

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *The Expositor* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_expositor-series-1.php

PRIMITIVE LITURGIES AND CONFESSIONS
OF FAITH.

I.

THE evangelist St. Luke, in the preface to his gospel, has seen fit to lay before us his reasons for publishing a new record of the Lord Jesus' life. There were already many *διηγήσεις* of doubtful authority, but he would now so write that his friend Theophilus might be furnished with facts upon which he could implicitly rely, and hence arrive at a fuller assurance regarding those *λόγοι*¹ in which he had been systematically instructed.

2. Again, in his Book of the Acts of the Apostles, when the same evangelist introduces Apollos to the notice of his readers, he describes him as "mighty in the Scriptures," and as one who had been "systematically instructed" in "THE WAY" of the Lord.²

3. Once more, we read that when Sergius Paulus, the proconsul at Cyprus, was impressed by the Apostles' preaching, and gave in his adherence to the truths proclaimed, he believed, startled by the *διδαχή* of the Lord.³

4. Lastly, when Elymas strove to hinder the work begun, and to weaken the impression that had been made, we are told "he sought to turn away the procurator from *the faith*" (*ἀπὸ τῆς πίστεως*); and when in the sixth chapter we hear of a great multitude of priests being convinced, it is said of them *ὑπήκουον τῇ πίστει*.

¹ ἵνα ἐπιγνῶς περὶ ὧν κατηχήθης λόγων τὴν ἀσφάλειαν.

² οὗτος ἦν κατηχημένος τὴν ὁδὸν τοῦ Κυρίου (Acts xviii. 25). Cf. 1 Cor. iv. 17.

³ ἐκπλησσομένοι ἐπὶ τῇ διδαχῇ τοῦ Κυρίου (Acts xiii. 12).

A careful comparison of the passages referred to, with many others that will come under review in the following pages, forces upon us the conviction that the four terms here employed, ὁ λόγος, ἡ διδαχή, ἡ ὁδός, and ἡ πίστις, all refer substantially to the same thing. Viewed with reference to the speaker who by word of mouth rendered an *account* of what was to be believed, it was ὁ λόγος; viewed with reference to the teacher who instructed, or the neophyte who received *instruction*, it was ἡ διδαχή; while as it was a summary of those things which were most surely *believed*, it was ἡ πίστις; and as the *line along which all dogmatic exposition was to travel*, it was ἡ ὁδός.

It would happen in the natural course, that as one term became (so to speak) the favourite, this term would tend to thrust the others out of use; and accordingly it appears that one of these terms, ἡ ὁδός, did actually cease to be employed very early; but there is abundant evidence of the fact, that, while the organization of the infant Church was still imperfect, these four terms were used as practically convertible.

Thus the διδαχή τοῦ Κυρίου of the 12th verse of Acts xiii. is plainly the λόγος τοῦ Κυρίου of the 48th and 49th verses, and as plainly the ὁδός τοῦ Κυρίου of Acts xviii. 25, and the πίστις τοῦ Κυρίου of St. James ii. 1.

Again the ὁδός σωτηρίας of Acts xvi. 17 is clearly the λόγος σωτηρίας of Acts xiii. 26, and probably the κοινὴ σωτηρία of St. Jude (Jude 3), while the ὁδός, which St. Paul declares he once persecuted, and of which (Acts xix. 9) we hear certain men spake evil before the people, can be no other than the πίστις in which Paul and Barnabas besought the men of Pisidia to abide,¹ in which the Churches were confirmed as they increased in number daily,² the πίστις which St. Paul when he had finished his course glories in

¹ παρακαλοῦντες ἐμμένειν τῇ πίστει (Acts xiv. 22).

² αἱ μὲν οὖν ἐκκλησίαι ἑστερεοῦντο τῇ πίστει, κ.τ.λ. (Acts xvi. 5).

having kept,¹ and that which in its later and more expanded form he refers to again and again under the designations of *ἡ καλὴ παραθήκη, ὁ πιστὸς λόγος, ἡ ὑγιαίνουσα διδασκαλία*, and other names, with which we shall attempt in the sequel to deal in fuller detail.

That these four terms refer to a Formulated Summary of Primitive Christian Doctrine is the first position which this article attempts to support.

Such a summary would of course serve more than a single purpose. To the preacher of the Redeemer's truth it was a guide and safeguard, keeping him from license in speculation and rashness in assertion. To the anxious inquirer, desirous to enter the Church, it was a simple elementary instruction in the primary essentials of the Christian faith. To the newly baptized believer it was a blessed memento of the solemn profession he had made at the laver of regeneration, when he had "passed from death unto life, and from the power of Satan unto God."

