

Jesus than to us. "Except ye have the Spirit of Christ ye are none of His."

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THE OLD AND NEW DISPENSATIONS.

WHAT is the line that divides the old from the new Dispensation? Why was it that the birth of Jesus was adopted as the line? Who created this line, and might not the division have been made by the baptism instead of the birth of Jesus?

What preminence was there about Jesus that cause even the years to revolve around His birth? In what sense did He become the Saviour of men? Did He become the Saviour by His life or by His death? If by His death was His life lived simply that He might die? Or if it is by His life that we are saved, then why was it necessary that He should die by crucifixion?

Or if it is neither by the life or death of Jesus that we are saved, but by the Holy Ghost, could the Holy Ghost not have come to earth without the shameful and ignominious death of Jesus? In what sense was the Holy Ghost on the earth before the New Dispensation started? Could the New Dispensation have been commenced a century earlier or a century later? If the doing of the whole will of God by Jesus, was the result of His baptism by the Holy Ghost, then what has the immaculate conception to do with the doing of this will? If Jesus did the will of God, and we are to do greater things than He did, what greater thing than the will is there to do?

Could Adam or Abraham or Isaiah or any of the Old Testament writers have taken the place of Jesus? And if not, why not? If we can become Christs or Saviours, why could not they? What did the advent of Jesus and the subsequent coming of the Holy Ghost do for the moralists of that time? What can God do for the moralist now? Can a man without God have correct morals or what relation has God to morals? Can a sinner commence now, to do the whole will of God and continue to do it? If so what difference is there between doing the will and the walk in the Spirit or are they interchangeable terms?

What has the blood and the atonement to do with the doing of the will? Can a heathen who never heard of Jesus but who believes in a great first cause or a great unknown, do the will and get to heaven? Or does the doing of the will include the acceptance of Jesus? And are all heathens who never heard of Jesus, and their name is legion, all lost, eternally lost? Has the heathen power to worship God—or as Jesus put it, to love God with all his heart, soul, mind, and strength and his neighbor as himself? If so, what relation has Jesus to such, or why need Jesus be preached to such? There may be food for thought in some or all of these questions.

We could ask a thousand more. This is called the dispensation of the Spirit or the New. In what sense does it differ from the Old? Why was it called the new? Was it because of the discovery of Jesus that the complete will of the unseen God could be done upon the earth, by men?

Was the Christian dispensation changed because the time for doing the will in part had passed, and we had inaugurated by Jesus the era when God would require of man the doing of the whole will? We believe that if the Holy Ghost is God, and God is unchangeable and omnipresent, then He was always on the earth just as He is now. We believe that Jesus stands out pre-eminently among men simply because He was the first man to recognize this. We believe that the chief old thing that passed away was the doing of the will in part. This would no longer please God. He would require among the all things that had become new, the doing of the whole will. Jesus was no imitator. He had no one to imitate. Neither does he desire us to be imitators of what he did, but only in His manner of doing things, viz., by the Holy Ghost. To be like Jesus means to be like Him in His manner of doing—to allow the wind to blow where it listeth, to be able *not to know* whence it cometh or whither it goeth. Born of the Spirit means simply to recognize the Spirit as God and let God control the life as Jesus did, irrespective of nineteenth century ostracism or cold-shouldering.

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