

The Fundamentals

A Testimony to the Truth

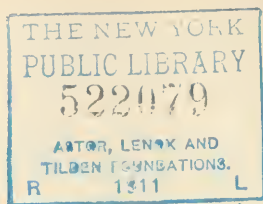
Volume I

Compliments of
Two Christian Laymen

TESTIMONY PUBLISHING COMPANY
(Not Inc.)

808 La Salle Ave., Chicago, Ill., U. S. A.

1909



FOREWORD

This book is the first of a series which will be published and sent to every pastor, evangelist, missionary, theological professor, theological student, Sunday school superintendent, Y. M. C. A. and Y. W. C. A. secretary in the English speaking world, so far as the addresses of all these can be obtained.

Two intelligent, consecrated Christian laymen bear the expense, because they believe that the time has come when a new statement of the fundamentals of Christianity should be made.

Their earnest desire is that you will carefully read it and pass its truth on to others.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. THE VIRGIN BIRTH OF CHRIST.....	7
Rev. Prof. James Orr, D. D., United Free Church College, Glasgow, Scotland	
II. THE DEITY OF CHRIST.....	21
Prof. Benjamin B. Warfield, D. D., LL. D., Princeton Theological Seminary	
III. THE PURPOSES OF THE INCARNATION.....	29
Rev. G. Campbell Morgan, D. D., Pastor Westminster Chapel, London, England	
IV. THE PERSONALITY AND DEITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT...55	
Rev. R. A. Torrey, D. D.	
V. THE PROOF OF THE LIVING GOD.....	70
Rev. Arthur T. Pierson, D. D.	
VI. HISTORY OF THE HIGHER CRITICISM.....	87
Canon Dyson Hague, M. A., London, Ontario	
VII. A PERSONAL TESTIMONY.....	123
Howard A. Kelly, M. D.	

CHAPTER II.

THE DEITY OF CHRIST.

BY PROF. BENJAMIN B. WARFIELD, D. D., LL. D.,
PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.

A recent writer has remarked that our assured conviction of the deity of Christ rests, not upon "proof-texts or passages, nor upon old arguments drawn from these, but upon the general fact of the whole manifestation of Jesus Christ, and of the whole impression left by Him upon the world." The antithesis is too absolute, and possibly betrays an unwarranted distrust of the evidence of Scripture. To make it just, we should read the statement rather thus: Our conviction of the deity of Christ rests not alone on the scriptural passages which assert it, but also on His entire impression on the world; or perhaps thus: Our conviction rests not more on the scriptural assertions than upon His entire manifestation. Both lines of evidence are valid; and when twisted together form an unbreakable cord. The proof-texts and passages do prove that Jesus was esteemed divine by those who companied with Him; that He esteemed Himself divine; that He was recognized as divine by those who were taught by the Spirit; that, in fine, He was divine. But over and above this Biblical evidence the impression Jesus has left upon the world bears independent testimony to His deity, and it may well be that to many minds this will seem the most conclusive of all its evidences. It certainly is very cogent and impressive.

EXPERIENCE AS PROOF.

The justification which the author we have just quoted gives of his neglecting the scriptural evidence in favor of that borne by Jesus' impression on the world is also open to criticism. "Jesus Christ," he tells us, "is one of those essential

truths which are too great to be proved, like God, or freedom, or immortality." Such things rest, it seems, not on proofs but on experience. We need not stop to point out that this experience is itself a proof. We wish rather to point out that some confusion seems to have been fallen into here between our ability to marshal the proof by which we are convinced and our accessibility to its force. It is quite true that "the most essential conclusions of the human mind are much wider and stronger than the arguments by which they are supported;" that the proofs "are always changing but the beliefs persist." But this is not because the conclusions in question rest on no sound proofs; but because we have not had the skill to adduce, in our argumentative presentations of them, the really fundamental proofs on which they rest.

UNCONSCIOUS RATIONALITY.

A man recognizes on sight the face of his friend, or his own handwriting. Ask him how he knows this face to be that of his friend, or this handwriting to be his own, and he is dumb, or, seeking to reply, babbles nonsense. Yet his recognition rests on solid grounds, though he lacks analytical skill to isolate and state these solid grounds. We believe in God and freedom and immortality on good grounds, though we may not be able satisfactorily to analyse these grounds. No true conviction exists without adequate rational grounding in evidence. So, if we are solidly assured of the deity of Christ, it will be on adequate grounds, appealing to the reason. But it may well be on grounds not analysed, perhaps not analysable, by us, so as to exhibit themselves in the forms of formal logic.

