

multitude, but on the twelve apostles who had been previously chosen for this purpose, who had accompanied their Master in all his journeys, who had been the witnesses of his miracles, sufferings, and crucifixion, and who affirmed, without the least hesitation, and in the face of every threatening and persecution, that they had seen him alive at different times, and held intimate converse with him, after he had risen from the dead. It rests likewise on the testimony of the seventy disciples, and on that of the five hundred brethren who had seen the Lord after his resurrection. These persons had full opportunity of information as to the fact they asserted; they could not be deceived, for it was brought within the evidence of their senses. They saw the body of the Lord Jesus after he had been crucified and laid in the tomb—not with a passing glance, but at different times and in divers places; they had an opportunity of *handling* it to convince them it was no phantom; they *heard* him speak, and entered into intimate conversation with him on the subject of their future ministry. They saw him, not only separately, but together; not only by night, but by day; not at a distance, but immediately before them. And as they could not be deceived themselves, they could have no motive for deceiving others; for they were aware, that by so doing they exposed themselves to scorn, persecution, sufferings, and death itself, without the most distant hope of recompense either in this world or in another.

Their character and conduct were strictly watched and scrutinized. Their enemies had taken every precaution which human wisdom could devise, to prevent the dead body of their Master from being removed from the sepulchre, either by fraud or by violence, and to secure the public from being deluded by any attempt at imposture. And yet, only a few days after he was buried, and in the very place where he was crucified, his resurrection was publicly asserted and proclaimed; and no attempt was made on the part of the Jewish rulers to invalidate the testimony of the apostles, by producing the dead body of him whom they had crucified—on whose tomb they had set a seal and a guard of Roman soldiers. For it is evident, that if his body could have been found, they would have produced it as the shortest and most decisive confutation of the story of the resurrection. All those circumstances being considered, to suppose that the apostles either were deceived, or attempted to deceive the world, would be to admit a miracle as great as that of the resurrection itself. But if the fact of Christ's resurrection be admitted, the truth of the evangelical history and of the doctrines of Christianity follows as a necessary consequence.

[To be continued.]