

Boston University

OpenBU

<http://open.bu.edu>

Boston University Theses & Dissertations

STH Theses and Dissertations (pre-2014)

1920

The resurrection of Jesus Christ

<https://hdl.handle.net/2144/44369>

"Downloaded from OpenBU. Boston University's institutional repository."

THESIS.

----- THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST -----

Submitted by

W. W. Van Kirk

Under direction of

Prof. Lowstetter

March 1920.

BIBLIOGRAPHY.

The Miracle of the Resurrection
The Diviner Immanence
Immortality and the Future
The Christian Hope
The Witness to Immortality
The Resurrection of our Lord
Commentary on Matthew
The Resurrection of Jesus Christ
Life of Jesus
"
The Resurrection

B.P.Bowne.
F.J.McConnell.
H.R.Mackintosh.
W.A.Brown.
G.A.Gordon.
Wm Milligan.
A.Plummer.
K.Lake.
Holtzmann.
B.Weiss.
Orr.

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS.

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

1. Preliminary statement.

Resurrection and immortality-Criticism of Renan and Strauss-Holtzmann and the open grave-the older rationalism-the stolen body-theory of visions-persistency of the faith.

2. Appraisal of the Evidence.

Importance of one's personal attitude-Necessity of sympathetic approach-Bowne-McConnell-Gordon.

3. Methods of Interpretation.

Psychological-Philosophical-Theological.

4. The Evidence.

Hope of Israel regarding resurrection and immortality-the Messianic hope-Paul-Mark-Matthew-Luke-Acts-the fourth Gospel-concluding verses of Mark-different appearances.

Analysis of Paul's testimony-debate as to bodily resurrection-Holtzmann vs Orr-Analysis of Mark-special Matthean details-the Lukan narrative-Estimate of evidence found in the fourth gospel-evidence in book of Acts-spurious conclusion to Mark-the apocryphal books-Lake's reconstruction of the earliest tradition-concluding estimate of the scriptural evidence-the personality of Jesus as evidence-development of church as evidence.

5. Relation of Resurrection of Jesus to the Christian hope.

Resurrection of Jesus final argument for immortality-comparative conceptions of future life-primitive man-Homer-immortality in Greece and India-Socrates and Plato-Israel's hope-climactic meaning of Jesus' resurrection.

6. Conclusion.

Resumé-the abiding conviction-disposition of material body of Christ-the miracle-substitutes for personal immortality-the proof of our immortality.

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ has been the subject of controversy from the very beginning of the Christian era. Inquiries concerning the resurrection cannot be silenced. The universal craving for immortality prompts and stimulates interest in the problem of the resurrection. Immortality and the resurrection are not to be identified. It is quite impossible however to think of the one without thinking of the other.

During this prolonged debate there has been a constant stream of destructive criticism. With merciless and abusive invectives these critics have heaped scorn and contempt upon the Christian hope. Renan and Strauss have been conspicuous for their negative criticism. The latter declares that in dealing with the narratives of the resurrection it is evident that we must distinguish two different strata of legend, an older one, represented by Matthew, which knew only of appearances in Galilee, and a later, in which the Galilean appearances are excluded in favor of appearances in Jerusalem. In both cases the narratives are regarded as mere myths. In any attempt to explain them we are forced on one horn of the dilemma or the other- if the resurrection was real, the death was not real; and if the death was real, the resurrection was not real. That the ascension is a myth he regards as self evident. Holtzmann explains the mystery of the open grave by saying that Joseph, the distinguish-

ed member of the Sanhedrin, who had in the first instance afforded the body a resting place in his rock-sepulchre, was not disposed to permit a crucified man to lie permanently beside the dead of his own family. As soon as the Sabbath was at an end he quietly buried the body in some other place. The appearances to the disciples and to the multitude he regards as a bit of mental intoxication. He declares that Peter's mind was well prepared for a vision of the risen Lord in Galilee. After this Peter took the path Jesus had pointed out to him. Sure of his own faith, he now set to work to encourage the other disciples. So the Twelve gather about him. Peter tells them he had seen the risen Lord. The story infects those who hear it, so that now the Twelve also see the risen Lord. Then comes the vision to the Five hundred brethren. This was due to the preaching of the disciples. Thereupon the tidings of these appearances spread thru' out the whole region of Galilee where Jesus had laboured. The story then comes to the family of Jesus, and the return to Jerusalem was made imperative by another appearance of the risen Lord. Finally we have the appearance to Saul. Thus Holtzmann disposes of the problem. Peter's imagination was fired, and in telling of his dreams to others they too ^{were} led into the same experience etc etc. Christianity, on the basis of such an explanation of the resurrection, rests upon unbalanced minds and unbridled imagination. To accept an explanation of this character is to create a more

difficult situation than presented in the more traditional and conservative view.

The older Rationalism hoped to escape this dilemma by the hypothesis of the death being only an apparent one. We are reminded of the well-known fact that sufferers on the cross did not usually expire in a few hours; and we are told that, fortunately for Jesus, he was spared the breaking of his limbs; and that the wound made by the lance may not have been dangerous. Possibly, too, Jesus was only in a faint when He was taken down from the cross and carried to the sepulchre. It might be regarded as conceivable that on Easter morning Jesus showed Himself beside the sepulchre attired in vestments belonging to the gardener, in the afternoon walked in the country, and in the evening, being completely restored, appeared among the disciples. Weiss meets this line of absurdities in the following words, "At the present day it is not worth while to dissolve this fabrication of a phantasy destitute of all historical meaning." If thru fortunate circumstances or timely care Jesus was saved from death and restored to his disciples, that could never give rise to the idea that he had risen from the dead. If the resurrection was only recovery from a swoon, what became of him for the remainder of his days?

Others who are opposed to the fact of the resurrection declare that the disciples of the Lord stole the body in

order to preach the resurrection. One critic goes so far to say that the disciples were in need of some occupation to insure them a living. They consequently hit upon the idea of stealing the body of Christ, after which they would preach the resurrection, and thus provide themselves with a message thru which they planned to gain a livelihood. That the body was not stolen from the grave is now generally admitted, both by friends and enemies.

Then there is the theory of visions, implied in the position of Holtzmann stated above. But this view is inconsistent with the mental state of the disciples previous to the manifestations. Before we can account on natural principles for the occurrence of a vision two things at least must mark the subject of it- belief in the idea that it expresses and excited expectation that the idea will somehow be realized. Belief and expectancy are absolutely essential to the production of visions. In the subject with which we are dealing both of these factors are wanting. Again the vision theory is inconsistent with (a) the length of time generally occupied by them, (b) with the fact of their having been witnessed by my many persons simultaneously, (c) with the scene of the chief manifestations, (d) and finally with their sudden cessation.

We have reviewed briefly some of the negative positions assumed toward the problem of the resurrection. But faith in the resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth cannot be de-

stroyed. The fact that faith in the resurrection persists, in spite of this volume of adverse criticism, is one of the strongest proofs for its historicity.

It must also be remembered that one's attitude toward Christ as a whole determines very largely the conclusions respecting the resurrection. The believer's presupposition is Christ. If Christ was what his Church has hitherto believed him to be—the divine son and saviour of the world—there is no antecedent presumption against his resurrection; rather it is incredible that he should have remained the prey of death. If a lower estimate is taken of Christ, the historical evidence for the resurrection will assume a different aspect. It will then remain to be seen which estimate of Christ most entirely fits in with the totality of facts. On that basis the question may safely be brought to an issue.

