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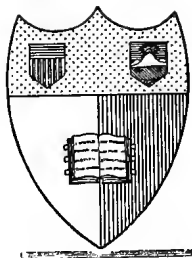
# THE PROBLEM OF JESUS



George Dana Boardman



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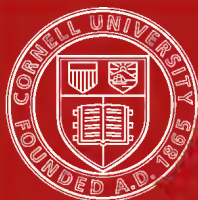
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# THE PROBLEM OF JESUS



THE  
PROBLEM OF JESUS

BY  
GEORGE DANA BOARDMAN

REVISED AND ENLARGED



PHILADELPHIA  
A. J. ROWLAND—1420 Chestnut Street  
1897

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## THE PROBLEM OF JESUS

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*The problem of Jesus is two-fold. First: a philosophical problem—How will you account for him? Secondly: a practical problem—What will you do with him?*

### I.

**The Philosophical Problem: How will you account for Jesus of Nazareth?**

JESUS THE NAZARENE IS THE MOST REMARKABLE PHENOMENON IN HUMAN HISTORY. However much men may differ about him in other respects, they all agree about him in this respect. Let us then examine this matter with a carefulness which a phenomenon so remarkable justifies.

*Jesus is a phenomenon in respect to his personality.*

Glance first at the mental structure of Jesus. There have been many men of gen-

ius in this world. But brilliant as these men of genius were, they were more or less unbalanced. On the other hand, Jesus held his manifold gifts in perfect poise. For example: Jesus was intellectual, yet not frigid; contemplative, yet not abstracted; subtle, yet not casuistical; scrutinizing, yet not morbid; intuitive, yet not unreasoning; original, yet not oracular; aphoristic, yet not arid; judicial, yet not portentous; assertive, yet not dogmatic; piquant, yet not mordant; categorical, yet not brusque; didactic, yet not pedagogic; Socratic, yet not categorical; luminous, yet not scintillant; parabolical, yet not nebulous; paradoxical, yet not contradictory; homely, yet not vulgar; humorous, yet not hilarious; practical, yet not pragmatismal; philosophical, yet not dialectical; telescopic, yet not hazy; microscopic, yet not rabbinic; profound, yet not abysmal; broad, yet not vague; lofty, yet not airy; idealistic, yet not quixotic; unique, yet not eccentric; in brief, a transcendent genius, yet not a transcen-

dental prodigy. Jesus of Nazareth is time's intellectual phenomenon.

Glance now at the moral character of Jesus. There have been many noble characters in this world—glorious heroes, patriots, philanthropists, reformers, martyrs—men and women before whose names Christendom bows, and bows justly. It is around such transcendent characters as these, towering like mountains above the plains of common humanity, that the reverence of the ages loves to wrap the robe of a spotless purity, even as the virgin snow enwraps the distant Alpine ranges. But as the actual attempt to climb those snowy heights discloses here and there huge gorges and beetling precipices; so, alas, does a nearer inspection of these transcendent characters disclose many a defect and deformity which mars and sometimes almost hides the general beauty. Abraham, Moses, David, Socrates, Confucius, Cicero, Paul, Augustine, Alfred, Luther, Cromwell, Washington, Lincoln, were far from faultless, even in the

eyes of men. Only one Character in all history has endured successfully all tests of keenest scrutiny. For nearly nineteen hundred years that Character has been before Christendom, occupying the most conspicuous niche in the temple of this world's heroes. For nearly nineteen hundred years scholars, skilled in all arts of searching criticism, have scrutinized every detail of that Character, as the sculptor searches for signs of flaw in the marble block he proposes to chisel. And what is the result? After nearly two millenniums of fiery criticism the character of Jesus of Nazareth still shines as earth's purest diamond. Not but there have been and still are fierce assailants, who have pointed out here and there what they choose to style flaws. Nevertheless, even unbelief itself assigns to the Man of Nazareth the supremest post of honor among earth's heroes, crowning him King of the kingliest.

Of course it is audacious in me to undertake a portraiture of this incomparable Character. But it is one of the elements

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in our problem, and therefore it must be attempted. Only the swiftest outline can be endeavored. Jesus of Nazareth was, for example : faultless, without dullness ; altruistic, without indiscriminateness ; constructive, without castle-building ; dignified, without stiffness ; delicate, without daintiness ; enthusiastic, without fanaticism ; guileless, without credulousness ; chivalrous, without rashness ; aggressive, without pugnacity ; conciliatory, without sycophancy ; prudent, without opportunism ; modest, without self-depreciation ; gracious, without condescension ; just, without severity ; lenient, without laxity ; flexible, without vacillation ; conservative, without obstructiveness ; progressive, without precipitance ; patient, without stoicism ; persistent, without perverseness ; decisive, without bluntness ; imperative, without imperiousness ; heroic, without coarseness ; independent, without self-insulation ; self-conscious, without self-conceit ; optimistic, without dreaminess ; sad, without gloom ; sympathetic, without mawkishness ;

generous, without prodigality ; frugal, without churlishness ; appreciative, without effusiveness ; indignant, without bitterness ; forgiving, without feebleness ; sociable, without familiarity ; reserved, without moroseness ; conscientious, without bigotry ; self-denying, without asceticism ; unworldly, without unwisdom ; trustful, without improvidence ; saintly, without unctuousness ; virile, without fierceness ; diversified, without contrariety ; in a word, perfect, without unnaturalness.

Recall the countless tributes paid to him, consciously and unconsciously, by the annual commemorations of his birth, his death, his resurrection ; by temples, prayers, praises, sacraments, memoirs, commentaries, creeds, missions, hospitals, paintings, monograms, poems, oratorios, novels, treatises, periodicals, etc. ; especially by the endless variety of assaults. Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, what-



soever things are of good report—if there be any virtue and if there be any praise—all these and such as these are impersonated in the Nazarene.

