

# The Certainty and Significance of Christ's Resurrection

Proposition: The first appearing of Christ, and his resurrection from the dead, is a fact that cannot be blotted from history, and one which will vitally affect the future.

*Whatever view you may take of Christ, you cannot exclude him from history; he is one of those stubborn things that men call facts. You may ignore him, but you cannot expunge him. You may neglect or misinterpret him, but you cannot get rid of him. He has left an indelible impression on the condition and institutions of mankind. Every church is in some way a memento of him. Every organized Christian state is a monument to his historical memory. He is before our eyes everywhere. His name is so ingrained in the fabric of our daily life, that you cannot issue an invoice or execute a deed, or even write a letter without Christ appearing on the face of it in the date -- A.D. "anno Domini," the year of our Lord.*

## **Christ: A Stubborn Fact of History**

Now, this matter of undeniable fact calls for explanation. How came this ascendancy of a particular name in all the realms of civilization? It must be due to circumstances of a very powerful and real character. Names do not come of themselves. A name does not come into circulation unless the man himself is there first of all, and does something to bring it into circulation. We are acquainted with many great names in various countries and various connections; but whoever heard of a great name without a great man to cause it? We have all heard of Hitler, at whose name years ago Europe turned pale. Should we ever have heard of him if there had not been the German Dictator who wrought such havoc on the continent? We have all heard of Napoleon, who thundered through Europe at the head of victorious armies, upsetting thrones, and overthrowing constitutions. But who would seek to account for his

name except by the fact that there was such a soldier-Emperor who performed the exploits that made his name great? We have heard of Mahomet with his fierce squadrons of turbaned cavalry; of Alexander the Great, the Macedonian madman, who overthrew Persia, and fought his way through the world; of Cyrus, the destroyer of Babylon, and of many other celebrities. But who ever heard of a man's name great in history who never existed?

The name of Christ has been ringing through the world during all the centuries that have elapsed since his crucifixion. What is the cause lying at the root of this simple and notorious fact? He led no armies, raised no sedition, employed no violence, and yet his name is above every name. You might get through life without hearing of Cyrus or Alexander or even of Napoleon, and perhaps of Hitler, but who could live in the world without hearing of Christ?

What is the cause of this? It must have a cause. Find it. You can find it! In the case of all other famous men, you can tell exactly how they came into notoriety. and by what acts and deeds and events they rose into influence. Here is a name more influential than all. How did it come about? Let us go back to the facts and look at them.

### **The Irrefutable Evidence of the 1st Century**

We turn over the pages of history into the First Century. Who have we here that can testify regarding Christ? We might say we have Paul, we have the apostles, we have Christ himself. But let us advance Nero, a witness of a different character. Who was Nero? All the world has heard of him. One of \*he most profligate and cruel of the Roman Emperors. He burnt Rome, and threw the blame on the Christians. He lit the amphitheater with their burning bodies. He affixed living Christians to stakes fixed in the ground at regular intervals round. and having had them wrapped in skins and soaked in oil, he had the fire applied when they wanted light, and in his perverted malignity enjoyed the tortures that gave the light. His case shows us the Christians as a numerous and active class shortly

after the middle of the first century -- about 30 years after the crucifixion of Christ.

How numerous the Christians were we learn in a very remarkable way -- out of the mouth of the enemy. Pliny, a provincial Roman Governor, wrote to the Emperor Trajan to know what he was to do with the Christians. An edict just promulgated required him to suppress them, and he was new to the business, and did not exactly know how to do it. The Christians held on to Christ and promulgated his faith, so that in whole regions the temples were shut up, and the idolatries suspended. Pliny's letter belongs to the early part of the second century, but the men lived in the end of the first century, and are witnesses to the fact of the name of Christ being a powerful influence in the Roman world at that time.

Why was that so?

Why was it that the name of a young Galilean carpenter, belonging to an obscure province in the Roman Empire, who had been crucified as a felon, by the Roman and Jewish authorities in Jerusalem became so influential throughout the Roman Empire as to create a party that at last permeated the army and subverted the very religion and politics of the State?

What was there in connection with Christ that could lead to such a powerful influence?

