

not only revealed, but realized in history, God's fatherhood and man's sonship in Christ's Sonship and Saviourhood. Faith in Christ as bringing God to man, and man to God, is faith in historical fact. But this is so, not only actually but necessarily; for faith is exercised by man who lives in time, who is conditioned morally and religiously by the history of mankind; and so God must deal with him in time through history. The needs which Christ meets, the aims He fulfils in man, are facts of history. The sin to be forgiven, the sorrow to be comforted, the death to be robbed of its terror, the moral and religious good to be gained, are facts; and God deals with facts through facts. The Father Christian faith reaches in Christ is not an absentee Deity, dwelling in the eternal realm alone, but a God present in, through, and over all nature and history alike. From whatever point of view we look at Christian faith as it is actually exercised in the Christian Church, it is inseparable from historical reality. The objection to including facts in a creed falls to the ground.

(3) Have the creeds, however, included all the facts that are significant and valuable for Christian faith? While the conditions of their origin as a protection against heresy explain their incompleteness; yet what they omit deserves notice, as it will bring us face to face with the most marked contrast between the fourth and fifth centuries and the nineteenth and twentieth. The historical reality of the earthly ministry of Jesus, and the grace and truth therein manifested, are not only unmentioned in the creeds, but the Christological controversies show that the living image of Jesus was not present to Christian thought; and thus while the completeness of the humanity was asserted in abstract terms, it was not so concretely realized as to prevent an actual absorption of the humanity in the divinity. To-day, on the contrary, it is this historical reality of the earthly ministry which is the starting-point of most modern thinking, which, therefore, demands a Christology that will do full justice not to an abstract humanity, but to a concrete manhood of Jesus Christ.

## The Writings of John.

IMPORTANT OVERLOOKED EVIDENCE.

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IN this paper, I shall adduce evidence, touching the authorship of the Fourth Gospel and the Book of Revelation, which has not yet received the attention it deserves; and especially evidence independent of authorship which goes far to prove that the distinctive teaching of the Fourth Gospel came from the lips of Christ and is supported by His divine authority. This evidence will also shed light upon the authorship of both the above books.

### I.

It is needless to reproduce the abundant evidence, so ably set forth by Bishop Westcott in his invaluable commentary, published in 1880, touching the authorship and historical truth of the Fourth Gospel; and by Professor Swete for the authorship of the Book of Revelation, in another admirable commentary published in 1906. The evidence I shall adduce is the profound harmony,

underlying conspicuous differences in phrase and in modes of thought, between the Fourth Gospel and the letters and addresses of St. Paul, in their presentation of the message of Christ, in contrast to His teaching as recorded in the Synoptic Gospels.

Our earliest and surest evidence touching the actual teaching of Christ is to be found in the four undisputed letters of St. Paul; and especially in that to the Romans, as being an orderly statement, to men whom he had never seen, of the gospel of Christ as understood by the greatest of the Apostles.

The writer begins it by announcing himself as a 'servant of Christ,' to whom he pays homage as the Son of David and of God; and then expresses his eagerness to go to Rome, there to reap a harvest of blessing and to discharge an obligation, by preaching the gospel. This last, he then describes as 'a power of God, for salvation, to every one who

believes'; adding as an explanation that in it a righteousness of God is revealed from faith, for faith, in harmony with an ancient prophecy, 'The righteous man by faith will live.' We notice at once the emphatic repetition (in all, four times) of the cognate words *believe* and *faith*.

In v. 18, all this passes from view; while in chs. 1<sup>18</sup>-3<sup>20</sup> both Greeks and Jews are brought guilty and silent before the bar of a righteous God. From this shadow we emerge in ch. 3<sup>21</sup> as suddenly as in ch. 1<sup>18</sup> we entered it; and so doing we find again, somewhat amplified, the phraseology and teaching of ch. 1<sup>17</sup>, 'a righteousness of God through faith . . . for all who believe.' This conspicuous prominence of *faith* or *believing*, as a condition of salvation, is kept before us in vv. 26. 28. 30, and is still further emphasized by the careful exposition (ch. 4) of Abraham's *faith*, which St. Paul tells us was recorded centuries before his time for the sake of those who in his day should *believe* in Him who raised Christ, and whose *faith* would be reckoned to them, as was Abraham's, for righteousness.