Aye, Jesus was more than the Nazarene, more even than history's unique hero; Jesus was—to use his own favorite designation of himself, recurring some eighty times in the Gospels—“*The Son of Man.*” Observe: the designation is not “a son of man”; neither is it “a son of men”; neither is it “the son of men”; but it is “THE SON OF MAN.” As such the designation is absolutely unique. See how the Son of Man illustrates in himself all essential human capacities—for example, reason, imagination, conscience, courage, patience, faith, hope, love; blending in his own pure whiteness all colors of all manly virtues, all hues of all womanly graces, as though he himself were Eternal God's own infinite, ever-blessed sunlight. In other words, Jesus is the universal *Homo*; blending in himself all races, ages, capacities, temperaments, types. See

how he blends in himself the race-marks of the three sons of Noah—Shemitic reverence, Hamitic force, Japhetic culture. Jesus is the transcendent *Vir*, from the hem of whose robe virtue is ever flowing; himself alike the radiating focus of all best impulses and the converging focus of all best achievements. Towering above all mankind, yet permeating all mankind, Jesus is mankind's one mighty archetypal, antitypal, consummate man; the symbol of perfected human nature; the Alpha and the Omega of unfolded, full-filled humanity. The Son of Man, and none but he, realizes Auguste Comte's majestic dream of the Apotheosis of Humanity; the very refusal of the great Positivist to enshrine Jesus in his own Pantheon being his own possibly unconscious but certainly transcendent tribute to the Man of men. Jesus of Nazareth is time's personal phenomenon.

Glance now at the prodigious personal claims of this extraordinary Character. Listen to some of his own declarations—

declarations intensely egoistic, yet so natural and credible that we are neither startled by them nor offended. For example :

“Ye have heard that it was said to them of old time. . . But *I* say unto you”; “He that loveth father or mother more than *me* is not worthy of *me*”; “Come unto *me*, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and *I* will give you rest”; “Lo, *I* am with you alway, even unto the end of the world”; “*I* am the bread of life; he that cometh to *me* shall not hunger, and he that believeth on *me* shall never thirst”; “Verily, verily, *I* say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, ye have not life in yourselves; he that eateth *my* flesh and drinketh *my* blood hath eternal life; and *I* will raise him up at the last day”; “*I* am the light of the world”; “Before Abraham was born, *I* am”; “Verily, verily, *I* say unto you, *I* am the door of the sheep; all that came before *me* are thieves and robbers”; “*I* and the Father are one”; “*I* am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth on *me*, though he die, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth on *me* shall never die”; “*I* am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one cometh to

the Father, but through *me*”; “Because *I* live, ye shall live also”; “As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; so neither can ye, except ye abide in *me*; for apart from *me* ye can do nothing”; “*I* am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end”; etc.

Thus from first to last it is a very King who speaks, conjugating all life in the active voice, the imperative mood, the present tense, the personal pronoun of the first person, the singular number. If this is not sovereignty, will you tell me what you mean by sovereignty? In fine, Jesus the Nazarene is time’s phenomenal personality.

*Again, Jesus is a phenomenon in respect to his religion.*

The religion of Jesus is phenomenal first, in respect to its matter. That matter is not an outward matter of ordinances—of meats and drinks; of fast-days and feast-days; of penances and pilgrimages; of rituals and rosaries; of canonicals and theo-

gies. That matter is an inward matter of character—of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. Recall Christ's doctrines; for example, his doctrine of God—God's spirituality, supremacy, righteousness, love, fatherhood. Recall Christ's doctrine of man—man's condition as fallen, defiled, lost, doomed; man's possibility of being born anew, forgiven, cleansed, rectified, transfigured, saved; man's duty of repenting, believing, following, ministering, glorifying, becoming perfect. Recall Christ's doctrine of himself—his divine apostleship, mediation, witnessing, interpreting, revealing, emancipating, cleansing, recovering, transfiguring, recreating. Recall Christ's doctrine of discipleship—his requirement of childlikeness, obedience, humility, purity, self-denial, service, fruitage; his two-fold test of loving the Lord our God with all our hearts, and loving our neighbors as ourselves; in one word, his doctrine of character. Recall Christ's doctrine of the church—its spirituality, co-membership, altruism, unity; its

duty of loving, forgiving, non-resisting, helping, evangelizing, witnessing, teaching, shepherding, upbuilding, harvesting, saving. Recall Christ's doctrine of last things—his doctrine of resurrection, judgment, rewards, heaven, hell, palingenesis. In short, recall Christ's mighty doctrine of the kingdom of heaven, or God's reign in man's soul.

One of the best tests of a religion is the character of the heaven it promises its followers. Compare then, or rather contrast, Christ's heaven of Perfected Character with the heavens of other religions; for example, the heaven of the Greek Elysium, the Buddhistic Nirvana, the Scandinavian Valhalla, the Moslem Paradise, the Indian Hunting-ground, even the materialist's Arcadia of Perfected Environment. Their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges.

Again, the religion of Jesus is phenomenal in respect to its manner. That manner was not by sword, not by legislation,

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not by gold, not by lore, not by ritual, not even by creed (that is, theology as a philosophic system or scientific opinion). But that manner was by character—by witnessing, by teaching, by living, by healing, by self-denying, by helping, by loving, by upbuilding; most of all, by dying. Listen to Jesus' own pathetic yet confident prophecy the Tuesday before he died:

The hour is come that the 'Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone: but if it die, it beareth much fruit. Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out; and I if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all unto myself.

And history is the eloquent record of the fulfillment of this memorable prophecy. Jesus on his cross is the magnet of mankind. His crucifixion proved to be his coronation. Napoleon Bonaparte was not a good man—far, very far from it. But he was a very great man, at least according to

this world's standard of greatness. It is this intellectual greatness, coupled with his own intense egotism, which makes his tribute at St. Helena to the supremacy of Jesus' empire so striking :

“Alexander, Cæsar, Charlemagne, and myself founded great empires : but upon what did the creations of our genius depend ? Upon force. Jesus alone founded his empire upon love, and to this very day millions would die for him.”—*Bertrand's Memoirs.*

Now it is this spirituality of Christ's religion, alike in respect to matter and to manner, which makes Christ himself the inhabitant of all lands, the contemporary of all ages, the exemplar of all ideals.