In answering this question, we must be careful to deal with facts and not with fancies. The world is full of fancies, guesses, and speculations; they are bootless and foolish. We want facts -- truth. Can we ascertain them and it? Certainly we can, as we shall try to show.

The first of these facts is the New Testament in our hands.

The veracity of the authenticity of the New Testament has never been successfully challenged. It is acknowledged to be the production of those men who claimed to have written it. No book

has been so closely scrutinized as this one; and no book has come more successfully through such scrutiny. It has been handed down through a crowd of spectators from the very first. In addition to this, it has been freely quoted by writers in all the intervening centuries, so that we have a guarantee that does not exist in the case of any other book that this is the book written by the companions of Christ.

### **The Unimpeachable Evidence of Eye-Witnesses**

Next, consider that the writers of the New Testament, wrote in the character of eye-witnesses. They did not narrate matters at second-hand. They did not profess to be mere purveyors of the knowledge of other men. Take Peter (2 Peter 1:16):

"We have not followed cunningly devised fables when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were EYE-WITNESSES!"

Take John:

"That which we have SEEN AND HEARD declare we unto you that ye also may have fellowship with as" (1 John 1:1-3).

Take Luke's declaration:

"Those who from the beginning were EYE-WITNESSES. . . ." (Luke 1:2).

Take the declaration of the apostles to the authorities in open court:

"We cannot but speak the things which we have SEEN AND HEARD" (Acts 4:20).

Thus you have in the New Testament, beyond all reasonable question or cavil, the very testimony of the men who lived along with Christ nineteen hundred years ago. The only question to consider before introducing their testimony is - were they honest

men? And were they capable of judging of the evidence of their senses? As to the first point, it may be remarked that if ever the veracity of witnesses are guaranteed to subsequent posterity, it is the veracity of the apostles. If men were advantaged by the evidence they give, you always feel that though they may be honest men, you have not the guarantee of truthfulness that you would have if their testimony told against them. Now, how is it in this case? Why, that the apostles, and all who were associated with them in this matter, were sufferers and only sufferers by the testimony they delivered. We all know in a general way that they suffered persecution, but take their case as circumstantially portrayed in the following places:

"I thank that God hath set forth us, the apostles, last as it were appointed unto death.... for we are made a spectacle unto the world and to angels and unto men.... Even unto this present hour we both hunger and thirst and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place" (1 Cor. 4:9).

"For him (Christ) I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them dung that I may win Christ" (Phil. 3:8).

As to their capability of judging of the matters to which they bear witness. their writings, apart from inspiration, afford proof of the highest discernment. But the matters to which they bear witness are not such as call for the highest gift. They are not matters requiring powers of recondite investigation. It is no affair of abstruse calculation. It is not a matter calling forth profound powers of judgment. They are matters on which our courts every day allow very ordinary people to be competent to give reliable evidence on. and that is the evidence of one's senses, as to whether a certain man was seen so many times under such and such circumstances.

### **What the Eye-witnesses Claim**

And now. as the New Testament is the very testimony of the men who were with Christ, who were proved true men by their

submission to death for their testimony, and capable men by the writing of such a book, the only remaining question is, what is their testimony as to the cause of the name of Christ becoming so widespread in the Roman Empire in a day when there were no speedy means of transport or methods of universally proclaiming such news?

In brief, it is this, that the writers were companions of Christ for a certain number of years; that they accompanied him in his journeyings, and heard his teaching, which they reproduce in these documents; that they saw his miracles, which they narrate with great clearness, and simplicity; that he was arrested by the authorities, and condemned to be crucified; that he was in fact crucified and buried; that they regard his crucifixion as an upsetting of all their hopes in him but that a certain number of days after his crucifixion he appeared to them alive -- appeared several times; spoke to them coherently and connectedly; ate and drank with them; allowed himself to be handled; exhibited marks of crucifixion; made appointments for meeting, which he kept. and finally, after about six weeks of this kind of intercourse, and after telling them that it would be their duty after his departure, to bear testimony to all the world to these things, he took formal leave of them on the summit of the Mount of Olives, and went away from the earth.

