

# THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST

An Historical Fact

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## INTRODUCTION

LET us begin with the present. The world is not very Christian, or at least there are very many people in the Western countries who are only vaguely Christian; they do not consciously guide their lives by Christian teaching. Yet the whole of the Western world bears traces of an influence that has helped to mould the characters of all peoples living in the West. Even those who consciously renounce all allegiance to Christianity owe much to this influence. Many of their ideals, though often distorted because torn from their framework, they owe to the Christian Church. Traces of the influence of the Church are everywhere manifest, for it has exercised a deep and wide influence on the history of mankind.

In every city, town and village of the Western world, there are buildings of every kind that owe their origin to the Christian Faith. Some are very old or are in ruins: some are recent, and some still in the course of erection. They comprise churches, schools, monasteries, hospitals, laboratories. Those who built them were inspired by motives rooted in their Christian religion. And these are only external evidence. The internal evidences are more impressive.

The regulating of the working week and of the year indicates how deeply was the Christian view of the universe ingrained in the life of the people. The week of seven days and the observance of the Sabbath, though not Christian in origin, got their present form from the Christian Church. The holiday times of Christmas and Easter are Christian. With many, the real meaning is almost totally lost. But the times were chosen, and the meanings attached to them were decided, by the Church, and their observance became universal. The very word holiday meant holy-day. The calendar by which the world regulates national and international affairs is the Gregorian Calendar, the calendar reformed under the authority of Pope Gregory XIII. It was accepted by the world because of the authority of the Christian Church.

The laws by which the Western world lives are shot through and through with evidences of Christian influence. In a recent little book of lectures, *The Changing Law*, Sir Alfred Denning, one of the Lord justices of the Court of Appeals of England, writes: "The common law of England has been moulded for centuries by judges who have been brought up in the Christian Faith. The precepts of religion, consciously or unconsciously, have been their guides in the administration of justice."

Perhaps the best way to realize how vital has been the Christian influence on Western civilization is to consider what would be left if we took away what was due to Christianity. For some centuries now, the governments of countries nominally Christian have relied in practice on "reason alone." The Christian guide to life is "Reason enlightened by Faith."

The achievements of science, divorced in practice from faith, have been great; but Bertrand Russell, in one of his broadcast lectures during his Australian tour, made a significant admission. After praising these achievements, he said: "So far we have not been able to eliminate fear." Is there any reason to believe that science, unenlightened by faith, will ever eliminate fear? Does not the present state of acute world anxiety point in the opposite direction? We all know what the Fascist, the Nazi, the Communist theories of life, which deny the Christian Faith, produce in practice.

Western civilization, of course, does not complete the picture. The Church has been very active in other countries as well. Africa, the Middle East (where the Church began), the Far East, the Pacific Islands, all bear testimony to her influence. But for our present purpose, it is enough to point out how vital and enduring that influence has been in the civilization with which the likely readers of this pamphlet are familiar.

What was the cause or origin of this great movement in the history of mankind? The Church herself has her explanation. Her explanation is that she was founded by an historical figure, Jesus Christ, Who died and rose from the dead. The Church's enemies do not accept this explanation; and, if evidence is produced in support of the Christian explanation, they deny its worth. But they deny it not for historical reasons, but because it contradicts what they have already decided on. They say: "How could such a cock-and-a-bull story about a resurrection have been true? Isn't it easy

to see that once Christianity got under way, these mythical accounts would arise?"

The Christian position is this: "Yes, we realize that what we say is unusual and unexpected, but the fact is that that is what actually happened." Let us examine this explanation and see on what evidence it rests.

### **WHO WAS JESUS CHRIST?**

There was a time when the opponents of Christianity even denied the existence of an historical Christ. But there is no dispute today about some of the facts in the life of Jesus Christ. He lived in Palestine, put himself forward as a teacher, exerted a great influence on the Jewish people, incurred the hostility of the Jewish leaders. He was condemned to death by them, and they forced the hands of the Roman Governor, Pontius Pilate, to put the sentence into execution. He was crucified and taken down for dead, and was buried. That is the account of the four Gospels. It is accepted now by every writer on the subject.

### **DID CHRIST RISE FROM THE DEAD?**

What happened after that? It is here that honest divergence of opinion can arise, until the evidence is sifted and weighed. The evidence of the gospels is that the disciples of Jesus Christ maintained that He arose from the dead but that those who brought about His death denied it. The onus of proof was on the disciples, for, in common human experience, dead men do not come to life again. But denial was not enough to discredit the claim. *The empty tomb had to be explained.*

But before discussing the empty tomb, the first step in arguing the truth of the resurrection is to show that the early Christians did believe it. We began this pamphlet by asking what was the source of the great influence Christianity has exercised on the world. Catholics say that it was the resurrection of Christ. If Christ rose from the dead, is it any wonder that His teaching exerted such an influence and is it any wonder that after 1900 or nearly 2,000 years the movement He began still exerts influence?

But did He rise from the dead? What is the evidence for it? The first point we have to establish is that the early Christians did believe in the resurrection and that it was part of the gospel. If belief in the resurrection was a late development, as some of the deniers of the resurrection allege, then our whole case is worthless. Where are we going to get the evidence? We say that as well as the evidence of tradition we have the evidence of the New Testament. Opponents have denied the validity of the New Testament, and, in the main, their objections take this form: "The New Testament writings describe the resurrection as an actual occurrence, but the resurrection did not take place because it could not, and so the New Testament is inadmissible as trustworthy evidence."

### **Outline of Argument**

In general outline the argument of the informed Catholic is this. The earliest Christian records show that the first Christians always appealed to the resurrection as an important proof of the message they had to give, the Gospel, as they called it. The worth of the New Testament evidence generally is corroborated by a constant tradition and by evidence of pagan authors writing a few decades later. There is no reason to deny the historical worth of the New Testament except for the extraordinary story that is being told, and the writers reveal that they were well aware that they were relating an extraordinary story. Whether the resurrection is believed or not, there is no good reason to doubt the facts they relate in connection with it.

It is manifestly impossible to rebut the arguments of those who impugn the worth of the New Testament as historical documents, if the arguments are based not on the evidence but on hypothesis. Again, if the origins of Christianity are not such as are described in the New Testament, what were its origins? The multitude of contradictory hypotheses that have been put forward to explain its birth and growth, is an indication of the weak case there really is, against the truth of the resurrection.

