

Bible to know. I did it quite frankly and honestly, and tried to make plain to them that we could no longer regard the Gospels as careful and well sifted biographies in the modern sense of the word, that they contained many lovely stories which are not to be taken as literally true, especially the ones in Matthew and Luke about our Lord's birth. But I also tried to show them that this did not really matter, that Jesus is none the less, but all the more, the supreme revelation of God to us, that he becomes the more divine the more we see him as a man like ourselves, our own brother who had to fight our battle just with our own weapons; that when we strip the Gospels of all which it is becoming plainer every day we can no longer insist upon as literal fact, there still remains clear and unshaken the figure and person of the Son of Man and the Son of God who won the victory for himself and us, and died that we might live. I also tried to show them that, in the long run, the laborious effort of the critics will be found only to bring out, in stronger relief than ever, just those elements in the Gospels which have all along come home the most to the simple and child-like hearts throughout all the ages, who have used them as their lamp of life and the staff of their pilgrimage.

I send you the article, and if you take some time over it you will see for yourself exactly what I have tried to do. There were several good and intelligent people, who found a great deal of comfort and even inspiration in what I said. Others did not agree with me, but recognized that I meant well. I dare say you will be of that class. But you must remember things are changing very fast, and there is a very large and constantly increasing number of well-informed and honest people who will not, and cannot, have anything to do with Jesus at all unless on some such understanding of Him as I try to suggest. My experience as a teacher has brought me in contact with many such, and I wish to stretch out to them a helping hand. I assure you I believe just as firmly as you in the Divinity of Jesus and in his unfailing power to send his Spirit to guide us into all goodness and all truth.—I am, your faithful friend,

JOHN MACNAUGHTON