





the fabric of the common good and the human community, and so seeks as its end the good of both individuals and the community.

Recall that *agapē* seeks the good of *the other*, and derives its power from looking for the intrinsic goodness, lovability, and transcendent mystery of *the other*. For this reason, it needs no rewards like the mutuality of friendship or the romantic dimensions of *eros*. The good of the other *is* its own reward. Thus it is not deterred by the appearance of the other, whether the other is a stranger, or even whether the other has been offensive, or harmful. This enables *agapē* to be the dynamic of forgiveness, compassion, and self-sacrifice – for anyone and everyone.

*Agapē* by its very nature unifies, seeks the positive, orders things to their proper end, finds a harmony amidst diversity, and gives of itself in order to initiate and actualize this unifying purpose. This implies that love (*agapē*) is naturally oriented toward perfect positivity and perfect fulfillment.

Furthermore, love (*agapē*) would seem to be the one *virtue* that can be an end in itself. Other virtues do not *necessarily* result in positivity or culminate in a good for others. So for example, courage left to itself, might be mere bravado or might lead to the persecution of the weak. Self-discipline, left to itself, might lead to a disdain for the weak or a sense of self-sufficiency which is antithetical to empathy. Even humility can be overbearing and disdainful if it is not done out of love. Even though these virtues are necessary means for the actualization of love (i.e., authentic love cannot exist without courage, self-discipline, and humility), they cannot be ends in themselves, for they can be the instruments of “unlove” when they are not guided by the intrinsic goodness of love. Love seems to be the only virtue that can be an end in itself and therefore can stand by itself.

Now, if *you*, the reader, affirm the existence of this power within yourself and further affirm that it is the guiding light of both intellect and creativity, that its successful operation is the only way in which all your other powers can be guided to a positive end, that it is therefore the only way of guaranteeing positivity for both yourself and others, and that it therefore holds out the promise of authentic fulfillment, purpose in life, and happiness, then you will have acknowledged *love* to be the highest of all powers and the central meaning of life. You will then want to proceed to the next question.

#### *Question #2*

**2) If love is the one power that seeks the positive in itself, and we are made to find our purpose in life through love, could God (the unique unrestricted act of thinking that creates everything else), who created us with this loving nature, be devoid of love?**

If the Creator were devoid of love, why would that Creator create human beings not only with the capacity for love, but to be fulfilled only when they are loving? If the Creator is devoid of love, why make love the fulfillment of all human powers and desires, and therefore of human nature? If the Creator is not loving, then the creation of “beings meant for love” seems absurd. However, if the Creator *is* love, then creating a loving creature (i.e., sharing His loving nature) would seem to be both intrinsically and extrinsically consistent with what (or perhaps better, “who”) He is. Could the Creator be any less loving than the “loving nature” He has created?

Furthermore, if the Creator is perfectly intelligent – a unique unrestricted act of thinking<sup>2</sup> – wouldn't that perfection extend to the highest perfection—love?

If you, the reader, can reasonably affirm the love of the Creator from the above, then proceed to the third question.

### *Question #3*

#### **3) Is your desire to love and to be loved merely conditional, or unconditional?**

We not only have the power to love (i.e., the power to be naturally connected to another human being in profound empathy, care, self-gift, concern, and acceptance), we have a “sense” of what this profound interpersonal connection would be like if it were perfect. This sense of perfect love has the positive effect of inciting us to pursue ever more perfect forms of love. However, it has the drawback of inciting us to *expect* ever more perfect love from others. This generally leads to frustrated expectations of others and consequently to a decline of relationships that can never grow fast enough to match this expectation of perfect and unconditional love.

The evidence for our awareness of and desire for perfect love can be seen in our capacity to recognize *every* imperfection of love in others and in ourselves.<sup>3</sup> How could we have this seemingly unlimited capacity to recognize imperfection in love without having some sense of what perfect love would be like? Without at least a tacit awareness of perfect love, we would be quite content with any manifestation of affection that just happens to come along.

Do you, the reader, have a capacity to recognize imperfection of love in others and yourself? Do you do this seemingly without limit? If so, could you do this without some sense of what perfect love would be like? And if you have this awareness of and desire for perfect love, would you be content with anything less? Do you want to continue the pursuit of love until you have arrived at what you truly desire? If so, then you will have also affirmed within yourself the intrinsic desire for unconditional love, which leads to the next question.

### *Question #4*

#### **4) If our desire for love can only be ultimately satisfied by unconditional love, then could the Creator of this desire be anything less than unconditional love?**

A simple response to this question might run as follows: if we assume that the Creator does not intend to frustrate our desire for unconditional love, it would seem that His creation of the desire would imply an intention to fulfill it, which would, in turn, imply the very presence of this quality within Him. This would mean that the Creator of the desire for unconditional love is Himself unconditional love.