It is beyond the learning of most of us to assess fully the value of the arguments for and against the worth of the New

Testament. We give, however, an example, found not far from home, of the type of reasoning that is common with those who do not accept the traditional Christian view of the New Testament and the resurrection. It is not beyond the ability of most of us to detect its worthlessness and its dependence on hypothesis and not on evidence {See Appendix Section II (b)}.

### **Early Belief in the Resurrection**

The following references to passages from the New Testament show how close is the association between belief in the resurrection and the kernel of the Gospel. We would point out that the order of appearance of the various books of the New Testament is still a matter of dispute among biblical scholars. However, one need not be a biblical scholar to see that, though it may not be easy to determine the exact order, it is possible to say that one book is earlier or later than another. The evidence is in the books themselves.

The Acts of the Apostles, for example, is later than the gospel of St. Luke, because in the Acts there is a reference to the gospel. So it is easy to see that by piecing together the evidence in the writings themselves, scholars can arrive at some measure of agreement as to what books are early and what late. If then there is reference in an undoubtedly early book to the resurrection, it is evidence that the resurrection was an early belief of the Christian Church. It doesn't matter, however, in what order we examine the New Testament books; in almost every one of them, early or late, there is a reference to the close association between belief in the resurrection and the essence of the Gospel.

### **THE EPISTLES OF ST. PAUL**

In I Thess. 1, 10, written about 51, St. Paul wrote: "You have turned away from idolatry to the worship of God, so as to serve a living God, a God who really exists, and to wait for the appearance of his son from heaven, Jesus, whom he raised from the dead, our Saviour from the vengeance that is to come."

St. Paul wrote his First Epistle to the Corinthians about 55. In the 15<sup>th</sup> chapter, there is a long discussion on the Christian belief in the resurrection of all men from the dead and the resurrection of Christ. (The whole chapter is given in the appendix, Section IV.) Here we point out that this passage is complete proof of

- (1) that the Apostles appealed to the resurrection as proof of the truth of the gospel, and
- (2) that belief in the resurrection was not a late growth.

In the Epistle to the Romans, written about 57, in 1, 4, we read: "marked out miraculously as the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead, our Lord Jesus Christ", and again in 8, 11, "If the spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised up Jesus Christ from the dead will give life to your perishable bodies too, for the sake of his Spirit who dwells in you."

In Ephesians, 1, 20, written about 61, we find: "measure it by that mighty exercise of power which he showed when he raised Christ from the dead and bade him sit on his right hand above the heavens."

In Philippians, 2, 8-9, written also about 61 we read: "he lowered his own dignity, accepted an obedience which brought him to death, death on a cross. That is why God raised him to such a height."

In Colossians, 2, 12, written also about 61, we have: "You, by your baptism, have been united with his burial, united too with his resurrection."

In Hebrews, 13, 20, written about 65, we read: "May God the author of peace, who has raised our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead . . . grant you . . . , to do his will, etc."

In I Peter, 1, 3, written about 67 (or perhaps even earlier), we read, "Blessed be that God, that Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in his mercy has begotten us anew, making hope live in us through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."

### **THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES**

The references we have taken from the Epistles occur in them just as reminders of what the readers already knew. In

the Acts of the Apostles we get accounts of how the Apostles first went about the work of preaching the Gospel. The Acts were written between 62 and 65, and in them St. Luke describes the progress of Christianity from the resurrection onwards. St. Luke has always been found a most accurate historian. His descriptions then of the earliest events in the history of the Church cannot be doubted. In these accounts of the Apostles' "technique" in preaching, we invariably find two arguments,

(1) Christ rose from the dead, and (2) we are witnesses of it.

While the Apostles and disciples were awaiting the coming of the Holy Ghost, they decided to fill the place vacated by Judas. In the discussion, St. Peter said: "There are men who have walked in our company all through the time when the Lord Jesus came and went among us. One of these ought to be added to our number as a witness of his resurrection" (1, 21-22).

On the day of Pentecost, St. Peter preaches to the Jews in Jerusalem; he said: "This Jesus has God raised again, whereof we are witnesses" (2, 32).

He used the same argument to the crowd after the healing of the lame man in the temple, "But the author of life you killed, whom God has raised from the dead, of which we are witnesses" (3, 15).

It was his argument before the Jewish Council, before whom the Apostles were brought. "Be it known to you all and to all the people of Israel that by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God has raised from the dead, even by him this man stands before you whole. . . . We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (4, 10, 20.)

We read in chapter 5 that the Apostles were again thrown into prison, released by an angel and again brought before the Jewish Council. St. Peter and the others replied: "we ought to obey God rather than man. The God of our fathers has raised Jesus whom you put to death, hanging him upon a tree . . . and we are witnesses of these things" (5, 30-32).

### **ST. PAUL IN THE ACTS**

When St. Paul comes on the scene in the book of the Acts, he uses the same argument. In Acts 13 we read how he preached in Pisidian Antioch. In his address he said: "On the third day, God raised him from the dead. He was seen over a space of many days by the men who had come up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem; it is they who now bear witness of him before the people."

When he was preaching in Thessalonica, we read (17, 3): "Over a space of three sabbaths he reasoned with them out of the scriptures, expounding these and bringing proofs from them that the sufferings of Christ and his rising from the dead were foreordained; 'The Christ,' he said, 'is none other than the Jesus whom I am preaching to you'."

When he was in Athens, some of the Athenians thought he was preaching another pair of oriental gods, Jesus and Resurrection, so closely was the resurrection associated with the essence of the gospel. The Athenians on the Areopagus listened interestedly to what he had to say about God and repentance, but when he said (17, 31), "the man whom he has appointed for that end he has accredited to all of us, raising him up from the dead", they declined to hear any more. (The moderns who reject the resurrection as a cock-and-a-bull story, were not the first to reject it on that ground.)

### **THE FOUR GOSPELS**

It is impossible to give excerpts from the Gospels as separate references to the resurrection. The narratives of all four Gospels culminate in a description of the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. They have to be read in their entirety. Without the resurrection, the Gospels lose all point. The specific references to the resurrection in the four Gospels are given in the appendix (see all of Section V).