This salvation is further described in chs. 5-8, and culminates, in ch. 8<sup>31-39</sup>, in a song of triumph. In ch. 9 St. Paul looks at it in the light of God's dealings with the patriarchs and with Israel; and sums up the result by saying, in vv. 30-32, that 'Gentiles have obtained righteousness, the righteousness which comes from *faith*,' but that Israel had not attained it, because they sought it 'not from *faith* but as from works.' Same thought in chs. 10<sup>4</sup>. 6. 9. 10. 11. 14 11<sup>20</sup>. 23.

The same doctrine is equally conspicuous in the Epistle to the Galatians; and again and again amid the various topics discussed in St. Paul's other letters, e.g. Eph 1<sup>13</sup>. 19 2<sup>8</sup> 3<sup>17</sup>. It also finds conspicuous expression in Christ's commission as recorded in Ac 26<sup>18</sup>: 'to whom I send thee . . . in order that they may obtain pardon of sins and a lot among the sanctified, by *faith* in me.' Similarly, Ac 13<sup>38</sup>. 39, doubtless a pattern of St. Paul's preaching: 'Through this man pardon of sins is announced to you . . . in him every one who *believes* is justified.' Nothing in the history of human thought is more certain than that Salvation by Faith was the kernel and marrow of the gospel preached by the great apostle who founded the Churches of Europe.

Passing now to the Synoptic Gospels, we are at once conscious of a great change. In beautiful language, the Sermon on the Mount sets before us

a new morality; the Law of the Kingdom of Christ; and in Mt 11<sup>28</sup> we hear the welcome call, 'Come to me, all who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.' In ch. 8<sup>10</sup> and elsewhere, we have *faith* followed by blessing. But the nearest approach to salvation for every one who believes is found in a sort of supplement to the Second Gospel, ch. 16<sup>16</sup>, 'He who *believes* and is baptized shall be saved.'

This contrast raises serious doubts. Does the glorious gospel of St. Paul, so much beyond the teaching of the Synoptic Gospels, rest on anything better than a few casual passages quoted by him from the Old Testament? To this question the Fourth Gospel gives a decisive answer. In an ancient document accepted throughout the Roman Empire, from the middle of the second century onwards, without a shadow of doubt, as written by a beloved disciple of Christ, and containing many internal marks of historical truth and accuracy, we find a record of the life and teaching of Christ in which salvation by *faith* is as conspicuous as in the letters of St. Paul. It is found also in an Epistle proved by evidence external and internal to be from the same author.

In Jn 1<sup>1-3</sup> we find, in full harmony with the teaching of Paul yet going beyond it, homage paid to Christ as in the beginning the Companion of God, Himself God, and the Agent of whatever began to be. In v. 12 we read that 'To those who *believe* in his name, he gave a right to become children of God'; a remarkable coincidence with Gal 3<sup>26</sup>, Ro 8<sup>16</sup>. 17. In Jn 3<sup>15-18</sup>. 36, with a repetition recalling Ro 1<sup>16</sup>. 17 3<sup>21-30</sup>, we read that 'God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, in order that every one who *believes* in him . . . may have eternal life.' So chs. 5<sup>24</sup> 6<sup>29</sup>. 35. 40. 47 7<sup>38</sup>. 39 11<sup>25</sup> 12<sup>40</sup> 14<sup>12</sup>, and conspicuously in 20<sup>31</sup>; also 1 Jn 5<sup>1</sup>. 4. 5. 10. 13. In Jn 3<sup>16</sup>. 18. 36 we have also escape from judgment already pronounced on those who do not *believe*, from the anger of God, and from destruction. This is equivalent to the salvation and justification by *faith* announced by St. Paul. Thus under phraseology peculiar to each of these two great teachers, revealing independent thought, we have the same good tidings of salvation for all who *believe*.

On the other hand, we notice the absence from the Gospel and Epistle of John of St. Paul's peculiar teaching about the spiritual significance of the Law, especially in Romans and Galatians; of the

distinctive phrases, 'righteousness of God through faith,' and 'justified by faith'; the believers escape from the Law, e.g. Ro 7<sup>4-6</sup>, and elsewhere frequently; the word *adoption*, a Roman legal process; and the phrases *crucified, dead, risen with Christ*. The above legal point of view is in the New Testament peculiar to the pupil of Gamaliel, an honoured teacher of law (Ac 5<sup>34</sup>).

