Church) of God? Jesus, the Messiah (cf. Eph. 2:19-22). When was Jesus the Messiah made the Head of the Corner? Obviously, when God raised Him up from the dead

and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places. This was the supreme miracle of all time, the one by which the entire Remedial System was authenticated. Again, the Spirit has spoken just as clearly through the Apostle Paul on this point, Rom. 1:1-4: "the gospel of God, which he promised afore through his prophets in the holy scriptures, concerning his Son, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, *who was declared [determined, demonstrated] to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit [Spirit] of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead: even Jesus Christ our Lord.*" The "spirit of holiness" here certainly is the Holy Spirit. He is the Spirit of wholeness; He alone gives *wholeness* to those who open their hearts to the fulness of His indwelling. This Jesus did: He possessed the Holy Spirit without measure (John 3:34). To Him therefore the Spirit gave wholeness of being—as the Son of man—by raising Him from the dead "the firstfruits of them that are asleep" (1 Cor. 15:20, 23; cf. Col. 1:18—"The firstborn from the dead") and clothing Him in bodily glory and honor and immortality. Rom. 8:11—"But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, he that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall give life also to your mortal bodies through his Spirit that dwelleth in you." 1 Tim. 6:15, 16—"our Lord Jesus Christ . . . who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in light unapproachable," etc. 1 Tim. 1:17—"Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen." These Scriptures all harmonize perfectly, if allowed to do so.

To sum up in the words of Paul, Rom. 10:9-10: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved: for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." The fundamental *truth* of Christianity, and of the entire Bible for that matter, is that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. This is the *truth* against which the gates of the grave did not, indeed *could not*, prevail; hence the truth upon which the Lord has built, and still builds, His Church. Christ Himself, the Way and the Truth and the Life, is the Creed of the Church; the formula in which that Creed is stated in

Scripture, and confessed by men, is that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. This is the truth which one must confess "with the mouth" in order to be a Christian. This *truth*, however, is based upon the fundamental *fact* of Christianity, which is that God raised up His Son from the dead. One who does not sincerely believe that God raised Jesus from the dead simply cannot believe that He is the Christ, the Son of the living God. This is the long of it, the short, and the all of it. The whole Remedial System is, I repeat, established upon the fact of the Resurrection of Christ.

A paragraph or two respecting the historicity of the Resurrection of Jesus becomes necessary at this point. For the Resurrection was either an event in history, or it was nothing; it either took place at a specified spot on the earth's surface and at a specified time, or it did not take place at all. Suppose we look at this event, therefore, first by reviewing the facts concerning Jesus which are quite generally admitted by both sacred and profane writers, by Jews, Catholics, Protestants and even skeptics alike, as follows: (1) it is generally agreed that Jesus of Nazareth is an historical personage, that is, that He actually did live on earth; (2) it is generally agreed that He lived at the time assigned to Him by the Bible—that He was born in the "Golden Age" of Caesar Augustus in Rome (Luke 2:1) and that he died during the rule of Tiberius, Augustus' successor (Luke 3:1); (3) it is generally agreed that He lived in the country assigned to Him in Scripture, namely, in the country round about Jerusalem or what is known today as Palestine; (4) it is generally agreed that He died by crucifixion in Jerusalem in the year 30 of our calendar; and (5) as far as I know, the main facts regarding His death and burial, as presented in the Gospels, have never seriously been questioned, by Jew, Catholic, Protestant or skeptic. It is agreed that His body at death was given to a wealthy friend, Joseph of Arimathea (another friend, Nicodemus, having provided for the wrapping and the anointing); that Joseph laid the body away in his own tomb, which had recently been hewn out of a rock, not far from the place of the Crucifixion; that a huge stone was rolled across the front of the sepulchre (Matt. 27:57-61, Mark 15:42-46, Luke 23:50-53, John 19:38-42); that an armed guard was stationed there to keep watch both day and night, to whom instructions were given to make