### **TESTIMONY OF PAGAN AUTHORS**

**IT** is clear that there is a mass of evidence from the New Testament that the resurrection was an integral part of the first preaching of the Gospel. The worth of the New Testament as trustworthy evidence is borne out by the unconscious

testimony of two pagan writers of the early second century, Tacitus and Pliny the younger. We do not quote them as witnesses to the early Christian belief in the resurrection, but as evidence for the worth of the New Testament as recording what happened. As they were pagans we cannot expect their testimony to throw much light on the doctrine of the early Christians. Their testimony is given from the point of view of outsiders, and rather hostile ones. It in no way contradicts but confirms the history of the Church as we learn it from the New Testament. (The extracts are given in full in the Appendix (in Sections I and II).

### **Tacitus**

Tacitus was an historian; Pliny was governor of a Roman province, engaged in the administration of justice. Tacitus's allusion to the Christians is short but it corroborates the New Testament on these points:

1. Christ was put to death by Pontius Pilate.
2. The early Christians were opposed and misrepresented.
3. Christianity spread rapidly.
4. The Christians were put to death for their faith.

Of course Tacitus does not say they were put to death for their faith as such. He says they were killed "not so much for the crime of firing the city as of hatred against mankind." We might remember that Christ said, as reported in Matt. 10, 24-25: "A disciple is no better than his master. . . . If they have cried 'Beelzebul' at the master of the household, they will do it much more readily to the men of his household."

### **Pliny**

Pliny's letter gives more corroboration of the beliefs and history of the early Christians as we know them from the New Testament. It shows:

1. The rapid spread of the faith.
2. The Christian abhorrence of idolatry.
3. The high moral code of the Christians.
4. Their readiness to obey the civil law.
5. The belief in the Eucharist.
6. The existence of a liturgy associated with the celebration of the Eucharist.
7. The belief in the divinity of Christ.

(In the appendix, in Section II (b), in a short commentary on an edition of Pliny's letters, we give an example of the method of dealing with neutral sources used by those who do not accept the Christian tradition).

### **THE PROBLEM OF THE EMPTY TOMB**

All this evidence leaves no doubt that the early Christians believed that Christ rose from the dead and regarded it as an integral part of the Gospel. However, belief that an event occurred is not proof that it did occur. We have so far only succeeded in disposing of the objection to the resurrection that the early Christians did not believe in it, that it was a later growth. We have still to argue that the evidence for the resurrection is overwhelmingly strong.

One other point that has to be emphasized before we begin to argue from the evidence is this. The problem of the empty tomb was urgent from the beginning. It could be argued that while there can be no doubt that from after Pentecost the Christians believed in the resurrection and based their faith on it, that does not dispose of this objection. Between the burial and Pentecost, there was a gap of fifty days; during this time there would be a calm in which the final Christian philosophy, built on a supposed resurrection, took definite shape; but also during this calm the Jewish leaders would have ceased to be very interested in the man from Galilee; once he was executed, there would be no reason to trouble much about his leaderless followers; how could the Jews, after Pentecost, have any positive means of disproving a resurrection — the body or the remains of it were, of course, no longer in the tomb—but could they be expected to know or to explain

what had become of it?

This is only a negative sort of objection and, like an argument from silence, has value only to raise doubts against a positive position. Again, however, the evidence is against it. There is abundant evidence that the problem was urgent from the beginning. There is St. Matthew's account of the Jewish anxiety about the burial and the possibility of deception by Christ's disciples, and the placing of an armed guard, and there is his account of the story they spread to explain the empty tomb, namely, the disciples stole it.

All this fits in with what we know from other sources. That the movement begun by Christ was of sufficient weight to move the Jewish leaders to contrive his death is admitted by all. Is it likely they forgot about it immediately after the crucifixion and they would not have heard rumours of an alleged resurrection, and if they did hear, that they would not have taken some measures to cope with a resurgence of the trouble? There is plenty of evidence that less than two months after the crucifixion, the "trouble" began to stir again. There is the arrest of the Apostles after the cure of the lame man in the temple and the repressive measures which turned into the active persecution with which St. Paul was associated.

And all this fits in with the statement of Tacitus: "Christus, from whom the name had its origin, suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius at the hands of one of our procurators, Pontius Pilate, and a most mischievous superstition, thus checked for the moment, again broke out not only in Judea, the first source of the evil, but even in Rome."

### **The Tomb Was Empty**

The evidence so far, then, leads to this position. Christ was crucified as the leader of a "subversive" movement; he was buried but on the third day the tomb was found empty.

What happened to the body? The Jewish authorities, if they could have produced the body, could have countered the resurrection story by producing it, and they had good reasons for being anxious to counter the story. But there is no evidence that they produced the body. The contemporary evidence is that they said that while the guards were asleep, the disciples came and stole the body; the Christians declared that Christ had risen from the dead.

### **Modern Hypotheses**

Many centuries later, unbelievers put forward a number of hypotheses to explain the empty tomb. One explanation is that Christ was not really dead but in a dead faint, and revived in the tomb. There is, of course, not the slightest evidence for this. The soldier whose duty it was to see that the crucified men were dead, had broken the legs of the thieves, but when he came to Christ he saw that He was already dead; it is unlikely that the thieves had been scourged before crucifixion, as Christ had been. Christ was apparently dead, but to be quite sure he was dead, the soldier ran the body through with a spear. Moreover, this explanation is inadequate to explain how an exit was made from the tomb, how the disciples came to believe in a resurrection, or what did finally happen to the revived Christ.

We are left with two explanations for which there is evidence that they were in circulation at the time, the Jews' explanation that the disciples stole the body and the Christian explanation that Christ rose from the dead.

### **Jewish Leaders' Explanation**

We examine the first explanation. It is the only explanation that can be entertained, if the resurrection is denied. This explanation assumes that the disciples were somehow inferior men, that is, lacking in intelligence or moral worth or both. There is no evidence that they were. The evidence is that they were plain, average men, and seemingly, of no high secondary education. But plain, average men are not, on that account, odd or inferior men; they can be very wise men. Learned men can be very inferior men. The French king called James I of England, "the most learned fool in Christendom", and history seems to think him right. On the other hand uneducated men can be both fools and rogues. As average men, the disciples could have been rogues or fools, but, we repeat, there is no evidence that they were. The evidence is all the other way.