We do not need to wait to analyse the grounds of our convictions before they operate to produce convictions, any more than we need to wait to analyse our food before it nourishes us; and we can soundly believe on evidence much mixed with error, just as we can thrive on food far from pure. The alchemy of the mind, as of the digestive tract, knows how to

separate out from the mass what it requires for its support; and as we may live without any knowledge of chemistry, so we may possess earnest convictions, solidly founded in right reason, without the slightest knowledge of logic. The Christian's conviction of the deity of his Lord does not depend for its soundness on the Christian's ability convincingly to state the grounds of his conviction. The evidence he offers for it may be wholly inadequate, while the evidence on which it rests may be absolutely compelling.

TESTIMONY IN SOLUTION.

The very abundance and persuasiveness of the evidence of the deity of Christ greatly increases the difficulty of adequately stating it. This is true even of the scriptural evidence, as precise and definite as much of it is. For it is a true remark of Dr. Dale's that the particular texts in which it is definitely asserted are far from the whole, or even the most impressive, proofs which the Scriptures supply of our Lord's deity. He compares these texts to the salt-crystals which appear on the sand of the sea-beach after the tide has receded. "These are not," he remarks, "the strongest, though they may be the most apparent, proofs that the sea is salt; the salt is present in solution in every bucket of sea-water." The deity of Christ is in solution in every page of the New Testament. Every word that is spoken of Him, every word which He is reported to have spoken of Himself, is spoken on the assumption that He is God. And that is the reason why the "criticism" which addresses itself to eliminating the testimony of the New Testament to the deity of our Lord has set itself a hopeless task. The New Testament itself would have to be eliminated. Nor can we get behind this testimony. Because the deity of Christ is the presupposition of every word of the New Testament, it is impossible to select words out of the New Testament from which to construct earlier documents in which the deity of Christ shall not be assumed. The assured

conviction of the deity of Christ is coëval with Christianity itself. There never was a Christianity, neither in the times of the Apostles nor since, of which this was not a prime tenet.

A SATURATED GOSPEL.

Let us observe in an example or two how thoroughly saturated the Gospel narrative is with the assumption of the deity of Christ, so that it crops out in the most unexpected ways and places.

In three passages of Matthew, reporting words of Jesus, He is represented as speaking familiarly and in the most natural manner in the world, of "*His* angels" (13:41; 16:27; 24:31). In all three He designates Himself as the "Son of man"; and in all three there are additional suggestions of His majesty. "The Son of man shall send forth *His* angels, and they shall gather out of *His* kingdom all things that cause stumbling and those that do iniquity, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire."

Who is this Son of man who has angels, by whose instrumentality the final judgment is executed at His command? "The Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with *His* angels; and then shall *He* reward every man according to his deeds." Who is this Son of man surrounded by His angels, in whose hands are the issues of life? The Son of man "shall send forth *His* angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together *His* elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." Who is this Son of man at whose behest His angels winnow men? A scrutiny of the passages will show that it is not a peculiar body of angels which is meant by the Son of man's angels, but just the angels as a body, who are His to serve Him as He commands. In a word, Jesus Christ is above angels (Mark 13:32)—as is argued at explicit length at the beginning of the Epistle to the Hebrews. "To which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, etc." (Heb. 1:13).

HEAVEN COME TO EARTH.

There are three parables recorded in the fifteenth chapter of Luke as spoken by our Lord in His defence against the murmurs of the Pharisees at His receiving sinners and eating with them. The essence of the defence which our Lord offers for Himself is, that there is joy *in heaven* over repentant sinners! Why "in heaven," "before the throne of God"? Is He merely setting the judgment of heaven over against that of earth, or pointing forward to His future vindication? By no means. He is representing His action in receiving sinners, in seeking the lost, as His proper action, because it is the normal conduct of heaven, manifested in Him. He is heaven come to earth. His defence is thus simply the unveiling of what the real nature of the transaction is. The lost when they come to Him are received because this is heaven's way; and *He* cannot act otherwise than in heaven's way. He tacitly assumes the good Shepherd's part as His own.

THE UNIQUE POSITION.