Hence it is only what we should expect if the writers of the several epistles appeal to and allude to this summary of Christian truth as to a palladium which each Christian would naturally hold very dear. Renegades who had left the Church under the pressure of persecution are called *ἀδόκιμοι περὶ τὴν πίστιν* (2 Tim. iii. 8), or are said *ἀρνοῦσθαι τὴν πίστιν*.² Timothy is exhorted *ἀγωνίζου τὸν καλὸν ἀγῶνα τῆς πίστεως* (1 Tim. vi. 12; 2 Tim. iv. 7), and in the Apocalypse the *ἅγιοι* are described as those *οἱ τηροῦντες τὰς ἐντολάς τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ τὴν πίστιν Ἰησοῦ* (Apoc. xiv. 12).

That something like a dogmatic Confession of Faith was drawn up very soon after the ascension of our Lord appears from the nature of the case more than probable. It is

¹ *τὴν πίστιν τετήρηκα* (2 Tim. iv. 7).

² . . . *τὴν πίστιν ἠρνήσθαι καὶ ἔστιν ἀπίστου χείρων* (1 Tim. v. 8). Compare Apoc. ii. 13, *οὐκ ἀρνήσω τὴν πίστιν μου*.

scarcely conceivable that the new society, by no means blind to the immense destiny which was before it, and the mighty work it was to carry out, should have remained long without some organized machinery for proselytizing, and some discipline for the regulation of its inner life and the display of its necessary activity.

Accordingly, no sooner do we read that three thousand were added to the Church in a single day, than we are assured that these same new converts continued steadfastly attending to the doctrines of the Apostles, and to *the* common contribution, and to *the* breaking of bread, and to *the* prayers.¹ The force of the article in these passages can by no means be passed over. In every single instance the term employed is a technical term, which subsequently attained an important significance, and if "the breaking of bread" must be taken to refer to a religious rite, and the *κοινωνία* must as certainly be assumed to point to a general contribution to a common fund—such as Macedonia and Achaia afterwards made for the relief of the poor saints at Jerusalem (Acts xv. 26), which the Hebrew Christians were specially admonished not to neglect (Heb. xiii. 16), and which the Corinthians are commended for having carried out with simple liberality (2 Cor. ix. 13)—not less certainly must the *διδασχῆ* be understood to refer to an authoritative and dogmatic exposition of the fundamental verities of the Christian faith; while by the *προσευχαὶ* are meant simple forms of prayer, which would be among the very first necessities of the multitudes whose awakened consciences and whose excited feelings would require that the outpourings of their emotions should be guided, instructed, and controlled, and the worshipper preserved from spasmodical utterances apt to run riot into wildness and extravagance.

Nor are allusions to such forms of prayer wanting. When

¹ Acts ii. 42: ἦσαν δὲ προσκαρτεροῦντες τῇ διδασχῇ τῶν ἀποστόλων καὶ τῇ κοινωνίᾳ, τῇ κλάσει τοῦ ἄρτου καὶ ταῖς προσευχαῖς. Cf. Ephesians vi. 18.

the continued growth of the Church had brought with it an increase in the number of those distracting engagements which constitute the most serious interruptions to the work of an evangelist, then it was seen that the governing body of the Church needed to be relieved in some way from the immense pressure of mere business which threatened to embarrass and overwhelm the apostolic college. The diaconate was accordingly instituted. To the deacons was committed the administration of the *κοινωνία*, "but," said the Twelve, "we will give our attention to the prayers and to the ministry of the *λόγος*."¹

But in truth nothing is more remarkable in the history of the Church than the promptness with which the Apostles set themselves to legislate for special occasions, and the wisdom they exhibit in dealing with difficulties as they arise. I have already alluded to the institution of the order of deacons; no less striking is the ordaining of Barnabas and Saul (Acts xiii.) for the extraordinary mission at Antioch; the provision for allaying the prejudice against St. Paul on his last recorded return to Jerusalem; and, above all, the publication of the *δόγματα* on the question of admitting Gentiles into the fold of Christ.

