

further admitted that the very latest date that can be assigned to any one of them is twenty-eight years after the Crucifixion.

Now, what do we learn from these letters in reference to the Resurrection of the Lord? Well, to speak generally, first this: that the writer entertained himself no shadow of doubt as to the historical fact of the Lord's Resurrection; and further—this is of great importance—that he regarded it as the very basis of all Christian belief. His opening words to the great company of believers at Rome show this in the most convincing form. He speaks of the Lord, whose servant he is, as "declared to be the Son of God with power." And how? "*By the Resurrection of the dead.*" That Resurrection was the causal source of the demonstration to angels and to man that Jesus of Nazareth was the Very and Eternal Son of God. What words could be devised or imagined to show the innermost convictions of the writer more potently and more persuasively than this incidental expression in the opening salutation of an Apostolic letter? We may observe just the same in the beginning of the Epistle to the Galatians, where, obviously intent as the Apostle is on a widely different subject—his independence of all human teaching—the simple mention of his Master's Name in juxtaposition with that of God the Father calls out at once the declaration of the Lord's Resurrection, as though the blessed doctrine were inwoven in every thought, and found almost unconscious utterance in every deeper and more reverential mention of the Eternal Father and the Eternal Son. Such expressions show the very innermost persuasions of the writer, and tell us, if we doubted it, what the Resurrection of Jesus Christ was to the inspired Apostle. It was to him the foundation of all Christian teaching, the one fact on which all here and hereafter rested for ever-

more. We might carry these thoughts much farther, for the allusions to the Resurrection in these Epistles are very numerous; but we have said enough to show, on evidence that cannot be called in question, what the convictions of St. Paul were as to the Resurrection of the Lord.

Let us now take a step further. We have seen what the convictions of the Apostle were: we may now from the same letters distinctly claim a complete harmony on this subject between St. Paul and those to whom his letters were addressed. He differed from those to whom he wrote in several important particulars. His claim to Apostleship was denied by some. His teaching in reference to the law was so opposed by others that on one occasion he asks the Galatian: if he had become *their enemy* because he told them the truth; but, in reference to the fact of our Lord's Resurrection, there is not the slightest trace of any divergence of opinion. Nay, rather, there is very striking proof to the contrary. In the Epistle to the Corinthians, when opposing those who doubted the Resurrection of the body, he bases his whole argument on the certainty of the fact that Christ did rise with His own body from the grave. Is it, we may ask, conceivable that he could have used such an argument, and to men as quick-witted as the Corinthians, if there had been the faintest difference of opinion between them or the reality of the Lord's Resurrection? It is simply certain from these letters that on this subject the convictions of the Apostle and of those to whom he wrote were absolutely identical, and that we may claim it as beyond all controversy that, no later than twenty-eight years after the Crucifixion, the Churches of Rome, Corinth, and Galatia believed in the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and regarded it as the ground and foundation of the Christian Church.

(To be continued.)