Thus we see the necessity of approaching the problem sympathetically. It would be rather foolish to talk to a pagan regarding the advantages of a bath tub. It would be just as foolish to discuss the resurrection of Jesus to a man who had already denounced the man of Galilee as an impostor and a fraud. An intelligent doctor of medicine wouldnt engage a radical Christian Scientist to distribute his powders and pills. A skilled surgeon wouldnt deliver his patient into the hands of a stock yard butcher. The astronomer would be loathe to regard

as valid the conclusions of a blind man regarding the location of the stars. Just so would a Christian hesitate to accept as valid the criticism concerning the resurrection of one at whose door of the heart Christ has knocked and pleaded in vain.

It may be argued that a prejudiced mind is not capable of calm and deliberate judgement, and for that reason the conclusions of the Christian saint regarding the resurrection of Jesus are just as untenable as the conclusions of the professed atheist. This argument contains a certain measure of truth. It is always safer however to trust your life with a friend rather than with an enemy. A friend may magnify your virtues and overlook your faults, but he is better qualified, in spite of that fact to give a more deliberate appraisal of your value than your most deadly enemy. A sympathetic attitude toward Jesus Christ is a prerequisite in approaching the problem of the resurrection. Bowne says in this connection, "The miracles of Christianity cannot be discussed piecemeal, but as parts of a system. Our general conclusion on this subject does not depend on argument alone or chiefly, but also and more fundamentally on our world view and our moral and religious sympathies and tendencies. If we are essentially irreligious and have no sympathy with humanity's search after God, or if we hold a naturalistic conception of philosophy, then there is no use in talking about the resurrection, or even about religion.

But if we believe that our race is and always has been in the hands of God, who is leading us on toward Himself, then our minds are not closed in advance against the presence of the living God in history and in the mind of man, and that too in such a way that we may discern his presence. The real debate here is not the mere question of miracle, but it is the strife of two views of life and the world, the higher spiritual view, and the lower material view."

The fact of Christ then must be assumed. His divine sonship must be assumed. His saving grace must be a living vital reality. On no other ground is a profitable discussion of the resurrection possible. On any other ground a discussion of the resurrection would be a sacrilege, and would prove futile and disappointing.

"If life is a boon, immortality must be a blessing; but if life is simply a burden and a misery, immortality must become, not an object of desire and hope, but of aversion and dread."

It should also be borne in mind that no strictly scientific demonstration of the resurrection is possible— and we might add desirable. As Bowne says, "No view of the resurrection can ever become a matter of strict demonstration or scientific evidence. The evidence must be of a kind that roots in life and will have something of life's complexity. All that is possible,

then, for the Christian is to form an argument that will be consistent with itself and fit into ^{our} general scheme of Christian thought. Then it will be the duty of each one to decide for himself between the conflicting views, but in any case we must not expect to construct an argument that will compel belief on the part of unwilling minds. This is not the method of God's dealing with us."

In this same connection McConnell says in his "Diviner Immanence"- "Science cannot prove that miracles are impossible or religion shore up its claims with syllogism alone. The most either side can hope for is to establish a presumption, for or against. The entire debate lies in the realm of grounds of belief, rather than in the province of strict demonstration. There is no formal scientific or philosophic principle which will make the foe or friend of miracle yield in unconditional surrender either to the other." Gordon adds this sober word of advice, "What is our problem? Not the completed proof of the immortal life, for that is impossible; impossible because we are considering a future event. The uniformity of nature is not something we know, but something we have assumed. For events in nature that lie in the future, prediction is the word, not proof. Prediction is the word in any discussion or consideration of immortality (and by implication of the resurrection). The event of death alone can furnish the utter refutation, or the complete demonstration of the belief."

Our task then is not one of scientific demonstration. We refuse to say with George Elliot, "God how impossible, Duty how absolute, Immortality how inconceivable!" Even though we lack this scientific demonstrative proof, we refuse to assent to John Stuart Mill's contention that there is no evidence either way. Another answer given by science is that inspired by evolution. Man is nature's best and costliest work. Can it be that this product shall not be conserved in growing beauty and power forever? It must appear that this is a formidable argument.

The method of psychology is sometimes employed in a discussion of the resurrection and immortality. "I" remain essentially the same. Without this personal self there could be no knowledge, no rational consciousness. This may outlast the great change of death. Then the philosophical method may be used. Man's place in the sum of things may be considered, his relation to duty, responsibility, and judgment. The scientific, psychological and philosophical methods all have their respective value, and must be considered in a thorough discussion of the problem. For our present purpose we shall adopt the theological method. This method, in the words of Gordon "begins with the existence of God; it takes God as a premise, and immortality as a conclusion. If God is good, if God is our Father, we shall live forever; that is the logic. If God is the premise immortality must be the conclusion."

Let us now inquire into the scriptural evidences for the Resurrection. As we follow the course of development we shall see how, starting on the same basis as other primitive peoples, the religious thinkers of Israel won their way step by step to an assured faith in God's universal moral government, in the continuance of his love and power in the realm of the dead, in the extension and ultimate triumph of his kingdom on earth, and in a universal resurrection and final judgement ushering in the rewards and punishments of the last day.

The three elements of the Messianic hope were national prosperity, national righteousness and religion, pure and undefiled. In such a program individual immortality is likely to play a subordinate part. A belief must arise that each human soul has a value of its own for God, quite apart from the social group of which it is a part. This we find taking place in the early years before the exile, and during the exilic period. This is particularly true of the prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel. We see the gradual transformation of the Messianic hope. It becomes less outward and more inward. It deals less with institutions and more with persons. Such a conception could not fail to issue in the belief in individual resurrection and immortality. Sooner or later the individual hope and the national hope must come together, and this is what takes place in the doctrine of the resurrection. The deep conviction that God had made man in his own image for

467
197 communion with himself, that salvation was a moral process involving the transformation of character in individuals as well as in the alteration of social conditions, and above all, the central place given self-sacrificing love as the characteristic attribute of God and the bond of union between him and his creatures, this was Israel's own, and it was upon this foundation that Jesus built his own teaching concerning the future.

Gordon in discussing the Book of Job in his volume on "The Witness to Immortality" says, "there could not be so much ado about nothing. There could not be such wealth of emotion, such reach of thought, such vexation of reason, such noble and fathomless sorrow unless the significance of life was great." Thus we see that the fundamental ideas of the great Hebrew thinkers constitute a premise from which only one conclusion respecting the individual can be drawn. The premise is God and man essential to each other, and the conclusion is immortal life. Such yearning as that recorded in the Old Testament may not in the technical sense be regarded as evidence for the resurrection, but it lays the foundation upon which rests the evidence found in the New Testament.

The oldest piece of evidence in the New Testament is that recorded by Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians, the fifteenth chapter. This letter was written in the neighborhood of 56 A.D., or in other words about 27 years after the

resurrection. Paul mentions appearances of the Christ to Peter, to the Twelve, to five hundred disciples, to James, to all the apostles, and finally to Paul himself. He makes no mention of any appearances to women. In many respects the account of the resurrection given by Paul is contradictory to the gospel accounts.

