

his attention drawn to the manifest earnestness of the speaker, an earnestness and an air of sincerity which proved him to be a profound believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. As he reflected on this, the question came into his mind, if this plain man, with moderate intellectual powers, has found evidence to so thoroughly convince him of the claims of Jesus, may not the same evidence be within my reach also, and may I not be guilty of a serious neglect in not paying attention to it? The thought took possession of him, and he resolved, that on returning home he would take the New Testament in hand and examine it carefully, to see if it sets forth a case in favor of Jesus of Nazareth, which he as a lawyer, de-

siring to keep up his reputation as such, would undertake to defend in a court of justice. He did so; and he said that before he had gone through the Gospel of Matthew he was forced to exclaim, "The case is a good one." Within a few weeks afterward he was baptized, and the remnant of his life was devoted to the service of God. He is but one of a countless host whose experiences have been in effect the same. How can this be accounted for? It is not true in the same way or to the same extent of any other book in the world. If the spirit of infinite wisdom is its responsible author, then it is easy to see that He who made the human soul and who, therefore, knows all of its secret springs, so guided the construction of this book as to adapt

it to the soul for whose redemption it was intended, adapted it to the conviction and to the spiritual moulding of that soul: but who can suggest another cause of this wondrous fact? It is not in the nature of error, of superstition, or of falsehood, to work changes so beneficent in the characters of men; these are the product of truth alone; and herein is a final and conclusive evidence that the human authors of this sacred volume wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

(Abridged at this point.)

~

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What About Jesus Christ?



dom—is built (vs. 18).

Although absolutely correct, Peter's position was the minority view. It still is, even after nearly 2,000 years. What a tragedy! The sadness of this fact is underscored by the realization that without a proper understanding of Jesus' identity, man is utterly lost (John 8:24). Is Jesus divine? If so, what evidence will establish that fact for modern man?

Laying The Foundation...

Initially, two foundational stones must be laid before one may erect a sound defense concerning Jesus' deity: (1) God's existence must be proven; and, (2) the Bible must be established as His inspired Word.

Regarding His existence, God has left such an overwhelming amount of data in the world that only the fool could reject it (Psalm 14:1). No one will be able to stand before the throne of Judgment and legitimately affirm "I never knew there was a

History is unmistakably clear—as sure as Aristotle, Julius Caesar, and Hitler lived—Jesus Christ lived. Unlike the Greek who is remembered for his logic, the Roman for his empire, or even the German for his insanity, the Jewish-born Jesus is remembered for His death on an old rugged, bloody cross!

On at least one occasion, Jesus asked His friends two searching questions: "Who do men say that

I am?" and "Who do you say that I am?" (Matthew 16:13,15). The first query was met with a variety of answers—all of which were wrong (vs. 14). The second was answered by Peter who, with apparent boldness, retorted: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (vs. 16). This evaluation of the Nazarene was praised then, and will be forever the only acceptable answer. It is upon this truth that the church of Christ—His King-

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God!" (Romans 1:20).

The inspiration of the Scriptures is also strongly supported. The law of cause and effect demands that the Bible be explained. It is such an amazing effect that only God can be its adequate Cause. Its harmony is a powerful witness to its divine origin. Though it was written through the course of 1,600 years of human history, by more than 40 men from differing backgrounds, languages, and locations, the Bible is unerringly harmonious. This fact alone (not to mention the evidence from prophecy and scientific foreknowledge) leads one to conclude that the Bible is from God. Upon the bedrock of these truths (here only briefly outlined), the case for the deity of Christ may be believably built.

Building A Sound Case

To Peter's confession Jesus responded: "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven" (vs. 17). The apostle had deduced his conviction from divine revelation, rather than from the uncertain ideas of men. By examining the testimony of divine revelation (which includes the myriad of fulfilled Old Testament prophecies, and Christ's numerous miracles), men today may also reach the confident conclusion that Jesus is the divine Savior of mankind.

Proof From Prophecy

Unlike most men who have their biographies written after they are dead, much of Jesus' life was reported hundreds of years be-

fore He was born. Over three hundred prophecies relating to the Messiah have been isolated; this number alone is nothing short of astounding. From Genesis to Malachi, the history of Jesus is foretold in minute detail.