the tomb absolutely secure (Matt. 27: 65-66); that, furthermore, the stone was sealed with a Roman seal, which meant that anyone tampering with it would be violating the authority of Rome, the mistress of the world, and would in all likelihood incur the death penalty for so doing; and that the reason for all these precautions—the stone, the seal, and the armed guard of soldiers—was that the enemies of Jesus, recalling his saying that He would rise on the third day, and fearing that the disciples might steal the body and proclaim a fraudulent resurrection, had persuaded Pilate, the Roman governor, to take (or at least to approve their taking) these necessary measures to prevent any tampering with the tomb or its contents (Matt. 27: 62-66). And finally (6) it is universally admitted—as a matter of fact, it has to be admitted—that at the end of the three-day period, the corpse was no longer in the tomb. These are the general facts regarding the death and burial of Jesus which may be regarded as universally conceded. To be sure, some of them have been denied by different persons, or at least fantastic theories have been put forward at different times to “explain them away”; these denials and theories, however, have never shown sufficient credibility to warrant any widespread or permanent acceptance.

Hence, the whole matter of the Resurrection narrows down to just one issue historically,—*What became of the corpse of Jesus that was laid away in Joseph’s tomb?* In answer to this question, only three hypotheses are possible: (1) that the body was stolen from the tomb by His friends, (2) that the body was stolen from the tomb by His enemies, or (3) that God, by the agency and power of the Spirit, raised it up from the dead and transformed (metamorphosed) it into a spiritual (etherealized) body.

Consider the first of these hypotheses for a moment,—that the disciples of Jesus stole the corpse from Joseph’s tomb and buried it secretly at some unknown spot. This view is utterly untenable, for various reasons. In the first place, nothing is more evident from the Gospel records than that the disciples went away from the Cross, after the death of Jesus, with their hopes completely blasted. They lingered near the Cross to the very last, expecting some miracle of deliverance from Heaven. But nothing happened. Jesus died,—and their hopes died with Him. The disciples did not even

linger to attend to the burial; they left that to the women and Joseph and Nicodemus. They were completely crushed, disappointed and disillusioned, saying one to another, "We hoped that it was he who should redeem Israel" (Luke 24:21). They were utterly without hope for the future. That this was their state of mind is further evidenced, by way of contrast, by their complete amazement some four days later to find the Lord alive again and in their midst. This astonishment began when the women arrived at the tomb early on the morning of the first day of the week, and found it empty. Peter and John, on hearing the news, it would seem from Mary Magdelene, rushed to the tomb at break-neck speed, and even hurried inside, to find there only the grave-clothes folded and laid aside in perfect order (John 20:1-9). On the evening of that same day, Jesus appeared "unto the eleven themselves as they sat at meat" (Mark 16:14), Thomas being absent, and "they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they beheld a spirit," that is, a ghost (Luke 24:36-43). Jesus could overcome their fright only by showing them His wounded hands and side (John 20:19-20); then "they were glad, when they saw the Lord" (John 20:20). When they reported the appearance to Thomas later, at his return, he refused to believe it. Then a week later Jesus appeared to the entire group a second time, when Thomas was present; Thomas was permitted to feel the wounds, and cried out, "My Lord and my God!" (John 20:24-29). Nothing is more evident than the fact that the disciples were expecting nothing but the usual oblivion that followed ordinary death and burial, and that followed especially such an ignominious form of death as a crucifixion. In the second place, the disciples simply *could not have stolen the body of Jesus* even had they desired to secure possession of it. To have done so, they would have had to break the Roman seal, roll the huge stone away from the entrance to the sepulchre, and carry out the corpse in the presence of a squad of some fifteen fully-armed soldiers (or Temple police). Such a thing was impossible on the face of it. In the third place, if the disciples did steal the body, certainly they entered into a league to perjure themselves for all subsequent time. Can any intelligent person, on reading the book of Acts, conclude that those men, the burden of whose preaching was that God had raised His Son from the

dead, were proclaiming what they knew to be a lie? Can anyone think for a moment that when the Apostle Peter announced on the Day of Pentecost, "This Jesus did God raise up, whereof we all are witnesses" (Acts 2:32), he was deliberately palming off a huge lie upon the world? The thought is incredible, even fantastic! Moreover, as far as we know, every one of that original group of Apostles suffered martyrdom,—and for what? For preaching boldly that Jesus had been raised up from the dead and made both Lord and Christ. Are men in the habit of dying, deliberately, for what they know to be a lie? I think not.