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<sup>2</sup> See Lonergan's proof of God in Chapter 1.

<sup>3</sup> See the detailed exposition of this point in Chapter 2 (Second Topic).

The converse is a contradiction. Why would God create us with a desire for unconditional love, only to allow it to go unfulfilled in everyone? Such a God would be a trickster and abjectly cruel, which contradicts the love of the Creator affirmed above in *Question #2*. The argument may be summed up as follows: If God is really the Creator of our desire for unconditional love, and He does not intend to frustrate it in us, then He intends to fulfill it; and if He intends to fulfill it, He must have the capacity to do so – which means, He must be unconditionally loving. So did God really create our desire for unconditional love?

Recall from above, that we have the capacity to recognize every imperfection of love in others and ourselves, revealing at least a tacit *awareness* of perfect love which brings these imperfections to light. This tacit awareness of unconditional love seems to be beyond any specifically known or concretely experienced love, because every manifestation of love we encounter is *imperfect*. How can we have an awareness of unconditional love that we have not experienced? How can we even extrapolate to it if we do not know what we are looking for? So it seems that there must be some source of our awareness of unconditional love which is capable of unconditional love.

Is God the source of our tacit awareness of unconditional love? Recall, from Lonergan's proof of God (in Chapter 1) that there must be a *unique*, unrestricted act of thinking to create everything else. Recall also, from our investigation of the transcendentals (in Chapters 1&2) that perfect thinking must be a perfect unity and so also must be perfect love. Yet, as we saw, there can only be *one* perfect unity and so, perfect thinking and perfect love must be *the same* reality (otherwise, there would be *two* perfect unities). If this reasoning is correct, then God must be the *one and only* perfectly loving reality, and therefore must be the *one and only* source of our tacit awareness of perfect and unconditional love.<sup>4</sup>

If you the reader are in agreement with “God being unconditional love,” then you will want to proceed to the next question.

#### *Question #5*

**5) If the Creator is Unconditional Love, would He want to be with us and enter into a personal empathetic relationship with us – face to face? Would he be Emmanuel (“God with us?”)**

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<sup>4</sup> Karl Rahner expresses this explicitly in 1982 *Foundations of Christian Faith*, pp.123-124.

See Lonergan 1972, p. 111.

See Pieper 1974.

See Powell 1978. *Unconditional Love*. New York: Argus.

If one did not attribute unconditional Love to God, then the idea of God wanting to be with us would seem implausible. If God were not loving, He would not bother to relate to creatures, let alone actually be among them and enter into empathetic relationship with them. However, in the logic of love, or rather, in the logic of unconditional Love, all this changes.

If we attribute the various parts of the definition of *agapē* to an unconditionally loving Creator, we might obtain the following result: God would be focused on what is uniquely good, lovable, and mysterious in each one of us, and in seeing this perfectly would enter into a perfect empathetic relationship with us – whereby doing the good for us would be just as easy if not easier than doing the good for Himself. Thus God would empathize with and do the good for us unconditionally – without expecting the “reward” of the other three kinds of love. He would love us unconditionally even if we did not love Him – even if we resented and rejected Him. He would love us unconditionally even if we had sinned terribly – so terribly that we had no hope of being excused, but only forgiven. His unconditional love would seek as deep a relationship with us as *we*, in our freedom, would allow. He would not only want to be with us in deepest intimacy, He would even sacrifice Himself for us – sacrifice Himself *unconditionally* for us – even if we did not deserve it – *particularly* if we did not deserve it. If God were unconditional love, and the purest form of love is *agapē*, then God’s love would naturally extend itself to us in an unmitigated act of compassion and affection, irrespective of our transgressions. If we open ourselves and respond to His love, He will deepen it until He brings us into the fullness of relationship with Him which is perfect joy. If God truly is unconditional *agapē*, then it would be perfectly consistent with His nature (and heart) to want to be perfectly present to us – as Emmanuel.<sup>5</sup>

If God is truly Unconditional Love (*agapē*), then He is also unconditional empathy; and if He is unconditional empathy, He would want to enter into a perfectly empathetic relationship with us – “face-to-face” and “peer-to-peer” – where the Lover and beloved would have an equal access to the uniquely good and lovable personhood and mystery of the other through empathy. A truly unconditionally loving Being would want to give *complete* empathetic access to His heart and interior life in a way which was proportionate to the receiving apparatus of the weaker (creaturely) party. Thus it seems that an unconditionally loving Creator would want to be Emmanuel in order to give us complete empathetic access to that unconditional Love through voice, face, touch, action, concrete relationship, and in every other way that love, care, affection, home, and felt response can be concretely manifest and appropriated by us. If God really is Unconditional Love, and *agapē* is the perfection of love, then we might expect that this God would want to be perfectly present to us as Emmanuel. If this resonates with the reader’s thoughts and feelings, you will want to proceed to the next question.