Glance for a moment at the universality of Christ's religion. All other religions are, comparatively speaking, more or less topographical ; for example, there is the Institute religion of Sinai ; the Priest religion of Egypt ; the Hero religion of Greece ; the Empire religion of Rome ; the Brahma religion of India ; the Buddha religion of



Ceylon; the Valhalla religion of Scandinavia; the Islam religion of Arabia; the Spirit religion of our aboriginal America. But Christianity is the religion of mankind. Baal was Phœnician; Osiris was Egyptian; Apollo was Greek; Mars was Roman; Zoroaster was Persian; Confucius was Chinese; Gautama was Indian; Odin was Norse; Mohammed was Arabian. But Jesus is the Son of Man. And therefore his religion is the religion of the sons of men; equally suited to black and white, mountaineers and lowlanders, landmen and seamen, philosophers and catechumens, patriarchs and children. See how he absorbs and assimilates into his own perfect religion all that is good in other religions—the symbolism of Judea; the aspiration of Egypt; the æstheticism of Greece; the loyalty of Rome; the hopefulness of Persia; the conservatism of China; the mysticism of India; the enthusiasm of Arabia; the energy of Teutonia; the versatilities of Christendom. Like the great sea, his re-

ligion keeps flowingly conterminous with the ever-changing shore-line of every continent, every island, every promontory, every estuary. And this because he is the Son of Man, in whom there is and can be neither Jew nor non-Jew, neither Greek nor Scythian, neither Asiatic nor American, neither male nor female; but all are one new man in him, and he is all in all.

Again, glance at the immortality of Christ's religion. Other religions, so far as we can see, have had their day. The religions of Assyria, Egypt, Greece, Rome, Scandinavia, have gone. The civilized world has long since outgrown the Koran of Mohammed, the Apothegms of Seneca, the Zend-Avesta of Zoroaster, the Analects of Confucius, the Tripitakas of Buddha, the Vedas of Brahma, even many of the institutes of Moses. But the civilized world has not outgrown, hardly even approximated, the teachings of Jesus; we still call many of them, for instance his doctrine of non-resistance, Utopian. True, the vast

majority of mankind still cling to ancestral forms of religion ; for example : Fetichism, Animism, Brahmanism, Zoroastrianism, Confucianism, Buddhism, etc. Little inspiration, however, do these religions give to the living, little comfort to the dying, little grasp on the hereafter. Their gaze is backward rather than forward ; deathward rather than lifeward. For example : the followers of Buddha, claim that Nirvana—that state of existence so nebulous it cannot be affirmed whether it means simple unconsciousness or total extinction—is the supremest goal of aspiration ; and that even Buddha himself is no longer, if indeed he ever was, a self-conscious person, but has himself attained Buddhahood or Nirvana. On the other hand, the followers of Jesus believe that though he was crucified and buried, he has burst the bars of death and is alive forevermore, holding in his own grasp the keys of death and hades, sitting on the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, from hence-

forth expecting till he make his foes his footstool. Believing that they hold personal communion with this risen, immortal, triumphant Nazarene, his followers are ever feeling the inspiration of his life-giving touch, and are therefore ever waking to broader thoughts and diviner catholicities. And so the religion of Jesus Christ is as everlasting as it is universal.

Thus the religion of Jesus Christ, alike in its matter, in its manner, in its universality, in its immortality, is an absolutely phenomenal religion.

*Once more, Jesus is a phenomenon in respect to his influence.*

Observe first his influence over *individuals*. Out of untold myriads who have felt *more or less directly* his sway, I can of course mention but a few, and these few only as typical examples, and of these typical examples, *only such as have departed this life (1896)*. Not that all these whom I shall mention were what we call "Christians"; nevertheless, Jesus manifestly influ-

enced them either in their character or in their work ; he stood among them, even though they knew him not. And in mentioning the following names, it is my purpose to mention no one of them but once ; except in those few cases where the person mentioned answered markedly to more than one type ; for example, Martin Luther was not only a great reformer—he was also conspicuous as a commentator, a theologian, a preacher, a hymnist, a musician, a translator, a hero.

See first of all how Jesus influenced his own *contemporaries* : for instance, his blessed mother, his forerunner, his apostles, his evangelists, his ministering women, Nicodemus of Jerusalem, the woman of Samaria, the centurion of Capernaum, the penitent woman of Simon's feast, Zacchæus of Jericho, the Greek proselytes, the dying robber, Joseph of Arimathea, Saul of Tarsus as one born out of due time. See how Jesus influenced even those who were not his followers ; as when sacrilegious traders fled before

him ; Roman soldiers fell prostrate at sight of him ; heathen Pilate tried to release him ; pagan centurion confessed his divinity ; remorseful Judas hanged himself ; conscience-smitten Sanhedrin bribed Roman sentry. Even the demons felt his power and trembled.

See how Jesus has been influencing men and women ever since.

See for example, how Jesus has influenced *apologists* (not apologizers for Christianity, but defenders of Jesus) : for instance, such ancient apologists as Justin of Shechem, Athenagoras of Athens, Origen of Alexandria, Tertullian of Carthage, Lactantius of Nicomedia, etc. ; such modern apologists as Auberlen of Germany, Chateaubriand of France, Grundtvig of Denmark, Liddon of England, Hopkins of America, etc.