Let us look, then, for a moment, at the second hypothesis,—that the enemies of Jesus stole His body and buried it secretly in an unknown grave. At this point, however, the problem of *motive* fairly hits us in the face. *Why* should the enemies of Jesus—the chief priests, scribes, and leaders of both Pharisees and Sadducees—have stolen the corpse? They had concocted the plot to put an end to His work (Matt. 26:14-16); they had arrested Him; they had sentenced Him to death; they had coerced Pilate into executing the death penalty; nor were they satisfied until they had seen Him die on the Cross. They knew, too, where His body was buried; they had seen to it that the huge stone was rolled across the entrance to the tomb; and they had induced Pilate to seal the stone with a Roman seal and to station a guard around the tomb—all for what purpose? *Precisely for the purpose of keeping the corpse from being stolen.* It is quite evident that the enemies of Jesus wanted above everything else that the body should stay right where it was buried—in Joseph's tomb. They had no reason on earth for stealing it; they used all precautionary measures to prevent its being stolen; the last thing they desired was for it to be stolen. *And if they had had their way, if the corpse had actually remained in the tomb, the whole Christian Religion would have died "aborning"; as a matter of fact, there never would have been any Christian Religion.*

Let us now move forward in time some fifty days—to the seventh first day of the week following the burial of Jesus—to the Day of Pentecost. The news is beginning to get around in Jerusalem that the corpse is no longer in the tomb where it was buried. The rumor has already begun to circulate that

Jesus has risen from the dead! Had He not promised, while He was yet in the flesh, that He would be raised up the third day? Had He not been seen recently by "above five hundred brethren at once" (1 Cor. 15:6)? Now, on this Day of Pentecost, marvels suddenly break forth from Heaven: a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind, and cloven tongues like fire resting upon the head of each of the Apostles, who are now preaching in many different foreign tongues, in the outer court of the great Temple! The terrific impact of the sound as of a rushing wind, the sound as of a hurricane, and the crackling of the tongues resembling the flames of a fire—naturally these wonders have attracted the attention of the populace. A great multitude has hurried breathlessly to the Temple, the scene of the Divine demonstration. There stand the Apostles, John here, Andrew over there, James at another spot, Peter over yonder, and so on—all of them are preaching, and preaching in the various native languages represented by this mixed multitude who have come to Jerusalem from all parts of the world to keep the feast of Pentecost. Peter's sermon is recorded. Hear what he says: "Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God unto you by mighty works and wonders and signs which God did by him in the midst of you, even as ye yourselves know; him, being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye by the hand of lawless men did crucify and slay: *whom God raised up*, having loosed the pangs of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. . . . *This Jesus did God raise up, whereof we all are witnesses.* Being therefore by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he hath poured forth this, which ye see and hear. . . . Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly, *that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified*" (Acts 2:1-36). Now it must be remembered that the very people to whom the Apostles were preaching on this occasion—hundreds of them—had been among the rabble at Golgotha and had actually witnessed the Crucifixion. They knew full well that Jesus had died and they knew equally well that His body had been laid away in Joseph's tomb. And now—right before their very eyes—the tomb was empty, the corpse was gone! I am quite sure that all Jerusalem was visiting that

