

ARTICLE VII.

THE THEOLOGY OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL A
GUARANTEE FOR ITS GENUINENESS.

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ONE of the most remarkable features of twentieth-century thought is its inconsistency. Especially in theological literature is this characteristic found. If there be one principle in which the prominent theological writers of the day are agreed, it is in their condemnation of dogma. And yet their writings are full of hardly anything else. The Old Testament critic builds his whole system on dogma. This passage is corrupt, that is unintelligible. This belongs to "JE," that to "P," the other to the Deuteronomist or one of his disciples. This book has undergone "revision," that is of later date. On these points "all critics are agreed."

The New Testament critic follows on the same lines. A particular passage in the Synoptic Gospels must be rejected because it conflicts with the rest. St. Luke's report of the Sermon on the Mount must be set aside because it is socialistic, and is inconsistent with the anti-socialistic principles inculcated by St. Matthew and St. Mark. No proof is vouchsafed for assertions of this kind. We are required to believe them on the personal authority of the critic, and it alone. It is not to the point that this view of the case has been confuted in anticipation by hundreds of writers. In an enlightened age like the present such antiquated whimsies do not count.

There is no need to confute them. It is quite sufficient to mention them with a smile which borders on a sneer. "*We* are the men, and wisdom will die with us." Revealed religion has been accustomed to give evidence for its claims on the allegiance of mankind. The majestic personality of the critic, it is to be supposed, speaks for itself.

This spirit of dogmatism seems to reach its climax when we deal with what has now come universally to be called the "Fourth Gospel." Of course no scholar in the present age of "research" and unprecedented skill in critical methods could possibly be so absurd as to imagine that this Gospel was written by St. John. Still less, if possible, can any reasonable person believe that its "dogmatic" teaching has any title to be represented as that of our Lord Jesus Christ. The modern "theologian" and "critic" may dogmatize in this fashion as much as he pleases. He has — or *thinks* he has — earned the right to do so. But though *he* may dogmatize to his heart's content, no one else must presume to imitate him. If Moses, or Isaiah, or our Lord Jesus Christ, or St. Paul, or St. John dares to put forth "dogma" on his own authority, let it be anathema. The only person who has a right to do this is he who enunciates the incontrovertible and irreversible principles of modern critical investigation.

In order to avoid the accusation of imitating those whom I condemn, I will take at random a passage written by a Professor of note, and published as a supplement to the *Hibbert Journal*. That volume literally bristles with dogma from one end to the other. Yet its bold assertions have gained for it respect which it can hardly be said to deserve. The Professor above mentioned says that the passage, "All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no one knoweth . . . the Father, save the Son, and he to whom the Son willeth to re-

veal him," "appears in Matthew and Luke like a patch of alien stuff in a garment." But one need not be astonished. "At the time these Gospels were written such sayings as these were common in the Church *as a consequence of the great changes originated by St. Paul*" (we indicate the Professor's dogmas by italics). "The Fourth Gospel, of course" (*why "of course"?*) "*is of a quite different texture.*" Here the author branches off into a self-contradictory sentence, which tells us that "*although* the author is one of the greatest theologians and mystics who have ever lived, the figure he portrays is not a historic figure, but an abstraction." One would have expected not "*although*," but "*because*." Surely the turning a historic figure into an abstraction is just what we might expect of a "*theologian and a mystic.*" If not, from whom should such an unhistorical process be expected? But the writer here begins to see that he is going too far. The touches of character in the Fourth Gospel are too numerous for such a sweeping statement. So he tries to save his face by the inadequate confession that "*in some parts of the narrative, as in the scene of the raising of Lazarus, the human element forces its way.*" "Jesus wept" is "*frankly humanist, but its adaptation to the context is very imperfect.*" Any person even moderately acquainted with the Gospel of St. John must remember many more "*frankly humanist*" passages in that Gospel; as, for instance, Jesus on the shores of the lake of Tiberias, His conversation with Nathanael, His action at the marriage at Cana, His weariness and thirst as He sat by Jacob's well, His conversation with the woman taken in adultery (which has not been proved to be no part of the Fourth Gospel), His washing the disciples' feet, His relations with the disciple whom He loved, as well as with Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. These are touches as "*frankly hu-*

