

THE WAY TO GOD

by

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CHAPTER FIVE

A DIVINE SAVIOUR

“Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matthew 16:16; John 6:69).

WE meet with a certain class of inquirers who do not believe in the divinity of Christ. There are many passages that will give light on this subject.

In 1 Corinthians 15:47, we are told: **“The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven.”**

In I John 5:20: **“We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.”**

Again in John 17:3: **“And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only, true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.”**

And then, in Mark 14:60: **“The high priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying, Answerest Thou nothing? What is it which these witness against thee? But He held His peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked Him, and said unto Him, Art Thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, What need we any further witnesses? Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned Him to be guilty of death.”**

What Brought Me to Believe in the Divinity of Christ

was this: I did not know where to place Christ, or what to do with Him, if He were not divine.

When I was a boy I thought that He was a good man like Moses, Joseph, or Abraham. I even thought that He was the best man who had ever lived on the earth. But I found that Christ had a higher claim. He claimed to be God-Man, to be divine; to have come from heaven. He said: **“Before Abraham was I am”** (John 8:58).

I could not understand this; and I was driven to the conclusion—and I challenge any candid man to deny the inference, or meet the argument—that Jesus Christ is either an impostor or deceiver, or He is the God-Man—God manifest in the flesh.

And for these reasons.

The first commandment is, “**Thou shalt have no other gods before Me**” (Exodus 20:2). Look at the millions throughout Christendom who worship Jesus Christ as God. If Christ be not God this is idolatry. We are all guilty of breaking the first commandment, if Jesus Christ were mere man—if He were a created being, and not what He claims to be.

Some people, who do not admit His divinity, say that He was the best man who ever lived; but if He were not Divine, for that very reason He ought not to be reckoned a good man, for He laid claim to an honor and dignity to which these very people declare He had no right or title. That would rank Him as a deceiver.

Others say that He thought He was divine, but that He was deceived. As if Jesus Christ were carried away by a delusion and deception, and thought that He was more than He was!

I could not conceive of a lower idea of Jesus Christ than that. This would not only make Him out an impostor; but that He was out of His mind, and that He did not know who He was, or where He came from. Now if Jesus Christ was not what He claimed to be, the Saviour of the world; and if He did not come from heaven, He was a gross deceiver.

But how can any one read the life of Jesus Christ and make Him out a deceiver? A man has generally some motive for being an impostor. What was Christ’s motive? He knew that the course He was pursuing would conduct Him to the cross; that His name would be cast out as vile; and that many of His followers would be called upon to lay down their lives for His sake.

Nearly every one of the apostles was a martyr; and they were considered as off-scouring and refuse in the midst of the people. If a man is an impostor, he has a motive at the back of his hypocrisy. But what was Christ’s object? The record is that “**He went about doing good.**” This is not the work of an impostor. Do not let the enemy of your soul deceive you.

In John 5:21-23 we read: “**For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom He will. For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son, honoreth not the Father which hath sent Him.**”

How It Works Out

Now notice: by the Jewish law if a man were a blasphemer, he was to be put to death; and supposing Christ to be merely human, if this be not blasphemy I do not know where you will find it. “**He that honoreth not the Son, honoreth not the Father.**”

That is downright blasphemy, if Christ be not divine. If Moses, or Elijah, or Elisha, or any other mortal had said, "You must honor me as you honor God;" and had put himself on a level with God, it would have been downright blasphemy.

The Jews put Christ to death because they said that He was not what He claimed to be. It was on that testimony He was put under oath.

The high priest said: "**I adjure Thee by the living God, that Thou tell us whether Thou be the Christ, the Son of God**" (Matthew 26:63).

And when the Jews came round Him and said: "**How long dost Thou make us to doubt? If Thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.**" Jesus said: "**I and My Father are one.**" Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him (John 10:24-33). They said they did not want to hear more, for that was blasphemy. It was for declaring Himself to be the Son of God that He was condemned and put to death (Matthew 26:63-66).

Now if Jesus Christ were mere man the Jews did right, according to their law, in putting Him to death.

In Leviticus 24:16 we read: "**And he that blasphemeth the name of the Lord, he shall surely be put to death, and all the congregation shall certainly stone him: as well the stranger, as he that is born in the land, when he blasphemeth the name of the Lord, shall be put to death.**"

This law obliged them to put to death every one who blasphemed. It was making the statement that He was divine that cost Him His life; and by the Mosaic law He ought to have suffered the death penalty.

