

Now, to test this matter the same as any other debatable question, let us start with the following "axiom":—When two or more contradictory accounts of the same events are given it is possible for all them to be wrong but it is impossible for all them to be correct. We have two genealogies of Jesus in Matthew and Luke entirely different, both as to the number of ancestors between Jesus and David as well as an entirely different list of names in each. Now, it is absolutely impossible for both of these to be correct, so it is quite possible that both are wrong in whole or in part. Besides, if Jesus had no earthly father he had no ancestors at all. It is quite evident, therefore, that both the writers who gave an ancestry to Jesus were not supporting the theory of the mysterious supernatural conception. The four Gospels give four entirely different versions of the accusation said to have been written by Pilate above Jesus on the cross. Authors who were capable of making such mistakes in plain matters of fact are naturally even more unreliable when they relate discourses. In any case, if anything is at all clear about the teachings and character of Jesus it is that he was hostile to the priests and rich of his day, therefore he did not belong in any sense whatever and does not belong now to the wealthy so-called Christian organizations that have used his name for so many ages for monetary and political purposes.

The chief use the Church has made of Jesus was by the atonement theory. Now, there is no theory more repulsive to any person with any sense of moral justice than the theory of punishing one person for the guilt of another. While man may be influenced by love and fear no country has ever applied the method of punishing the innocent for the guilty in ordinary human laws. This is a case where Religion has no analogy to reason and common sense.

Let us next take up the question of miracles. Thaumaturgy is evidence against instead of being in favor of Christianity. Ethics do not need thanmaturgy to illustrate the value of moral teachings. As has been well pointed out by Hume and Paine we have no experience of such violation of the laws of nature taking place as is recorded in the Bible but we have