Their account does not stop here. They tell us that just before his departure, he told them not to commence their testimony for his resurrection until he should send power upon them to work miracles in proof of their testimony to his resurrection. He told them to stay in Jerusalem till this power should come. The account goes on to inform us that they did so; that on the day of Pentecost, the tenth day after Christ's departure, being assembled together in one place, the Holy Spirit came upon them with the power of a rushing mighty wind, filling all the place where they were, manifesting itself in a fiery appearance resting on each, and imparting to them a supernatural knowledge of languages they had not learned, and power to work various miracles. They then

proceeded to proclaim the resurrection of Christ, in accordance with the command they had received, exhibiting the miracles in token of the truth of their testimony. The effect was to cause multitudes, who witnessed these things, to believe. To these multitudes was extended the same power to work miracles, so that the testimony of Christ's resurrection spread far and wide. The authorities who had put Jesus to death naturally felt themselves compromised by these proceedings, and strove to suppress the movement. In attempting to do so they resorted to legal proceedings. They imprisoned the apostles, and raised a great persecution against all believers everywhere. The apostles, miraculously liberated, were re-arrested and re-charged with the offence of proclaiming Christ's resurrection. Their answer was "We cannot but speak *the things we have seen and heard*" (Acts 4:20). Believers everywhere were steadfast under similar tribulation: the number of believers increased greatly.

Such, in brief, is the account of this most important matter. Is it a true account? We submit that you cannot get rid of it without doing violence to every principle of logic and of common sense. To say their account is not a true one, you must make them liars, while you have, in the same breath, to allow that they preached righteousness, and turned thousands of people from wickedness. You must make them parties to an imposture without a motive, and not only without a motive, but against all motive, for they gained nothing by their enterprise but opposition, calumny, spoliation, and death.

Accept their account and all is plain sailing. We then understand the prevalence of the name and faith of a crucified carpenter. He said he would send the Spirit of God upon them to qualify them as his witnesses; that the words they should speak should not be their own; that he would give them a mouth and wisdom that all their adversaries should not be able to resist (Luke 21:15). If this is true, all is explained; if it is not true, the inexplicable riddle remains, that the highest literary fact upon earth was performed by ignorant fishermen, and that the loftiest character and most influential name

in the whole range of human history has obtained its power in the world through what in that case is a literary imposture.

But the question is not really an open one. The existence of Christendom is an evidence that the declarations of the apostles are true; for nothing less than the resurrection of Christ earnestly testified by hundreds of eye-witnesses supported by miracle, will account for the fact which no man can contradict. that in the first century the name and faith of a crucified felon (as it was claimed) were diffused throughout the Roman Empire in the face of imprisonment and death. If the resurrection of Christ is denied. we stand in dim bewilderment in the presence of these matters of undoubted fact which constitute a chapter that cannot be erased from history.

### **Why Deny The Evidence?**

As a question of evidence, the resurrection of Christ cannot be denied. It is attested by witnesses whose veracity cannot logically be called in question. Yet, through mere force of intellectual prejudice it is refused. Men deny the resurrection of Christ not because there is no evidence of it, but because they have come to the conclusion on other grounds that it 's impossible. They say no evidence can convince them of a thing they believe to be impossible. What are we to say to this? We claim that it is unreasonable. It is the attitude of the highest unreason and even of resumption! It is setting up the limited capabilities of the human mind as the standard by which we are to judge of the possibilities of the infinite. It was this intellectual stupidity that for ages obstructed the progress of true science. and now proves a barrier with thousands to the reception of demonstrated truth of the only really and finally important character for the afflicted race of man.

It is extraordinary that in this age, above all others, when the powers of the universe are unloosed as never before, that such difficulties should be raised in the way of believing a demonstrated fact. Why should it be so difficult to believe in the resurrection of

Christ, when it is not considered incompatible with intellectual respectability to believe in evolution? Does it not demand of us a greater credulity to believe that all the diversity of creation, together with its marvelous order, was produced by mere chance rather than by an intelligent Creator? Nay; it is considered respectable to believe that man has sprung from monkeys, and that monkeys sprang from -- what? From bits of jelly, and the bits of jelly from -- what? From nothing?

But if it is not considered derogatory to human intelligence to believe that the intelligence and life of man has come from nothing, why should a word be raised against the attested, beautiful, and sublime fact that the noblest man that ever appeared upon earth was a God-sent man to save the world. and that when he died in demonstration of the wisdom and righteousness of God, he was not permitted to slumber in a dishonored grave, in which the malice of man placed him: but was raised to life again by angels of light on the third day, as a germ of a new generation. that will fill the earth with light and glory?