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See how Jesus has influenced *artists*: for instance, such architects as the designers of the abbeys of Westminster, Fountains, Tintern, Glastonbury, Caen, etc., and the cathedrals of Amiens, Canterbury, Chartres, Cologne, Durham, Ely, Exeter, Florence, Gloucester, Lincoln, Notre Dame, Peterborough, Pisa, Rheims, Rouen, Salisbury, St. Paul's, St. Peter's, Strasburg, Winchester, Worcester, York, etc.; such musicians as Ambrose, Gregory, Luther, Tallis, Palestrina, Purcell, Bach, Handel, Haydn, Mendelssohn, Spohr, Gounod, Croft, Dykes, Barnby, Mason, etc.; such painters as Cimabue, Giotto, Masaccio, Angelico, Bellini, Bartolommeo, Correggio, Holbein, Titian, Tintoretto, Domenichino, Guido, Rembrandt, Murillo, West, Blake, Allston, Delaroche, Scheffer, Overbeck, Millet, Doré, Bida, etc.; such engravers as Dürer, Müller, Longhi, Morghen, etc.; such sculptors as Pisano, Ghiberti, Donatello, Vischer, Thorwaldsen, etc.; such all-comprehending artists (architectural, musical, pictorial, sculptural) as

Leonardo, Michaelangelo, Raphael; to say nothing of such writers on sacred art as Anna Jameson, John Ruskin, etc.

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See how Jesus has influenced *biblicists*: for instance, such archæologists as Reland, Bingham, Winer, Smith, etc.; such commentators as Origen the Greek, Augustine the Latin, Calvin the Frenchman, Grotius the Dutchman, Meyer the German, Godet the Swiss, Lightfoot the Englishman, Hackett the American, etc.; such cyclopedists as Fairbairn, Herzog, Eadie, Kitto, Smith, etc.; such geographers as Burckhardt, Palmer, Ritter, Thomson, etc.; such lexicographers as Cremer, Girdlestone, Grimm, Trench, etc.; such textuaries ("critics" if you prefer) as Erasmus, Bengel, Griesbach, Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Abbot, Hort, etc.; such translators as Jerome (Latin), Wycliffe (English), Luther (Ger-



man), Segond (French), etc.; such writers of analyses, concordances, introductions, etc., as Barth, Cruden, Hitchcock, Horne, Young, etc.; in sum, such a mansided biblicist (archæologist, explorer, harmonist, lexicographer, etc.) as Edward Robinson.

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See how Jesus has influenced *biographers* (I mean only those who have written more or less complete memoirs of him): for instance, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John; Andrews, Baumgarten, Beecher, Bonaventura, Caspari, Crosby, De Pressensé, Dupanloup, Ebrard, Edersheim, Ewald, Fleetwood, Hanna, Hase, Herder, Keim, Klopstock, Lange, Mercier, Monod, Neander, Plumptre, Schaff, Schleiermacher, Seely, Sepp, Taylor, Weiss, Wittichen, etc.; to say nothing of such harmonists (chronological arrangers of the gospel-biographies) as Tatian, Greswell, Lightfoot, Robinson, Strong, etc. Even

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Strauss and Renan, in their Lives of Jesus, do him the homage of their elaborate doubts.

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See how Jesus has influenced *colonists* : for instance, Robinson of Leyden, Bradford of Massachusetts, Williams of Rhode Island, Bogardus of New York, Penn of Pennsylvania, Calvert of Maryland, Raleigh of Virginia, Marion of the Carolinas, Oglethorpe of Georgia, Hughes of Tennessee, Zinzendorf of Herrnhut, etc.

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See how Jesus has influenced *educators* : for instance, Benedict of Nursia, Alcuin of York, Ascham of London, Sturm of Strasburg, Comenius of Moravia, Raikes of Gloucester, Pestalozzi of Zürich, Bell of St. Andrews, Lancaster of London, Arnold of

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Rugby, Mary Lyon of Mount Holyoke, Froebel of Oberweissbach, Wayland of Providence, Duff of Calcutta, Hopkins of Williamstown, etc., to say nothing of the many Christian founders of various kinds of institutions (academic, philanthropic, reformatory, etc.), or of the multitudes of Christian teachers in schools of all sorts, Sunday and week-day.

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See how Jesus has influenced *heroes*: for instance, Godfrey of Bouillon, Tancred of Galilee, Robert the Bruce, Joan of Arc, Bayard the chevalier, Columbus of Genoa, Raleigh of London, Sidney of Penshurst, Gustavus of Sweden, Havelock of Lucknow, Lee of Manassas, Grant of Appomattox, Livingstone of Chitambo, Gordon of Khartum, etc.: to say nothing of the countless ungazetted heroes and heroines who

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have for Jesus' sake endured every form of trial in the home and in the shop.

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See how Jesus has influenced *historians* (to mention only ecclesiastical): for instance, Luke, Eusebius, Bede, Bossuet, Mosheim, Schröckh, Gieseler, Neander, Ranke, Baur, Hagenbach, Kurtz, Muller, Bunsen, Burnett, Milman, Montalembert, D'Aubigné, Schaff, Robertson, Smith, etc.

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See how Jesus has influenced *lawyers*: for instance, Tertullian the champion, Selden the scholar, Hale the jurist, Blackstone the commentator, Mansfield the statesman, Marshall the constitutionalist, Jay the phil-

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anthropist, Kent the chancellor, Webster the orator, Maine the antiquarian, etc.

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See how Jesus has influenced *linguists* (to speak only of missionary translators of the Bible): for instance, Eli Smith into Arabic, William Goodell into Armeno-Turkish, William Carey into Bengali, Robert Morrison into Chinese, Henry Martyn into Persian, etc., to say nothing of the multitudes of missionaries who have translated Scriptures into hundreds of heathen tongues and dialects, in many cases even inventing alphabets, and so laying for their converts the very foundations of the only literature they possess.

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See how Jesus has influenced *martyrs*: for instance, Stephen of Jerusalem, Antipas

of Pergamum, Ignatius of Antioch, Polycarp of Smyrna, Irenæus of Lyons, Perpetua and Felicitas of Carthage, Sebastian of Narbonne, Albanus of Verulam, Boniface of Friesland, Bruno of Brauenburg, Huss and Jerome of Prague, Latimer and Ridley of Oxford, Tyndale of Vilvorde, Rogers of Smithfield, Margaret of Wigtonshire, the Gordons of Erromanga, Hannington of Uganda, the Stewarts of Ku Cheng, etc. ; to say nothing of the anonymous thousands and probably millions who have fallen by organized persecutions, as under the Roman emperors, among the Lollards of England, the Waldenses of the Alps, the adherents to the Reformation, the early converts in many mission fields, the Armenian Christians in Turkey, etc. ; or of the countless saints who have bravely suffered practical martyrdom for Jesus in daily life in their own obscure homes.