Another conspicuous element in the letters of St. Paul is the phrase *in Christ* in Ro 6<sup>11, 23</sup> 8<sup>1, 2, 30</sup> 9<sup>1</sup>, Eph 1<sup>1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13</sup>; and elsewhere frequently. So also the correlative phrase *Christ in you* in Ro 8<sup>10</sup>, Gal 2<sup>20</sup>, Eph 3<sup>17</sup>, Col 1<sup>27</sup>. A remarkable counterpart is found in Jn 6<sup>56</sup> 14<sup>20</sup>; and is further developed in the Parable of the Vine in ch. 15<sup>1-7</sup>. So also in 1 Jn 2<sup>5, 6, 24</sup> 3<sup>6</sup>. Similarly *in God* and *God in us* in ch. 4<sup>13, 15, 16</sup>; cp. 1 Th 1<sup>1</sup>. Notice also the distinctive word *abide* in Christ; in contrast to the letters of St. Paul, e.g. Eph 3<sup>17</sup>, where we have *κατοικῆσαι* instead of *μένει*. This remarkable teaching, that Christ is Himself both the living environment and refuge and home of His people and the inward animating principle of their life, is another most valuable element common to these two writers, in contrast to the Synoptic Gospels: and in each it has a distinctive phraseology. Similar words are found in 1 P 3<sup>16</sup> 5<sup>10, 14</sup>, Jude 1.

Of these remarkable phenomena, the only explanation is that these great doctrines are due to the One Teacher at whose feet sat all the apostles. If Christ spoke words equivalent to those recorded in the Fourth Gospel, we can understand their reappearance, after decades during which they had been treasured in the memory and heart of a beloved disciple, in the Fourth Gospel, re-echoed also in the First Epistle of John; and that by intercourse with him and others who had heard Christ, St. Paul had learnt these doctrines and their deep significance. That, by some channel unknown to us, St. Paul's gospel came from Christ, he asserts plainly in Gal 1<sup>11, 12</sup>, Ac 26<sup>18</sup>, and assumes throughout his Epistles. And the amazing effects of his preaching, of which I have proved above that these doctrines were the centre, and of the same teaching in all subsequent ages, are complete proof that they come from God and are essential truth.

In other words, just as the four Gospels, compared each with the others, afford abundant evidence of their substantial historical truth, so the Fourth Gospel finds, in the letters and recorded

addresses of St. Paul, decisive confirmation of the divine origin and essential truth of the message of Christ to men as therein set forth.

## II.

In the light of the above evidence, we come now to discuss the less important question of authorship. In Mt 4<sup>18, 21</sup>, Mk 1<sup>16-20</sup>, Lk 5<sup>1-11</sup>, at the opening of Christ's public ministry, we notice at once the conspicuous prominence of two pairs of brothers, partners as fishermen on the Lake of Galilee. In all four Gospels and in the Book of Acts, Peter is the most prominent. And closely associated with him as an inner circle within the twelve apostles, we find in Mk 1<sup>29</sup> 5<sup>37</sup> 9<sup>2</sup> 13<sup>3</sup> 14<sup>33</sup>, and their parallels, James and John, sons of Zebedee, the second pair of brothers just mentioned. Of these brothers, one was again associated with Peter in Ac 3<sup>1, 3, 4, 11</sup> 4<sup>13, 19</sup> 8<sup>14</sup>; and the other is said in ch. 12<sup>2</sup> to have been put to death.

Strange to say, in the Fourth Gospel, among the many vivid pictures of men associated with Christ, we never find the names of James or John, and only in ch. 21<sup>2</sup> a casual mention of 'the sons of Zebedee.' Along with this remarkable omission of two names almost at the head of all lists of the apostles, we find in Jn 13<sup>23</sup> 19<sup>20</sup> 20<sup>2</sup> 21<sup>7, 20</sup> an anonymous 'disciple whom Jesus loved,' closely associated with Peter; cp. also ch. 18<sup>15, 16</sup>. To his care, from the cross, Christ committed His mother.