man" as anything in the other Gospels. And millions of devout souls have recognized the harmony of the weeping of Jesus at Lazarus' grave with the surroundings, and have utterly failed to discover the 'imperfect adaptation to the context' which the Professor asserts, but altogether forgets to prove.¹ The Professor, however, condescends to admit, though after having removed well nigh all the foundations on which his admission can logically be based, that "Jesus of Nazareth is the last and greatest of the Hebrew prophets, the prince of ethical idealists, the most noble of martyrs, the most spiritual of thinkers." But is not this conception really founded, not on the Synoptic Gospels, or the *débris* which is all that is left us of them by the critics, but on "the great changes introduced by St. Paul"? Our Professor goes on to tell us that "the accounts of the Resurrection in our Gospels *are among the least satisfactory parts of them.*" They are "a mass of floating legends and of inconsistent statement. We have, however, an infinitely more trustworthy source of information" on this point—"the Epistles of St. Paul." "When," however, "he does but repeat the traditions handed on to him," even his "authority is limited." A mind like his is "peculiarly liable to be influenced in the narrative of events by theological views." But then how can he be "infinitely more trustworthy" than those poor creatures who compiled the Gospels in so slovenly a manner? A man who is so "peculiarly liable to be influenced" by his "views" that he cannot be trusted to narrate facts ought surely to be put out of court at once. Has a Professor, we may ask, just because he has the good fortune—some people might think it *misfortune*—to live in the early part of the twentieth century, the

¹Note Jesus' trouble in spirit (John xiii. 21; cf. xii. 27). Are these also 'imperfectly adapted to the context'?

right to sweep away with a wave of the hand every treatise on Christian evidence which in the past has maintained the direct contrary of what he so boldly asserts? Is not all this tissue of unfounded assertion — for we may observe that in this passage we have five consecutive sentences containing five distinct assumptions — somewhat thin and slipshod when it comes to be fairly examined? Is not the true explanation of writing of this description that which was lately given by a man of experience like the Archbishop of Canterbury, who describes the present age as always in a hurry — in far too great a hurry to be able really to arrive at truth? That is a process which needs the judicial mind, which takes up not one only, but many lines of research, which weighs all objections, of whatever kind, and which does not venture to pronounce its verdict until all the information to be obtained, from every quarter, has been carefully examined and tested. It may be permitted to one who, in the course of a long life, has seen many confident assertions of this kind vanish off the face of the earth, and many clever and ingenious theories perish without leaving a trace behind them, to ask a question or two in arrest of judgment.

What if all these offhand pronouncements should be made in ignorance of the facts? What if the Fourth Gospel, so coolly assumed to be unauthorized, should prove to be the most absolutely unassailable historical document of the world? What if, instead of contradicting the Synoptist narratives, it should turn out to be the only possible explanation of their contents? What if it should further prove to contain the facts, and the *only* facts, which can bridge over the gulf between the theology of the Synoptists and that of the Epistles? What if the “changes originated by St. Paul” should prove to be no “changes” at all, but the simple repetition of the truths

taught by his Master which had been handed down orally in the Church from the first, although not written down until the beloved disciple saw the necessity of providing the Church with a record of the Lord's most important discourses before his departure from this world? The remainder of this paper can be only the barest epitome of the inquiry which the writer, then an unknown young clergyman, published thirty-five years ago in a work which never had a wide circulation, and is now out of print.¹ The book which contained this inquiry was founded on some words of the learned Tholuck, an author once held in high repute, but now forgotten. His words are, "For all the doctrinal matter characteristic of St. John (and on this argument the greatest stress should be laid) some parallels at least can be found in the Synoptical Gospels and in the Epistles." Such a statement as this the critic of the present day is, or *thinks* he is, justified in ignoring. And since, as an acute and learned theologian lately remarked to me, "he is ensconced behind the professor's chair and the large publishers' houses," he can, for the present at least, do it with impunity. Our appeal is to the age of reason which must sooner or later return, when assertion shall be no longer allowed to usurp the place of argument, and when men shall have once more accustomed themselves to ask about a writer, not what position he happens to hold, nor how much is heard of him, but what he says.

We commence with a brief summary of the grounds on which St. John's Gospel differs from the Synoptics. The latter are narratives of the *life on earth* of our Lord Jesus Christ, concluded, in two of them, by the miracles of His Resurrec-

¹ It did, however, reach America, and had a most kindly acceptance there in some quarters. It brought about a correspondence lasting thirty years with a theologian of some note in the United States.

tion and Ascension.¹ The former is chiefly an account of His doctrinal and theological teaching. The reason for this is obvious. The Synoptic narratives were intended, not only to instruct those who had already become Christians, but to attract unbelievers. Had the first propagators of the gospel started, as St. John does, with the assumption of Christ's Divinity, they would at once have repelled inquirers from their pages. The idea that an inhabitant of Judæa, an insignificant and yet turbulent and intractable province of the Roman Empire — a man, moreover, who had suffered a felon's death for his turbulence — was really God in human shape, would have been regarded as folly of the most ridiculous kind, as St. Paul himself remarks (1 Cor. i. 18-23), and the book which contained it flung aside with disdain. So the Synoptists depicted in the simplest manner the actual human life of their Lord, with its mysterious powers and amazing end, confident that no other conclusion could be reached by the reader — unless he dismissed the whole story as either a wicked imposture or a most absurd delusion — than that of the centurion, "Truly, this was the Son of God." That this is no mere assumption is proved by the fact that it has actually happened within living memory. In his once famous but now I fear forgotten work, "Ecce Homo," my lamented friend, Professor Seeley, the historian of the "Expansion" of his country, undertook a careful examination of the Synoptic Gospels — that of St. John being naturally outside of his purpose — on the ground, as he puts it, that "after reading a good many books on Christ, he felt still constrained to confess that there was no historical character whose motives, objects, and feelings re-