empty tomb. I ask this question, therefore: If the enemies of Jesus had stolen the body, if they knew where the body was, why did they not produce it and prove that the Apostles were either liars or dupes, right on the spot? *Peter's sermon was a direct challenge to the leaders of Judaism either "to put up or shut up," either to produce the corpse of Jesus or to admit the Resurrection.* Every sermon delivered by the Apostles from that day forward contained, either explicitly or implicitly, the same challenge! Why, then, did not the chief priests produce the body? For the obvious reason that they had not the slightest inkling of what had happened to it; they did not produce the corpse simply because they *could not* produce it. No wonder that three thousand people believed, repented and were baptized on that first day of Gospel preaching (Acts 2:41)! No wonder that the number of converts grew in a few days to five thousand men alone, not counting the women and children of accountable age (Acts 4:4)! No wonder that "the word of God increased," that "the number of disciples multiplied in Jerusalem exceedingly," and that "a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith" (Acts 6:7)! Only the certainty of the historicity of the Resurrection could have produced such conversions *en masse*. The events of that great Day of Pentecost must be seen in their *historical* setting to be properly understood. I affirm, without any fear of successful contradiction, that the enemies of Jesus would have destroyed Christianity then and there, had they been able to produce the body of Jesus and show it to the people. Had they done so, there would be no Christian Religion to this day. More than this, if unbelievers in subsequent ages could have uncovered some sort of convincing evidence as to the disposal of that precious body, some concrete evidence that would discredit, or even cast a shadow of doubt upon, the historicity of the Resurrection, Christianity no doubt would have disappeared from the face of the earth. It was the Resurrection that crowned, perfected and established the Life of Jesus, the Teaching of Jesus, the Person of Jesus; that proved once for all that He is the Christ, the Son of the living God.

The fact needs to be emphasized again and again in our day of loose thinking that Christianity is both an *authoritative* and *authoritarian* system. It is infinitely more than a system

of ethics, noble as its ethical principles indeed are. Our high schools, colleges and universities today are filled with teachers who cling—half-heartedly at least—to the ethics of Jesus, but who at the same time reject His authority as the Logos and religious Teacher of mankind. Such a position involves a contradiction in itself, for the simple reason that the ethics of Christianity cannot be divorced from the religious framework in which they were given to mankind. The Founder of Christianity Himself spoke, and still speaks, as One having authority, and not as the scribes (Matt. 7:29, Mark 1:22). Hence, when He had fully demonstrated His power over man's last and greatest enemy, Death, and had thus "brought to nought him that had the power of death, that is, the devil" (Heb. 2:14), He had a perfect right to say, "All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth" (Matt. 28:18). Christianity is *not* just another human philosophy, *not* just another guess at the issues of life, death and destiny; Christianity is authoritarian or nothing, and it receives its authority from the fact of the Resurrection. That fact alone proves it to be God's final and complete revelation of His Eternal Purpose to mankind. Refusal to recognize the authority of Christ is the supreme folly of all so-called "humanistic" systems.

But we have yet another and crowning proof of the fact of the Resurrection—the Man from Tarsus himself. When those stirring scenes of Pentecost and the days that followed, as described above, were being enacted in Jerusalem, Saul of Tarsus, the little man with the giant mind, was there. He, who had sat at the feet of Rabbi Gamaliel, was a fanatical Jew; he refused to believe that this Jesus had been raised up; he despised this new religion; and he set out to destroy *by force* the "sect" that had espoused it. He went at the head of a posse of Temple police throughout the city, seizing the Christians and throwing them into prison if they refused to renounce the name of Christ (Acts 8:3). And one day he stood by personally, and looked on with the utmost nonchalance, while a few ecclesiastical fanatics in blind rage—priests turned killers—stoned the Spirit-filled disciple, Stephen, to death (Acts 7:57-58). Then, some time later, this same Saul is on his way to Damascus armed with credentials from the chief priests of Judaism to lay waste the church in that city