#### *Question #6*

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<sup>5</sup> Even though an unconditionally loving God would never stop loving us, he would give us the freedom to reject His love, because He would not want to force it upon us. Therefore, He would have to make some accommodation for those who wanted to live without Him and without love – even eternally.



There has been considerable discussion about the authenticity of this passage, but the majority of mainstream scholars concur with Kirby that:

The most persuasive case is made by those who maintain that Tacitus made use of a first century Roman document concerning the nature and status of the Christian religion. As to the reliability of that source, following normal historical practice, it is prudently assumed to be accurate until demonstrated otherwise. The reference from Tacitus constitutes *prima facie* evidence for the historicity of Jesus.<sup>7</sup>

### *Flavius Josephus*

Flavius Josephus (a Jewish historian writing a history of the Jewish people for a Roman audience in approximately 93 AD) provides the most impressive and detailed evidence for the historical Jesus outside Christian scripture. Many historians and exegetes have written extensively on Josephus' testimony about Jesus because there were obvious Christian edits and interpolations of this text. Luke Timothy Johnson,<sup>8</sup> Raymond Brown,<sup>9</sup> and John P. Meier<sup>10</sup> have a very balanced (and somewhat minimalistic) approach to the critical passage. All three scholars believe that the beginning part of the passage from Josephus' *Antiquities* has not been significantly changed or edited, though later parts clearly were. The passage (sometimes called the *Testimonium Flavianum*) appears directly below. The italicized portions represent those which many scholars believe are part of the original text of Josephus. The unitalicized parts are either probably or definitely Christian additions or interpolations.

*Now there was about this time Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man; for he was a doer of wonderful works, a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him both many of the Jews and many of the Gentiles. He was [the] Christ. And when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principal men amongst us, had condemned him to the cross, those that loved him at the first did not forsake him; for he appeared to them alive again the third day; as the divine prophets had foretold these and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning him. And the tribe of Christians, so named from him, are not extinct at this day.*<sup>11</sup>

Johnson provides a mainstream-minimalistic view of the matter:

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<sup>7</sup> Kirby 2014.

<sup>8</sup> See Johnson 1991, pp. 113-114.

<sup>9</sup> See Brown 1994(a), pp.373-376.

<sup>10</sup> See Meier 1994, pp. 592-593.

<sup>11</sup> Josephus 1965, 18:3.3.





The *kerygmas* represent the earliest extant proclamations of the primitive Church (AD late 30s and 40s<sup>15</sup>). They are brief texts that resemble very simple creedal statements, and are to be found mostly in the Pauline letters, and the Acts of the Apostles (particularly in the speeches of Peter and Paul). These texts predate the Pauline letters and the Acts of the Apostles in which they are contained. They are identifiable through form critical methods, which were elucidated by C.H. Dodd and his predecessors.<sup>16</sup>

There are nine major *kerygma* statements: Acts 2:14-39, Acts 3:13-26, Acts 4:10-12, Acts 5:30-32, Acts 10:36-43, Acts 13:17-41, 1Thess 1:10, 1Cor 15:1-7, Rom 8:34.

When we combine the content of these *kerygmas*, we find eight major repeated themes:

1. Jesus was a descendent of David,
2. Jesus was predicted by the Prophets,
3. Jesus worked miracles,
4. Jesus was crucified and buried for our sins (in all major *kerygmas*),
5. Jesus rose in glory (in all major *kerygmas*),
6. Jesus gave his disciples the Holy Spirit,
7. Jesus is now exalted in God,
8. Jesus is therefore, Messiah and Lord.

There is considerable historical evidence to substantiate four of these apostolic themes:

1. *Jesus worked miracles* – extratestamental sources, the Jewish polemic to explain Jesus’ miracles (“It is by Beelzebul...”), and historical verification by Raymond Brown and John P. Meier .
2. *Jesus was crucified and buried* – extratestamental sources, archaeological evidence, historical verification by Brown and Wright.
3. *Jesus rose in glory* – Wright’s assessment of messianic movements, St. Paul’s witness dilemma, and Wright’s analysis of Second Temple Judaism.
4. *Jesus gave the Holy Spirit* – Dunn’s analysis of miracles in the early Church and contemporary evidence of the power of the Spirit.

When this evidence is combined, it reveals why the early Church believed that Jesus is the exclusive Son of the Father (the Son of God), and why it was willing to make so many sacrifices to proclaim Him not merely risen from the dead, but the Lord (*ho Kurios* – the Greek Septuagint translation of the Divine name Yahweh).

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<sup>15</sup> Dodd 1962, p. 16.