¹The question of the authorship of the last twelve verses of St. Mark's Gospel is not taken into account here. We have no other ending of the Gospel but that which has come down to us.

mained so incomprehensible to him." His conclusion is that the "New Jerusalem" which Christ came to build, "*descended out of heaven from God.*" To the end of his days Professor Seeley never publicly accepted the doctrine proclaimed in the opening lines of the Fourth Gospel. But — the writer has the right to say what follows, for Professor Seeley was a frequent attendant at his church in Cambridge — he never rejected it, and on one occasion he gave aid as ready as it was most valuable to the writer of these lines in a campaign against unbelief. As this is not a treatise, but a paper planned on a scale inadequate to deal with the question in all its details, it must be sufficient to say here that the contrast between the last Gospel and the three preceding Gospels lies on the surface only. A careful comparison of the four will reveal many tokens of agreement which the superficial reader passes over without notice. It will be found that the passage above referred to as a "patch of alien stuff on a garment" in St. Matthew and St. Luke is but one instance of a line of thought which is common to all the Gospels. And it will further be found, by any one who cares to go into the question thoroughly, that such coincidences are not due to "changes introduced by St. Paul," but to the fact that it was perfectly well known from the first in the Church that to Jesus Christ, and Him alone, was the teaching due which the Apostle beloved of Him has recorded.

So, again, it may be needless to labor the point that the conception of God which underlies the mention of Him, and the teaching about Him, is the same in all the four Gospels. It is the old Jewish conception of God revealed to Moses at the Bush — that of the eternally Self-existent One — "I AM," "He Is." It agrees in every point with the proclamation recorded in Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7: "The Lord, a God full of compas-

sion and gracious, slow to anger, plenteous in mercy and truth." It is the God who is described in the Psalms as Life and Light, Mercy and Truth, Righteousness and Salvation (Ps. ix. 4, 8; xxiv. 5; xxv. 10; xxvii. 1; xxxi. 5; xxxvi. 7, etc.). It is needless to ransack the prophets for instances of the fact—it permeates them all. And the same is the case with the sterner side of the proclamation quoted above. It is absent from no single book either of the Old Testament or the New.¹ And no one can doubt that the conception of God's unity is in the forefront of the Old Testament and of the New (Deut. vi. 4; Mark ii. 29; John xvii. 21, 22).²

We proceed, therefore, to the points of agreement between the Gospel of St. John and the rest of the New Testament—

¹The book of Esther never mentions the name of God at all. But the belief in the sterner side of God's dealings is plainly evident even there.

²A few references are added (though they could be multiplied indefinitely) to show that the Epistles and the Fourth Gospel are entirely at one in their conceptions of God. For His Eternal Existence, see Rom. i. 20; 1 Pet. v. 10; John xvii. 4; Acts ii. 23; Rom. iii. 25; Eph. i. 4; iii. 11; 2 Tim. ii. 10; 1 Pet. i. 20; Rev. xiii. 8. The "eternal purpose" of God in the matter of man's salvation is here shown to be taught by *Christ Himself*. For Mercy and Peace, see Gal. vi. 16; Eph. ii. 4; 1 Tim. i. 2; Jas. v. 11; 1 Pet. i. 3; Jude 2. For Truth, see Rom. i. 18; iii. 7; Eph. v. 9; Jas. iii. 14; v. 19; 1 Pet. i. 22; 2 Pet. ii. 2. For Light, see Eph. v. 8; 1 Tim. vi. 16; 1 Pet. ii. 9; Rev. xxi. 23; xxii. 5. For Life it is needless to give references. See also "Living God." For Righteousness, see Rom. i. 17; iii. 5, 21, 22; 2 Cor. v. 21; Jas. i. 20; 2 Pet. i. 1; also John xvi. 8; xvii. 25. The great doctrine taught in John iv. 24, that *God is Spirit*, demands a brief explanation. In these days Spirit is supposed to be opposed to matter. But it would be difficult to find that opposition in Scripture. *Spirit is Breath*, and as applied to God it expresses the mighty Influence breathed out from Him as a source into the material, moral, and spiritual worlds. Much the same is meant by the Hebrew word *Elohim*, though this refers more to the Power exercised by the Divine Being over all His creatures. This great subject requires an article to itself.