(Acts 9:1-2). But, at midday, just as the cavalcade is approaching the gates of the ancient city, something happens! There is a great dazzling Light, and the persecutor falls to the ground completely blind! And then he hears a voice speaking to him in the Hebrew tongue, and saying in sad, pleading tones: "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? . . . I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest." (Cf. Acts 9:1-22, 22:3-21, 26:1-23.) Jesus of Nazareth, alive again, alive forevermore, in a glorified body whose radiance outshone the brightness of the noonday sun! If this was not a genuine experience, a Divine call to the Apostleship, how are we to account for the subsequent life and devotion—even to martyrdom—of Paul the Apostle, once the fanatical Saul the persecutor? What does Paul himself say about it? 1 Cor. 15:8—"And last of all, as to the child untimely born, he appeared to me also." 1 Cor. 9:1—"Am I not free? am I not an apostle? *have I not seen Jesus our Lord?*" Gal. 1:11-17: "For I make known to you, brethren, as touching the gospel which was preached by me, that it is not after man. For neither did I receive it from man nor was I taught it, but *it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ.* For ye have heard of my manner of life in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and made havoc of it; and I advanced in the Jews' religion beyond many of mine own age among my countrymen, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers. But when it was the good pleasure of God, who separated me, even from my mother's womb, and called me through his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the Gentiles; straightway I conferred not with flesh and blood; neither went I up to Jerusalem to them that were apostles before me; but I went away into Arabia; and again I returned unto Damascus," etc. One simply cannot read the testimony of the Apostle Paul without realizing that he had actually *seen* Jesus our Lord; there is no other explanation of the complete change which took place in his life and his subsequent utter devotion to the ministry of the Gospel of Christ.

After all, had not God affirmed in olden times, by *the Holy Spirit* through the prophet David, that He would not leave the soul of His Holy One, the Messiah, to Sheol (Hades) nor suffer His flesh to see (experience) corruption

(Psa. 16:10)? And did not the same Holy Spirit testify through the Apostle Peter on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:4) that David, being a prophet himself, had spoken these words prophetically of the Resurrection of Christ, that is, of Jesus of Nazareth, whom God raised up and made both Lord and Christ (Acts 2:25-36)? That precious human body which was begotten by the agency of the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Virgin (Luke 1:35), and which was offered up "through the eternal Spirit" as a sinless Sacrifice for the sins of the world, on the Cross-tree of Calvary (Heb. 9:14)—that body, according to the Eternal Purpose of God, was never to suffer decomposition,—God had affirmed it by His Almighty Word from the very foundation of the world. That body was prepared for the inhabitation of the Spirit-Logos; nor was it any the less human, but actually more so, in virtue of that Divine indwelling. *Thus it will be seen that the Incarnation, the Virgin Birth, the Atonement, and the Resurrection, are facts which are all bound up together into the one mighty mosaic of Divine revelation in history, and bound up also with the entire Cosmic Plan of our God.* The human body of Jesus was a special creation in the womb of the Virgin: this is the Mystery of the Incarnation (John 1:14), the Mystery of Godliness (1 Tim. 3:16). That sinless body was a special Divine Offering for the sins of the world: this is the Mystery of the Atonement (1 Pet. 2:24). Therefore it was inevitable that that precious body should not suffer fleshly decomposition. No one who is fully cognizant of the wonderful unity of the Divine Plan of the Ages could ever doubt for a moment that our Lord Jesus Christ was raised up from the dead.

In view of all these facts, certainly it is not to be wondered at, that the Resurrection of Jesus was the burden of apostolic preaching. In every sermon recorded in the book of Acts, the inspired evangelist brought his message to a close with an affirmation of the fact of the Resurrection.

[Thus Peter concluded his sermon on the Day of Pentecost]: This Jesus did God raise up, whereof we all are witnesses. . . . Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly, that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, thus Jesus whom ye crucified [Acts 2:32, 36]. [In his sermon from Solomon's Porch a few days later, the Apostle declared]: But ye denied the Holy and Righteous One . . . and killed the Prince of Life; whom God raised from the dead, whereof we are witnesses [Acts 3:14-15]. [At a session of the Sanhedrin only a few hours later, he boldly said]: Be it known unto you