Next in order is the evidence contained in the gospel of Mark. (Mk 16:1-10). This was written a few years after Paul's letter to the Corinthians. We then note the evidence contained in Matthew. The next piece of evidence to be considered is the testimony of Peter in Acts 1:22; 2:24-33; 3:13-15; 4:16; 5:31-32; 10:40-42. This is followed by the independent evidence of the fourth gospel, which was written toward the close of the first century. Next in order is the evidence found in the concluding verses of Mark. To sum up, there are ten appearances of the Lord contained in these several bits of evidence. They are

- (1) To certain women, "the other Mary", Salome, Joanna, and others, as they returned from the sepulchre, Mt 28:1-10.
- (2) To Mary Magdalene at the sepulchre, Jn 20:11-18.
- (3) To Peter. Probably on the day of Resurrection Lk 24:34; 1Cor 15:5.
- (4) To the two disciples on the way to Emmaus My 16:12-13; Lk 24:13-35. This appearance was probably on the Resurrection day.
- (5) To the ten apostles (Thomas being absent) Lk 24:33. This was on the evening of the Resurrection day, while they were

gathered together for the evening meal. Mk 14:14-18; Lk 24:36-40; Jn 20:19-23; 1 Cor 15:5.

(6) To the eleven disciples, Jn 20:26-28.

(7) To several of the disciples at the sea of Galilee, Jn 21:1-23.

(8) To the apostles and five hundred brethren on an appointed mount in Galilee. Mt 28:16-20; 1 Cor 15:6.

(9) To James. Little is known of the circumstances. 1 Cor 15:7.

(10) To the apostles at Jerusalem just before the ascension.

To these ten is added the appearance to Paul on the road to Damascus. It is of course by no means certain that even these are the only appearances.

The testimony of Paul is of great significance in the resurrection discussion. Certain people in Corinth had been denying the doctrine of life beyond the grave. Paul declares their arguments to be negated by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Lake raises the question, "Did Paul mean that that which was buried in the grave was in every sense identical with that which was raised and seen?" He then answers the question raised. "In one sense he did believe in the complete personal identity of that which rose with that which had died and been buried. In another place he admits that 'flesh and blood' cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. He points to a transubstantiation of the body from flesh and blood into spirit. He believed that at the

resurrection of Jesus his body was changed from one of flesh and blood to one which was spiritual, incorruptible and immortal in such a way that there was no trace left of the corruptible body of flesh and blood which had been laid in the grave. This doctrine of transubstantiation was in the main familiar to the Jews. We find evidences of it in Baruch. But according to the Jewish point of view this transubstantiation took place after the resurrection from the dead, not simultaneously with it. Arguing backward we may say that Paul believed that the resurrection body of the Lord was from the beginning spiritual and not material. It is argued by Lake that the evidence on which Paul bases his teaching of the resurrection is the appearance of the risen Lord. Paul does not recognize any difference between the appearance to himself and the appearance to other witnesses. He believed the risen Lord to have appeared to himself and to other disciples in a manner which left no room for doubt as to his triumph over death. He thought that the body of the risen Lord no longer consisted of flesh and blood, but that a transubstantiation into spirit had taken place. He believed this transubstantiation took place on the third day.

Dr Gordon in discussing Paul's argument says "His preaching to them was the announcement of the death, the burial, the revival of Christ. The death was the supreme manifestation of love, the burial was the supreme manifestation of sympathy, The

revival was the supreme manifestation of power, and that was the consummation of his message. If love does not die it is not sovereign; if it is not buried it is not absolute in sympathy; if it is not revived it is not victorious. The love that dies, is buried and revived is the supreme, the compassionate and the victorious love of God in Christ.

"The evidence must be taken in connection with the character of the event. In Paul's thought the person of Christ was such that it seemed the highest reason to believe that death could not have dominion over him. Paul's first argument then, is a statement of fact. In witness of this sovereign event of Christ's resurrection Paul recites the evidence. He then makes a comparison of this statement of fact with the Corinthian denial. Christ has been raised from the dead: that is the fact. Resurrection of the dead, there is none: that is the Corinthian denial. Each is an utter contradiction of the other. Resurrection of the dead there is none: if that proposition is true, Christ has not been raised. Christ has been raised: if that statement is true, the Corinthian denial is discredited.

"Suppose the denial is true, what follows? (1) Christ is still in the grave and the apostolic message is in vain, as is also the faith of Christian men and women. (2) The message is false, it is blasphemous, an audacious ascription to God of an act that he has not done. (3) Saddest of all, if the denial holds, those that are asleep in Christ have perished. Those who

confessed him to their own hurt and shame, who held to him thru every form of social disesteem and distress, who laboured in his name with unwearied devotion and ever-brightening hope, who thru him claimed citizenship in heaven, and who, when the hour of death came, hailed it as the consummation and coronation of love, if the Corinthian denial is valid, this lengthening procession of radiant spirits is a procession not upward into the skies, but downward into the dust. Thus the denial runs into its abysmal consequences. But the denial is not true; Christ has been raised from the dead. In Adam all die; in Christ all are made alive. There is a human inheritance, in virtue of which man is perishable, and there is a divine sonship, in virtue of which man is imperishable. We owe a debt to death; we must pay it, and so our bodies sink in the dust. We are in duty bound to God, and so our souls rise into the life eternal. The death and the revival of Christ are the supreme instances of this double law, the law that invests man with mortality, and the law that proclaims his immortality."

Pauls brings his argument to a close by a suggestion from analogy, and from the nature of the case as to the future or resurrection life. This argument is concerned with the mode of resurrection. The dead man does not come forth in his old buried body; that is sown in the grave, and as an organization ceases to be. But the life that was in that body does not perish. It rises out of the decaying organization, as the corn does out

of the decomposed seed. It persists, and gathers to itself a new form, one in the likeness of that which has laid aside, even as the corn keeps the type of the seed; still, thru the change of the body, the imperishable life attains an increase in power but faintly suggested by the multiplication of the seed in the harvest. The life in the seed persists, altho its first body dies, and the soul persists after the death of the body. That is the first analogy. The apostle presents another, going to show how foolish it would be to limit the love and power of God. The apostle has a third analogy. Looking away from earth, we find that every heavenly body has an organization differing from that of every other. These organizations in the animal and material world do not enable us to guess or dream of the form of the spiritual body, but they abundantly declare its possibility. With God, therefore, we may leave the unclothed soul, He will give it a body as it shall please him. From experience we are able to conclude that the possibilities of divine love and power are endless.

There is also a line of suggestion as to the form of the future life from the nature of the case. Such as he was after his revival from death we shall be after our revival from death. That wonderful form of light and mystery in which the Lord appeared after death is a hint at the forms we who bear his image and share his spirit shall wear. As he was before death, so are

we; subject to pain, to the cross and to the spear. As he was after his revival from death, so shall we be. He shall change the body of our humiliation, and fashion it like unto his own glorious body.

There is considerable dispute as to whether Paul's conception of the resurrection ruled out the possibility of a bodily resurrection. This point has been debated furiously. Holtzmann says in this connection, "The reanimation of Jesus' earthly body could only have been important if he was to continue his life on earth. Yet the oldest and most trustworthy account of these appearances knows nothing of a renewal of the earthly life of him who had been crucified. In first Corinthians it is claimed the Lord was seen on six occasions. In all and each of these cases Paul just says that Jesus was seen; there is no mention of any lengthened intercourse with him of conversations of any length, of a touching of his body, of a coming and going, of participation in any meal. The three accounts in Acts of the appearance of the Risen Lord to Paul makes no mention of any precisely outlined figures. Paul simply hears a voice proceeding from the light. This is quite a different thing from Jesus returning in the bodily form he had before his death, as described by the later evangelists. Yet Paul was not aware that the Risen Lord's appearance to him differed in any respect from his appearance at an earlier date to others."