On this occasion (Acts xv. 6 and *seq.*) we find that the apostolic college, seeing the gravity of the point at issue, and that a crisis in the history of the Church had come, hesitated to put forth any canons on their own authority solely, but calling a council of the whole Church at Jerusalem, they solemnly deliberated upon the course to be adopted, and only after long discussion and devout inquiry did they finally agree upon the important point that was raised. But the *δόγματα* once having been passed, no time was lost in giving them publicity (Acts xv. 22). A formal copy of the resolution passed at the meeting of the council

¹ ἡμεῖς δὲ τῇ προσευχῇ καὶ τῇ διακονίᾳ τοῦ λόγου προσκατερέθημεν (Acts vi. 4). Compare here the use of *διακονία* (Rom. xii. 7).

was committed to Paul, Barnabas, and Silas, and these distinguished servants of the Church were at once sent forth to promulgate the canon. In this case there can be no doubt that we have the actual words of the letter with which the commissioners were furnished. We are expressly told that the decree was disseminated as widely as possible, and that it was imposed upon the several Churches as an ordinance binding upon all who were baptized in the name of Christ. It is moreover observable that these ordinances were not promulgated once, and once only, and that when the special occasion had passed they were forgotten; on the contrary, the *δόγματα* of the council at Jerusalem were evidently imposed as fundamental conditions of union upon every new Christian community which was afterwards admitted into Church membership, and more than once we meet with allusions to these decrees in epistles to Churches *which were not founded for some years after the council was held*. Thus it can scarcely be doubted that the *παραγγελίαι* which St. Paul speaks of having given to the Thessalonians (1 Thess. iv. 2), regarding fornication, refer to these early *δόγματα*, for so only can we explain the full force of his language, where he says that they had been given *διὰ τοῦ Κυρίου Ἰησοῦ*, *i.e.* by the instrumentality of the Lord Jesus; and a large portion of the first epistle to the Corinthian Church appears actually taken up with explaining and enforcing those very decrees on the subject of fornication and things offered to idols, as against those who assumed that the *δόγματα* were only meant for such as were "babes in Christ," but no longer binding upon advanced Christians who had risen to the apprehension of an esoteric *γνώσις*.

How then can it be conceived that any time should have been lost in drawing up a confession of faith for the guidance of the teacher and the support of the taught? especially when it is remembered that all this wonderful progress—all this Divine awakening of men's minds, and

this eager acceptance of Christ—was going on for years before the earliest of our gospels was composed, nay, probably before two of our evangelists were converted to the faith at all. For it must never be forgotten that the growth of the Church was not due to the gospels, but that the gospels sprang into being from the needs of the Church.

Hence it appears not so very improbable that the ancient tradition of the Apostles' Creed being actually composed by the Twelve may have some basis of truth to repose on. I have already pointed out that the expression *διδασχὴ τοῦ Κυρίου* is to be regarded as the equivalent of the *ὁδὸς τοῦ Κυρίου*: but in the second chapter of the Acts, ver. 42, we find this term in another form; it is there called *διδασχὴ τῶν ἀποστόλων*, as though the very first work which the Apostles had set themselves to labour at (possibly in that awful time of suspense and anxious expectation which preceded the day of Pentecost) had been the drawing up of some short summary of doctrine in conformity with which all the teaching of the future should be carried on. And one very striking passage in the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, which it appears to me commentators so far have misunderstood, affords a remarkable confirmation of this view. In the eleventh chapter of the epistle and the sixth verse, St. Paul is contrasting his own claims to be listened to with those put forth by the false teachers at Corinth.¹ “For,” says he, “I reckon myself in no respect to have fallen short of the chiefest Apostles”; for although an unofficial person in regard to the *λόγος*, I am not so in regard of the *γνώσις*: *i.e.* in the drawing up of the first elementary summary of Christian doctrine I took no part, for I was no Apostle then, yet in the fuller and more developed ex-

¹ λογίζομαι γὰρ μηδὲν ὑστερηκέμαι τῶν ὑπὲρ λίαν ἀποστόλων. εἰ δὲ καὶ ἰδιώτης τῷ λόγῳ, ἀλλ' οὐ τῇ γνώσει· ἀλλ' ἐν παντὶ φανερώσαντες ἐν πάσῃ εἰς ὑμᾶς. Taking this view of the passage, it appears to me that the reading *φανερώσαντες* becomes the only intelligible one; the diplomatic evidence in its favour is overwhelming.

position of the faith—the *γνώσις*—I did take my part, and my apostleship was acknowledged.

