

were obliged to classify him either as an agent of the devil or as the Son of God according to their state of mind. Strange and wondrous deeds were wrought by his hand, not wrought ostentatiously to win applause, but quietly as if he would not have them known. There was healing in his touch; there was power in his word. The ordinary laws of nature bent before him as if he understood all their secrets, and they could but haste to do his bidding. The multitude looked on in awe at such majestic control of the mightiest forces, but so far from being himself surprised at his mysterious power he was rather surprised at the wonder it excited, and assumed that when his disciples came to understand fully who he was they would themselves do greater works in his name. As has often been pointed out, he was strangely reticent as to his own claims, probably because he was afraid of being misunderstood by a fanatical people who more than once threatened to mar his work by forcing him into a false attitude. But from childhood he was conscious of being destined to play a great rôle in the world, and from time to time he gave such revelations of himself to his disciples as left them in no doubt that his personality was more than human. Without being able to explain it at all, Peter but confessed the thought of all his fellows when he owned him as "the Christ the son of the living God." Then there was the

mystery of his birth, the voice out of heaven at his baptism and again at the transfiguration, the marvel of his resurrection from the dead, and finally his visible ascension up into heaven. All this was an integral part of his unique personality.

The supernatural element in the life of Christ is one of the great difficulties of the Gospel to many in modern times, and doubtless was so to many in the time of the Apostles. Numberless have been the attempts to explain it away and reduce the stature of his person within the limits of humanity. But however difficult to explain, the Apostles knew it was there and could not keep silent about it. On the contrary they emphasized it and made much of it, because knowing it to be true, they believed that in the long run the world would listen and trust him all the more just because of it. They were satisfied that when men came to realize they needed a Saviour at all, they would feel most of all drawn to one who gave some guarantee of the completeness of the salvation he had to offer. Nor were they disappointed. In spite of opposition and calumny from many, their message found a ready welcome in an increasing number of hearts in every land whither it came. And whenever it found a welcome in the heart, it became an inspiration in the life to kindle love and ennobles character as well as to furnish peace and joy to the troubled soul. The preacher of to-day cannot follow a