

**THE HISTORICAL
JESUS AND THE
THEOLOGICAL CHRIST**

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The historical Jesus and the theological Christ by J. Estlin Carpenter

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J. ESTLIN CARPENTER

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The
Historical Jesus
and the
Theological Christ

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IN MEMORIAM

Rabbi Isaacson

1850-1911

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PREFACE.

THE Addresses which are reproduced with some expansions in this little book, were intended to give to those unacquainted with the details of historical study some insight into the results of modern investigation in the Gospel-field, and some knowledge of the process by which the ecclesiastical conception of the person of Jesus Christ was slowly formed. In such brief surveys much was necessarily left unsaid, and the relation of Jesus to our religious experience did not fall within the lecturer's scope.

If any reader should desire a fuller view of Jesus and his teaching as presented in the earliest records, he will find the *Commentary on the Synoptic Gospels* by Mr. C. G. Montefiore of great service: while from the philosophical side a lofty and penetrating estimate is contained in the *Problems of Human Life* by Prof. Rudolf Eucken.

My sincerest thanks are due to the Rev. J. Edwin Odgers, D.D., for his kindness in reading through the proofs, and giving me the advantage of his wide and varied knowledge.

J. E. C.

Oxford, May 24, 1911.

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CONTENTS.

I. THE HISTORICAL JESUS.		PAGE
Christianity a Historical Religion		9
i. Conditions of the Study		10
ii. Did Jesus never live?		16
iii. The Gospels and the Beliefs of their Age		37
iv. The Nature of their Testimony to a Historical Person		47
II. JESUS AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD.		
John the Baptist and Jesus		60
i. The Kingdom of God		62
ii. The Preaching of Jesus.		73
iii. The Kingdom as a spiritual Rule		83
iv. At Caesarea Philippi		87
v. The Coming of the Son of Man		94
vi. The Alleged Failure of Liberal Christianity.		102
III. THE THEOLOGICAL CHRIST.		
An Analogous Development		113
i. Complex influences in Judaism		118
ii. The Apostle Paul		125
iii. The Divine King.		131
iv. The 'Son of God' in the Fourth Gospel		137
v. The Advance of the Logos-Theology up to 325 A.D.		159
IV. THE DOCTRINE OF THE TWO NATURES.		
Christianity and the Roman Empire		177
i. Factors in the Dogmatic Settlement.		179
ii. Opposite Methods of approaching the Problem.		183
iii. Nestorius and Cyril		189
iv. The Council of Chalcedon, 451 A.D.		193
v. Modern Difficulties and Ancient Solutions		201
vi. Theories of <i>Kenosis</i>		208
vii. The Sub-conscious Self		220
Conclusion		229



I

THE HISTORICAL JESUS

CHRISTIANITY, as we receive it through the New Testament, is a historical religion. It professes to be derived from a particular person. Whatever else he may be in the eternal counsels of God according to the definitions of the creeds of the Church, Jesus of Nazareth belongs to a particular country; he sprang from a particular people; he belonged to a particular age; and the circumstances of his life, his spoken word, the events of his career from birth to death, can be known to us only through testimony. And whatever he may appear now to the experience of the believer, whether in the mystical communion of the Eucharist, or in the Evangelical experiences of forgiveness and justification, what he was on earth we can apprehend only by evidence. That evidence is summed up for us in the Gospels; they