the Synoptic Gospels, for reasons already given, being excepted. The first is the doctrine of Christ's Person. St. John allows no doubt whatever to be felt as to this point. The "Word was God," he says, and amplifies his language in a way to make a plain statement plainer (John i. 1, 2). There has been considerable discussion as to whence the title which he applies to our Lord has been derived. But as the phrase is found in at least a similar sense, if not altogether identical, in the writings of Philo and in the Targums, we are entitled to claim for it a Jewish origin.¹ And when we find such expressions in the Old Testament as, "By the Word of God were the heavens made," "The Word of God is set for ever in heaven," and the Word of God was "sent" to heal and save (Ps. xxxiii. 6, cvii. 10, 14, 17, 20; cix. 25), we need hardly complain of St. John for applying it to Him who came into the world that sinners might be saved, and that mankind might receive the gift of Eternal Life. Not only does St. John use the expression in the Gospel, but in his First Epistle also, which it seems reasonable to suppose was sent with it as an introduction or preface (1 John i. 1). Nor is it absent from the Apocalypse (Rev. xix. 13), which, in spite of differences in the style and subject, has never been conclusively shown to be by another author. The Johannine *doctrine* of the Word (or Logos) is as clearly perceptible throughout the book as it is elsewhere in the New Testament (see Rev. i. 4, 5, 8, 17, 18; v. 8-14; vii. 10 (cf. xix. 10; xxii. 8, 9); xvii. 14; xix. 16. etc.). We must not forget the remarkable exclamation of Thomas in chapter xx., nor to note that it was allowed to pass unrebuked. Yet though in the Johannine writings Jesus Christ

¹ Recent discoveries have enlarged our knowledge of the steps by which the meaning of the word Logos was developed between the Return from the Captivity and the Birth of Christ. We have not space to do more than mention the fact here.

is everywhere regarded as God, He is none the less represented as human. As we have seen, the presentment of Him as Man is no less emphatic in St. John's Gospel than in the rest. In the Epistle He is described as having been "handled" by His disciples' "hands," and the person who will not believe that He is "come in the flesh" is possessed by the spirit of Antichrist (1 John i. 1; iv. 2; cf. 2 John 7). The Apocalypse represents Him as having overcome death, as having been slain, as the Lion of the tribe of Judah, and as the Root of David (Rev. i. 5; iii. 21; v. 5, 6; xxii. 16). His Incarnation and exaltation to God's Right Hand are clearly referred to in chapter xii.

I cannot enter at length on the fact, which, however, can hardly be disputed, that, though not expressly asserted to be Divine by the Synoptists, in every one of their Gospels Christ repeatedly makes claims which, were He not a Divine Being, would be absurd and blasphemous. I proceed to the Epistles. Here it will be surely unnecessary to prove that Christ was regarded as "found in fashion as a man" (Phil. ii. 5, 6). I will therefore confine my attention to the passages which claim Divinity for Him. I may remark, in passing, that I can hardly accept the distinction frequently drawn of late between "Divinity" and "Deity." The word "Divine" is, of course, often used in a wider and less strict sense than "Deity." We speak of "Divine influences," "Divine gifts," and the like. But the idea of Deity is always behind them. And when one predicates "Divinity" of any being, it is not possible to make a distinction between it and Deity.

There are two passages in Holy Writ which cannot be quoted directly in favor of the Godhead of Christ in consequence of the uncertainty of the text. These are 1 Tim. iii. 16 and Acts xx. 28. Of these the former must be given up,

especially as Christ is called the "Mystery" also in Col. i. 26, 27, ii. 2 (cf. Eph. iii. 3, 4, 9). But a careful analysis of the passages will show that *indirectly*, when Christ is spoken of as "the Mystery," His Divinity is asserted, since in one of them the Mystery is identified with the Divine Logos, in another the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are said to be hidden in Him, and in a third He is said to have been "hidden for ages in the Being of him who created all things." The direct testimony of the other passage (Acts xx. 28) cannot so easily be set aside, since it appears in the two best MSS. and in some of the earliest Versions.¹

Then we have St. Paul calling Christ the *εἰκὼν Θεοῦ* on two occasions (2 Cor. iv. 4; Col. i. 15), surely in a higher sense than when used of man (1 Cor. xi. 7). In Heb. i. 4 (an Epistle which, if not actually written down by St. Paul, is felt by a critic of such wide knowledge and deep insight as the late Bishop Westcott to have been instinct with Pauline ideas) He is called the beaming forth (*ἀπαύγασμα*) of His Brightness, and the stamp of his personality or Essence.² Then we have also the celebrated passage in the Epistle to the Philippians in which He is said not to have regarded equality with God as a claim which He had no right to make (*οὐκ ἀρπαγμὸν ἠγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα Θεῷ*) (Phil. ii. 6), and also to have been as plainly God (*ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ*) as he was plainly the bond-slave of God (*μορφῇ δούλου*). For brevity's sake we must omit to notice the many passages in which Christ is

¹ Note, also, that in Acts iii. 15; v. 31; Christ is spoken of as a Source, i.e. of Life (*ἀρχηγός*).