### **The Disciples Rogues?**

If they stole the body the disciples must have been rogues or fools. If they were more fools than rogues, they might have thought that by stealing the body they could somehow carry on the work of Christ, whatever it was they thought it to be. This is a more plausible suggestion than that they were rogues. We will examine it shortly. But what, if they were more rogues than fools? If they were, they might have thought that they could derive some material gain, economic or political, from the fraud. There is evidence that some of them, some time before the crucifixion, had their eyes on political benefits from the gospel of the kingdom. But the view that it actuated them in stealing the body cannot be entertained for long. The history of the early church, as given in the New Testament (corroborated, as we have seen, by pagan authors), shows that after the Ascension, all the disciples considered the mission of Christ to have been a purely spiritual one. Granted that they stole the body with some idea of perpetrating a fraud and, human nature being what it is, they would not have persevered for long in a fraud which they expected would yield material gain but was resulting in persecution and death.

### **The Disciples Fanatics?**

There is, then, the view that the disciples were deluded fools or fanatics of some sort. As is well known, fanaticism can spur men on to extremes of heroism, however irrational or deluded. But heroism is not of its nature fanatical. All men revere the brave man who knows the danger and perseveres in the course he has set himself. He is always ready to “listen to reason,” but until he sees reasonable cause for a change, he will continue on his course. The fanatic sees that in life there is no escaping hardship and the risk of death; he adopts a fatalistic attitude and is deaf to every argument. The brave man is resolved because he has examined the situation honestly; the fanatic acts on impulse. Now there is no evidence that the disciples were fanatics, but there is strong evidence that they acted as normal honest men would act; they were moved by the evidence before them. Their argument always was: “We have seen it.”

The Gospel narratives make it clear that the Apostles were normal men. They were originally rather worldly-minded; they found it hard to understand the mystery of the kingdom; they were somewhat cowardly, or better, as yet unused to overcoming fear. Peter was like the most of us—“big talk,” when the danger is remote, but inclined to yield when it is imminent. After the crucifixion, they were in a state of confusion; they forgot about the prediction of Christ that He would rise again. When the announcement of the resurrection was first made, they were disinclined to believe. One of them, Thomas, was a thorough sceptic—“Until I have seen the mark of the nails in His hands, until I have put my finger into the mark of the nails, and put my hand into His side, you will never make me believe.” But eventually they were all convinced, and it was the evidence that convinced them—“We have seen it.”

## **CONVINCING OTHERS**

In these our days, amongst people who have somewhat lost their grip of the Christian tradition, there is a tendency to adopt a non-committal attitude to these arguments. They cannot but see their cogency, but still they hang back. It is not a new tendency; it was the tendency of the men with whom the apostles had to deal; it had been their own tendency. The Apostles’ method of approach to their contemporaries is itself proof that they were not fanatics. They knew that what they were preaching was something that their hearers regarded as extraordinary; they themselves had felt the full weight of the objections against their preaching; they had considered the implications of the doctrine so far as it would affect themselves, but the evidence was compelling. This comes out very clearly in the 15<sup>th</sup> chapter of St. Paul’s First Epistle to the Corinthians. (Read it for yourself in your Bible or in the appendix, (at Section IV) bearing the following points in mind.)

## **ST. PAUL DISCUSSES THE RESURRECTION**

St. Paul is answering enquiries from the Corinthians on points of doctrine. Some of the Corinthians were inclined to

deny the teaching of Christ on the resurrection of the body, somewhat in the style of many people today, who claim to be Christians but choose or reject at will various elements of the Christian Revelation. St. Paul writes to explain further the doctrine and appeals to the resurrection of Christ. First of all, he reminds them of the main Christian teaching: “The chief message I handed on to you as it was handed on to me, was that Christ, as the Scriptures had foretold, died for our sins, that he was buried, and then, as the Scriptures had foretold, rose again on the third day.” (verses 3 & 4) He then tells them that He was seen after His resurrection on a number of occasions by different individuals and groups of disciples.

He then argues: If you say there is no resurrection from the dead, then Christ could not have risen. If He has not risen, then the whole of your faith is useless. And we—this is a most important point—are shown to be guilty of having given false testimony against God. We have testified that God raised Christ from the dead, and this could not be true if there is no resurrection from the dead. Manifestly Paul was very conscious of the necessity of loyalty to truth; no “pious fraud,” no wishful thinking for him. He goes on to emphasize that if there is no resurrection, then the rest of their faith is vain, those who died in the faith are lost, and Christians are the unhappiest of people, for they lose in this world and their hope for the next is a delusion. But the fact is—Christ did rise from the dead, and just as surely as He rose to a life of glory, so also will those who belong to Him.

Later on in the chapter, St. Paul stresses the fact that he has to undergo much hardship and persecution for the gospel. What use is it, if the dead do not rise. Better to follow the advice, “Eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.” (verse 32)

There is no trace of the fanatic or deluded fool in all this. St. Paul squarely faces the issues raised by the mystery of life. Men are animals with animal desires; they have also an intellectual and moral life. The two lives are often at variance. Which is the more important? Men have always agreed that any lie or deceit in the soul is treason, and fatal to the well-being of the whole man. St. Paul knows this well, and it could not be that he or the other Apostles—St. Paul expressly identifies himself with the others (15, 11)—were party to a plot to foist some superstitious doctrine on the world on the basis of a faked resurrection.

### **SUMMING UP**

In brief, the historical case for the resurrection is this. Christ died and was buried. No one doubts this now. The evidence of the New Testament, backed by a constant church tradition, is that from the beginning, the Christians said He rose from the dead and that they appealed to the resurrection as proof of the gospel they preached.

The New Testament also shows that the Apostles were honest men of strong common sense, who had been convinced by the evidence, and like brave men, were prepared to die for a doctrine that their love of truth had led them to accept. The reliability of the New Testament as truthful documents is attested by the evidence of pagan authors, so far as the pagan authors touched upon the matter. Those who impugn the veracity of the New Testament build more upon hypothesis than on evidence.

