

There is certainly no absurdity in such suppositions although science has not discovered any medium through which the action can take place—nor is there any proper reason why the Creator, who is the origin of all the forces of the universe both spiritual and physical, should not, to his own Son grant a potency which He constantly exercises. If we have the proof that Jesus is the Son of God, and that, he, attempted such works it is certain they were done. The moral certainty neutralizes the natural improbability. To be assured that Christ wrought these miracles it is only necessary to know that he was *wise good and true*.

We approach another point—the Incarnation. We may observe he never affirmed this explicitly of himself. But is it not the only legitimate explanation of his life? It has been said that the account of his origin must have been derived from the mother of Jesus. Well but this account can be judged of by its verisimilitude with the other facts. The truth of the mother's account is corroborated by the son's character. Had not the life of Jesus already necessitated the incarnation as a logical postulate prior to a word on the subject from Mary? Such seems to have been John's judgement. "We beheld his glory the glory, as of the only begotten of the Father full of grace and truth." Why has none like him appeared on earth? Does not the reply sound natural—because none had a similar origin. After Alexander came Hannibal, Cæsar and Napoleon, and with Socrates are associated Plato and Aristotle; but Jesus sits on his own unapproachable throne. We speak of orders of warriors, poets, philosophers, prophets, but there is only one Christ. It is no disparagement of Socrates, to say that he might have sat at the feet of Paul and listened to his wonderful discourses, with rapture, yet Paul afar off worships Christ. If Plato had heard John he would have given up his charming dialectics to wonder at the discourses inspired by the word that was made flesh. The influence of Jesus upon the disciples, and upon the world, is the standing miracle of history. Did all

this influence flow from a man like ourselves? Yes like yet how unlike—like sinners yet *holy*. And whence the holiness? Is it the foul well of humanity that has ever kept pouring out muddy, dirty, slimy, fetid waters before and since, which for one short hour sent out such a sweet stream, that the centuries as it flowed down have rejoiced to drink of it? Strange inexplicable life if God be not his special Father. Ah, it is the incarnation alone which explains how this sweet life flows from the bitter fount of humanity. Tell me not of the impossibility of the incarnation. Jesus had been impossible without it. The incarnation is the only correct solution of the **PROBLEM CHRIST**.

Whether in an enquiry of this kind we should start with the assumption of the incarnation or arrive at it as our goal, is a question for each enquirer. Neander, the author of "Ecce Deus," and others, take the former course. The author of "Ecce Homo" having commenced with the mere man life, has ascended to something approaching a Divine origin. "It pleased the Father to beget no second son like him," is an expression pointing this way. The course pursued by Strauss and Renan, and others, assuming the miracle as impossible, is utterly unscientific. It seems fairer to assume nothing, to interrogate the facts, letting them develop conclusions, rather than assuming conclusions to make the facts accord with them. The last mode was that of necessity pursued by the disciples. Having seen the works, companied with the man, heard his words, considered his claims, they were at last in a position to answer the question, "Whom do you say that I am?" and intelligently to affirm, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." It may be, however, thought that this is an experience which cannot be repeated. They have announced a conclusion which it is for us to verify. The discoverer of a law in nature stands in a different relation to it from any one who may come after him. It is allowable for the follower to interrogate all the facts which have led to the discovery, but from the beginning he will have reference to the