

nal and in the group of individuals. Materialists have attempted to build up a system of morality upon the basis of enlightened self-interest. They would have man figure out by mathematics that it pays him to abstain from wrong doing; they even inject an element of selfishness into altruism, but the moral system elaborated by the materialists has several defects. First, its virtues are borrowed from moral systems based upon religion; second, as it rests upon argument rather than upon authority, it does not appeal to the young and by the time the young are able to follow their reason, they have already become set in their ways; and third, one whose morality is based upon a nice calculation of benefits to be secured spends time on mathematics that he should spend in action. Those who keep a book account of their good deeds seldom do enough good to justify keeping books.

Morality is the power of endurance in man; and a religion which teaches personal responsibility to God gives an unyielding strength to morality. There is a powerful restraining influence in the belief that an all-seeing eye scrutinizes every act of the individual.

I passed through a period of skepticism when I was in college; the theories of the scientists concerning the creation confused me. But I examined these theories and found that they all begin with an assumption. The materialist assumes matter and force as pre-existing and he assumes force working on matter and upon these assumptions builds a solar system. I have a right to assume as well as he, and I prefer to assume a Designer back of the design—a Creator back of creation. No matter how long-drawn-out the period of creation, so long as God stands behind it my faith in Jehovah cannot be shaken. In Genesis it is said that God created the heaven and the earth, and I shall stand on that proposition until some one presents a theory that gives a more reasonable beginning.

The miracles also disturbed me and I am inclined to think that the miracle is the test question with the Christian. Christ cannot be separated from the miraculous; His birth, His ministrations, and His resurrection, all involve the miraculous, and the change which His religion works in the human heart is a continuing miracle. Eliminate the miracles and Christ becomes merely a human being and His gospel is stripped of divine authority.

The miracle raises two questions, Can God perform a miracle? and, Would He want to? The first is easy to answer. A God who can make a world can do anything He wants to do with it. The power to perform miracles is necessarily implied in the power to create. But would God want to perform a miracle?—this is the question which has given most of the trouble. The more I have considered it the less inclined I am to answer in the negative. To say that God would not perform a miracle is to assume a more intimate knowledge with God's plans and purposes than I can claim to have. I will not deny that God does perform a miracle or may perform one merely because I do not know how or why He does it. The fact that we are constantly learning of the existence of new forces suggests the possibility that God may operate through forces yet unknown to us, and the mysteries with which we deal every day warn me that faith is as necessary as sight. Who would have credited a century ago the stories that are now told of the wonder working electricity? For ages man had known the lightning, but only to fear it; now, this invisible current is generated by a man-made machine, imprisoned in a man-made wire and made to do the bidding of man. We are even able to dispense with the wire and hurl words through space, and the X-ray has enabled us to look through substances which were supposed, until recently, to exclude all light. The miracle is not more mysterious than many of the things with which man now deals—it is simply different. The immaculate conception is not more mysterious than any other conception—it is simply unlike; nor is the resurrection of Christ more mysterious than the myriad resurrections which mark each annual seed-time.

It is sometimes said that God could not suspend one of His laws without stopping the Universe, but do we not suspend or overcome the law of gravitation every day? Every time we move a foot or lift a weight, we temporarily interfere with the operation of the most universal of natural laws and yet the world is not disturbed.

Science has taught us so many things that we are tempted to conclude that we know everything, but there is really a great unknown which is still unexplored and that which we have learned ought to increase our reverence rather than our egotism. Science has disclosed some of the machinery of the universe, but science has not yet revealed to us the great secret—the secret of life. It is to be found in every blade of grass, in every insect, in every bird and in every animal, as well as in man. Six thousand years of recorded history and yet we know no more about the secret of life than

they knew in the beginning. We live, we plan; we have our hopes, our fears; and yet in a moment a change may come over any one of us and then this body will become a mass of lifeless clay. What is it that, having, we live and, having not, we are as the clod? We know not and yet the progress of the race and the civilization which we now behold are the work of men and women who have not solved the mystery of their own lives.

And our food, must we understand it before we eat it? If we refused to eat anything until we could understand the mystery of its growth, we would die of starvation. But mystery does not bother us in the dining room; it is only in the church that it is an obstacle.

I was eating a piece of watermelon some months ago and was struck with its beauty. I took some of the seed and weighed them, and found that it would require some five thousand seed to weigh a pound. And then I applied mathematics to a forty pound melon. One of these seeds, put into the ground, when warmed by the sun and moistened by the rain goes to work; it gathers from somewhere two hundred thousand times its own weight and, forcing this raw material through a tiny stem, constructs a watermelon. It covers the outside with a coating of green; inside of the green it puts a layer of white, and within the white, a core of red, and all through the red it scatters seeds each one capable of continuing the work of reproduction. I cannot explain the watermelon but I eat it and enjoy it. Everything that grows tells a like story of infinite power. Why should I deny that a divine hand fed a multitude with a few loaves and fishes when I see hundreds of millions fed every year by a hand which converts the seeds scattered over the field into an abundant harvest? We know that food can be multiplied in a few months' time, shall we deny the power of the Creator to eliminate the element of time, when we have gone so far in eliminating the element of space?

Those who question the miracle also question the theory of atonement; they assert that it does not accord with their idea of justice for one to die for others. Let each one bear his own sins and the punishments due for them, they say. The doctrine of vicarious suffering is not a new one; it is as old as the race. That one should suffer for others is one of the most familiar of principles and we see the principle illustrated every day of our lives. Take the family, for instance; from the day the first child is born for twenty-five or thirty years the mother's time is devoted to her offspring, she sacrifices for them, she surrenders herself to them. Is it because she expects them to pay her back? Fortunate for the parent and fortunate for the child if the latter has an opportunity to repay in part the debt it owes. But no child can compensate a parent for a parent's care. In the course of nature the debt is paid, not to the parent, but to the next generation, each generation suffering and sacrificing for the one following.