Those of our readers who wonder whether the modern critics of the New Testament or the upholders of the orthodox Christian tradition are the more worthy of trust have to decide for themselves, from their personal knowledge of each, which they will choose to trust. We give in the Appendix some considerations they can ponder over. (Especially in Sections II (b) and III.)

Finally, the resurrection of Christ, if true, will explain the undeniable fact of the profound influence of the Christian Church in the history of the world; if not true, how is that influence to be explained? Whatever we think about it, Christ either rose or did not rise. There is the evidence that He did rise; we reject it at our peril. The traditional Christian teaching has been that once we believe in the resurrection—and we will believe it, given honesty of intention—the universe ceases to be unintelligible.

### **APPENDIX I**

#### **From the Annals of Tacitus (xv, 44)**

Tacitus has been recording the great fire of Rome in A.D. 64, and telling of the means taken by Nero to repair the

material damage, and of the religious rites performed to propitiate the pagan gods. He continues:

”But all human efforts, all the lavish gifts of the emperor, and the propitiations of the gods, did not banish the sinister belief that the conflagration was the result of an order” (i.e., of Nero), “consequently, to get rid of the report, Nero fastened the guilt and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class hated for their abominations, called Christians by the populace. Christus, from whom the name had its origin, suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius at the hands of one of our procurators, Pontius Pilate, and a most mischievous superstition, thus checked for the moment, again broke out not only in Judea, the first source of the evil, but even in Rome, where all things hideous and shameful from every part of the world find their centre and become popular. Accordingly, an arrest was first made of those who pleaded guilty; then, upon their information, an immense multitude was convicted, not so much of the crime of firing the city, as of hatred against mankind. Mockery of every sort was added to their deaths. Covered with the skins of beasts, they were torn by dogs and perished, or were nailed to crosses, or were doomed to the flames and burnt, to serve as a nightly illumination, when daylight had expired.”

”Nero offered his gardens for the spectacle, and was exhibiting a show in the circus, while he mingled with the people in the dress of a charioteer or stood aloft on a car [chariot]. Hence even for criminals who deserved extreme and exemplary punishment, there arose a feeling of compassion; for it was not, as it seemed, for the public good, but to glut one man’s cruelty that they were being destroyed.”

## II A

### From the Letters of Pliny the Younger (Traj. 96)

Pliny was a contemporary of Tacitus, He was appointed Governor of Bithynia by the Emperor Trajan in 111 or 112. He was a literary man and, in writing his letters, even official ones to the emperor, he had his eye on future publication. He was in Bithynia for a year and died soon after his return to Rome, probably in 114, aged 52.

”It is my custom, sir, to refer to you all matters in which I am doubtful. For who can better guide my indecision or instruct my ignorance.

”I have never been present at the investigations concerning Christians. And so I do not know what is the usual object and extent of either punishment or enquiry. And I have wondered not a little whether there should be any distinction made between ages or whether the very tender are to differ in no way from the stronger; should pardon be given on repentance or is it of no avail for one who was completely a Christian to cease to be one; should the very name be punished, if it is not associated with evil deeds, or is it evil deeds going with the name that are to be punished. Meanwhile, in the case of those who have been reported to me as Christians, this is the procedure I have followed.

”I asked them themselves if they were Christians. Those who confessed I questioned a second and a third time, threatening punishment. Those who persisted I ordered to be led to execution. For I had no doubt that, whatever might be the nature of their belief, pertinacity and inflexible obstinacy should certainly be punished. There were others of similar madness, who since they were Roman citizens, I have entered up for transfer to the city (Rome).

”Before long, merely as a result of the matter being dealt with,—as usually happens—the accusation became more common and more varieties of it appeared. A list was handed in bearing no signature and containing the names of many.

”Those who denied that they were or had been Christians, after they had invoked the gods in my presence and had made supplication with incense and wine before your image, which for this purpose I had ordered to be brought in together with the statues of the divinities, and they had moreover reviled Christ—none of which things, it is said, can they be forced to do who are in real truth Christians,—I decided to have dismissed. Others named by the informer, said they were Christians and soon denied it; they had been indeed, but had ceased to be, some three years since, some a greater number of years since, a few even twenty years since. All of these venerated your image and the statues of the gods, and reviled Christ.”

They declared, however, that this was the sum-total of their fault or error: they were accustomed on a given day to assemble before daylight and recite together in alternating verses (*secum invicem dicere*) a hymn to Christ as to a god

(*quasi deo*), and to bind themselves by a sacrament,—not to some wicked enterprise—but not to commit thefts or robberies or adulteries, not to break their solemn word, not to refuse to return a loan when called upon; when these rites were over, the custom was to depart and to meet again to take food, but food that was common and harmless (*promiscuum et innoxium*). But this they had ceased to do after my edict, whereby, following your commands, I had banned the existence of clubs. For this reason I believed it all the more necessary to find out, even under torture, what was the truth of the matter from two maidservants, who were called deaconesses. I found nothing but a superstition, depraved and unrestrained.

”Accordingly, I have postponed the enquiry and have hastened to consult you. For the matter seemed to me worthy of consultation, especially in view of the number of those in danger. For many of every age, of every rank, of both sexes too, are being called into danger and will be called. This contagious superstition has permeated not only the cities but even the villages and the country districts; and yet it seems it can be halted and corrected. Certainly it is pretty well agreed that the temples, which up to the present have been almost deserted, have now begun to be frequented, and the accustomed sacrifices, for a long time discontinued, have been resumed, and fodder for the victims is being sold, for which up till now a buyer was rarely found. From this it is easy to conjecture what a multitude of people can be reformed if there be room for repentance.”

## II B

### Note on Pliny’s Letter \*

In the edition of Pliny’s letters still in use at the Melbourne University [in 1955], there is to be found an instance of how untrustworthy is modern learning, when there is question of Christian teaching, and how hypothesis usurps the place of an honest examination of the evidence. The edition is a selection of the letters, edited with notes by Prichard and Bernard, printed at the Clarendon Press and first published in 1872.

Among the notes to the letter we have just given, there is this one: “QUASI DEO; these words are evidently thrown in by Pliny and must not be regarded as evidence of the belief of the church at that time in the Divinity of Christ.” There are two questions to be considered:

- (i) What truth there is in the note,
- (ii) Why was it included.

