Jesus is The Christ – N.B. Hardeman

Pillars of the Truth

Article #1

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The divine origin of the Christian religion depends for its proof upon the evidence that Jesus of Nazareth is “the Christ, the Son of the living God.” This is the central thought of the entire Bible and upon its truth­fulness all else depends.

It has ever been the object of all infidels to discredit this state­ment and thereby rob Christ of His divinity and the Christian of his hope, which must forever rest upon it. There have been written many books and many lectures have been given upon “Jesus, the Perfect Man,” “Jesus, the Great Teacher,” “Jesus, the Great Philosopher,” etc. Let me say to those who may read this article that I am not so much concerned about Jesus as a man, teacher, or philosopher, but that I am tremendously concerned about Jesus, the Christ, the Son of the liv­ing God. Those who lived with Him and who heard Him talk and saw Him perform the miracles, wonders, and signs which He did, unite in the belief that He was a super-man. The evidence of His friends is conclusive. His enemies are forced to join in saying: “Truly, He was the Christ, the Son of God.” Some years ago, Mr. H. G. Wells, the noted writer, was asked to contribute an article for the *American Magazine* on six of the greatest men that had ever lived. This request came in recognition of his scholarship, integrity, and ability to measure men by the historian’s standard. Though not a Christian himself and even skeptical regarding the Christ, Mr. Wells caused to be penned the following article:

Jesus of Nazareth is easily the domi­nant figure in history. I am speak­ing of him, of course, as a man, for I conceive that the historian must treat him as a man, just as the paint­er must paint him as a man. We do not know as much about him as we would like to know…To assume that he never lived, that the accounts of his life are inventions, is more diffi­cult and raises more problems in the path of the historian than to accept the essential elements of the Gospel stories as fact.

Of course you and I live in coun­tries where, to millions of men and women, Jesus is more than a man. But the historian must disregard that fact, he must adhere to the evidence which would pass unchallenged if his book were to be read in every nation under the sun. Now, it is interest­ing and significant—isn’t it?—that a historian, setting forth in that spirit, without any theological bias what­ever, should find that he simply can­not portray the progress of humanity honestly without giving a foremost place to a penniless teacher from Nazareth. The old Roman historians ignored Jesus entirely; they ignored the growth and spread of his teach­ing, regarding it as something apart from life, something, as it were, that happened only on Sundays. He left no impress on the historical records of his time. Yet, more than nineteen hundred years later, a historian like myself, who does not even call him­self a Christian, finds the picture cen­tering irresistibly around the life and character of this simple, lovable man. All sorts of dogma and tradition have been imposed upon his per­sonality, of course; it is the fate of all great religious leaders to be mis­interpreted by their followers. But from underneath this mass of the miraculous and incredible, the man himself keeps breaking through. We sense the magnetism that induced men who had seen him only once to leave their business and follow him. He filled them with love and cour­age. Weak and ailing people were heartened by his presence. He spoke with a knowledge and authority that baffled the wise and subtle. But other teachers have done all this. These tal­ents alone would not have given him the permanent place of power which he occupies; that place is by virtue of the new and simple and profound doctrine which he brought—the universal, loving Fatherhood of God and the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven.

It is one of the most revolutionary doctrines that have ever stirred and changed human thought. His follow­ers failed to grasp it; no age has even partially understood its tremendous challenge to the established institu­tions of mankind. But the world be­gan to be a different world from the day that doctrine was preached; and every step toward wider understand­ing and tolerance and good will is a step in the direction of universal brotherhood, which he proclaimed. So the historian, disregarding the theological significance of his life, writes the name of Jesus of Nazareth at the top of the list of the world’s greatest characters. For the historian’s test of greatness is not, “What did he accumulate for himself?” or “What did he build up, to tumble down at his death?” Not that at all, but this: “Was the world different because he lived? Did he start, men to thinking along fresh lines with a vigor and vi­tality that persisted after him?” By this test Jesus stands first.

Is it not rather strange that a man of the type of Mr. Wells would by all evidences available be forced to place Jesus, the penniless peasant of Nazareth, at the head of the list of the world’s great men? As a rule, men do not reach their zenith as early as thirty or thirty-five years. What the world considers its great men have lived to practically double the age of Jesus the Christ. Greatness is deter­mined in general by ancestry, wealth, social, or political prominence. Mea­sure the Christ by either standard and you will find Him weighed and found wanting. He was born in a stable and cradled in a manger and at the end of the days for such, His mother offered a substitute for the sacrifice of the more wealthy. His father was a carpenter and for thirty years He lived in practical obscurity. He came from a despised town, out of which the world thought no good thing could come. There is no record of His ever having a dollar. He made His home among the poor of this earth and the common people heard Him gladly. He was never galvanized into prominence by the social set nor did He attain political prestige at the hands of His friends. With all these elements lacking, we are made to wonder how Mr. Wells accounts for His superiority.

The only logical conclusion is that He was not merely man but was di­vine. Let not the world therefore rob Him of His divinity and reduce Him to a common level of other men.

*Deceased*