The opposite position is stated just as emphatically. Orr declares that what the gospels attest as the belief of the Apostolic church on the nature of the resurrection is amply corroborated by the witness of Paul. "It is," he says, "frequently argued that since Paul, in the words, 'he appeared to me also' puts the appearance of the Risen Lord to himself at his conversion in the same category with the appearances to the disciples after the resurrection, he must have regarded these as, like his own, visionary. Canon Henson repeats this objection. "The apostle, in classing his own 'vision' of the risen Saviour on the road to Damascus with the other Christophanies, allows us to conclude that in all the appearances there was nothing of the nature of a resuscitated body, which could be touched, held, handled, and could certify its frankly physical character by eating and drinking." This, however, is to miss the very point of the apostle's enumeration. Paul's object in his use of the word 'appeared' is not to suggest that the earlier appearances were visionary, but conversely to imply that the appearance vouchsafed to himself on the road to Damascus was as real as those granted to others. He, too, had veritably seen Jesus our Lord. That Paul conceived of the resurrection as an actual re-animation and coming forth of Christ's body from the tomb follows, not only from his introduction of the clause 'and that he was buried', but from the whole argument of the chapter in Corinthians, and from numerous statements elsewhere in his epistles."

In first Corinthians, the fifteenth chapter, Paul is rebutting the contention of the adversaries in the church that there is no resurrection from the dead for believers, and he does this by appealing to the resurrection of Christ. The latter fact does not seem to have been disputed? If there is no resurrection from the dead, Paul argues, then Christ is not risen; if Christ has risen, his resurrection is a pledge of that of his people. It is perfectly evident that the sceptics of Corinth were not denying a merely spiritual resurrection; they evidently believed that death was the extinction of the individual life. As little is Paul contending in his reply for a merely spiritual resurrection. He contends for a resurrection of the body, tho in a transformed and spiritualized condition. (It will be remembered ~~that~~ Professor Lake concedes this).

"The apostle's views of the bodily resurrection of Jesus is unambiguously implied in the various statements of his other epistles. In Rom 8:2 we have the declaration: "But if the spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, He that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall give life also to your mortal bodies thru His spirit that dwelleth in you." Here plainly it is the mortal body which is the subject of the quickening. Later, in verse 23 of the same chapter we have: "Waiting for our adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." In Ephesians 1:19-20 "the exceeding greatness of

(God's) power to usward who believe," is measured by " that working of the strength of his might which he wrought in Christ, when he raised Him from the dead." In Philippians 3:10,11,21, the hope held out is that the Lord Jesus Christ, awaited from heaven, "shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation that it may be conformed to the body of his glory?" The like implication of a bodily resurrection is found in 1 Thess 4:13-17, and many more passages.

"It seems unnecessary to accumulate evidence to the same effect from the remaining New Testament writings. On a fair view of the evidence, it seems plain that the belief of the Apostolic Church was belief in a true bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ, and it is as little open to doubt that, if such an event took place, it was a miracle, i.e., a true supernatural intervention of God, in the strictest sense of the word."

It would seem to us that the safe position regarding Paul's conception of the resurrection is that assumed by Professor Lake in these words, " He believed that at the resurrection of Jesus his body was changed from one of flesh and blood to one which was spiritual, incorruptible and immortal, in such a way that there was no trace left of the corruptible body which had been laid in the grave." And again, " There can be clearly no doubt that he (Paul) believed in the complete personal identity of that which rose with that which had died and been buried."

The evidence in Mark comes a few years later. The most essential part of Mark's evidence has been lost. He gives us (1) the early visit of the three women to the tomb. It is a very important fact that they found the tomb empty. (2) They say a young man in a long white robe, who told them that the Lord was risen, and would meet his disciples in Galilee. (3) They were frightened and fled with terror. The account ends abruptly, so abruptly that it is thought the last leaf has been lost from very early times. That Mark recorded at least one appearance of the risen Lord can scarcely be doubted. Regarding the value of this Marcan evidence Lake says, "How far Mark can be trusted is of course a matter which can only be discussed after a similar investigation of the other accounts? But one may be allowed to emphasize at once the apparent absence of all mythological embroidery, and the simple, self-consistent character of the narrative. Mark is the evidence of a witness who comes into court with a good character for trustworthiness."

Mark's evidence is confined to 16:1-8. Reference is made to the three women, Mary Magdalene; Mary, Mother of James, Salome. The stone is rolled away and a young man in white is seen. The women are afraid and run in fear. Holtzmann reminds us that there is no description of any appearances of a risen Lord. The very fact that Jesus himself does not appear on the occasion lends a high degree of probability to Mark's account.

"The later stories of the resurrection, from Matthew onwards, gratify the natural desire of making Jesus appear to his faithful followers in the vicinity of the grave." Holtzmann ~~###~~ suggests the elements of truth contained in this account. That the women should wish to embalm the body of Jesus is quite inelligible. Again, there is no reason to doubt that the women could not carry out their purpose simply because they found the grave empty. Finally, the fact may well have excited them to such a degree that they imagined they could see an angel and hear his message.

The special Matthean details are (1) the resurrection of the saints. There is no other trace in the New Testament of this particular feature. It plays a large part however in the apocryphal literature. (2) The watch at the grave. (3) The great angel at the tomb. (4) The appearance to the women. According to Professor Lake this is a complete reversal of Mark's meaning. Consequently this incident has no claim to be regarded as more than a secondary product of the Marcan tradition, with no historical value. (5) The appearance to the disciples in Galilee.

We have in Matthew 28:1-8 a free reproduction of Mark 16:1-8. It is probable that in 28:9-10 the author is still making use of the Marcan tradition, as also in verses 16-20. It is not so with verses 11-15 regarding the hierarchy and soldiers. This is peculiar to Matthew. It no doubt comes from some

of the traditions current when Matthew wrote his gospel.

In the Lukan narrative we have the following peculiarities, (1) the experience of the women at the tomb, (2) the message of the two men, (3) Conduct of the women and the disciples, (4) appearance on the road to Emmaus, (5) appearance to the assembled disciples in Jerusalem, (6) speech of the Lord, (7) ascension.

This evidence is much similar to that found in Matthew. It is partly dependent on Mark, but it is obvious that he had other valuable sources of information. In the narrative of the walk to Emmaus he contributes one "of the most convincing of the post-resurrection narratives, for which he was probably indebted to first hand testimony." (Swete, The Appearances of our Lord after the Passion).

As for the fourth gospel, it is generally admitted that chapter twenty one is an appendix and not part of the original scheme of the gospel. Some inconsistencies with the other accounts are noticeable. The appearances of Jesus in Galilee contrasts strangely with chapter twenty, which is unconscious of any appearance save those in Jerusalem. Chapter twenty one was inspired by the knowledge of a tradition as to appearances of the Lord in Galilee.