### **The True Character of the Bible**

And now, if Christ rose from the dead, consider what the fact means, with regard to the character of the Bible, and the question of hope for man in the future. The power of the Bible has been undermined through the influence of various theories that change from age to age, except in this one point, that by whatsoever means, they seek to displace the Bible from its position as the Word of God. First it was the vulgar, shallow, malignant opposition of Voltaire and Tom Paine; then it was the more scholarly opposition of Colenso; then came the supposed opposition of geology and astronomy. Then Darwin came into the arena with speculations on the origin of man. Now it is the showy and plausible suggestion of so-called "higher criticism," which is really guess and speculation and surmise, and most of it in downright contradiction with the mountain facts of the case.

All the hostile theories have a degree of plausibility at first, but they are all proved equally empty, and vain and false by the side of the undeniable fact of Christ's resurrection.

If Christ rose from the dead, his word is the truth. as he claimed. If therefore we can know what he thought about the Bible, we can know what is the truth on the subject. This is in our power, for his words have been preserved. Ingenious theories charm the imagination. but they may always be fallacious. Time and again, the most learned suggestions of science are withdrawn or amended, but the Bible with its teaching remains constant. Moreover, it is designed to give hope and salvation. As a sample of its teaching in that direction, consider the following quotations:

"Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope" (Romans 15:4).

"The holy scriptures are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness . . ." (2 Tim. 3:15-16).

### **The Bible Its Own Witness**

It is evident if we are to be guided by Christ and the apostles, and not by speculators and learned men in this far off century, that we must hold the Bible to be an absolutely divine book. The whole case requires this view. The literary character of the New Testament is inexplicable without it. It is not only that it is a self-evidently true narrative in its artless simplicity and its candid narration of apparently damaging facts. such as that Peter denied Christ, and that the apostles at first doubted his resurrection, but it is a narrative in which you are bound to conclude there must have been some extraordinary influence guiding the writers, as they alleged, for it transcends all the ordinary literary achievements of men in this, that in simple words, and without any attempt at

literary effect. it presents in its biographic exhibition of Christ a figure and a personality unapproached in the whole range of human thought and writing, a character such as has never been seen among men before or since, towering as far above ordinary men as heaven is above the earth, in Godlike dignity, purity, beneficence, faithfulness and power.

No genius known to man could have conceived such a character. But the writers were not men of genius. Who were the writers? As admitted by all, they were fishermen who were in no way naturally distinguished for capacity, culture, or goodness, but rather for the smallness of character usually belonging to their class. Yet these illiterate companions of Christ have produced in the simplest language an ideal portrait transcending the most gifted of human imaginations. How do you account for it? There is but one answer: it is the result of divine inspiration.

The whole case requires the view of the Bible put forth by Christ and the apostles, for the Bible is not otherwise intelligible. Its character excludes the supposition of its being of human evolution. Its tone of thought in every sentence is in total contrast to that which is congenial to man. It exalts God and the divine obligation of human life everywhere, and depreciates man and all his ways. There is no human glory in it anywhere. This is one ground of its unpopularity. Human complications are popular because they appeal to human impressions and human sympathies and human views. But the Bible is pitched in a key that does not harmonize with human views and feelings. It is in unison with the sublime declaration of God by Isaiah: "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts" (Isaiah 55:8-9).

Let Christ's view of the Bible prevail. and this Bible controversy is settled. Men will then give it that attention in constant reading which purifies and ennobles with righteousness and hope. Instead of this, it is regarded as a venerable piece of literary antiquity, good

in its way, but not deserving the first place in human life. How can you expect people to read a book of which such a view is entertained and circulated.

### **All Assaults on the Bible Have Failed**

All assaults against the Bible have hitherto been in vain: and from the nature of the case, they must ever be so. The Bible is like the rocks on the seashore, against which the waves dash and roar in a very threatening manner, but which break themselves upon the rocks, instead of breaking the rocks upon which they dash. For a time the rock is hidden by the rushing water, but presently it re-emerges untouched, unscathed, unharmed. It has been well said:

"Tradition has dug a grave for the Bible; intolerance has lighted for it many a faggot; many a Judas has betrayed it with a kiss, many a Peter has denied it with an oath, many a Demas forsaken it for the world, but the Word of God endures."