² The word here used (*ἀπόστασις*) may have either meaning. This is clear from the history of the Nicene controversy.

³ *Ἀρπαγμός*, — like other words ending in *-μός*, which seem to have the sense of a completed process, as the termination *-μα* seems to be the *result* of such process — must surely mean "an act of robbery." For *πικῆμα*, see page 303.

indirectly spoken of as God. The short Epistle of St. James, entirely practical in its character and objects, can hardly be expected to contain much to our purpose. But even there we find the writer speaking of his "brother" according to the flesh as "the Lord of Glory" (Jas. ii. 1)—a remarkable phrase—and as the Logos of Truth and the Implanted Logos (a term to which we must shortly return). In 1 Pet. i. 23 (to which we must also return) Christians are spoken of as begotten again through the Word of the living and abiding God. I submit that we are not entitled to interpret an expression so remarkable as this, as we shall presently see, of the *spoken* word of God, but must understand it as referring to Him who came that those who believe on Him might be begotten of God (John i. 13). In the Second Epistle it is certainly by no means clear that Christ is not spoken of as "our God and Saviour," as may be seen by comparing 2 Pet. i. 1 with verse 11 and chapter iii. 2. Nor can we pass over such assertions as those which predicate of Him "glory and power unto ages of ages," "divine power," manifested in the fact that He "goes up to heaven," and is not borne thither; that "angels, authorities, and powers are subject to Him"; that He was absolutely free from spot or blemish, guile or sin, and that by the knowledge of Him we escape the pollutions from which He was free (1 Pet. i. 19; ii. 22; iv. 11; 2 Pet. i. 3; ii. 20).

Our next point is the Incarnation of Christ and its blessed results for humanity, a doctrine of which the Western Church seems progressively—or rather *regressively*—to have lost sight until the study of the New Testament in the original and of the Greek Fathers has had time to produce its natural results. I will not discuss the fact of the Incarnation, for at the present moment it is accepted in some sense by all schools of theology save those of a most extreme character. I will go

on to show that its immediate result, a new birth or *begetting* of mankind in consequence of the coming of Christ, is the doctrine taught not only in the Fourth Gospel, but in all the Epistles, without exception. The object of Christ's coming is clearly stated by Him in the words, "I am come that they [i.e. mankind] might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."¹ This life must have a *beginning*, a *begetting*, as St. John calls it.² It is *continued* in us by a process which is called eating Christ's Flesh, and drinking His Blood (John vi., *passim*). To those who so "eat" and "drink," the Life thus given is continuous or *immanent*. Some people stumble at this word. I once heard an Archbishop of Canterbury say publicly that he "did not like" it. But that was because of the pantheistic notions with which some thinkers have enveloped it. Whether people "like" it or not, there it stands in the Scriptures too frequently and clearly to be explained away. The Life is the Life of Christ, which is communicated by Him to those who believe on Him, and is to abide in us and we in it.³ But not the slightest hint is ever given that our personality will at any time be absorbed into that of the Divine Being. The same doctrine is found in the writings of St. Paul. The Life and Light which are in Jesus Christ are communicated by Him to those who believe in Him. The gift of God is "eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. vi. 23; see also 2 Cor. v. 17), he says, in the very words of Christ as reported by St. John (x. 28; 1 John v. 11,

¹ 1 John x. 10; cf. xi. 25: "I am the Resurrection and the Life"; also vi. 40.

² Chap. i. 12, 13; iii. 3, 5. It is an unsolved question whether *ἀνωθεν* means "again," or "from above." See also the First Epistle, where the word *γεννάω* occurs repeatedly.

³ John v. 38; viii. 31; xv. 4, 5, 6, 7; xvii., *passim*, and repeatedly in the First Epistle.