Who was this disciple, and why was his name so carefully concealed? The only explanation, and a sufficient explanation, is the unanimous and confident tradition in the early Church that he was John the son of Zebedee; that to him we owe the Fourth Gospel; and that his modesty moved him to hold back his own name and his brother's, even when narrating incidents in which they took part.

This tradition confirms strongly the Fourth Gospel as a correct report of the teaching of Christ; and thus confirms St. Paul's teaching about salvation by faith and the believer's inward and mutual relation to Christ as a correct inference from the actual words of Christ. It is needless to inquire how this information reached St. Paul. We know (Gal 1<sup>18, 19</sup>) that he went to Jerusalem to interview Peter, and remained with him fifteen days, and that there he found also 'James, the Lord's brother.' Many years later (ch. 21) we find him in

Jerusalem along with 'James and Cephas and John.' By various intercourse with the apostles and others who had heard Christ, St. Paul's inquiring mind would learn much about the Master's teaching. Admit once that teaching equivalent to that recorded in the Fourth Gospel was spoken by Christ, and we can well understand how a man like Paul would infer from it the doctrines embodied, in forms peculiar to his own legal training and disposition, in his letters and addresses.

The same tradition explains the First Epistle of John. Of its intrinsic worth, we have proof in three golden words in 1 Jn 4<sup>s. 16</sup>, which tell us more about the inmost moral nature of God than any other words in the Bible: GOD IS LOVE. The similarity, independence, and worth of the Gospel and Epistle reveal their common origin. And this can be no other than the beloved Apostle, John the son of Zebedee.

All this does not imply that in the Fourth Gospel we have the *ipsissima verba* of Christ; but only that this document gives a substantially correct account of His teaching, in such forms as would best convey its significance. And this is suggested by the form in which these discourses have reached us.

### III.

This conclusion has also important bearing on the authorship of the Book of Revelation. This last work claims four times to have been written by 'John,' who, however, does not call himself either an apostle or a son of Zebedee, but only 'a servant' of Christ, a 'brother,' and a 'partner in the affliction in Jesus' (ch. 1<sup>1. 9</sup>). A very early, yet not unanimous, tradition attributes it to the Apostle John. But strange grammatical forms, unparalleled in Greek literature, the writer's readiness to mention his name, in contrast to the strange reticence of the author of the Fourth Gospel and First Epistle, the love for the concrete in contrast to the equally characteristic abstract teaching of the other two books, and, what is still more remarkable, the total absence of the distinctive teaching noted above, make it in the last degree unlikely that the three works are from the same writer. Of these differences, only the last claims attention here: the others have been well stated by other writers, and are universally admitted.

In the Book of Revelation the word *believe*, so

frequent in the Fourth Gospel, and the doctrine of salvation by *faith* never occur; nor does any equivalent. Nor have we the distinctive teaching of the believer's *abiding in* Christ and Christ *in* him. In the theological types in the New Testament, the Fourth Gospel and the Book of Revelation are, in these and other respects, at opposite poles.

Now, if the Fourth Gospel is from the son of Zebedee, he must have learnt these distinctive and life-giving doctrines from intimate intercourse with Christ; and they must have taken the deep hold of his mind and heart which in later years found embodiment in his Gospel and Epistle. It is impossible that doctrines so deeply implanted and bearing so closely on the believer's inner life could have left no trace whatever in a work so long and so spiritual as the Book of Revelation; and afterwards reappeared in the Gospel and Epistle.

This unlikeliness does not seriously weaken the powerful evidence adduced by Bishop Westcott for the apostolic authorship of the Fourth Gospel, supplemented as it is in this paper by evidence from the letters of St. Paul. For, in this last case, strong traditional evidence is strongly confirmed by various internal indications, including the absence of the name of John the son of Zebedee, so conspicuous in the Synoptic Gospels and the Book of Acts; whereas we have nothing else in the New Testament, except the name *John*, which links the Book of Revelation with the Apostle John. While, therefore, insufficiency of evidence leaves the authorship of the latter open to doubt, we may accept with reasonable certainty the apostolic authorship of the Fourth Gospel.