Nor is this confined to the family. Every step in advance has been made possible by those who have been willing to sacrifice for posterity. Freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of conscience and free government have all been won for the world by those who were willing to make sacrifices for their fellows. So well established is this doctrine that we do not regard any one as great unless he recognizes how unimportant his life is in comparison with the problems with which he is connected.

The seeming paradox: he that saveth his life shall lose it and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it, has an application wider than that usually given to it; it is an epitome of history. Those who live only for themselves live little lives, but those who give themselves for the advancement of things greater than themselves find a larger life than the one surrendered. Wendell Phillips gave expression to the same idea when he said, "How prudently most men sink into nameless graves, while now and then a few forget themselves into immortality."

Instead of being an unnatural plan, the plan of salvation is in perfect harmony with human nature as we understand it. Sacrifice is the language of love and Christ, in suffering for the world, adopted the only means of reaching the heart, and this can be demonstrated, not only by theory but by experience, for the story of His life, His teachings, His sufferings and His death has been translated into every language and everywhere it has touched the heart.

But if I were going to present an argument in favor of the divinity of Christ, I would not begin with miracles or theory of atonement. I would begin as Carnegie Simpson begins in his book entitled, "The Fact of Christ." Commencing with the fact that Christ lived he points out that one cannot contemplate this undisputed fact without feeling that in some way this fact is related to those now living. As he studies the character of Christ he becomes conscious of certain virtues which stand out in bold relief, purity, humility, a

forgiving spirit and unfathomable love. The author is correct. Christ presents an example of purity in thought and life and man conscious of his own imperfections and grieved over his shortcomings finds inspiration in One who was tempted in all points like as we are, and yet without sin. I am not sure but that we can find just here a way of determining whether one possesses the true spirit of a Christian. If he finds in the sinlessness of Christ a stimulus to greater effort and higher living he is indeed a follower; if, on the other hand, he resents the reproof which the purity of Christ offers he is likely to question the divinity of Christ in order to excuse himself for not being a follower.

Humility is a rare virtue. If one is rich he is apt to be proud of his riches; if he has distinguished ancestry, he is apt to be proud of his lineage; if he is well educated, he is apt to be proud of his learning. Some one has suggested that if one becomes humble, he soon becomes proud of his humility. Christ was the very personification of humility.

The most difficult of all the virtues to cultivate is the forgiving spirit. Revenge seems to be natural to the human heart; to want to get even with an enemy is a common sin. It has even been popular to boast of vindictiveness; it was once inscribed on a monument to a hero that he had repaid both friends and enemies more than he had received. This was not the spirit of Christ. He taught forgiveness and in that incomparable prayer which he left as a model for our petitions He measured our forgiveness by our willingness to forgive. He not only taught forgiveness but He exemplified His teachings in His life. When those who persecuted him brought Him to the most disgraceful of all deaths, His spirit of forgiveness rose above His sufferings and He prayed, Father forgive them for they know not what they do.

But love is the foundation of Christ's creed. The world had known love before, parents had loved children and children, parents; husband had loved wife and wife, husband; and friend had loved friend; but Jesus gave a new definition of love. His love was as boundless as the sea; its limits were so far-flung that even an enemy could not travel beyond it. Other teachers sought to regulate the lives of their followers by rule and formula, but Christ's plan was, first to purify the heart and then to leave love to direct the footsteps.

What conclusion is to be drawn from the life, the teachings and the death of this historic figure? Reared in a carpenter shop; with no knowledge of literature, save Bible literature; with no acquaintance with philosophers living or with the writings of sages dead, this young man gathered disciples about Him, promulgated a higher code of morals than the world had ever known before, and proclaimed Himself the Messiah. He taught and performed miracles for a few brief months and then was crucified; His disciples were scattered and many of them put to death; His claims were disputed, His resurrection denied and His followers persecuted and yet from this beginning His religion has spread until millions take His name with reverence upon their lips and thousands have been willing to die rather than surrender the faith which He put into their hearts. How shall we account for Him? What think ye of Christ? It is easier to believe Him divine than to explain in any other way what He said and did and was.

I was thinking a few years ago of the Christmas which was approaching and of Him in whose honor the day is celebrated. I recalled the message, Peace on earth, good will to men, and then my thoughts ran back to the prophecy uttered centuries before His birth, in which He was described as the Prince of Peace. To re-inforce my memory I re-read the prophecy and found immediately following the verse which I had forgotten—a verse which declares that of the increase of His peace and government there shall be no end, for, adds Isaiah, He shall judge His people with justice and with judgment. Thinking of the prophecy I have selected this theme that I may present some of the reasons which lead me to believe that Christ has fully earned the title, The Prince of Peace and that in the years to come it will be more and more applied to Him. Faith in Him brings peace to the heart and His teachings when applied will bring peace between man and man.

All the world is in search of peace; every heart that ever beat has sought peace and many have been the methods employed to find it. Some have thought to purchase it with riches and they have labored to secure wealth, hoping to find peace when they were able to go where they pleased and buy what they liked. Of those who have endeavored to purchase peace with money, the large majority have failed to secure the money. But what has been the experience of those who have been successful in accumulating money? They all tell the same story, viz., that they spent the first half of their lives trying to get money from others and the last half, trying to keep others from getting their money and that they found peace in neither