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See how Jesus has influenced *merchants*: for instance, Samuel Budgett, Nathaniel R. Cobb, the Lawrences, Peter Cooper, George Peabody, William E. Dodge, Samuel Morley, George H. Stuart, etc.

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See how Jesus has influenced *missionaries*: for instance, Paul the apostle to the Gentiles, Irenæus the apostle to the Gauls, Denis the apostle to the Franks, Gregory the apostle to the Armenians, Ulfilas the apostle to the Goths, Patrick the apostle to the Irish, Columba the apostle to the Caledonians, Augustine the apostle to the English, Boniface the apostle to the Germans, Anskar the apostle to the Scandinavians, Cyril the apostle to the Bohemians, Methodius the apostle to the Moravians, Gall the apostle to the Swiss, Bruner the apostle to the Prussians, Xavier the apostle to the Japanese, Eliot the apostle to the Indians,

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Egede the apostle to the Greenlanders, Schwartz the apostle to the Tamils, Carey the apostle to the Hindus, Judson the apostle to the Burmans, Morrison the apostle to the Chinese, Wolff the apostle to the Jews, Williams the apostle to the South Sea Islanders, Boardman the apostle to the Karens, Moffatt the apostle to the Bechuanas, Ellis the apostle to the Polynesians, Patteson the apostle to the Melanesians, Mackay the apostle to the Bugandas, McAll the apostle to the French, Jewett the apostle to the Telugus, etc.

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See how Jesus has influenced *novelists*: for instance, Walter Scott, George Borrow, Elizabeth R. Charles, Charles Dickens, Georg Ebers, Victor Hugo, Charles Kingsley, Charles Reade, Robert L. B. Stevenson, Harriet B. Stowe, etc.

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See how Jesus has influenced *philanthropists*: for instance, Dorcas of Joppa, Vincent de Paul, St. Bernard, the Buxtons, Thomas Clarkson, Joseph G. Gurney, John Howard, Granville Sharp, William Wilberforce, Jean F. Oberlin, Felix Neff, Theodore Fliedner, Hermann Francke, Mary Carpenter, Elizabeth Fry, Dorothea Dix, Sister Dora, John Woolman, Samuel G. Howe, Wendell Phillips, the Gallaudets, Henry Berg, Charles L. Brace, George W. Childs, Samuel C. Armstrong, Earl Shaftesbury, etc.; to say nothing of the many Christian founders of hospitals, asylums, orphanages, orders of charity, homes, institutes, schools (academies, colleges, seminaries), settlements, etc.

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See how Jesus has influenced *philosophers*: for instance, Justin of Shechem, Bacon of Oxford, Bacon of Verulam, Des-

cartes of Touraine, Pascal of Port Royal, Locke of Wrington, Cudworth of Cambridge, Berkeley of Cloyne, Leibnitz of Leipsic, Clarke of Norwich, Reid of Glasgow, Kant of Königsberg, Schleiermacher of Berlin, Coleridge of Highgate, Schelling of Stuttgart, Cousin of Paris, Hamilton of Edinburgh, Delitzsch of Berlin, Whewell of Cambridge, Lotze of Bautzen, McCosh of Princeton, etc.

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See how Jesus has influenced *physicians*: for instance, Luke the Beloved, William Harvey, Sir Thomas Browne, Hermann Boerhaave, Albrecht von Haller, Benjamin Rush, John Abercrombie, Sir Charles Bell, Sir Henry Holland, Sir Andrew Clarke, Sir James Y. Simpson, D. Hayes Agnew, Benjamin W. Richardson, etc.

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See how Jesus has influenced *poets*: for instance, Caedmon the Northumbrian, Dante Alighieri, Geoffrey Chaucer, Torquato Tasso, Edmund Spenser, William Shakespeare, Giles Fletcher, George Herbert, Francis Quarles, John Milton, Henry Vaughan, Joseph Addison, Edward Young, Henry Kirke White, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Robert Southey, William Wordsworth, John Keble, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Robert Browning, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, James Russell Lowell, Alfred Tennyson, John Greenleaf Whittier, etc.; see how Jesus has influenced hymnists; for instance, such Greek hymnists as Anatolius of Constantinople (“*Ζοφεράς τρικυμίας*”), John of Damascus (“*Ἀναστάσεως ἡμέρα*”), Stephen of Sabas (“*Κοπὸν τε καὶ κάματος*”), etc.; such Latin hymnists as Bernard of Clairvaux (“*Jesu, dulcis memoria*”), Bernard of Cluny (“*Urbs Syon aurea*”), Thomas of Celano (“*Dies iræ, dies illa*”), etc.; such German hymnists as Martin Luther (“*Ein’ feste Burg ist unser Gott*”), Paul Gerhardt (“*O*

Haupt voll Blut und Wunden"), Philip Nicolai ("Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme"), etc.; such translators of hymns as Edward Caswall, John M. Neale, Catharine Winkworth, etc.; such English hymnists as Sarah F. Adams ("Nearer, my God, to thee"), Sir John Bowring ("In the cross of Christ I glory"), William Cowper ("There is a fountain filled with blood"), Philip Doddridge ("Jesus, I love thy charming name"), Charlotte Elliott ("Just as I am, without one plea"), Frederick W. Faber ("There's a wideness in God's mercy"), John Fawcett ("Blest be the tie that binds"), Reginald Heber ("From Greenland's icy mountains"), Thomas Ken ("Praise God, from whom all blessings flow"), Henry F. Lyte ("Abide with me; fast falls the even-tide"), Samuel Medley ("Oh, could I speak the matchless worth"), James Montgomery ("Hail to the Lord's Anointed"), John H. Newman ("Lead, kindly Light! amid the encircling gloom"), John Newton ("How sweet the name of Jesus sounds"), Edward