all, and to all the people of Israel, that in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even in him doth this man stand here before you whole [Acts 4:10]. [And in a subsequent hearing before the same body, he again declared]: The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew, hanging him on a tree. Him did God exalt at his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins [Acts 5:30-31]. [And so we read, in Acts 4:33, that] with great power gave the apostles their witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. [Again, in concluding his first sermon to a Gentile audience, Cornelius and his household at Caesarea, Peter said]: Him [Jesus of Nazareth] God raised up the third day, and gave him to be made manifest, not to all the people, but unto witnesses that were chosen before of God, even to us, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. And he charged us to preach unto the people, and to testify that this is he who is ordained of God to be the Judge of the living and the dead. To him bear all the prophets witness, that through his name every one that believeth on him shall receive remission of sins [Acts 10:40-43]. [The Resurrection was the theme of Paul's preaching also. In his address delivered in the synagogue at Antioch of Pisidia, Paul said]: And when they had fulfilled all things that were written of him, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a tomb. But God raised him from the dead: and he was seen for many days of them that came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are now his witnesses unto the people. And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers, that God hath fulfilled the same unto our children, in that he raised up Jesus; as also it is written in the second psalms, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he hath spoken on this wise, I will give you the holy and sure blessings of David. Because he saith also in another psalm, Thou wilt not give thy Holy One to see corruption. For David, after he had in his own generation served the counsel of God, fell asleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption; but he whom God raised up saw no corruption. Be it known unto you therefore, brethren, that through this man is proclaimed unto you remission of sins [Acts 13:29-38]. [Note the similarity of content between the messages of Peter and Paul.] [Again, in his famous sermon to the Athenian philosophers on the Hill of Ares, Paul affirmed the Resurrection to be God's proof and pledge of ultimate universal Judgment, Acts 17:30-31]: The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked; but now he commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent: inasmuch as he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he raised him from the dead. [For preaching the Resurrection, the Apostle was almost mobbed by his own people, on his return to Jerusalem (Acts 23:1-10); before Felix, the Roman governor, he "reasoned of righteousness, and self-control, and the judgment to come," a message which included the fact of the Resurrection (Acts 24:15, 21, 25); and in his speech before King Agrippa, he again defended his former proclamation of the Resurrection, Acts 26:22, 23]: Having therefore obtained the help that is from God, I stand unto this day testifying both to small and great, saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses did say should come: how that the Christ must suffer, and how that he first

by the resurrection of the dead should proclaim light both to the people and to the Gentiles. [To proclaim Christ in apostolic times (Acts 8:5), to preach Jesus (Acts 8:35), to proclaim that Jesus is Lord (Rom. 10:9), to preach that Jesus is the Son of God (Acts 9:20), or that He is the Christ, the Son of the living God (Matt. 16:16-18)—to proclaim any one of these truths was to proclaim that God had raised Jesus from the dead and made Him both Lord and Christ (Acts 2:32-36). This was the essence of the apostolic testimony, as indeed it should be of the message from the modern pulpit.]

The First Epistle to the Corinthians was written by Paul only some twenty-five or thirty years after the actual death, burial and resurrection of our Lord. It was written while a great many of the eye-witnesses of the Crucifixion and the Empty Tomb were still living (1 Cor. 15:6). It was among the very first books, if not actually *the first book*, of the New Testament canon to have been indited. And there is no doubt whatever that it was written by the Apostle Paul. It is one of the most important, most valuable, and most authentic of all Christian writings. It is significant, therefore, that in this Epistle the inspired writer summed up the whole Christian doctrine of the Resurrection of Christ and the future resurrection of the saints.

[Concerning the Resurrection of Christ, he testifies in the following unequivocal terms]: Now I make known unto you, brethren, the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye received, wherein also ye stand, by which also ye are saved, if ye hold fast the word which I preached unto you, except ye believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received: that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried; and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the scriptures; and that he appeared to Cephas; then to the twelve; then he appeared to above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain until now, but some are fallen asleep; then he appeared to James; then to all the apostles; and last of all, as to the child untimely born, he appeared to me also. For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. . . . Now if Christ be preached that he hath been raised from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, neither hath Christ been raised: and *if Christ hath not been raised, then is our preaching vain, your faith also is vain*. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we witnessed of God that he raised up Christ; whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, neither hath Christ been raised: and *if Christ hath not been raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also that are fallen asleep in Christ have perished*. If we have only hoped in Christ in this life, we are of all men most pitiable. [The Apostle then adds the following positive declaration]: *But now hath Christ been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of them that are asleep*. For since by man

came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead [1 Cor. 15:1-21)]. [He then goes on to present his famous argument for the bodily resurrection of the saints (but in a *spiritual* body, of course) answering the two questions which were being raised by the philosophical speculators in the church at Corinth, How are the dead raised? and with what manner of body do they come? (v. 35)].