The Bible challenges us with its Divine origin. Five hundred times in the first five books it prefaces or concludes its declarations with the statement: "The Lord said . . ." or "The Lord spake . . ." Three hundred times again in the following books it does the same. Similar expressions occur no less than twelve hundred times in the prophetic books.

Moreover, its prophetic utterances testify to its Divine origin. God has declared:

"I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying: My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure" (Isa. 46:9-10).

Fulfilling prophecy reveals how true these words are! As predicted, Babylon is still in heaps (Jer. 51:37); Nineveh still lies empty, void and waste (Nahum 2:10); Egypt is among the basest of nations (Ezek. 29:15); Tyre has been submerged by the sea, and is literally

a place for the spreading of nets (Ezek. 26:5); Israel has not only been scattered among the nations (Deut. 28:64), and Jerusalem driven over to the Gentiles (Luke 21:24), but today the Jews are returning to their land, and building up the waste country as foretold (Jer. 30:18-24; Amos 9:14).

In 1967, the world witnessed an amazing vindication of Bible prophecy, and therefore of the truth of the Bible, for in that year Jerusalem was occupied by the Jewish people. It fulfilled the prediction of the Lord Jesus Christ: "They (the Jews) shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: (as they were in A.D. 70), and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (Luke 21:24).

With remarkable prescience he had foretold the overthrow of Jerusalem, and the scattering of the Jews, but had also stated that this would be for a limited period of time. In our own lifetime, we have seen the return of the Jews to their ancient homeland, the revival of the State of Israel, and the freeing of the city of Jerusalem - all the subject of Bible prophecy, and a prelude to Christ's return to reign from that city as king (see Ezekiel 37:21-23; Jeremiah 3:17; Isaiah 2:2-4).

The evidence of prophecy is irrefutable when the facts are examined, and demonstrates that every confidence can be placed in the Bible. It is what it claims to be: the inspired Word of God.

### **The Bible Provides Hope and Incentive to Life**

Consider these conclusions in the light of human hope and incentive. What hope have we in any natural direction? The universe in which we live is of over-powering greatness and glory, but what is our life? It is a vapor that appeareth for a very little while. It opens with interest and promise; but "soon fades the summer sky." The effervescence of young blood subsides, the poetic ardors of youth die; time flits by, life tones down. Business

loses its aim and interest; the friends of early life disappear one after the other in the universal grave; mortal energy wanes; life flickers in its lamp; and we are at last compelled to own the truth, however long ignored in pride, or silenced in the din of folly, that man is subject to vanity and human life is in darkness. The sun rises and then sets on the changeless scene of death. The stars, in their nightly procession, silent and solemn, look down with indifferent eye on the woes of man. The cradle pours its flood of new life from year to year and the cemeteries yawn to receive its equal torrent. "One generation passeth away, and another cometh," only to pass away also. "All is vanity."

Is there no hope, then, of a better life, a better day! Is there no hope of a time when existence will yield its measureless capacities of enjoyment to the noble race upon this noble planet? Christ is the answer. his resurrection the pledge, Human hope is bound up with him, and with him alone. There is no hope in any other direction, "No other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." Listen to what he declared:

"God both given me power over all flesh that I should give eternal life to as many as He has given me" (John 17:2).

"I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness but shall have the light of life" (John 8:12).

"I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me though he were dead, yet shall he live . . . and never die" (John 11:25).

"I am alive for evermore; and have the keys of the grave and of death" (Rev. 1:18).

Listen to what the Bible declares of his future:

"This same Jesus, which is taken up into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11).

"Christ was once offered to bear the sin of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (Heb. 9:28).

"There is laid up for me (the Apostle Paul) a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing (2 Tim. 4:8).

"He shall put down all rule, authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet" (1 Cor. 15:24-25).

"The Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke 1:32-33).

"The kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever." (Rev. 11:15).

"Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye (the Apostles) shall also sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And every one that hath forsaken (anything) for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life" (Matt. 19:28-30).