Not only are the major facets of His life predicted, but seemingly trivial things (e.g., men would gamble for His clothing--Psalm 22:18) are also foretold. The Messiah had every right to expect the Jews to know Him when He arrived. His specific lineage was exactly as it should have been (Genesis 12:1-3; Galatians 3:16; etc.). He was born where and when He was supposed to be (Micah 5:2; Genesis 49:10). He died—as a brutal sacrifice for the cleansing of mankind's sins—exactly as God had predicted hundreds of years before (cf. Isaiah 53; John 1:29). By the word of prophecy He was even called Jehovah—the special name reserved only for God (cf. Isaiah 40:3; Matthew 3:3). The notions that Jesus either met the prophetic requirements accidentally, or that He was a charlatan who set out to conform to them intentionally, defy all logic. He was all He was predicted to be!

Proof From Miracles

Jesus was a miracle worker. Although God empowered other men to perform miracles, this Man was different. Their works confirmed that they were from God, His works proved He is God (John 10:37,38). Hence, John wrote: "And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written

in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name" (John 20:30,31).

Even the antagonistic Jews understood the meaning of the term "Son of God." Notice their reaction when Jesus referred to God as His Father: "...the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God" (John 5:18). Peter reminded his hearers that Jesus' unique identity had been "attested by God...by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him..." (Acts 2:22).

Unlike the pseudo-miracles of today's world, Jesus performed feats that defied naturalistic explanation. In the presence of many witnesses, the Nazarene raised the dead, gave sight to the blind, made the lame to walk, stilled a turbulent sea, walked upon the water, and on more than one occasion fed thousands starting from but a handful of food.

Proof From The Resurrection

Likely, the most impressive miracle involving Jesus was His resurrection. In agreement with Old Testament prophecy, and just as He promised, the Christ came forth from His rock tomb three days after being crucified (Psalm 16:10; Matthew 12:40; 16:21). His resurrection was witnessed by the soldiers who guarded His tomb—men who had to be bribed to change their story (Matthew 28:11-15). It is a mat-

ter of history that Jesus' tomb was empty on Sunday morning.

If Jesus had not been raised from the dead, how came His guarded and sealed tomb to be empty? For those who reject the resurrection, the vacant tomb will forever stand as eternity's greatest mystery. However, for those who accept the testimony of more than 500 witnesses who saw the resurrected Christ (I Corinthians 15:4-8) there is no mystery at all.

Seeing Jesus living again was irrefutable proof! Little won-

der, then, that when Thomas saw Jesus after His resurrection he exclaimed: "My Lord and my God" (John 20:28).

What About You?

As these and other lines of evidence show, Jesus Christ was far more than just a man of history. He is God Who pre-dates, and will outlast, time itself (Philippians 2:5-11). It is His Word which will meet us in Judgment (John 12:48; II Corinthians 5:10). Have you submitted to His will for your life?

Jesus calls all men to believe in Him (John 3:16). In order to obtain the salvation He died to give you, He calls you to repent and be baptized for the forgiveness of your sins (read Acts 2:38; 22:16; Galatians 3:27; Romans 6:1-4).

Considering all He has done for you, why not give your life to Him? ~

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Inspiration of the Scriptures, Part 4



(Editor's Note: This is the final installation of a transcript of a sermon delivered by J.W. McGarvey before the YMCA of University of Missouri, May 28, 1892. It is such a compelling and closely reasoned piece that the reader is strongly encouraged to obtain the entire article.)

Finally, we cite the inherent power of the New Testament writings to convince men of their own divine origin, and to move them to holy living. That they should possess such power was the expectation of the writers, one of whom expressly declares his purpose in writing to be, that his readers might believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and that believing, they might have life through His name. That there is inherent in them a self-evidencing power, is the testimony of a vast multitude who have been turned by it from unbelief to a triumphant faith; and their power to move in the direction of holy living, is attested by the whole host of the believers in every Christian age and country. I may be per-

mitted to cite as an individual example of this, one of the most eminent men by whom the history of your own State of Missouri has been adorned. All of the older men in the audience remember Gen. A. W. Doniphan, a conspicuous officer in the Mexican war, an eminent lawyer, and for many years the leader of the Whig party in this State. Until he was about sixty years or age he was indifferent to all creeds, and he had never become a believer in Jesus Christ; but while in attendance on the circuit court away from home, he dropped into a church on the Lord's day to hear a sermon. As he stated afterward, in telling the story, there was nothing in the sermon to especially interest him, but he found