Perronet ("All hail the power of Jesus' name"), Robert Robinson ("Come, thou Fount of every blessing"), Anne Steele ("Father! whate'er of earthly bliss"), Samuel Stennett ("Majestic sweetness sits enthroned"), Augustus Toplady ("Rock of Ages, cleft for me"), Isaac Watts ("When I survey the wondrous cross"), Charles Wesley ("Jesus, lover of my soul"), etc.; such American hymnists as Phoebe H. Brown ("I love to steal awhile away"), Phoebe Cary ("One sweetly solemn thought"), Arthur C. Coxe ("Oh, where are kings and empires now"), George Duffield ("Stand up! stand up! for Jesus"), Timothy Dwight ("I love thy kingdom, Lord"), Edward Hopper ("Jesus, Saviour, pilot me"), John Leland ("The day is past and gone"), Ray Palmer ("My faith looks up to thee"), Edmund H. Sears ("It came upon the midnight clear"), Samuel F. Smith ("My country, 'tis of thee"), etc.; to say nothing of converted hymnists, for instance, Krishnu Pal ("O thou, my soul, forget no

more"), etc. Jesus is the real *motif* (conscious or unconscious) of all true poetry and song.

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See how Jesus has influenced *preachers*: for instance, Apollos the Alexandrian, Basil the Great, Gregory the Nazianzen, John the golden-mouthed, Bernard the enthusiastic, Tauler the mystical, Fletcher the blameless, Baxter the saintly, Massillon the oratorical, Whitefield the impassioned, Wesley the zealous, Hall the eloquent, Herder the versatile, Evans the dramatic, Channing the philanthropic, Simeon the evangelical, Schleiermacher the many-sided, Irving the eccentric, Alexander the scholarly, Finney the searching, Tholuck the sympathetic, Lacordaire the intense, Monod the devout, Robertson the chivalric, Beecher the pro-

gressive, Spurgeon the conservative, Brooks the manly, etc.

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See how Jesus has influenced *publicists*: for instance, Grotius the accomplished, Puffendorf the historian, Vattel the jurist, Wheaton the diplomatist, Lieber the scholar, Woolsey the educator, etc.

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See how Jesus has influenced *reformers*: for instance, such ecclesiastical reformers as Hildebrand of Italy, Wycliffe of England, Huss of Bohemia, Luther of Germany, Zwingli of Switzerland, Groot of Holland, Farel of France, Knox of Scotland, Hooper the Puritan, Fox the Quaker, Wesley the Methodist, Zinzendorf the Moravian, Döllinger the Old Catholic, etc.; such political

reformers as Arnold of Brescia, Savonarola of Florence, Cobden of London, Curtis of New York, etc. ; such sociological reformers as Thomas Chalmers, Frederick D. Maurice, Charles Kingsley, Louis Blanc, Cardinal Manning, etc. ; such temperance reformers as Beecher of Connecticut, Mathew of Ireland, Gough of Massachusetts, etc.

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See how Jesus has influenced *scientists* (you tell me that the Academy is skeptical; let me then appeal both to numbers and to weight): see, for instance, how Jesus has influenced such astronomers as Nicholas Copernicus, Galileo Galilei, John Flamsteed, the Herschels, Jeremiah Horrocks, Johann Kepler, etc.; such chemists as Robert Boyle, John Dalton, Sir Humphrey Davy, Louis Pasteur, Justus von Liebig, etc.; such geologists as William Buckland, the Conybeares, James D. Dana, Edward Hitchcock,



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Hugh Miller, Alexander Winchell, etc. ; such inventors as Richard Arkwright, Samuel F. B. Morse, Eli Whitney, etc. ; such mathematicians as Isaac Barrow, Thomas Bradwardine, René Descartes, Leonard Euler, the Gregories, Thomas Hill, Gottfried W. von Leibnitz, John Napier, Isaac Newton, Blaise Pascal, Benjamin Pierce, Mary Somerville, Emanuel Swedenborg, William Whewell, William Whiston, Matthew Young, etc. ; such naturalists as Louis Agassiz, John Bachman, George Cuvier, Asa Gray, George J. Romanes, Henry Drummond, etc. ; such physicists as Roger Bacon, David Brewster, Ebenezer Kinnersley, the Sillimans, Joseph Henry, James Clerk-Maxwell, Michael Faraday, etc.

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See how Jesus has influenced *statesmen* : for instance, Alfred the Great, Coligny the hero, William the Silent, Mornay the Huguenot, Cromwell the protector, Chatham

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the commoner, Burke the thinker, Washington the patriot, Mackintosh the scholar, Guizot the historian, Peel the reformer, Lincoln the martyr, Bright the orator, etc.<sup>1</sup>

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See how Jesus has influenced *theologians*: for instance, Paul the forensic, Origen the exegetical, Athanasius the Christological, Gregory the profound, Hilary the acute, Augustine the comprehensive, Anselm the scholastic, Bernard the mellifluous, Bonaventura the seraphic, Aquinas the angelic, Scotus the subtle, Luther the impetuous, Melancthon the gentle, Calvin the systematic, Butler the apologetic, Edwards the metaphysical, Swedenborg the apocalyptic, Ullmann the devout, Rothe the harmonious, Müller the modest, Ritschl the orthodox-heterodox, Martensen the spiritual, Lim-

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<sup>1</sup> William Ewart Gladstone is such a conspicuous instance of Christian statesmanship, oratory, and society building, that, though still living, I depart in his case from the chronological limitation stated on p. 24.

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borch the Arminian, Mohler the Roman Catholic, Hooker the Episcopalian, Barclay the Quaker, Molinos the Quietist, Fuller the Baptist, Bushnell the Congregationalist, Hodge the Presbyterian, Watson the Methodist, Twisten the Lutheran, Dorner the Reformed, Ballou the Universalist, etc.

