

We cannot reject it without abandoning all grounds for any historical belief. We accept with gratitude the teachings of the gospel, and rejoice with the Church of Christ on Easter morn, because Jesus rose triumphant from the grave and now lives to make intercession for us.

II.—SOME REASONS WHY WE SHOULD CLING SO TENACIOUSLY TO THIS DOCTRINE.—So far we have indicated some of the grounds upon which our faith in Christ's resurrection rests. Let us now briefly give two or three reasons why we should so tenaciously cling to this belief.

1. We cannot but recognize that it is the foundation stone of Christianity. We cannot retain the Christ of the Gospel, the Saviour of the World, the divine Son of God, unless we believe with our text: "He is risen; he is not here." Does any one ask why? We reply, it is impossible for you to retain even ordinary respect for Jesus otherwise. You are compelled to bring him down to the status of a man, great though he may be, because of his life and teachings, he is no longer the Son of God, the true God and life eternal, the Emmanuel or God with us. Death hath conquered him like other men. He died, and he is dead! Again, how can you trust him, how can you even respect him? He has either acted the part of a deceiver or has been the victim of a strange hallucination. He either believed he would rise and taught it before his death, or again, he had no such expectation and shamefully attempted to impose upon men. Again, study his statements, and you will soon see that, contrary to all other men, death was his goal. Death, instead of putting an end to his real work, was to be rather the consummation of it. With it his humiliation would cease, because, being the Prince of Life, he would break the bonds of death and rise to live and reign forever and give to his redeemed ones the same blessing. And instead of this, that death which he was to have conquered has obtained the mastery over him and his people for ever; that last enemy which he was to have placed under his feet has subdued him! Do you not see then that his work is a stupendous failure, and that it is all the greater because of the fair and beautiful beginnings it showed. No, no! we say to the enemies of the cross of Christ, we cannot surrender this part of the Christian citadel. Your object is too transparent, and we see too well how utterly untenable our faith would be were the immovable rock of Christ's resurrection taken away from us. We believe, and we