It is said that the words *quasi deo* are “evidently thrown in.” But there is no ground in the text for saying so. The evidence is that they were not “thrown in,” but carefully chosen. Pliny was manifestly trying to give a just account of the situation in Bithynia. He was handing on information he had acquired after careful examination. The natural reading of his words is that the Christians had told him that they worshipped Christ as God. If they did say that, and there is abundant evidence from the New Testament that they did regard him as God, how else could Pliny have put it? Less naturally the words could be understood to mean that Pliny was putting his interpretation on what the Christians told him. The words are not “*evidently thrown in.*” But even on that reading of the words, the passage is evidence that the Christians believed in the divinity of Christ. There must have been something in what the Christians told him of their worship of Christ that would cause the fair-minded Pliny to describe it as rendered to Christ “as to a god.”

Pliny, of course, didn’t believe that Christ was divine but his information came from the Christians; it is impossible to imagine what they could have told him except on the basis that they believed Christ was divine. We must also remember that the charge against the Christians was not crime but the very profession of Christianity. It was a question of ultimate loyalty, Caesar or Christ? The old Roman Republic had ended. It is now the will of Caesar that gives authority to law. The divinity of the emperor was worshipped throughout the Empire,—hence his image at the trial of the Christians. It is manifest that Pliny had chosen his words carefully; the Christians “evidently” had told him they worshipped Christ as God; if they worshipped the emperor and reviled Christ, they could go free.

Now why was the note put in? It is most emphatic; it is directed to correcting the impression gained from the natural reading; it has no foundation in the text and it is not necessary for an understanding of grammar or syntax. The answer, we are sure, is to be had from recalling the date of the first edition of the book. It was in 1872. The higher criticism of the

Bible was then in full swing. In 1835 David Strauss had published a book in which he popularized the view that whatever was extraordinary in the Gospels was myth. This view, with varying modifications, was put forward by a number of subsequent writers, and in 1883 Ernest Renan published his *Life of Christ*. In these books the traditional Christian doctrines were knocked over one after another. There has been a reversal of this attitude in more recent times, but in 1872 the view of the higher critics would have been very strong. One doctrine early attacked and denied was the early Christian belief in the divinity of Christ.

### III

#### **The Attitude of Sir William Ramsay**

The following extract from a recent Scripture commentator, C. S. Dessain, will be helpful to assessing the value of the higher criticism of the New Testament. "The extraordinary accuracy of St. Luke has also been demonstrated by the recent discoveries of archaeology. The story of the 'conversion' of Sir William Ramsay, who had been brought up to regard Acts as a second century forgery, is well known, and the archaeological evidence can be found in his books. 'Every incident described in the Acts is just what might be expected in ancient surroundings. The officials with whom Paul and his companions were brought into contact are those who would be there. Every person is found just where he ought to be; proconsuls in senatorial provinces, Asiarchs in Ephesus, stregoi in Philippi, politarchs in Thessalonica, magicians and soothsayers everywhere. . . . The magistrates take action against them in a strictly managed Roman colony like Pisidian Antioch or Philippi, where legality and order reigned; riotous crowds try to take the law into their own hands in the less strictly governed Hellenistic cities like Iconium and Ephesus and Thessalonica.' (*The Bearing of Recent Discovery on the Trustworthiness of the New Testament* (1915), 96.")

### IV

#### **From First Epistle to Corinthians (Chap. 15.)**

Here, brethren, is an account of the gospel I preached to you. It was this that was handed on to you; upon this your faith rests; through this (if you keep in mind the tenor of its preaching) you are in the way of salvation; unless, indeed, your belief was ill-founded. The chief message I handed on to you, as it was handed on to me, was that Christ, as the scriptures had foretold, died for our sins, that he was buried, and then, as the scriptures had foretold, rose again on the third day. That He was seen by Cephas, then by the eleven Apostles, and afterwards by more than five hundred of the brethren at once, most of whom are alive at this day, though some have gone to their rest. Then he was seen by James, then by all the Apostles; and last of all, I, too, saw him, like the last child, that comes to birth unexpectedly. Of all the Apostles, I am the least; nay, I am not fit to be called an apostle, since there was a time when I persecuted the church of God; only by God's grace, I am what I am, and the grace he has shown me has not been without fruit; I have worked harder than all of them, or rather, it was not I, but the grace of God working with me. That is our preaching, mine or theirs as you will; that is the faith which has come to you.

If what we preach about Christ, then, is that He rose from the dead, how is it that some of you say the dead do not rise again? If the dead do not rise, then Christ has not risen either; and if Christ has not risen, then our preaching is groundless, and your faith, too, is groundless. Worse still, we are convicted of giving false testimony about God; we bore God witness that he had raised Christ up from the dead, and he has not raised him up, if it is true that the dead do not rise again. If the dead, I say, do not rise, then Christ has not risen either; and if Christ has not risen all your faith is a delusion; you are back in your sins. It follows, too, that those who have gone to rest in Christ have been lost. If the hope we have learned to repose in Christ belongs to this world only, then we are unhappy beyond all men. But no, Christ has risen from the dead, the first fruits of all those who have fallen asleep; a man had brought us death, and a man should bring us resurrection from the dead; just as all have died with Adam, so with Christ all will be brought to life. But each must rise in his own rank; Christ is the first-fruits, and after him follow those who belong to him, those who have put their trust in his return. Full completion comes after that, when he places his kingship in the hands of God, his Father, having first

dispossessed every other sort of rule, authority, and power; his reign, as we know, must continue until he has put all his enemies under his feet, and the last of these enemies to be dispossessed is death. God has put all things in subjection under his feet; that is, all things have been made subject to him, except, indeed, that power which made them his subjects. And when that subjection is complete, then the Son himself will become subject to the power which made all things his subjects, so that God may be all in all.

Tell me, what can be the use of being baptized for the dead, if the dead do not rise again? Why should anyone be baptized for them? Why do we, for that matter, face peril hour after hour? I swear to you, brethren, by all the pride I take in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ, that death is daily at my side. When I fought against beasts at Ephesus with all my strength, of what use was it, if the dead do not rise again? Let us eat and drink, since we must die tomorrow. Do not be led into such errors; bad company, they say, can corrupt noble minds. Come back to your senses, like right-minded men, and sin no longer; there are some, I say it to your shame, who lack the knowledge of God.