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See how Jesus has influenced *writers*: they are as countless "as autumnal leaves that strew the brooks in Vallombrosa"; let me mention but one name; his genius shall represent them all—*John Bunyan*.

See how Jesus has influenced even *skeptics* themselves: I might make many citations; let the following from John Stuart Mill stand as a sample:

About the life and sayings of Jesus, there is a stamp of personal originality combined with profundity of insight which, if we abandon the idle expectations of finding scientific precision where something very different was aimed at, must place the Prophet

of Nazareth, even in the estimation of those who have no belief in his inspiration, in the very first rank of the men of sublime genius of whom our species can boast. When this pre-eminent genius is combined with the qualities of probably the greatest moral reformer and martyr to that mission who ever existed upon earth, religion cannot be said to have made a bad choice in pitching on this man as the ideal representative and guide of humanity ; nor even now would it be easy, even for an unbeliever, to find a better translation of the rule of virtue from the abstract into the concrete than the endeavor so to live that Christ would approve our life.—*Essays on Religion*, p. 254.

See how Jesus is *still* influencing men and women to this very day, still transfiguring into his own likeness Jews and non-Jews, savages and sages, profligates and pharisees. In fact, there has never been an age in the Christian era, not even in the apostolic, when Jesus, practically speaking, influenced so many persons, or influenced them so profoundly, as in this nineteenth century of his grace. For it must be admitted that in addition to the millions who

openly confess him there are all through Christendom unknown multitudes of latent confessors who, repelled by present ecclesiastical tests, have never joined any earthly church, but who, if the crisis should demand, would boldly come forth, not indeed to entomb him, but to enthrone him.

Hitherto I have spoken of the personal influence of Jesus over individuals. Let me now speak of the general influence of Jesus over *society at large*. See, for instance, how it is Jesus himself who, in virtue of his own personality and character, is making the difference between Christendom and heathendom. See how the spirit of Jesus is permeating, like a healing elixir, the disordered framework of society ; opening its clogged veins, expelling its morbid humors, touching its springs of health, restoring it to the image of God. See how under his influence, or the sense of his constraining love, Christian missionaries are giving to pagans the boons of regeneration, liberty, industries, property, peace, education, chas-

tity, temperance, virtues, amenities, home. See how his influence is softening the barbarism of the world's customs; abolishing its pitiless suicides and infanticides and suttees, its horrible self-mutilations, its brutal wars, its cruel slaveries, its private duels, its loose divorces, its filthy imprisonments, its scaffold shames, its murderous dram-shops, its secret seraglios, its satanic gossips. See how his influence is reconstructing human society: founding missions, asylums, hospitals, orphanages, schools, universities, institutes for heart and mind and body; ameliorating the condition of animals; exalting ideals; transfiguring childhood; uplifting woman; ennobling jurisprudence; establishing and maintaining rights of labor, of property, of person, of name, of conscience, of manhood; rearing courts of arbitration—personal, corporational, national, international; exalting the individual by making him feel that he is a corporate member of human society; exalting human society by making its members

feel that they are members one of another; equipoising mankind into one corporate unity; in brief ushering in the Kingdom of God.

See how the Nazarene has influenced *chronology* itself. Why is it, O Christian, that you do not observe the Mosaic Sabbath by worshiping in the synagogue on Saturdays? It is because you believe that Jesus rose from the dead on Sunday, and you revere him so much that you prefer his resurrection-day as your Sabbath. How, O skeptic, do you date your letters? It may be that on last Christmas-day you wrote one of special importance. In dating it, why did you not reckon from the Greek Olympiad? from Rome's Foundation? from Mohammed's Flight? from Buddha's Birth? from Comte's Calendar? Why did you date it, December twenty-fifth, 1896? Because, according to the common chronology, Jesus of Bethlehem was born 1896 years ago; this is why atheists and believers alike say, *Anno Domini*—IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD,

1897. Every almanac in Christendom is a tribute to Jesus.

See how the Man of Nazareth has consecrated the commonest things : transfiguring water into baptism, eating and drinking into holy communion, society into church, cross into throne, etc.

In sum, see how the Lamb of Calvary is reorganizing human chaos, reversing human instincts, revolutionizing human tendencies, co-ordinating human faculties, transfiguring human sensibilities, marshaling human powers, disclosing human potentialities, celestializing human character, uprearing the temple of the New Mankind, transforming earth's Babylons into heaven's Jerusalem. The Nazarene Teacher is himself the universal Seminary, at whose feet mankind is evermore learning whatsoever things are true in theology, in philosophy, in science, in history, in poetry, in art, in ethics, in religion. The Babe of Bethlehem is the contemporary of all times ; the Man of Calvary is the inhabitant of all lands. In short,



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Jesus the Christ is the watershed of human history—all yonder side of him flowing into comparative oblivion, all the hither side of him flowing into certain immortality—himself the august

Lever to uplift the earth,  
And roll it in another course.

—*In Memoriam.*

And Jesus Christ has never been so influential as he is at this very hour. In vain have the kings of the earth set themselves in array against Jehovah, in vain have the rulers of the world taken counsel against Jehovah's Christ, saying,

Let us break their bands asunder,  
And cast away their cords from us.

—*Ps. 2.*

Time has proved that Julian the apostate was no match for Matthew the publican; that Hume the philosopher was no match for Mark the evangelist; that Gibbon the historian was no match for Luke the physi-

cian; that Voltaire the scoffer was no match for John the exile; that Strauss the professor was no match for Peter the fisherman; that Renan the scholar was no match for Paul the tentmaker; that Satan the destroyer is no match for Jesus the up-builder. Do you talk about a waning Christianity? You might as well talk about a waning Deity!

Thus Jesus' personality, Jesus' religion, Jesus' influence, is time's overshadowing phenomenon.

And so emerges our philosophical problem—

HOW WILL YOU ACCOUNT FOR THIS UNPARALLELED PHENOMENON — JESUS THE NAZARENE?

