

The Matchless Lack of Logis

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Can one come to know anything about Christ from history? No. And why not? It is because Christ is the paradox, the object of faith, and exists only for faith. About him nothing can be known; he can only be believed. You cannot come to know anything about Christ from history. Whether one learns little or much about him, it will not represent who he is in reality. Obtaining historical facts makes Christ into someone other than who he in fact is.

Can't you at least demonstrate from history that Christ was God, even though we might know little else? Let me ask another question first: Can any more absurd contradiction be imagined than wishing to prove that an individual person is God? Now think of proving that! How can you make something that conflicts with reason into something reasonable? You can't, unless you wish to contradict yourself. The so-called proofs for the divinity of Christ that people claim Scripture sets forth - his miracles, his resurrection, his ascension - are not, when you think about it, in harmony with our reason. On the contrary, they demonstrate that believing in Christ's works is a matter of faith.

What can all the miracles really demonstrate anyway? At most that Jesus Christ was a great man, perhaps the greatest who ever lived. But that he was - God - no, stop; that conclusion will surely miscarry.

How is it possible to observe the gradually unfolding results of something and then arrive at, by some trick of deduction, a conclusion different in quality from what you began with? Is it not sheer insanity (providing humanity is sane) to let your judgment become so altogether confused as to land in the wrong category? A footprint is certainly the consequence of some creature having made it. I may mistake it for that of a bird, but on closer inspection, and by following the prints for some distance, I may

determine that some other animal made it. Fine. But can I at some point reach the conclusion: ergo it is a spirit that has walked along this way, a spirit - which leaves no print? Precisely the same holds true whenever we try to infer from the results of a person's life that therefore he was God.

True, if God and humankind resemble each other so closely so as to essentially belong to the same category of being, the conclusion "therefore Christ was God" makes perfect sense. But this is nothing but humbug. If that is all there is to being God, then God does not exist at all! But if God belongs to a category infinitely different from the human, why, then neither I nor any one else can start with the assumption that Christ was human and then logically conclude that therefore he was God. Anyone with a bit of logical sense should be able to see this. The question of whether or not he was God lies on an entirely different plane: each person must decide for himself whether or not he will believe Christ to be what he himself claimed to be.

Faith protests against every attempt to approach Christ by means of historical facts. Faith's contention is that the historian's whole approach is - blasphemy. How strange! With the help of history, that is, by looking at the results of Christ's life, we think we can arrive at the conclusion that he was God. Yet faith makes the very opposite claim. Anyone who begins with this kind of logic is guilty of blasphemy. The blasphemy is not so much the hypothetical assumption that Christ was a human being, but in the thought that the results of his life can be separated from who he was. When you scrutinize the facts, you make Christ out to be just a man.

With regard to Christ we have only sacred history (which is qualitatively different from the historian's account). Christ is the divine-human paradox that history can never digest or convert into a proof. Even with what we know of Christ's life and of all his brilliant works, they will pale in comparison to his coming again in glory! Or perhaps you think that Christ's return will be nothing more than the progressive result of his life in history? No! Christ's return will be something entirely different, something that can

only be believed. That Christ was God incarnate in his lowliness and that he will come again in glory, all this is far beyond the comprehension of history. This cannot be inferred from "facts" or from history, no matter how matchlessly you regard them, except through a matchless lack of logic.

It is infinitely beyond history's capacity to demonstrate that God, the omnipresent One, lived here on earth as an individual human being. History can indeed richly communicate knowledge, but such knowledge annihilates Jesus Christ. How strange, then, that anyone ever wanted to use history to demonstrate that Christ was God. Even if Christ's life had manifested no astonishing results, it makes no difference. Besides, what's so extraordinary about the fact that God's life had extraordinary results? To talk this way is sheer nonsense. No, God lived here on earth, in true lowliness, and that is what is infinitely extraordinary - extraordinary in itself. The fact that he lived among us is infinitely more important than all the extraordinary results ever recorded in history.