All the great designations are not so much asserted as assumed by Him for Himself. He does not call Himself a prophet, though He accepts this designation from others: He places Himself above all the prophets, even above John the greatest of the prophets, as Him to whom all the prophets look forward. If He calls Himself Messiah, He fills that term, by doing so, with a deeper significance, dwelling ever on the unique relation of Messiah to God as His representative and His Son. Nor is He satisfied to represent Himself merely as standing in a unique relation to God: He proclaims Himself to be the recipient of the divine fullness, the sharer in all that God has (Matt. 11:28). He speaks freely of Himself indeed as God's Other, the manifestation of God on earth, whom to have seen was to have seen the Father also, and who does the work of God on earth. He openly claims divine prerogatives—

the reading of the heart of man, the forgiveness of sins, the exercise of all authority in heaven and earth. Indeed, all that God has and is He asserts Himself to have and be; omnipotence, omniscience, perfection belong as to the one so to the other. Not only does He perform all divine acts; His self-consciousness coalesces with the divine consciousness. If His followers lagged in recognizing His deity, this was not because He was not God or did not sufficiently manifest His deity. It was because they were foolish and slow of heart to believe what lay patently before their eyes.

THE GREAT PROOF.

The Scriptures give us evidence enough, then, that Christ is God. But the Scriptures are far from giving us all the evidence we have. There is, for example, the revolution which Christ has wrought in the world. If, indeed, it were asked what the most convincing proof of the deity of Christ is, perhaps the best answer would be, just Christianity. The new life He has brought into the world; the new creation which He has produced by His life and work in the world; here are at least His most palpable credentials.

Take it objectively. Read such a book as Harnack's "The Expansion of Christianity," or such an one as Von Dobschütz's "Christian Life in the Primitive Church"—neither of which allows the deity of Christ—and then ask, Could these things have been wrought by power less than divine? And then remember that these things were not only wrought in that heathen world two thousand years ago, but have been wrought over again every generation since; for Christianity has reconquered the world to itself each generation. Think of how the Christian proclamation spread, eating its way over the world like fire in the grass of a prairie. Think how, as it spread, it transformed lives. The thing, whether in its objective or in its subjective aspect, were incredible, had it not actually occurred. "Should a voyager," says Charles Darwin.

“chance to be on the point of shipwreck on some unknown coast, he will most devoutly pray that the lesson of the missionary may have reached thus far. The lesson of the missionary is the enchanter’s wand.” Could this transforming influence, undiminished after two millenniums, have proceeded from a mere man? It is historically impossible that the great movement which we call Christianity, which remains unspent after all these years, could have originated in a merely human impulse: or could represent today the working of a merely human force.

THE PROOF WITHIN.

Or take it subjectively. Every Christian has within himself the proof of the transforming power of Christ, and can repeat the blind man’s syllogism: Why herein is the marvel that ye know not whence He is, and yet He opened my eyes. “Spirits are not touched to fine issues who are not finely touched.” “Shall we trust,” demands an eloquent reasoner, “the touch of our fingers, the sight of our eyes, the hearing of our ears, and not trust our deepest consciousness of our higher nature—the answer of conscience, the flower of spiritual gladness, the glow of spiritual love? To deny that spiritual experience is as real as physical experience is to slander the noblest faculties of our nature. It is to say that one half of our nature tells the truth, and the other half utters lies. The proposition that facts in the spiritual region are less real than facts in the physical realm contradicts all philosophy.” The transformed hearts of Christians, registering themselves “in gentle tempers, in noble motives, in lives visibly lived under the empire of great aspirations”—these are the ever-present proofs of the divinity of the Person from whom their inspiration is drawn.

The supreme proof to every Christian of the deity of his Lord is then his own inner experience of the transforming power of his Lord upon the heart and life. Not more surely

does he who feels the present warmth of the sun know that the sun exists, than he who has experienced the re-creative power of the Lord know Him to be his Lord and his God. Here is, perhaps we may say the proper, certainly we must say the most convincing, proof to every Christian of the deity of Christ; a proof which he cannot escape, and to which, whether he is capable of analysing it or drawing it out in logical statement or not, he cannot fail to yield his sincere and unassailable conviction. Whatever else he may or may not be assured of, he knows that his Redeemer lives. Because He lives, we shall live also—that was the Lord's own assurance. Because we live, He lives also—that is the ineradicable conviction of every Christian heart.