This last judgment is accepted and strongly supported by Dr. Westcott; but he considers that the differences between the Gospel and First Epistle of John and the Book of Revelation 'are not inconsistent with identity of authorship.' His statement of these differences seems to me inadequate: and he passes in silence over the great doctrinal differences noted above, involving a different conception of the message of Christ to men. This last evidence is also omitted by Professor Swete, who, however, states the differences more fully than does Dr. Westcott, and admits their force. He states also an alternative suggestion, and asks on p. clxxx, 'Was it John the son of Zebedee who lived in Asia and was exiled to Patmos, or was it the mysterious Elder, who was

distinguished by Papias from the apostle of the same name? A fair case may be made for either view. . . . While inclining to the traditional view which holds that the author of the Apocalypse was the Apostle John, the present writer desires to keep an open mind upon the question.' This cautious opinion seems to me to be overborne by the overlooked evidence adduced in this paper.

Dr. Moffatt, in his recently published *Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament*, after 'Prolegomena,' appropriately discusses in ch. i. 'The correspondence of Paul'; in which he includes, and accepts as genuine, all the Epistles attributed to him except those to the Ephesians, to Timothy, and to Titus. Then follows in ch. ii. 'The historical literature,' including the Gospels of Mark and Matthew and the 'Writings of Luke (Gospel and Acts).' Then come, in ch. iii., 'Homilies and Pastorals,' including all else in the New Testament, except (ch. iv.) 'The Apocalypse of John' and (ch. v.) 'The Fourth Gospel' and 'A Johannine Tract (1 John).' He thus, in his table of 'Contents' separates conspicuously the Fourth Gospel from 'the historical literature' of the New Testament.

The historical worth of the Fourth Gospel he does not discuss, contenting himself with saying, on p. 533, 'That the Fourth Gospel presupposes the general synoptic tradition may be taken for granted; the real problem of literary criticism is to determine whether it can be shown to have used any or all of the synoptic gospels.' He passes over in silence, apparently as unworthy of consideration, the traditional apostolic authorship of the Fourth Gospel, and the important evidence and arguments adduced in support of it by Bishop Westcott and many others, giving no tangible reasons. Yet on p. 544, touching 'The date of the Crucifixion,' Dr. Moffatt rejects as unlikely the plain statement in Mk 14<sup>12</sup>, Mt 26<sup>17</sup>, Lk 22<sup>7</sup>; and accepts as 'the better tradition' a reasonable inference from Jn 13<sup>1</sup> 18<sup>28</sup>, namely, that the paschal lamb was slain and the passover eaten on the evening after the death of Christ. This admitted accuracy in an important matter of time, as against the admitted inaccuracy of the Synoptic Gospels, gives, along with much else in it, to the Fourth Gospel a better claim to be considered an historical document. Yet this claim is ignored.

On p. 502, Dr. Moffatt anticipates the present paper by saying, 'The strong linguistic presump-

tion against the theory that the relationship of the two books (the Gospel and the Book of Revelation) is one of common authorship, is amply corroborated by the differences of religious thought, christological, spiritual, and eschatological.'

On p. 509 he says that 'The hypothesis of John the apostle's authorship (of the Book of Revelation) is ruled out by the acceptance of the tradition of his early martyrdom (see below, Chap. V. (c)).' On p. 559, this is used as an argument against the apostolic authorship of the Fourth Gospel: 'Since John the apostle was martyred early, the only available hypotheses of this kind are those which make the historical narrative come from a disciple of John, and merely the discourses from the apostle himself.' The same assumption meets us again on p. 596. To make the assumption first and at once to build arguments upon it, and to give the proofs long afterwards, is a most unscientific order.