This is that *λόγος* which he subsequently commands Timothy to proclaim (2 Tim. iv. 2)—*κήρυξον τὸν λόγον*—and to persist in with all patience in teaching, “because,” he adds, “the time will come when people will not endure the wholesome doctrine, but will choose teachers according to their own fancies.” This is that *λόγος ἀκοῆς* which the Thessalonians (1 Thess. ii. 13) are said to have received not as a human, but as a Divine *λόγος*, as in truth it was. This is that *λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ* which the Corinthians (1 Cor. xiv. 36) are reminded did not go out from them, but came to them. This is that *λόγος τοῦ Κυρίου* of which, in writing to the Thessalonians, the Apostle prays that it may have free course and be glorified. Lastly, it is that *τύπος διδαχῆς* to which at their baptism the Roman Christians were handed over, and by virtue of the reception of which they were freed from the bondage of sin and bound by a new bond to righteousness (Rom. vi. 17).

But this passage in the Epistle to the Corinthians, which puts in such marked contrast the *λόγος* (or primary and elementary summary of the faith) and the *γνώσις* (or esoteric doctrine to which probably the Christian was introduced only after his baptism), brings us to a further examination of those passages where the *γνώσις* is alluded to.

It must be conceded that, as a technical term, *ἡ γνώσις* appears much more frequently in the epistles to the Corinthians than anywhere else in the New Testament; but, though this might suggest the hypothesis that the origin of the term is to be traced to the Corinthian Church in the first instance, we do meet with it in its technical sense in other apostolic writings.

In the epistles to the Corinthians however the passage referred to above by no means stands alone. A plain allusion to this distinction between the *πίστις* and the

γνώσις is to be met with in the thirteenth chapter of the first epistle, where the commentators, as far as my observation goes, have failed to point out the right explanation of the acknowledged difficulty. The second verse stands thus: καὶ ἐὰν ἔχω προφητείαν (observe, no definite article) καὶ εἰδῶ τὰ μυστήρια πάντα καὶ πᾶσαν τὴν γνώσιν, καὶ ἐὰν ἔχω πᾶσαν τὴν πίστιν ὥστε ὄρη μεθιστάνειν, ἀγάπην δὲ (again no definite article) μὴ ἔχω, οὐθέν εἰμι. The passage should, I believe, be thus translated: "And if I have a gift of prophecy, and know *all the mysteries* and *the whole* γνώσις; and if I hold *the whole πίστις* to such an extent as to remove mountains, yet have not love, I am nothing." The εἰδέναι τὰ μυστήρια is illustrated by another passage in the eighth chapter, which will be discussed hereafter; but the distinction between τὴν πίστιν and τὴν γνώσιν appears obvious.

In the first chapter of this epistle a no less evident and significant allusion is to be found. At the fifth verse the Apostle gives thanks to God ὅτι ἐν παντὶ ἐπλουτίσθητε ἐν αὐτῷ, ἐν παντὶ λόγῳ καὶ πάσῃ γνώσει, καθὼς τὸ μαρτύριον τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐβεβαιώθη ἐν ὑμῖν; *i.e.* Because ye were enriched by Him¹ in every way, to wit, ἐν παντὶ λόγῳ καὶ πάσῃ γνώσει. That these words are extremely difficult of translation is certain; yet I feel no doubt that the true key to the meaning of the expression is to be sought in that marked distinction between the two terms which has been pointed out before.²

¹ I regard the first ἐν παντὶ as equivalent to an adverb of manner; the second παντὶ is in close concord with λόγῳ, and only affected by the preposition in so far as it agrees with its noun; ἐν αὐτῷ is here instrumental, as in Rom. v. 9, 10, and, as I believe, much more frequently in St. Paul than is usually supposed. See Ellicott on Eph. ii. 13.

Cf. Eur. Ion. 1071: οὐ γὰρ . . . ζῶσα ποτ' ὀμμάτων ἐν φαειναῖς ἀνέχοιτ' ἀν αὐγαῖς, κ.τ.λ.; *i.e.* she will never, if she lives, endure *with* her bright eyes, etc., etc.

² It is quite possible that allusion is made to the existence of distinctive λόγοι or γνώσεις among the conflicting Church parties at Corinth.