## V

### From the Four Gospels

*The following are the references to the resurrection from the four Gospels, as presented by Archbishop Alban Goodier, S.J., in his book, "The Risen Jesus" (Burns, Oates, 1943). [The Scripture translation here is a slightly amended version of the Douay-Rheims New Testament.]*

## V (a)

### THE EMPTY TOMB

And when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalen and the other Mary, the mother of James and Salome, bought sweet spices that coming they might anoint Jesus. And on the first day of the week, very early in the morning when it was yet dark and when it began to dawn, they came to see the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared. And the sun being now risen they said one to another: 'Who shall roll us back the stone from the door of the sepulchre.' And behold there was a great earthquake and looking, they saw the stone rolled back, taken away from the sepulchre. For an angel of the Lord descended from Heaven and coming rolled back the stone for it was very great, and sat upon it. And his countenance was as lightning and his raiment as snow. And for fear of him the guards were struck with terror and became as dead men.

And the angel answering said to the woman: 'Fear not you for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here for he is risen as he said. Come and see the place where the Lord was laid.'

And entering into the sepulchre they found not the body of the Lord Jesus. And they saw a young man sitting on the right side clothed with a white robe. And it came to pass as they were astonished in their mind at this behold two men stood by them in shining apparel.

And as they were afraid, and bowed down their countenance towards the ground, they said to them: 'Be not affrighted. Why seek you the living with the dead. You seek Jesus of Nazareth Who was crucified. He is not here, but is risen. Behold the place where they laid him. Remember how he spoke unto you when he was yet in Galilee, saying the Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and the third day rise again. But going quickly, you all tell his disciples and Peter that he is risen. And behold he will go before you into Galilee. There you shall see him as he told you. Lo I have foretold it to you.'

And they remembered his words.

Matthew 28, 1-7; Mark 16, 1-7; Luke 24, 1-8; John 20, 1.

## V (b)

### THE FIRST APPARITION

But they going out quickly, Fled from the sepulchre with fear and great joy, for a great trembling and fear had seized

them. And they said nothing to any man, for they were afraid.

(Mary Magdalen ran therefore and comes to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved and says to them: ‘They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre and we know not where they have laid him.’)

And behold Jesus met them saying: ‘All hail.’

But they came up and took hold of his feet and adored him. Then Jesus said to them: ‘Fear not. Go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee. There they shall see me.’

Matthew 28, 8-10; Mark 16, 8; Luke 24, 9, 10; John 20, 2.

#### **V (c)**

#### **THE FIRST WITNESS**

And going back from the sepulchre they told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. And it was Mary Magdalen, and Joanna, and Mary of James, and the other women that were with them who told these things to the apostles. And these words seemed to them as idle tales and they did not believe them.

Luke 24, 9-11.

#### **V (d)**

#### **PETER AND JOHN**

But Peter rising up went out and ran to the sepulchre, and that other disciple. And they came to the sepulchre. And they both ran together and that other disciple did outrun Peter and came first to the sepulchre. And when he stooped down, he saw the linen cloths lying, but yet he went not in. Then comes Simon Peter following him, and stooping down he saw the linen cloths laid by themselves, and went into the sepulchre. And saw the linen cloths lying and the napkin that had been about his head not lying with the linen cloths, but apart, wrapped up into one place. Then that other disciple also went in who came first to the sepulchre. And he saw and believed. For as yet they knew not the scripture that he must rise again from the dead. The disciples therefore departed again to their home. And Peter went away wondering in himself at that which was come to pass.

Luke 24, 12; John 20, 3-10.

#### **V (e)**

#### **MARY MAGDALEN**

But he rising early the first day of the week appeared first to Mary Magdalen, out of whom he had cast seven devils. Mary stood at the sepulchre without, weeping. Now, as she was weeping, she stooped down and looked into the sepulchre and she saw two angels in white, sitting one at the head and one at the feet where the body of Jesus had been laid.

They say to her: ‘Woman, why weep you?’

She says to them: ‘Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.’ When she had thus said she turned herself back and saw Jesus standing, and she knew not that it was Jesus.

Jesus says to her: ‘Woman, why weep you? Whom seek you?’

She, thinking that it was the gardener, said to him: ‘Sir, if you have taken him hence tell me where you has laid him and I will take him away.’

Jesus says to her: ‘Mary’.

She, turning, says to him: ‘Rabboni.’ (Which is to say: ‘Master.’)

Jesus says to her: ‘Do not touch me for I am not yet ascended to my Father. But go to my brethren and say to them I ascend to my Father and to your Father, to my God and your God.’

Mary Magdalen comes and tells the disciples that had been with him, who were mourning and weeping. ‘I have seen the Lord, and these things he said to me.’ And they, hearing that he was alive and had been seen by her, did not believe.

Mark 16, 9-11; John 20, 11-18.

## V (f)

### THE DISCIPLES AT EMMAUS

And behold, after that, he appeared in another shape to two of them walking that same day as they were going into the country to a town which was sixty furlongs from Jerusalem named Emmaus. And they talked together of all these things which had happened. And it came to pass that while they talked and reasoned with themselves, Jesus himself also drawing near went with them, but their eyes were held that they should not know him.

And he said to them: 'What are these discourses that you hold with one another as you walk and are sad.'

And the one of them answering whose name was Cleophas said to him: 'Are you only a stranger in Jerusalem and have not known the things that have been done there in these days?'

To whom he said: 'What things?'

And they said: 'Concerning Jesus of Nazareth who was a prophet, mighty in work and word before God and all the people. And how our chief priests and princes delivered him to be condemned to death and crucified him. But we hoped that it was he that should have redeemed Israel. And now besides all this, today is the third day since these things were done. Yea, and certain women also of our company affrighted us, who, before it was light were at the sepulchre, and, not finding his body, came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who say that he is alive. And some of our people went to the sepulchre and found it so, as the women said, but him they found not.'

Then he said to them: 'O foolish and slow of heart to believe in all things which the prophets have spoken. Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and so to enter into his glory.'