The narrative in the Acts also presents some inconsistencies. These are most noticeable in connection with the

account of the ascension. There is also recorded the appearance to Stephen. This is a vision of heaven rather than an appearance on the earth. Here also are recorded the three accounts of the appearances to Paul on the road to Damascus. There is considerable variation in these accounts. His description does not imply, but rather excludes, an appearance of a material nature. According to Luke, the earlier appearances were those of a person with a body of flesh and blood, while the later ones were of an immaterial nature. (Lake).

There is also the spurious conclusion of Mark to be considered. This is clearly an addition made to the already mutilated gospel by someone who noticed the harshness of the conclusion, and tried to repudiate the suggestion of the silence of the women. (Lake). Whether Aristion or some unknown Christian be its author, it is good evidence for what was believed in the second century. There are traces of it in Justyn Martyr and Irenaeus, and it is found in almost all the MSS. and versions that have come down to us.

Professor Lake makes reference to the accounts of the resurrection found in the Apocryphal books.

(1) The gospel of Peter. In chapter five the ascension is represented as taking place at the moment of death on the cross. But the apparent inconsistency can be explained as due to the peculiar doctrine of the Docetics; from whose circle the gospel came. The story of the guard at the tomb resembles that in

Matthew, tho there are considerable differences. In chapter nine there is an explicit account of the resurrection which has no exact parallels in the gospels, but seems to embody various details found especially in Matthew. It is plain that the words of chapter nine refer to the descent into Hades, which is not mentioned in the gospels but plays a large part in apocryphal literature, as well as in the development of early Christian doctrine and art. In chapter eleven the narrative takes up the thread of the Marcan account. There is no room for doubt that the writer was actually using Mark, tho with much freedom.

(2) Gospel according to the Hebrews. There are only two extant fragments which refer to the resurrection, both quoted by Jerome. It is obviously connected with the tradition mentioned by Paul of the appearance to James.

Lake, in attempting a reconstruction of the earliest tradition has come to the following conclusions: the Lord was buried by Joseph of Arimathea, who wished to fulfill the law of Deuteronomy, and probably was the representative of the Sanhedrin. The burial was watched, probably from a distance, by the little band of women who had remained to see the last moments of their Master. None of the other disciples were present, for they had scattered after the arrest of Jesus (Peter a little later than the rest), and had either already returned home, or were in hiding in Jerusalem until they could find an opportunity to escape. Soon all the disciples found themselves once more in their old

homes, and prepared to return to their old methods of life.

But to their surprise the Lord appeared, first to Peter and afterward to the others—to those who lived in Judea as well as to the Galileans— and under the influence of these appearances, of which the details have not been accurately preserved, they came to believe that the Lord was risen and exalted to heaven, and that they were called to return to Jerusalem to take up their Master's work.

In Jerusalem they found the women who had watched the burial, and these told them that they had gone on the morning of the third day to supply the deficiencies of the burial given to the Lord by Joseph, but when they came to the grave, instead of finding it closed, they found it open, and a young man terrified them by telling them that Jesus whom they were seeking was not there. Thus to the already firm belief in the fact of the Resurrection—a belief which to that generation implied that the grave was empty— came to be added, on the strength of the women's report, that the resurrection took place on the third day.

In getting at the facts behind the earliest tradition Professor Lake stresses three points; (1) the belief that the tomb was empty; (2) the choice of the third day as that of the resurrection; (3) the appearance of Christ as the basis of belief.

Regarding the empty tomb he says the story of the

empty tomb seems to be an improper inference from the fact of the resurrection, and we are led on to ask whether it need be inferred from the experience of the women in which they inferred it. It is seriously a matter for doubt whether the women were really in a position to be quite certain that the tomb which they visited was that in which they had seen Joseph of Arimathea bury the Lord's body. The neighborhood of Jerusalem is full of rock-tombs, and it would not be easy to distinguish one from another without careful notes. So far as their frame of mind at the time of the burial was concerned, the women were certainly not fit to take such notes. It is very doubtful if they were close to the tomb at the moment of burial. The possibility, therefore, that they came to the wrong tomb is to be reckoned with, and it is important because it supplies the natural explanation of the fact that whereas they had seen the tomb closed, they found it open. To Paul, faith in the resurrection was based on the evidence that the Lord had been seen, not that the tomb was empty. If it were not the same tomb, the circumstances all seem to fall in line. The women came in the early morning to a tomb which they thought was the one in which they had seen the Lord buried. They expected to find a closed tomb, but they found an open one; and a young man, who was in the entrance, guessing their errand, tried to tell them that they had made a mistake in the place. "He is not here," said he; "see the place where they laid him," and probably pointed to the next tomb.

But the women were frightened at the detection of their errand and fled, only imperfectly or not at all understanding what they heard. It was only later on, when they knew the Lord was risen, and on their view that his tomb was empty, that they came to believe that the young man was something more than they had seen; that he was not telling them of their mistake, but announcing the resurrection, and that his intention was to give them a message for their disciples.

Regarding the choice of the third day Professor Lake reminds us of the prophecy of the Lord himself. "after three days" or "on the third day" is interpreted as "shortly", "in a short time." The contemporary Messianic belief among the people is next referred to. There is little direct proof that the idea of the "third day" was in vogue during the days and immediately following the days of Jesus. But the fact remains that from the beginning the third day was regarded as that of the resurrection on theological grounds rather than historical grounds- and the question arises whether this primitive belief has still a commanding claim on our assent.

The answer to this question depends really on that given to the problem of the empty tomb. If we take the Jewish view that resurrection implies resuscitation of the body, the fact of the burial of the Lord proves at least there was an interval between his death and resurrection; and so far, at least, the belief in the third day is not excluded. If, on the other hand,

we reject this view, we really reject with it not merely the doctrinal justification for the belief in the empty tomb, but also for an interval between death and resurrection. What we mean by resurrection is not resuscitation of the material body, but the unbroken survival of personal life; and the uninterrupted continuance of life excludes an interval of even three days, just as certainly as the resuscitation of the body demands it.

Regarding the meaning of the appearances of the Lord, Lake regards the authority of Paul as more or less final. It is quite plain that the disciples were all firmly convinced that the Lord had appeared to them, and no one more firmly than Paul; nor is there any reason to suppose that his experience was essentially different from that of the other disciples. What matters is that the evidence of Paul is explicit on the two points (a) that the appearance left no room for doubt in his mind, (b) that it was that of a spiritual being. We must consider the possibility that the phenomenon which we call the resurrection of Christ cannot be isolated, but must be considered in connection with others which belong to the same class. Critical methods dealing with the historical evidence shows more and more clearly that the view is untenable, except on doctrinal grounds, that there was any resuscitation of the body of Jesus. A consideration of the doctrinal grounds does not convince us that there is reason for altering the verdict. At the same time, critical methods point

just as clearly to the existence of a conviction among the disciples that the Lord had appeared to them, and neither criticism nor philosophy can give any explanation of this fact without admitting that these appearances were dependent upon the personality of Jesus

Thus we have reviewed the evidences for the resurrection. The evidence is as good as could reasonably be expected, yet it is not all that we ourselves should have desired. The several accounts are less full and less harmonious than we should have desired. Yet, as Plummer reminds us, a strictly harmonious evidence would be suspicious. The divergencies show that each witness is telling what he believes to be the truth. The divergencies are not enough to discredit the testimony as a whole, which is in remarkable agreement, especially about the main facts. Each report bears the stamp of honesty. The Christian church exists, and has existed and grown since the years of the crucifixion. So enormous a fact cannot be explained without an adequate cause, and it is impossible to find an adequate cause if the resurrection of Christ from the tomb is regarded as fiction.