A similar allusion to this esoteric *γνώσις* is observable in the second chapter of the Epistle to the Romans. St. Paul is there insisting that Jew and Gentile are equally liable to the righteous judgment of God. He puts the case thus (Rom. ii. 17): "But you call yourself a Jew, and rest upon the law, and boast yourself in God, and know His will, and are examining points of difference, *having had your catechising out of the law*, and believe yourself to be a leader of the blind, a light to those in darkness, an instructor of the simple, a teacher of babes, *having your form of the γνώσις and of the truth in the law*. . . ." ¹ Whatever else the word *γνώσις* may mean, it certainly is not adequately represented by the English word "knowledge." Here, as elsewhere, the significance of the definite article can by no means be passed over; and if the *ἀληθεία* here be the *λόγος τῆς ἀληθείας* of the Second Epistle to Timothy and elsewhere, the *πιστὸς λόγος*, the *λόγος σωτηρίας*, called in the Acts (ii. 42) the *διδασχὴ τῶν ἀποστόλων*, then the *γνώσις* here, as in the former passage to which attention has been drawn, can be no other than the fuller and more expanded summary of the faith which received this technical name.

One more passage must be noticed in which the same allusion is to be found. I refer to the fervent and sublime prayer for the Ephesian converts. Here again the significance of the definite article is to be insisted on, and the

¹ *Εἰ δὲ σὺ Ἰουδαῖος ἐπονομάζη καὶ ἐπαναπαύῃ νόμῳ, καὶ καυχᾶσαι ἐν Θεῷ, καὶ γινώσκεις τὸ θέλημα, καὶ δοκιμάζεις τὰ διαφέροντα, κατηχούμενος ἐκ τοῦ νόμου* . . . Anything like a discussion of the *syntactical* difficulties of this passage would be beyond my province here; but I feel no doubt, (1) that the verbs *ἐπονομάζη*, *ἐπαναπαύῃ*, and *καυχᾶσαι* are all to be taken as *middle verbs*; (2) that *δοκιμάζεις* is to be taken in the sense of "testing" or "examining" (see Bp. Ellicott on Eph. v. 10); (3) that *τὰ διαφέροντα*, whatever else it may mean (and how widely different the meanings given to it have been may be seen in Ellicott, Phil. i. 10), cannot *here* mean "things which transcend," even though so profound a scholar as Bishop Lightfoot has so rendered the phrase in the parallel passage.

distinction between *πίστις* and *γνώσις* to be carefully observed; and here too, I believe, as elsewhere, that the key to the obscurity of the eighteenth verse is to be found in looking upon it as containing allusions to the *mystical phraseology of the theosophic formulæ* with which the half-instructed converts of Ephesus (as of Corinth, Colossæ, and elsewhere) would be acquainted, and from which deliverance was to be sought by giving greater prominence to the ethical element in Christianity. The Apostle thus begins: “. . . I bow my knees to the Father, . . . that He may grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to receive strength with power by means of His Spirit into the inner man; so as for Christ to take up His abode in your hearts, *by means of the faith*—being rooted in love as ye are, and having had your foundation laid—in order that ye may be thoroughly able to comprehend with all the saints what is [the true significance of] the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and [be able] to know Christ’s love, which transcends the *γνώσις*, in order that [as the *final result*] ye may be filled to all the fulness of God.”¹ A beginning might be made when the *πίστις* was

¹ . . . κάμπτω τὰ γόνατά μου πρὸς τὸν Πατέρα, . . . ἵνα δῶ ὑμῖν κατὰ τὸ πλοῦτος τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ δυνάμει κραταιωθῆναι διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸν ἔσω ἄνθρωπον, κατοικῆσαι τὸν Χριστὸν διὰ τῆς πίστεως ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ὑμῶν, ἐν ἀγάπῃ ἐρριζώμενοι καὶ τεθεμελιωμένοι, ἵνα ἐξισχύσητε καταλαβεῖσθαι σὺν πᾶσιν τοῖς ἁγίοις τὸ πλάτος καὶ μήκος καὶ ὕψος καὶ βάθος, γινῶναι τε τὴν ὑπερβάλλουσαν τῆς γνώσεως ἀγάπην τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ἵνα πληρωθῆτε εἰς πᾶν τὸ πλήρωμα τοῦ Θεοῦ (Eph. iii. 14-19).

With regard to the *grammar* of this passage, it will be sufficient to note—(1) that *κραταιωθῆναι διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος* and *κατοικῆσαι τὸν Χριστὸν διὰ τῆς πίστεως* must necessarily be taken as expressing *instrumentality*: the *πνεῦμα* is the instrument in one case, the *πίστις* in the other; (2) that *κατοικῆσαι* is *consecutive* upon *κραταιωθῆναι*; (3) that *ἵνα ἐξισχύσητε* expresses the primary purpose, or result that the prayer has in view; (4) that *ἵνα πληρωθῆτε* marks the ultimate purpose, *καταλαβεῖσθαι* indicates intellectual apprehension, *γινῶναι* experimental fruition.