The teaching of the Bible clearly shows that the Lord Jesus is to return to the earth in like manner as he left it nineteen hundred years ago; that he will return to raise from the dead and reward those who have lived faithfully in accordance with his precepts (Rev. 22:12); that he will command the obedience of all mankind; and that he will set up on earth the righteous rule of the Kingdom of God, so that Daniel 2:44 shall be fulfilled:

"The God of heaven shall set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed: the kingdom shall not be left to other people: it shall break in pieces and consume all nations, and it shall stand forever."

The Bible being true, this is what it teaches, and to what it calls you. And what can we say to these things. In Christ we have a man who never sinned; who taught righteousness and condemned wickedness with a fervor never before shown by man; who cured all diseases; who raised from the dead; who was put to death because he said he was the Son of God and the King of Israel; who said his death was no accident. but his own voluntary submission to the violence of men in obedience to the commandment of God as a sacrifice for sin; who said he would rise after he should die; whose body could not be found three days after his death; whose resurrection was trumpeted through the Roman world as a matter of their personal knowledge, by his apostles, within a year after his crucifixion, in the teeth of universal opposition and at the hazard of every consequence that men dread: and whose aim in the proclamation was to turn men to righteousness in preparation for the return of Christ to raise his friends from the dead to immortal life and fill the earth with righteousness.

### **What Do You Say To These Matters?**

What do you say to these things? Can you say they are not true? Do you say the apostles were guilty of falsehood and imposture without a motive, and against all motive. and in the interest of righteousness and holiness? The suggestion is an insult to common sense and an outrage upon reason.

No, the case stands squarely on its own foundation. Christ rose from the dead and lives for evermore and will re-appear on the earth in due time. Paul taught:

"God hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man He hath ordained, whereof He hath given assurance unto all men in that He hath raised him from the dead" (Acts 17:31).

Do not let your eyes be blinded to his glory by the false glamour of pseudo-science. Science is useful in its sphere but it has nothing to

do with the foundation of things. It is only a little knowledge on the surface of a boundless universe. It can tell us nothing of the origin or the purpose of things. The universe existed before science. All the forces that science investigates - all the phenomena it studies the glorious constellations of the starry depths towards which it turns its inquiring telescopes in vain - were all there before science began. Men forget that the professors of science are poor mortals who sucked their bottles a short time back!

Let us clear the cobwebs from our eyes. Wisdom did not begin with man. It does not consist of the scientific technicalities which men have invented for themselves. It was in the universe before the human race had appeared upon the earth; before the earth itself existed; before the sun and moon made their majestic appearance.

"In the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the word was God. All things were made by Him and without Him was not anything made that was made. And the word was made flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:1,14).

This is the word by which Jesus Christ speaks to us. It is on this strong foundation that our hope is built. Christ is to us the power of God, the wisdom of God, and the salvation of God. Look to him and embrace him with all your heart. Reject the delusive shadows that play everywhere on our path. Lay hold of the hope that is built on the solid rock of actual fact and truth. It is no phantom figure that stands at the other end of the long vista of the nineteen centuries that lie behind us; it is no mocking voice that sounds in our ears when he says, "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." It is the voice of God Himself that says by Isaiah the prophet:

"Ho everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat; yes, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which satisfieth

not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, come unto me, bear and your soul shall live. And I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David" (Isaiah 55:1-8).

Happy is the man that findeth that wisdom, and the man that getteth that understanding. Happy is the man whom Christ shall approve in the day of his coming - now at hand. For the time allotted for Christ's absence has nearly expired. The next event for which the Scriptures bid us look is his return to gather together his followers (from among both dead and living) to assist him in his divinely-appointed Work in connection with his millennial reign on earth. With the advent of Christ, God's gracious invitation to the Gentiles to associate with him in this reign, will cease. Now is the time to accept it. The invitation is open to all who will comply with the conditions attached to it, which are: (1) - a belief of the truth concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ; and (2) - baptism in water for remission of sins and union with Christ. Christ gave this preaching commission to his Apostles:

"Go into all the world and preach the gospel; he that believeth and is baptised shall be saved. He that believeth not shall be condemned" (Mark 16:16).

Let us obey this instruction by coming to an exact understanding of Gospel truth and by embracing Christ in the way indicated -- by baptism into his name.