Orr says regarding the evidence, "The consideration of the alleged discrepancies can stand over, save as they prove to be involved in the general discussion. Even if all were admitted, they hardly touch the main facts of the combined witness-

especially the testimony to the central fact of the empty tomb and the Lord's resurrection on the last day. Dr Sanday says, the "No difficulty of weaving separate incidents into an orderly and well-compacted narrative can impugn the unanimous belief of the Church which lies behind them, that the Lord Jesus rose from the dead on the third day and appeared to the disciples." F.C.Burkitt says in this connection, "There are many variations and discrepancies, but all the gospels agree in the main facts." Wm Adams Brown says, "Of course there are differences in the reports. Those of Paul, the first documentary evidence, does not agree in all points with the gospels. It is not easy to reconcile the differences. Matthew puts the appearance to the eleven in Galilee, while Luke and John make Jerusalem the scene of the first appearance. Whatever the difficulties, no sober critic doubts that at the basis of the gospel story there lies a core of solid fact. We may take for granted that within a very few days after the crucifixion, the disciples actually saw what they believed to be their Master, and that no subsequent experience was able to shake their confidence in the fact that he had risen from the dead."

So much for the scriptural and non-scriptural evidence. After all, the most direct and convincing evidence of the resurrection is the personality of Jesus Himself. The miracle of the resurrection is that a man could live such a life that folks would believe he had been raised from the dead. The novelty of

Jesus' teaching about the life after death was not so much the matter, as in the manner of it. He spoke of immortality as a familiar fact, too well known to need defence or definition. As with the prophets, who were his predecessors, it was a corollary from another truth to which he attached supreme importance. This was God's purpose to establish his kingdom. To Jesus, immortality is the necessary condition for the fulfillment of his Messianic work. The ground of Jesus' faith in immortality is the inherent relationship between the spirit of the human child and that of the divine Father in whose image he is made. That which He has made and for which He cares cannot perish. Jesus dismisses everything else as irrelevant. The nature of the resurrection body, the conditions of knowledge and of activity in the unseen world- of those we learn nothing from Jesus' answer. This only is clear, that to him, there is moral continuity. Death may be a change, but it is not a break.

As we have said Jesus lived such a life as to make it incredible that he should die. It is impossible to believe that the time will ever come when his loving ministry will be brought to a close. What gave Jesus' resurrection its unique significance was its setting in human history, its relation to that which had gone before, and to that which followed after, and above all, the nature of the person who was raised. This is the fact- according to Brown-upon which everything turns. "If we make," he says,

His resurrection the central fact in history, it is because Jesus is more than an ordinary man. It is because he is to us what he was to the first disciples, God's promised Messiah, the central figure in human history, the Saviour of the world."

Gordon asks the questions, "What is the contribution, general and special, that Jesus Christ has made with reference to existence after death?" He then proceeds to answer the question. There are two lines to be followed, - the course of thought and that of fact.

"There is," he says, "the interpretation that Christ puts upon God and man, the character of his ideas, the conception of truth that he left in the world, the revelation that he made of the order of the universe, the faith that he planted in the world's heart.

"There is, besides, the significance of his own career, the bearing upon our question of his personal experience, the import of his revival from death and the grave. The ideas that made immortality credible and more and more probable, are in Christ carried to their highest, take on a form and power inapproachable and final.

"Perhaps Christ's most fundamental idea is that of the Kingdom of God. The second great idea, if indeed it is second, is that of eternal life. Eternal life is the soul conscious of its relationships, human and divine, and living in them with an inspired aim, strength and fullness.

" The life eternal is a present possession. This is eternal life, the knowledge of God and humanity as revealed in Jesus Christ. What is life? Existence raised, enriched and inspired by an unearthly and boundless love, and wrought over into heavenly excellence and joy. What is death? Existence without love, destitute of worth, dogged by despair and pursued by the shadow of an infinite horror.

" Eternal life is the human life realized and inspired. Sensuous existence is not human existence. Intellectual and moral life is not the characteristic and full life of mankind. Communion with the Divine, within, around, and above is the complete life. Lay hold upon that which is life indeed, subordinate the sensuous to the intellectual, and the intellectual to the moral, and all to the spiritual, to full and inspired and endless communion with God."

Such was the teaching of Jesus regarding immortality. The appreciation of his teaching renders more possible a convincing faith in his resurrection. We must ever keep in mind the character of the person revived. The worth of Jesus Christ, his transcendent intellectual and moral greatness, is the first thing to be noted in connection with his revival from the grave. Christian ethics prepare the way for Christian facts; the infinite worth of Christ, for his revival from death. If he is an amazing exception to the law of death, he is an equally amazing exception to the law of sin. Exceptional in character and errand,

why should he not be exceptional in death?

In considering the evidences regarding the resurrection we have considered (1) scriptural evidences, (2) the fact and the character of Christ. We have now to consider the development and growth of the early church. The origin of the Christian church cannot be explained without the belief in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. If an account of this belief must be given, and if everything is against the supposition that it was simply due to the natural growth of thought, we are thrown back upon the only other explanation possible. The first Christians must have been satisfied that those who proclaimed the resurrection of Jesus had ample evidence of it. The church must have had, what she supposed herself to have, intelligible reasons for her faith.

The longer one studies the whole problem of the resurrection the more convinced one becomes that the only adequate explanation of the early faith in the revival of Christ from the dead, is the historic fact that he was revived. The fact created the faith, and not faith the fact. That these early witnesses were incredulous and ultimately convinced only by the power of fact has often been noticed. That they were simple men and absolute strangers to the genius out of which imposture comes has likewise been duly emphasized.

The Christian faith is founded upon the fact of

Christ's revival from the dead. His death dispersed the disciples, as it then seemed, forever. They were gathered together again, and reunited. What did it? Was it fancy or fact? Their character was changed. The very men who were vexed with ambitious schemes and tormented with the desire of superiority are now planning for the spiritual good of mankind. These men were formed into a church, they meet for worship, they undergo wonderful spiritual experiences. What reunited the disciples? What changed them from deniers into confessors, from self seekers to servants of humanity? What gave them organization and life? Was it not the power of an event, and was not that event the revival of their master from the bonds of death?

Orr says in this connection, "The testimony of the disciples, held fast to under the severest trial of privation, suffering and death, was public, and not attempt was ever made, so far as is known, to refute their assertion. The effects of the faith in the first disciples, and in the hearts and lives of their converts, were of a nature to establish that they were the victims of no illusion; that they built on rock, not sand.

For this is the point next to be observed: the historical evidence for the resurrection of Jesus is not all the evidence. As the resurrection had its antecedents in the history and claims of Jesus, so it had its results. Pentecost is such a result. The conversion of Paul, the epistles of the New Testament,

the spirit-filled lives of a multitude of believers are such results. The church founded on the apostolic witness has endured for all these centuries. Christian experience throughout all these ages is a fact which only a Living Christ can explain or sustain."