This in indeed the "conclusion of the whole matter"; the Apostle leaves nothing more to be said. If Christ was not raised from the dead, then all Christian preaching is vain, and our faith is vain and we are yet in our sins. If Christ was not raised, then the question voiced by Job in an early age of the world, "If a man die, shall he live again?" (Job 14:14), remains unanswered. The Resurrection of Christ is man's only hope; without it, life has no meaning, the universe is futility, and the race is back where it was two thousand years ago floundering in the mire of natural religion and human speculation.

In the third decade of the last century, a great debate was held in Cincinnati, Ohio, between Alexander Campbell, defender of the Christian Religion, and Robert Owen, one of the first "humanists" and communists, whose position, widely heralded over the nation, was that a few simple rules of morality were all that were needed to establish an ideal human society on earth, that religion was not only unnecessary but actually detrimental to man's highest good. Mr. Campbell denied this thesis *in toto*. Owen was among the first of those starry-eyed gentlemen who envisioned the setting up of a Utopia in this world; he had come to the United States from England, and, with certain other persons, had established a typically communistic (free-love and all) colony at New Harmony, Indiana. Incidentally, this colony, as is invariably the case, was short-lived; some of the good sisters had a "falling out," and the other crackpots failed to get along harmoniously; so Utopia disappeared into oblivion in a short time. At any rate, Owen visited Alexander Campbell at the latter's farm home near Bethany, West Virginia, to conclude final arrangements for the forthcoming debate in Cincinnati. In the course of their excursions about the little farm at Bethany, they came one day to the private burying-ground of the Campbell family. Mr. Owen stopped for a moment, and addressing Mr. Campbell, said: "There is one advantage, Mr. Campbell, that I have over you Christians: I am not afraid

to die. Most Christians whom I have known have feared death, but I have no fear of it. I can truthfully say that if certain items of my business were attended to, I should be perfectly willing to die at any time." "Well," replied Mr. Campbell, "possibly so. Possibly it is true, or at least you think it to be true, that you have no fear of death. But after all, is that the point at issue? I should like to ask you this question: Do you have any *hope* in death?" There was a solemn pause,—a long pause, "No," replied Owen, finally, "No, I must confess that I have no hope in death." "Then," rejoined Campbell, pointing to an ox grazing near by, "you are on a level with that brute. He has fed until he is satisfied. Now he is standing there in the shade, whisking off the flies, perfectly contented with the world. Like you, he has no fear of death; neither, like you, has he any hope in death." It is said that Mr. Owen never brought up the subject again. And in the debate that followed, Owen confessing his inability to answer Mr. Campbell's arguments, courteously yielded the floor to the latter, who proceeded to deliver extemporaneously, his long address on the Evidences of Christianity, one of the most exhaustive and unanswerable defenses of revealed religion that is to be found in all Christian literature. After the debate, Owen returned to Europe.

Man's faith, his prayers, his hopes, his ideals and aspirations—all stand or fall with the Resurrection of Christ. In the light of all these facts, it becomes perfectly clear what Jesus meant when He declared that the only *sign* that should be given our age was the sign of Jonah the prophet. That sign was typical; the antitypical sign is the Resurrection of our Lord. This sign is all-sufficient; nothing more is needed; nothing greater or more convincing could be asked for.

3. The Word-Power of God

It becomes necessary, at this point in our study, to consider again the relationship which exists between the Spirit of God and the Word of God. As will be seen, there should be no confusion here, because the teaching of the Scriptures on this subject is uniform throughout and too clear for misunderstanding.