In John 16:15, Christ says, "**All things that the Father hath are Mine: therefore said I, that He shall take of Mine, and shall show it unto you.**" How could He be merely a good man and use language as that?

No doubt has ever entered my mind on the point since I was converted.

One Good Proof

A notorious sinner was once asked how he could prove the divinity of Christ. His answer was, "Why, He has saved me; and that is a pretty good proof, is it not?"

An infidel on one occasion said to me: "I have been studying the life of John the Baptist, Mr. Moody. Why don't you preach him? He was a greater character than Christ. You would do a greater work."

I said to him, "My friend, you preach John the Baptist; and I will follow you and preach Christ: and we will see who will do the most good."

“You will do the most good,” he said, “because the people are so superstitious.”

Ah! John was beheaded; and his disciples begged his body and buried it: but Christ has risen from the dead; **“Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: and received gifts for men”** (Psalm 68:18).

Christ is Risen!

Our Christ LIVES. Many people have not found out that Christ has risen from the grave. They worship a dead Saviour, like Mary, who said: **“They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him”** (John 20:13). That is the trouble with those who doubt the divinity of our Lord.

Then look at Matthew 18:20. **“Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them.”** **“THERE AM I.”** Well now, if He is a mere man, how can He be there? All these are strong passages.

Again in Matthew 28:18. **“And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth.”** Could He be a mere man and talk in that way? **“All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth”!**

Then again in Matthew 28:20. **“Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.”** If He were mere man, how could He be with us? Yet He says: **“I am with you always, even unto the end of the world”!**

Then again in Mark 27-9. **“Why doth this Man thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only? And immediately when Jesus perceived in His Spirit that they reasoned within themselves, He said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts? Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk?”**

Some men will meet you and say, **“Did not Elisha also raise the dead?”** Notice that in the rare instances in which men have raised the dead, they did it by the power of God. They called on God to do it. But when Christ was on earth He did not call upon the Father to bring the dead to life. When He went to the house of Jairus He said, **“Damsel, I say unto thee, Arise”** (Mark 5:41).

He had power to impart life. When they were carrying the young man out of Nain He had compassion on the widowed mother and came and touched the bier and said, **“Young man, I say unto thee, Arise”** (Luke 7:14).

He spake; and the dead arose.

And when He raised Lazarus He called with a loud voice, **“Lazarus, come forth.”** (John 11:43). And Lazarus heard, and came forth.

Some one has said that it was a good thing that Lazarus was mentioned by name, or all the dead within the sound of Christ's voice would immediately have risen.

In John 5:25, Jesus says: **“Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.”**

What blasphemy would this have been, had He not been divine! The proof is overwhelming, if you will but examine the Word of God.

Worship Accepted by Christ

And then another thing—no good man except Jesus Christ has ever allowed anybody to worship him. When this was done He never rebuked the worshiper.

In John 9:38, we read that when the blind man was found by Christ he said: **“Lord, I believe. And he worshipped Him.”** The Lord did not rebuke him.

Then again, Revelation 22:6, runs thus: **“And he said unto me, These things are faithful and true; and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show unto His servants the things which must shortly be done. Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book. And I John saw these things and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which showed me these things. Then saith He unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellow-servant and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God.”**

We see here that even that angel would not allow John to worship him. Even an angel from heaven! And if Gabriel came down here from the presence of God it would be a sin to worship him, or any seraph, or any cherub, or Michael, or any archangel.

“WORSHIP GOD!”

And if Jesus Christ were not God manifest in the flesh we are guilty of idolatry in worshipping Him.

In Matthew 14:33, we read: **“Then they that were in the ship came and worshiped Him, saying, Of a truth Thou art the Son of God.”** He did not rebuke them.

And in Matthew 8:2, we also read: **“And, behold, there came a leper and worshiped Him, saying, Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean.”**

In Matthew 15:25: **“Then came she and worshiped Him, saying, Lord, help me.”**

There are many other passages; but I give these as sufficient in my opinion to prove beyond any doubt the divinity of our Lord.

In Acts 14 we are told the heathen of Lystra came with garlands and would have done sacrifice to Paul and Barnabas because they had cured an impotent man; but the evangelists rent their clothes, and told these Lystrans that they were but men, and not to be worshipped; as if it were a great sin. And if Jesus Christ is a mere man, we are all guilty of a great sin in worshiping Him.

But if He is, as we believe, the only-begotten and well-beloved Son of God, let us yield to His claims upon us: let us rest on His all-atoning work, and go forth to serve Him all the days of our life.

~ end of chapter 5 ~

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