The defeated disciples were transformed as if by magic into a conquering host that converted pagan Rome, and made it the first Christian empire. The darkness and gloom of the days of their Master's passion were dispelled, and they stood in the broad sunlight of a new day of promise. They were no longer dependent, they no longer thought of continuing their former trades. Something had happened which made them world citizens of a new hope and inspiring message. Torture, the burning stake, all forms of hideous persecutions were unable to shake the faith of these early disciples that Jesus had been raised from the dead. The secret of the Pentecostal experience was the consciousness that those disciples had, that Jesus was still with them. The fact that he was still with them was to them an indubitable evidence that he was no longer in the grave. It is impossible to read the early history of the church, of the self sacrificing service engaged in by the apostles of the cross, without feeling that the only adequate explanation of such conduct was the knowledge that their Lord and Master had been raised from the dead as He had prophesied. To contend that the disciples were deceived, and that they suffered the privations and persecutions of those early years

as a result of an hallucination is to ask too much of the imagination. Folks dont suffer because they enjoy it. The disciples didnt submit to all manner of taunts and brutalities because they enjoyed that more than fishing or collecting taxes. They only suffered and died, because they KNEW that death would release them from the restrictions of flesh, and would bring them into immediate contact with their risen Lord and Master. The evidence from the early church for the resurrection of Jesus Christ is most convincing.

A consideration of the evidence for the resurrection brings us to a consideration of the Christian hope. It is that form of hope for the future of the human spirit after death which owes its origin to the life, teaching, resurrection and continued influence of Jesus, the founder of the Christian religion. It is the hope of continued fellowship with and ultimate conformity to Jesus Christ. His personality is the ground of the Christian confidence. The resurrection of Jesus is not the only argument for immortality. But faith in the particular kind of immortality to which the Christian looks forward finds its strongest support in the life, character and continued influence of the Christ.

A glance backward affords us a view of the earlier conceptions of the future life, which were destined to blossom forth in the Christian hope. We see that the primitive man's idea was a life in an underworld without moral distinctions. ~~This feeling is reflected in Homer and some of the~~

psalms. There is but slight difference between the soul and the body. If you substitute Sheol for Erebus, you might transfer Homer's words almost without change to certain portions of the Old Testament. Here the world to come is one of darkness, with little or no hope, and the separation of the soul from God. Death is something to be feared, an object of dread.

The simplest form of the resurrection is to be rescued from this underworld, resulting in the reunion of the body and the soul. This view is seen in the miracles of resurrection recorded in the Old Testament. But with the deepening of moral insight this early interest wanes. The contrast between this life and the next is emphasized. The resurrection is not simply a return to this life, even under the most favorable circumstances. It is the entrance of the spirit upon a new environment. The Persian doctrine of Paradise gave expression to this higher hope. The Egyptian doctrine of judgement embraced the same idea.

We then become familiar with the rise of the doctrine of Immortality in Greece and India. Instead of introducing a man into a material life of a happier and more desirable kind, death may be thought of as delivering him from bodily existence altogether, and introducing him into the life of pure spirit. We have here the doctrine that the soul of man is indestructable, more real, and therefore more enduring than the body in which it is temporarily housed; and with the exception of the absolute

spirit, the most real and enduring thing in the entire universe. This is a philosophic rather than a religious conception. It was Socrates that shifted the center of interest from the outer world to the inner world. Both he and Plato conceived of God as spirit rather than matter. The soul is regarded as the divine element in man, a spark of the eternal reason which is the creative principle of the universe. As such it is as imperishable as God himself.

In India the doctrine of immortality was interwoven with that of transmigration. This present existence is but one of an infinite series reaching backward and forward in endless sequence as far as the imagination can reach. With this conception before us we can understand why Puddhism would prove attractive. Utter renunciation of life brings deliverance. What a contrast to the teachings and example of Christ!

We have already considered the preparation in Israel for the Christian hope. We have seen with what deep convictions the prophets gave expression to a hope that was to be permanent and abiding. We see the introduction of that element of vicarious suffering upon which the resurrection was later to become possible. We see how closely the prophets linked up their own lives and the lives of their people with God. Here was an indestructable relationship

To these preparatory conceptions the resurrection of Jesus Christ brought an infinitely greater meaning. His

resurrection furnished the climax and the completion to a long line of development, looking forward to eternal life. His resurrection clarified the hidden meaning of all that had been said or written on the theme of everlasting life. His resurrection has guaranteed the validity of the hopes and aspirations of mankind as set forth by the philosophers and religious teachers all over the world, both before and since his day.

W.A. Brown defines the Christian hope, as rendered possible by the resurrection of Christ in the following way.

"The Christian hope is at once individual and social. It involves a belief in the continuance of personal existence after death under conditions which insure the continuity of self consciousness, and at the same time it anticipates continued fellowship with God, our father, and continued service of our fellow-men in the new social order which Christ came to establish, and the principles of which he exemplified in his own life.

"In this life the body fulfils for us a double function. It at once is the means by which we realize our own purposes and the channel by which we enter into social intercourse with others. We cannot doubt that in the life to come those two needs will still be present and will still be met. Beyond this we need not go. Life then, as now, will be one of progress, new lessons to be learned, new battles to be fought, new experiences to be gained, new services to be rendered. It will not be a ~~life of stagnation, but of activity, not of monotony, but of change,~~

This confident rest with Christ in God in ceaseless labour and unbroken trust is what the Christian means by heaven."

We see that faith in immortality is based upon the resurrection of Jesus Christ. His resurrection gives witness and reality to our thought of the future, and turns what would otherwise be a vague hope into an assured conviction. The resurrection was to the disciples the confirmation of a pre-existing faith. Christ gives such dignity to human nature that its endless continuance seems natural and worthy. He discloses to us all capacities within ourselves which justify our instinctive hope, and in the new experience of sonship into which he leads, gives us the pledge of endless life in the Father's house.

In the words of Milligan, "Whatever befalls Him befalls us. We live in His life, work His work; we suffer in His suffering, die in his death; rise in His resurrection, ascend to the heavenly places in His ascension. This doctrine of the union between the Lord Jesus Christ and His people is the central doctrine of the New Testament."

We have come to see how inseparable is the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the Christian hope. Take away His resurrection, and the very foundation of our spiritual life is removed. The Christian hope feeds upon and thrives on the historical resurrection of Jesus. To conceive of Christ as having been buried in that Judean cemetery, there remaining until his ashes

were blown to the four winds of the heaven, is to deprive the Christian hope of its energy and vitality. It is quite impossible to rationalize the Christian hope on any other premise than the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Mackintosh says, " While the resurrection of Jesus is not the final resting place of thought, the place it fills in the array of evidence is crucial. It does not prove immortality, as if apart from it that hope had no sufficient ground; but it adds incalculably to its hold upon our mind. It is a tangible defence of our belief. It is associated with that belief in such a sense, so fortifies and illustrates it, that it acts as a vivid apprehension acts, giving it luminousness and force. The experience of Jesus was a test case, and, like every test case, it fixed a principle. It did not create that principle; yet it decided what it should mean for the world. We know that men are brave; but to see an act of heroism wonderfully quickens the knowledge. In like manner, he whom God is holding by His right hand is sure of life without end, but the spectacle of Jesus' actual resurrection gives to his prior faith a new intensity of feeling. It makes his hold upon it more living; so that he dares to apply it undismayed to the darkest aspects of experience—to sorrow, to tragedy, to ignominy and pain. The world is now transfigured in his eyes."