It is a fair question to ask. A phenomenon so stupendous demands explanation. Among the axioms of reasoning are these: "From nothing, nothing comes"; "every effect must have a cause"; "every effect must have an adequate cause," etc. Here

is a colossal effect ; what caused it ? We are living in an age of scientific inquiry, inductive sciences, philosophical generalizations. I have brought before you a vast mass of material, mental and moral—some of it labeled, much of it only suggested. Gathering typical samples from almost every variety of best human thought, emotion, activity, character, I have shown you that Jesus of Nazareth canopies all these varieties of best human achievements and possibilities, even as God's own sky canopies all varieties of earth's phenomena—lands, seas, forests, mountains, structures, possibilities. And now my question is: How will you account for this unparalleled phenomenon ? It is a question alike momentous, philosophical, scientific, pertinent.

*How will you account for the personality of Jesus ?* Recall the age in which he lived—an age of Cæsarean imperialism, selfishness, debauchery, brutality, atheism ; an age of Jewish traditionalism, conceit, bigotry. Yet, despite all this, Jesus of

Nazareth is earth's solitary ideal, time's transcendent miracle. Instead of Christ's character having been the product of his age, that character was an absolute anachronism. Instead of Christ's personality having been an evolution, that personality was a cataclysm of graciousness, as though himself had come down from heaven a parentless Melchizedek, without biographical father or mother, without historic beginning of days or prophetic end of time. How then will you account for this unique break in the law of heredity, this tremendous exception to the law of environment? You can account for Plato—he sat at the feet of Socrates. You can account for Cicero—he was trained in the statutes of the Twelve Tables. You can account for Newton—he pondered in the cloisters of Cambridge. But how will you account for Jesus, who never argued with Socrates by whispering Ilissus, or strode along with Cicero by golden Tiber, or meditated with Newton by rippling Cam? How happens it that Jerusalem with

her Temple, Egypt with her Heliopolis, Athens with her Academy, Rome with her Forum, France with her Sorbonne, Germany with her Heidelberg, England with her Oxford, America with her Harvard—how happens it that these, and all such as these, have never produced the peer, at best only dim hints, of the Nazarene? How then will you account for the personality of Jesus? It is a fair question to ask: Whose Son is he?

*Again, how will you account for the religion of Jesus?* Recall again his environment — his dwarfing surroundings of rabbinism, traditionalism, trivialities. Yet, despite that unfortunate heredity, that disastrous environment, this obscure Galilean, this young, unlured, despised, crucified carpenter founded a religion so seminal and prophetic that even now, after nearly nineteen hundred years, there are many good people who still call it utopian—a religion supremely fresh, pure, lofty, profound, catholic, controlling, immortal. How then will

you account for this most remarkable moral phenomenon—the religion of Jesus Christ—in one mighty word, Christianity? Whose Son is this Founder of it?

*Once more, how will you account for the influence of Jesus?* Ponder his boundless personal sway over men. Recall the tremendous hold he has had on mankind from the beginning, and never so tremendous as to-day. Recall the sweeping victories of the early church, and this in spite of dreadful imperial persecutions; the homage implied in the simple initials, B. C. and A. D.; the many and enormous differences between Christendom and pagandom; the wonderful transformations of personal character; the mysterious help that comes to his followers in time of trouble; the sense of communion with him that his people have; the readiness with which, were it needful, millions would die for him. How then will you account for this influence of Jesus—an influence so personal, so continuous, so intense, so all-dominating? Again, I declare,

it is a fair question to ask: Whose Son is he?

Here then is our philosophical problem: How will you account for this most amazing phenomenon, JESUS CHRIST—a phenomenon absolutely unparalleled in human space and time? Once more I assert, it is a fair question to ask: Whose Son is this Jesus Christ? We all admit that he was David's son. How is it that, as history proves, he is also humanity's Lord?

## II.

And so we pass from the philosophical problem, How will you account for Jesus of Nazareth? to

**The Practical Problem: What will you  
do with this Jesus?**

First, IT IS A MOMENTOUS QUESTION. Recall his stupendous claims. He declared that he was a teacher sent from God; he taught that he is the sole deliverer of mankind; he claims that he is still alive, and

from his throne in the heavens demands earth's allegiance and adoration; he announces that he is to be the final judge of mankind. These are tremendous claims. Hence the question, What will you do with him? is a tremendous question. If he is to be believed, our treatment of him is decisive of our own destinies. *What* then will you do with Jesus of Nazareth?

Again, IT IS AN EXECUTIVE QUESTION. It is not a question of theory—it is a question of practice; not a question of creed, but a question of deed; not a question of church, but a question of life; not a question of opinion, but a question of obedience. What then will you *do* with Jesus of Nazareth?

Again, IT IS A PERSONAL QUESTION. Practically speaking, you cannot separate Christianity from Christ. If there is any Christianity it is because there is a Christ. And this Christ demands a personal coronation at our hands. Neutrality at this point is impossible. Neutrality?—neutrality is



itself hostility. What then will *you* do with Jesus of Nazareth?

Once more, IT IS A PRESSING QUESTION. Recall Pilate's dilemma in his own Praetorium, "What then shall I do with Jesus, who is called the Christ?" But Pilate was not the only man who has been summoned to ask this tremendous question. There is a profound sense in which it is awfully true that Jesus of Nazareth is still on our hands, still awaiting our decision concerning him—whether to deny him or to confess him. Pilate's question is an immortal question, which you and I, not less than Pilate himself, must answer. Scripture asks the question; so does history; so does literature; so does art; so does philosophy; so does science; so does civilization; so does morality; so does conscience; so does providence; so do I. As it was in the days of his flesh, so it is to-day—Jesus can in no wise be hid. What then will you *now* do with Jesus of Nazareth?

How long then, O friend, will you halt

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between two opinions in this stupendous matter? What will you do now with the Man of men? Do not answer as Pontius Pilate answered. Be true to your diviner instincts. With the once doubting but finally believing and adoring Thomas, exclaim—

“MY LORD AND MY GOD!”