and *passim* in both Gospel and Epistle). As in John iii. 5, there is a suggested connection between the original gift of a new life with the Sacrament which initiates the believer into the Christian church when St. Paul speaks of the believer as saved by a font of regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit (Tit. iii. 5; cf. Rom. vi. 1-4; Col. ii. 12). His speaking of Christ as the Second Adam indicates his belief in a new life being imparted to Christians in Jesus Christ. When he speaks of the Jewish and Christian churches as "grafted into Christ," the new "olive tree" (Rom. xi. 17-20), we are reminded of the parable of the Vine and the Branches. And the indwelling of Christ in the believer's soul is indicated in Eph. ii. 22; iii. 17. So, too, we are told that we can "put off" the old, and "put on the new man," and that "if any man be in Christ, there has been a *new creation*" (2 Cor. v. 17; Gal. vi. 12; Eph. iv. 20-25; Col. iii. 20). The unity of the believer with Christ, and through Him with his fellow-Christians, is repeatedly taught by St. Paul (Rom. xii. 4, 5; 1 Cor. xii. 12; Eph. iv. 4, 16; cf. Gal. iii. 28). Again and again does he tell his converts that they are "in Christ," that "their life is hid with Christ in God," that Christ "lives in" those who believe in Him (2 Cor. xiii. 5; Gal. ii. 20; Eph. ii. 20-22; iii. 17, 19; iv. 6, 13, 15; Col. i. 27, 28; ii. 6, 10, 12, 13; iii. 3 (in the original)). And if St. John insists on the feeding on Christ's Flesh and Blood by faith, the Synoptists tell us how He bade us eat His Body, and drink His Blood, and St. Paul points out how "we are all partakers of the one bread" (1 Cor. x. 17), echoing the words of Jesus Himself, when he tells that He is "the bread of Life," and that "the Bread He will give is His Flesh which He will give for the Life of the World" (John vi. 47, 51).

If we turn to St. James, we find only two doctrinal state-

ments in his Epistle (to which reference has already been made). But those two references contain a clear intimation that his doctrine of the incarnate Logos and of His *modus operandi* in the salvation of mankind was that which St. John reports as having been announced by his Master. We are "begotten" by the Word of Truth, and that by His being "implanted" in us (Jas. i. 18, 21, *σύμφυτον*). The same idea of the translation of man from darkness to light which is found in St. John and in St. Paul finds a place in the mind of St. Peter (1 Pet. ii. 9). By being "made partakers of the Divine Nature" man has escaped the corruption which is in the world through lust (2 Pet. i. 4). Once more, the entrance of Christ into the soul is described as a "regeneration," which is brought about by no "corruptible seed," but by the Word of the living and abiding God (1 Pet. i. 3, 23). We "grow" by feeding on the genuine milk of the Word (1 Pet. ii. 2). The one thing needful for the believer is to rest on the foundation which was once laid, and his one characteristic the "faith which worketh by love."

If I pass over the doctrine of Propitiation with only a few words, it is to save my readers time and trouble. That doctrine is so clearly laid down by the Synoptists¹ and in the Epistles that all that is really necessary is to show that it was drawn from the words and acts of Jesus, as recorded in the Fourth Gospel. What, then, is the teaching of Christ Himself on the remission of sin? It is summed up in the words by

¹"Remission of sins" was prophesied by Zachariah (Luke i. 77), proclaimed by the Lord's forerunner (Mark i. 4; Luke iii. 3), ordered by Christ to be preached after His Resurrection (Luke xxiv. 47), and actually so preached (Acts ii. 38; v. 31; x. 43; xiii. 38; xxvi. 18). And Christ declared that His Blood was to be shed to that end (Matt. xxvi. 28; see also iii. 6; ix. 2, etc.). I may add that I believe *ἀφεσις* to mean, not only "forgiveness," but "expulsion" of sin.

which the Baptist introduced Him whom it was his mission to proclaim: "Behold, the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world" (John i. 29). One other passage there is, and only one, on this point. St. John lays the utmost possible stress upon the fact that blood and water came forth from the Lord's side after His Death. The first of these important passages declares that Christ had come to be a sacrifice for sin. The second, which St. John explains in his First Epistle, clearly means that Christ came not only to cleanse mankind from sin, but to do so by the sacrifice of His human life. He implies as much when He says that He "lays down His life for His sheep" (John x. 11, 15, 17, 18). And in one of His repeated references to His being "lifted up" (chap. iii. 14) from the earth, He speaks of it as a necessary part of His work for our salvation (*δεῖ*). In the accompanying Epistle, St. John further explains the doctrine: "The Blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John i. 7). Jesus Christ is the Propitiation (*ἰλασμός*) for our sins (chap. ii. 2; iv. 10). He was manifested that He might bear (or take away) our sins (chap. iii. 5). It is paradoxical to assign the Epistle to any other hand but that of the writer of the Gospel. We may fairly contend that no such idea could occur to any one who had not a foregone conclusion to maintain. I have no wish to fall back on the habit of assumption so common with the critical school of to-day. But I cannot enter at length into the teaching of the Epistles on the subject of Propitiation. I must therefore content myself with saying that I am prepared to prove: (1) that it is this doctrine, and no other, which the Epistles teach; and (2) that in what they do, and what they do not say, they are in full accord with the doctrine of Propitiation as set forth in the Gospel of St. John.