That is to say, the resurrection of Jesus and the ~~Christian hope are one and inseparable.~~

We have taken account of the critical and negative estimates of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. We have tried to listen with patience to those who would make the resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth a myth, woven out of an excited imagination. We have discussed the evidences for the resurrection, both in the scriptures and in the person and the work of Christ and his disciples. We have listened to Paul as he outlines the fundamentals of his faith and hope. We have considered the testimony of his contemporaries and his successors. It was our conclusion that the evidences, contradictory in some respects, too brief in some places and burdened with unnecessary details in other places, was still reasonable enough to command the serious respect of thinking people.

When folks deny the possibility of the resurrection of Jesus because of the inconsistencies in the New Testament reports, they operate upon a literary principle nowhere else employed. To demand absolute and perfect consistency on the part of those untrained and highly excitable disciples, is to demand the impossible. These men were human enough to be inconsistent. If the several accounts of the resurrection were without blemish, without shortcomings and inconsistencies, then indeed, would we have occasion for serious wondering and doubting. Fortunately for the salvation of future generations, the scriptures will no longer be subjected to the brutal necessity of perfectly parallel-

ing their respective contents. To make the evidences of the resurrection as reported in the gospels, the Acts and the Pauline letters absolutely consistent and harmonious is to attempt the impossible. It cant be done. There is an essential harmony however of the permanent and the abiding elements.

We are convinced of this- that Jesus Christ was triumphant over death and the grave. We believe in the resurrection from the dead of the Son of God. We admit the difficulties involved. What ultimate disposition is to be made of his natural body is difficult to determine. It is spiritual suicide the dogmatize at this point. We simply dont know. Believing as we do in the Fatherhood of God, and in His infinite love and mercy we are helped to certain conclusions. We dont know what fortunes or misfortunes befell the body of Jesus. It is difficult to conceive in what way his mortal body was transformed into a spiritual body, qualifying it for eternal citizenship in God's Kingdom, and still retaining those elements recognizable to mortal eye. If this viewpoint is difficult to comprehend, the alternative viewpoint is still more difficult. To believe that the body of Jesus Christ, that body fashioned by the spirit of a loving, heavenly Father, and nursed by a Virgin mother, to believe that that body was left in some obscure grave to suffer corruption and disintegration, to believe that is to do insult to every sense of Christian propriety. And yet we must believe one or the

other. There is no other alternative. The material body of Christ was either transformed into a spiritual body, recognizable by his surviving friends and serving as the corner stone for the hope of the resurrection; or his body rotted in the grave, and as dust has been scattered by the winds of heaven to the four corners of the earth. On the basis of the latter conception we have no assurance but what the dust that was blown about the streets of Boston today was once a part of the divine Son of God.

We have faith enough to believe that God, in His infinite love, and by some process as yet dimly understood, the body of our Lord and Saviour was saved the embarrassment of rotting in the tomb. It may be said that the viewpoint of a resurrected body makes necessary a miracle of stupendous and far reaching dimensions. What of it? Who is afraid of a miracle, when the character of God is at stake. The flabbiness of present day Christianity is due in no small degree, to the pagan mutilation of Christ and His message, until nothing of the superhuman remains. If we can no longer accept the possibility or the desirability of a miracle, then for God's sake, and for the sake of the sin ridden world, let us cease preaching the gospel. The man whose theology is so sterilized and whose vision carries him no farther than the horizon of his own experience, has no Easter message. The Christian pulpit today is being desecrated by men

who wear the seamless garment of Christ, but who remain so bigoted as to believe that God is capable of doing only those things which their own mortal minds are able to completely rationalize. When our religion has been reduced to purely material dimensions it will have lost its strength and its appeal, and will cease to be Christian. When we are no longer able, in our supposedly mental infallibility, to admit the possibility of a miracle, then Easter Sunday will have become a dead institution.

Because we have faith enough to believe in the resurrection, even tho it cant be completely rationalized, we have faith enough to believe in immortality. We mean by that individual and personal resurrection from the grave. Several substitutes have been offered to take the place of this personal resurrection. We have radical socialists who place all their energy and their thought upon the present order. They believe in a sort of social immortality. Their horizon is bounded by the present life. But what shall we say of the myriad of souls that have died and will die before the coming of this golden era? Then we have the so-called immortality of influence. The individual, while ceasing to exist as a separate self consciousness, continues after death to live on in the effects for good or evil which he produces in the lives of those who come after him. There is much truth here. What lover of humanity but feels himself sustained in his struggle by the thought of Lincoln, Augustine, Luther, Wesley and a host of others? But how comes man to exert such a

far reaching influence? What is the nature of this personality that can work without end. Then there is the immortality of value. The significance of life consists not in what we do but in what we mean. Each life is the expression of some purpose, some desire, some ideal. It is so with all the permanent values that give dignity to human life. It is true of justice, of beauty, of loyalty and consecration and worship. But how should we ever have come to appreciate the permanent values of these great ideals except against the background of the changing?

None of these substitutes can ever take the place of the hope of individual, personal resurrection. If it is difficult to believe this, it is more difficult not to believe it. Few souls there are who consistently and energetically deny the possibility of life beyond the grave. To rob mankind of the hope of immortality is to deliver every son and daughter of creation into the yawning chasm of a mocking fatalism. It were better never to have been born, than to have been brought into the world and after enjoying life to the full, to be forever doomed to an unconscious slumber in the grave! Our whole soul cries out against this. It is a blasphemy to the soul, an outrage to conscience, an injustice to the obvious beauty and goodness of God to call into question the hope of a personal eternal immortality.

It is because immortality seems supremely worthwhile that we desire it, and because we expect the universe to answer our highest desires that we believe in it. All that makes life

beautiful, and society noble, and character secure, we hold in the last analysis by faith. We dare to trust where we cannot prove, and act where we dare not know. The ground of individual confidence today is largely the faith that ages have thought into clearness and lived into character. The indefinable by mighty forces of sentiment that have carried mankind into the highest incivilization and into the ideals that are the conditions and inspiration of all human progress rise in the heart of the solitary thinker of today. Belief in immortality will one day become inevitable. Inevitableness of belief is the goal toward which history is moving, and we who live in the present are in the midst of this sublime tendency.

When we take the deathless life on trust we have under our feet the most stable things within the compass of human experience: the conscience, the ideals that are the conditions of the worlds advance, the highest in history, and the highest in the universe,- the character of God. The proof of our immortality is not complete; but the evidence for it is so great that it would be an outrage upon life not to honor it with credence.

In conclusion we give this parting thought to him who may be sceptically minded regarding the contents of this paper, as to the hope of the resurrection from the grave, so beautifully phrased by James Russel Lowell. * When the keen scrutiny of sceptics has found a place on the planet where a decent man may live in decency, comfort and security, supporting and educating

his children, unspoiled and unpolluted; a place where age is revered, infancy protected, womanhood honoured, and human life held in due regard,- when sceptics can find such a place ten miles square on this globe, where the gospel of Christ has not gone before and cleared the way and laid the foundations that made decency and security possible,; it will then be in order for the sceptical 'literate' to move thither and there ventilate their views. But so long as these men are dependent upon the very religion which they discard for every privilege they enjoy, they may well hesitate to rob the Christian of his hope and humanity of its faith in the Saviour who alone has given men that hope of eternal life which makes life tolerable and society possible, and robs death of its terrors and the grave of its gloom."