On p. 602, the proof is given. 'The evidence for the early martyrdom of John the son of Zebedee is, in fact, threefold: (a) a prophecy of Jesus preserved in Mk 10<sup>39</sup>, Mt 20<sup>23</sup> (b) the witness of Papias, and (c) the calendars of the church.' But (a) Christ's words, 'The cup which I drink, ye shall drink, and with the baptism with which I am baptized, ye shall be baptized,' by no means assert or even suggest that both brothers were to suffer at the same time. Nor does (b) 'the witness of Papias,' who is quoted as saying that John 'was killed by the Jews, thus plainly fulfilling along with his brother the prophecy of Christ regarding them and their own confession and common agreement concerning him.' That in (c) 'some ancient calendars' the two brothers were commemorated as martyrs, cannot be called decisive proof of martyrdom at the same time. Surely this uncertain evidence is of no avail against the plain testimony of Irenæus, that 'John the disciple of the Lord' continued with the elders of Asia 'till the times of Trajan.' Certainly it does nothing to overturn the various and abundant evidence that to the Apostle John we owe the Fourth Gospel. Moreover, in Gal 2<sup>1-9</sup>, we find him living long after (Ac 12<sup>2</sup>) the death of James.

Dr. Moffatt does nothing to explain the omission from the same Gospel of all mention of two out of the three members of the inner circle of the apostles.

As 'Sources' of the Fourth Gospel, he

mentions on p. 522, 'apart from the O.T. (a) Paulinism, (b) the Jewish Alexandrian philosophy, and (c) Stoicism.' This admits what I have said above about the underlying harmony between the letters of Paul and the Fourth Gospel. But this by no means implies that the latter was taken from the former: for both may have come from a common source. Moreover, Dr. Moffatt does not tell us from what source, other than the Old Testament, St. Paul derived his Paulinism.

The Apostle tells us plainly (Gal 1<sup>12</sup>) that he received his Gospel from Christ. The Fourth Gospel declares that the discourses in it were spoken by Him. And we have seen in this paper that the former is a legitimate development of the latter. This profound harmony, amid marked differences of form, reveals a common source. And the infinite value of the doctrines common to these two writers, as attested in the inward and outward life of unnumbered thousands of devout men and women, is decisive confirmation of the claims clearly made by these writers that their

teaching is the message of Christ to men, and a correct announcement of the mind and will of God.

To sum up. We have found abundant and decisive evidence that the Fourth Gospel is a correct account of what Christ did and taught and is; also evidence sufficient for reasonable certainty that the Gospel and First Epistle are due, directly or indirectly, to the Beloved Apostle. To the same apostle, a very ancient, but not unanimous, tradition attributes the Book of Revelation. But internal evidence makes this common origin extremely unlikely; and leaves us in complete uncertainty about the author of this last work. On the other hand, its infinite value, and especially the honour therein paid to Christ as an object of the worship and the songs of the brightest in heaven, and the significance attributed to His death, in complete harmony with the rest of the New Testament, claim for the Book of Revelation the place it holds in our Bibles as the completion of the Sacred Records of the Christian Church.

## In the Study.

### Recent Literature in Apologetic.

THE Rev. J. O. Bevan, M.A., F.G.S., F.S.A., Rector of Chillenden, Canterbury, is somewhat of the mind of those who held that 'they did not know everything down in Judee.' He does not think that St. Paul knew everything. And in a book entitled *S. Paul in the Light of To-day* (Allenson; 1s. 6d. net), he mentions some of the things which St. Paul either did not know or was not sure about. Nevertheless there is no flippancy or presumption in the book. There is a sincere desire to understand St. Paul as a man of the twentieth century may be able to understand him.

The Cambridge University Press, as agent for the publications of the University of Chicago, has issued a volume on that curious question, *The Historicity of Jesus* (6s. net). The author of the book is Professor Shirley Jackson Case, of the Department of New Testament Literature and Interpretation in the University of Chicago. And so thoroughly has Professor Case done his work,

that for all English-speaking people the historicity of Jesus will be settled. It takes a special type of mind to consent to spend precious days in such an undertaking. But the reward is worth it. For not only does Professor Case assure us that Jesus was, he also assures us that He is.

There is scarcely a topic of interest for the Church of the present day that is not discussed in *Renaissance of Faith*, by Richard Roberts (Cassell; 6s.). And every topic is discussed with decision of mind and with the command of precise, picturesque language. At the very beginning of the book, before the first page is finished, we come to the conclusion that this vigorous young writer will allow no vague sentiment or obscuring emotion to stand in the way of the mind in its search for truth. And we suspect that long before we are done with the book we shall have gone through a good deal of theological novelty. But with every page the writer's horizon widens; he takes more account of man's whole being; he stands more manifestly in awful boldness before God. His mental vigil-