We come next to the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. One

point on which St. John's Gospel insists is the teaching of Jesus that unredeemed man is flesh, and not spirit — a statement which, remarkably enough, is found in Gen. vi. 3: "That which is begotten of flesh is flesh, and that which is begotten of the Spirit is spirit" (John iii. 6). The first germ of the Divine Humanity which is implanted in the soul of man is implanted by the Spirit (chap. iii. 5). And the test of the continuance of that Life of the Divine Word in us is the possession of His Spirit (or Breath; see John xx. 22). He it is who is sent by Christ from the Father, from whom He "proceeds" (John xv. 26; xvi. 7, 8). He is the Paraclete or Advocate or Helper — a title we must remember also applied to Christ Himself (John xiv. 26; 1 John ii. 1). The identity of essence between Christ and the Spirit is hereby indicated. He is the Spirit of Truth, and as such is qualified to lead Christ's disciples along the road (*ὁδὴ γῆσοε*) in which Truth is found (chap. xiv. 17). Through Him Christ's disciples acquired the power to remit and retain sins (chap. xx. 22, 23). He was to be to them a well of living water springing up unto Eternal Life (chap. iv. 14; vii. 38). His Mission was not, however, to commence until after the Saviour's Resurrection (chap. vii. 39; xvi. 7). In these utterances of the Saviour the distinct Personality of the Spirit is plainly asserted, and from His association on equal terms with the Father and the Son in the work of salvation, His Divinity may as plainly be inferred.

The testimony of the Synoptists to these facts cannot be disputed. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of the Father (Matt. x. 20). His Divinity is implied in the statement of the serious nature of offenses committed against Him (Matt. xii. 31, 32; Mark iii. 28, 29; Luke xii. 10). A Synoptist, by inference, declares Him to be God (Acts v. 4). From the time of His descent at Pentecost, He continues to inspire and

direct the disciples. The Power they receive to proclaim Christ to the uttermost parts of the earth, comes from Him (Acts i. 8). If He is not expressly called Paraclete, His work is described as *Paraclesis* (Acts ix. 31). And the impartation of Him to the soul of every Christian is an essential part of the scheme of salvation (Acts viii. 15-17; xix. 2). The passage in Acts v. 32 in which St. Peter associates his testimony and that of his fellow-disciples to Christ with that of the Holy Spirit reads very much like a reminiscence of our Lord's words as recorded in John xv. 26, 27.

Space would fail one to give even a faint idea of the way in which the Epistles expand, though they can scarcely be said to develop, the nucleus of doctrine on this head with which St. John's Gospel acquaints us. A very brief summary is all that one can permit one's self. St. James only once mentions the Holy Spirit — a fact which may be accounted for by the severely practical character of his Epistle. But that passage (chap. iv. 5) distinctly asserts His indwelling in the soul. In the short Epistle of St. Jude, however, there are two occasions on which He is mentioned as the inspirer of our actions (ver. 19, 20), and implying precisely the same contrast between the Christian as so guided with the natural (*ψυχικός*) man as is implied in 1 Cor. ii. St. Peter ascribes our sanctification to His agency, and speaks of Him as resting upon the souls of faithful Christians. And if, in the difficult passage in chapter iii. (19-22), *τῷ πνεύματι* means the *Holy Spirit*, we have a declaration of His agency in the Resurrection corresponding to that in Heb. ix. 14, where the Offering of Himself by the Lord is spoken of as made through the agency of the Eternal Spirit.

We proceed briefly to summarize the most important parts of St. Paul's doctrine of the Holy Spirit. He is spoken of,

not only as the Spirit of God, but of Christ (Rom. viii. 9), and as sent by Him (cf. John xvi. 26). If Christ dwell in our hearts by faith, it is because we are "strengthened with might, by His Spirit in the inner man" (Eph. iii. 16, 17). If Jesus speaks of Him as "speaking" what He "hears" (John xvi. 13), St. Paul, using another figure of speech, describes Him as searching out all things, even the deep things of God (1 Cor. ii. 9). If Christ speaks of Him as our advocate or Paraclete (as St. John informs us), St. Paul tells us how He "maketh" intercession¹ for the saints according to the Will of God (Rom. viii. 26, 27). St. Paul also speaks of the "Paracletis" of the Divine Spirit (2 Thess. ii. 16, 17). It would be only wearisome to point out how he attributes every step of ours in the spiritual life as due to His influence. But if St. John attributes the Life of Love to the Divine indwelling in our souls, we must not forget that St. Paul tells us that it is by the Holy Spirit that this love is "shed abroad in our hearts" (Rom. iv. 5).

