

upon interior and profoundly spiritual experiences. John almost as little notices the merely external facts and events of the Lord's life, which Matthew habitually regards.¹

In their structure the Evangelical narratives have been well compared to Xenophon's *Memorabilia* of Socrates. They are clusters of events, parables, miracles, discourses, in which the order of time is sometimes obscure, and sometimes wholly inverted.

In every age of the Church it has been deemed wise to attempt to form a harmony of the four Gospels. Since the year A. D. 1500, there have been more than *fifty* harmonies made by most eminent Christian scholars. Of *Lives of Christ and Harmonies* there have been more than *one hundred and fifty*.

But for some such help, the difficulties arising from a comparison of the different narratives would be insoluble. Many obstacles are thus removed, many apparent contradictions are congruously explained, many apparent inconsistencies are harmonized; and it is shown that, of the inexplicable facts remaining, none are important, — certainly not as respects the great truths or the essential events of the narrative.

3. It is probable that no equal amount of truth was ever expressed in a mode so well fitted for universal circulation. And yet, as the Gospels were written by

¹ "The first three Evangelists describe especially those things which Christ did in our flesh, and relate the precepts which He delivered on the duties to be performed by us, while we walk on earth and dwell in the flesh. But St. John soars to *heaven*, as an eagle, above the clouds of human infirmity, and reveals to us the mysteries of Christ's Godhead, and of the Trinity in Unity, and the felicities of Life Eternal, and gazes on the Light of Immutable Truth with a keen and steady ken." — *St. Augustine, translated by Dr. Wordsworth. Introduction to Commentaries on the New Testament.*