WHAT St. Paul prays for is, that the Ephesians may receive Christ into their “heart of hearts”; they had accepted “the faith,” and the beginnings of a sanctifying emotion had become manifest, but growth in Christian experience was extremely desirable, and this he prays they may attain.

WHY that growth was so desirable he explains:

accepted, when the neophyte put on Christ, and through the *γνώσις* he might make a step in advance; but real progress was first made when Christ was accepted with the heart, and when the mere intellectual *γνώσις* was supplemented by love—the soil in which the Christian could alone hope to grow and bring forth fruit to the end.

But as in the case of what I have called the primary or elementary summary of Christian doctrine, we find that in the as yet unsettled condition of Church government that summary is called by different names,—sometimes it is *ὁδὸς*, sometimes *λογος*, sometimes *πίστις*,—so is it probable that this esoteric *γνώσις* was designated by other equivalent terms. We need not go beyond the Epistle to the Ephesians itself to be convinced that the term *μυστήριον* was used as an equivalent of the other term *γνώσις*:¹ while from 1 Corinthians xv. 51, it would almost seem that any advanced statement was called a *μυστήριον*, any truth, *i.e.*, for which the babe in Christ might not be prepared, though it was meet and right that the more advanced Christian should be instructed in it. Thus in writing on the subject of the resurrection of the body, St. Paul draws attention to what he is about to say on the subject by calling it *μυστήριον*;² in the First Epistle to Timothy iii. 9, he orders that the deacons must be those *ἔχοντας τὸ μυστήριον τῆς πίστεως*; a few verses later he speaks of *τὸ μυστήριον τῆς εὐσεβείας*: and taking these passages in connexion with

(1) Because it would bring profounder insight into the infinite depths of the Divine mysteries, with which, if the *γνώσεις* professed to deal, they would but deal, at best, inadequately.

(2) Because it would bring more intimate *personal union* with Christ on the emotional side, with which the *γνώσεις* did not even pretend to deal.

(3) Because the final grand result would be that the convert would attain, at least in idea, to the fulness of the Divine perfection.

¹ Eph. iii. 4. I cannot accept Meyer's view of this expression, adopted by Alford and Bishop Ellicott. See *infra*.

² *ἰδοὺ μυστήριον ὑμῶν λέγω* (1 Cor. xv. 51).

others in the apostolic writings, nor losing sight of the fact that the expression *τὰ μυστήρια τῆς βασιλείας* is more than once used by our Lord—in a sense which certainly supports the view advocated—bearing in mind too that the use of the term in the Apocalypse can bear this interpretation only—I am irresistibly led to the conclusion that the term *μυστήριον* is in many passages of St. Paul a technical term (if the expression may be allowed), the equivalent of what is elsewhere called *γνώσις*; and that both refer to the advanced summaries of Christian instruction to which, as will appear in the sequel, such frequent allusion is made.

But having arrived at this point, it will be well if I simply recapitulate what has been said.

I. I have pointed out, that at the very beginning of the history of the Christian Church we find a formal summary of Christian doctrine referred to under four different terms: *ἡ ὁδὸς, ἡ διδαχὴ, ὁ λόγος, ἡ πίστις*.

II. That such a summary would be felt as a necessity when no written record of our Lord's life existed, and the Christian Church was increasing enormously day by day.

III. That in the general organization of the Church conspicuous wisdom and foresight were exhibited when emergencies arose, and that it was unlikely so primary a need as this should be left for long unsupplied.

Lastly, assuming that such a summary of fundamental Christian truth was drawn up thus early, that this *λόγος* or *διδαχὴ* was but a brief summary of primary Christian doctrine, possibly drawn up by the Twelve themselves; that the acceptance of this elementary creed was a condition of baptism; but that supplementary to this primary summary there appear to have been expanded statements of more advanced or esoteric doctrine—possibly less generally accepted, probably less widely diffused, and certainly less generally imposed; and that such an expanded state-

ment was called *γνώσις* or *μυστήριον*, and perhaps was known by other designations also.

It remains to consider what fragments of these original formularies of the faith are embedded, and may still be traced, in the writings of the New Testament.

AUGUSTUS JESSOPP.