The close agreement between St. John's report of his Master's sayings descends even to many minor details. Thus we repeatedly read of the Holy Ghost as "promised" by Christ (Acts i. 4; ii. 33; Gal. iii. 14; Eph. i. 13). But the only record of the promise is in St. John xiv.-xvi. We constantly come across such phrases in the Epistles as the "freedom with which Christ has made us free," and as of the "natural" or rather "psychic" man as the slave of sin. These references are directly traceable to Christ's own teaching. On one occasion He incurred the indignation of the Jews by suggesting that they were in bondage. "The Truth," he said, "shall make you free" (John viii. 36). And when they resented this speech, he made a memorable reply: "*Every one who commit-*

¹ Intercession means, properly, "going between," i.e. mediation.

teth sin is the slave of sin" (ver. 34). Can we wonder that such speeches as these sank deeply into the minds of His hearers, and that we continually meet with them in their speeches and writings?¹ The struggle between the Flesh and the Spirit, again, is plainly indicated by Jesus Christ in John iii. 6, and it plays a prominent part in the Epistles.² The conflict in our souls between light and darkness may be traced to Christ's teaching.³ Other evidence of the same fact might be given, but this must suffice. Another point which cannot be treated fully here is the way in which the information is given. It is evidently not given in such a way as to emphasize the agreement between Christ's teaching and that of His disciples. On the contrary, it requires very close attention to discover it. This brings in the argument from Undesigned Coincidences, to which such weight was given by Paley and Blunt, but which is now ignored, or possibly forgotten. But the fact that the coincidences between Christ's teaching and that of His apostles are not insisted upon but the reader is left to find them out for himself, adds not a little confirmation to the statement of the author that he is reporting the actual words of Christ.

One point, and only one, remains to be noted. It can be given only in the barest detail. The most striking proof that St. John gives to us the actual teaching of Jesus Christ is to be found in the fact that in every instance his Gospel gives the substance of that teaching in a more elementary form than

¹ See Rom. vi. 6, 16; viii. 21; 1 Cor. vii. 21, 23; ix. 1; x. 29; 2 Cor. iii. 17; Gal. iv., v.; Jas. i. 25; ii. 12; 1 Pet. ii. 16; Rom. vi. 17, 20; Gal. iv. 24; v. 1; Titus iii. 3; Heb. ii. 15; 2 Pet. ii. 19, etc.

² Note particularly Rom. vii. throughout, viii. 1, 5, 12-13; 1 Cor. ii. 14; xv. 45-49, etc.; 1 Pet. iii. 18, 21; 2 Pet. ii. 19; see also John i. 13; vi. 63; viii. 15.

³ See John i. 4; iii. 19; xii. 35, 36, etc. Cf. 2 Cor. iv. 6; Eph. v. 8; Phil. ii. 15; 1 Thess. v. 5; 1 Pet. ii. 9.

that in which it is presented in the Epistles. The general principle ever comes first. It is afterwards crystallized into the words and phrases under which it becomes familiar in later periods. St. John uses the verb "believe" (πιστεύω) no less than 105 times. "Faith" (πίστις) never occurs in his Gospel, and only once in his Epistle. The facts of the New Birth, Justification, Atonement, Divine good-will to the redeemed, are clearly set forth, but are expressed in general terms (John xiv. 21, 23; xii. 24, 32; xvi. 27; xvii. 13-26). By the time the Epistles are written, these elementary facts are crystallized into names or phrases. We have Regeneration, Faith, Justification, Atonement, Propitiation, Redemption, Grace, Sanctification, Conversion, and numerous other words which are absent from the oracular and intensely original language of the Master, but are corollaries of it. One interesting corroboration of this line of argument is that St. John himself uses the word ἰλασμός in his Epistle, though it is altogether absent from the Gospel (John ii. 2; iv. 10; cf. Rom. iii. 25). This argument really needs a paper to itself. As it is impossible to follow it out here, I commend it, and this line of inquiry in general, as a line of research to the candid and impartial student of Holy Scripture — the man who does not approach that unique volume with a foregone conclusion, or with the affectation of superiority, now so common, to a book which has been a "lamp unto the feet and a light unto the path" of many thousands of generations. I can promise any one who undertakes the task the pleasure of coming to an ever-deepening and ripening conclusion that in the Fourth Gospel we find the *ipsissima verba* of Jesus Christ, the source of that fertilizing stream of doctrine which has grown ever deeper, broader, more far-reaching in its influence, more powerful in molding the lives of men. The minimizing critic may

analyze it as he will; he may take his two-foot rule and apply it to the walls of the glorious city which standeth four-square, hoping to show that one side is a quarter of an inch longer than another. But long after these superficial and self-satisfied utterances have been swept by the rushing stream of time into the limbo of utterly forgotten fancies, the Christian reader will continue, in the future as in the past, to rise from its perusal with the words of the Apostle on his lips: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of Eternal Life."