And beginning at Moses and all the prophets he expounded to them in all the scriptures the things that were concerning him. And they drew nigh unto the town whither they were going, and he made as though he would go farther.

But they constrained him saying: 'Stay with us, because it is towards evening and the day is now far spent'. And he went in with them. And it came to pass, whilst he was at table with them, he took bread, and blessed, and broke, and gave to them.

And their eyes were opened and they knew him. And he vanished out of their sight.

And they said to one another, 'Was not our heart burning within us whilst he spoke in the way, and opened to us the scriptures.'

And rising up the same hour they went back to Jerusalem and they found the eleven gathered together and those that were with them saying, 'the Lord is risen indeed and has appeared to Simon.' And they told what things were done in the way and how they knew him in the breaking of bread. And they, going, told it to the rest; neither did they believe them.

Mark 16, 12, 13; Luke 24, 13-35.

## V (g)

### FIRST APPEARANCE TO THE APOSTLES

Now when it was late that same day, the first of the week, and the doors were shut where the disciples were gathered together for fear of the Jews, whilst they were speaking of these things, at length Jesus appeared to the eleven as they were at table, and came and stood in the midst of them. And he upbraided them with their incredulity and hardness of heart because they would not believe them who had seen him after he was risen again.

And he said to them: 'Peace be to you. It is I. Fear Not.'

But they, being troubled and frightened, supposed that they saw a spirit. And he said to them: 'Why are you troubled and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? See my hands and feet. That it is I, myself, handle and see, for a spirit has not flesh and bones as you see me to have.'

And when he had said this he showed them his hands and feet and his side. But while yet they believe not and wondered for joy, he said: 'Have you here anything to eat?'

And they offered him a piece of broiled fish and a honey-comb. And when he had eaten before them, taking the

remains, he gave to them. The disciples therefore were glad when they saw the Lord.

He said therefore to them again: 'Peace be to you. As the Father has sent me, I also send you.'

When he had said this, he breathed on them and he said to them: 'Receive all you the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained.'

Mark 16, 14; Luke 24, 36-43; John 20, 19-23.

## V (h)

### THE APPARITION TO THOMAS

Now Thomas, one of the twelve, who is called Didymus [the Twin], was not with them when Jesus came.

The other disciples therefore said to him: 'We have seen the Lord.'

But he said to them: 'Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.'

And after eight days, again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them. Jesus comes, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst and said: 'Peace be to you.'

Then he said to Thomas: 'Put in your finger hither and see my hands and bring hither your hand and put it into my side, and be not faithless but believing.'

Thomas answered and said to him: 'My Lord and my God.'

Jesus says to him: 'Because you have seen me, Thomas, you have believed. Blessed are they that have not seen and have believed.'

John 20, 24-29.

## V (i)

### BY THE SEA OF TIBERIAS

After this Jesus showed himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias. And he showed himself after this manner. There were together Simon Peter and Thomas, who is called Didymus, and Nathaniel, who was of Cana of Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples.

Simon Peter says to them: 'I go a-fishing.' They say to him: 'We also come with you.' And they went forth and entered into the ship. And that night they caught nothing. But when the morning was come, Jesus stood on the shore, yet the disciples knew not that it was Jesus.

Jesus therefore said to them: 'Children, have you any meat?'

They answered him: 'No.'

He says to them: 'Cast the net on the right side of the ship and you shall find.'

They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes.

That disciple therefore, whom Jesus loved, said to Peter: 'It is the Lord.' Simon Peter, when he heard that it was the Lord, girt his coat about him, for he was practically naked, and cast himself into the sea. But the other disciples came in the ship, for they were not far from the land, but as it were two hundred cubits, dragging the net with fishes.

As soon, then, as they came to land, they saw hot coals lying and fish laid thereon, and bread. Jesus says to them: 'Bring hither of the fishes which you have now caught.'

Simon Peter went up and drew the net to land, full of great fishes, one hundred and fifty-three, and although there were so many the net was not broken.

Jesus says to them: 'Come and dine.'

And none of them who were at meat dared ask him: 'Who are you?' knowing that it was the Lord. And Jesus comes and takes bread and gives them, and fish in like manner. This is now the third time that Jesus was manifested to his disciples after he was risen from the dead.

When, therefore, they had dined, Jesus said to Simon Peter: 'Simon, son of John, love you me more than these?'

He says to him: 'Yea, Lord, you know that I love you.'

He said to him: 'Feed my lambs.'

He says to him again: 'Simon, son of John, love you me?'

He says to him: 'Yea, Lord, you know that I love you.'

He says to him: 'Look after my lambs.'

He says to him the third time: 'Simon, son of John, love you me?'

Peter was grieved because he had said to him the third time: 'Love you me?'

And he said to him: 'Lord, you know all things—you know that I love you.'

He said to him: 'Feed my sheep. Amen, amen, I say to you, when you were younger you did gird yourself and did walk where you would. But when you shall be old, you shall stretch forth your hands and another shall gird you and lead you whither you would not.'

And this he said, signifying by what death he should glorify God.

And when he had said this, he says to him: 'Follow me.'

Peter, turning about, saw that disciple whom Jesus loved, following, who also leaned on his breast at supper, and said: 'Lord, who is he that shall betray you?'

Him, therefore, when Peter had seen, he says to Jesus: 'Lord, and what shall this man do?'

Jesus says to him: 'So if I will have him to remain till I come, what is it to you? Follow you me.'

This saying therefore went abroad among the brethren that that disciple should not die, yet Jesus did not say to him: 'He should not die', but, 'So if I will have him to remain till I come, what is it to you?'

This is that disciple who gives testimony of these things and has written these things and we know that his testimony is true.

John 21, 1-24.

## V(j)

### ON THE MOUNT OF GALILEE

And the eleven disciples went into Galilee, unto the mountain where Jesus had appointed them. And seeing him, they adored, but some doubted.

And Jesus, coming, spoke to them saying: 'All power is given to me in heaven and in earth. Going therefore, into the whole world, preach the gospel to every creature. And, all you, teach all nations, baptizing them, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. He that believes and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believes not shall be condemned. And these signs shall follow them that believe,—In my name, they will cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay their hands upon the sick, and they shall recover. And, behold, I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world.

Matthew, 28, 16-20; Mark 16, 15-18.

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