<sup>16</sup> Four of the key elements here are: 1) its formulaic character, 2) in the Acts of the Apostles, the occurrence of doublets in a style diverging from Luke’s, 3) the absence of any theological interpretation from a later era of the Church, and 4) a Semitic and Aramaic background identified originally by Torrey 1916. For a fuller explanation, see Dodd 1962, pp. 19-22.









radical scholars. They are among the most widely established details from the entire New Testament.<sup>22</sup>

Habermas goes on to explain that:

More skeptical scholars often still acknowledge the grounds for the appearances as well. Helmut Koester [notes]: ‘We are on much firmer ground with respect to the appearances of the risen Jesus and their effect.... That Jesus also appeared to others (Peter, Mary Magdalene, James) cannot very well be questioned.’<sup>23</sup>

In view of this general agreement about the historicity of the resurrection appearances, where do opinions diverge? Habermas again notes, “the *crux* of the issue, then, is not *whether* there were real experiences, but how *we explain the nature* of these early experiences.”<sup>24</sup>

Habermas then inquires into what these exegetes consider to be the cause of the apostolic Church’s early and widespread belief that Jesus rose from the dead. Was it a natural cause or a supernatural cause? The vast majority of exegetes believe that the cause was *supernatural*. Nevertheless, Habermas examines the minority opinion, namely, natural causation. His investigation ranges from the subjective vision theory of Gerd Lüdemann (who grounds his hypothesis in “stimulus,” “religious intoxication,” and “enthusiasm”<sup>25</sup>), to the illumination theory of Willi Marxsen (who asserts that Peter had an internal experience which led him to convince the other apostles about Jesus’ resurrection).<sup>26</sup> These theories do not stand up well to historical and exegetical scrutiny (see below Section III.B),<sup>27</sup> and so Habermas concludes, “In the twentieth century, critical scholarship has largely rejected wholesale the naturalistic approaches to the resurrection.”<sup>28</sup>

He then examines *supernatural* causes for the early witnesses’ experience of the risen Jesus. “Supernatural causation” means that something happened to *Jesus* rather than to His followers. What happened to Jesus must be supernatural because it effects a transition from death to new life. Variations among supernatural explanations are centered on the ways in which the risen Jesus appeared – that is, *the ways* in which His risen life was mediated in the physical world (in

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<sup>22</sup> Habermas 2006, p. 79, italics mine.

<sup>23</sup> Habermas 2006, p. 80.

<sup>24</sup> Habermas 2006, p. 80.

<sup>25</sup> Lüdemann 1994, pp. 106-7, 174-75, and 180.

<sup>26</sup> Marxsen 1970, pp. 88-97.

<sup>27</sup> See Habermas 2006, pp. 84-86. See also Davis 1999, pp. 57-58: “All of the alternative hypotheses with which I am familiar are historically weak; some are so weak that they collapse of their own weight once spelled out.”

<sup>28</sup> Habermas 2006, p. 86.





prostrate yourself and worship me,” to which Jesus replies, “The Lord, your God, shall you worship and him alone shall you serve” (Matthew 4: 9-10). It seems that Jesus has been transformed in a divine and spiritual way – so much so that it evokes worship (reserved for God alone) from the disciples. This interpretation is confirmed by Jesus’ subsequent words, “All power on heaven and earth has been given to me (which belongs to God alone).”

There is yet another confirmation of Jesus’ Divine/Spiritual transformation, namely that many of the disciples have difficulty recognizing him (“some doubted”). What did they doubt? They were not doubting that a divine appearance (a theophany) was occurring – they were all bowing down and worshipping It. Thus, they must have been doubting that *Jesus* was part of the theophany. They thought they were seeing God, but they were uncertain about *Jesus*. When this Divine-Spiritual Being communicates with and *missions* them, they apparently become aware of His identity – it is Jesus who is transformed into a Spiritual-Divine Being to which “all authority on Heaven and Earth” has been given.

*Luke* communicates the same spiritually transformed appearance of Jesus in the narrative of Jesus’ appearance to the eleven (Luke 24:33ff). He differs from Matthew in attempting to show continuity between Jesus’ risen appearance and his former embodiment:

While they were still talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you.” They were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a spirit. He said to them, “Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds? Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a spirit does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have” (Luke 24: 36-39).

Luke implies here that Jesus is transformed in appearance – looking like a spirit (the word “spirit” is mentioned twice in three sentences). As in Matthew, Luke mentions the disciples’ “doubts”. They are certainly not doubting that a spirit is appearing (because they are startled and frightened), so presumably they are doubting the presence of Jesus in this *spiritual* appearance. Notice that Jesus resolves those doubts by showing him the wounds of his crucifixion, and inviting them to touch him – calling attention to his body.

*Luke* is more concerned than Matthew to show continuity with Jesus’ former embodiment – amidst his spiritually transformed appearance. Perhaps there was confusion in the Gentile churches about Jesus being *only* a spirit (having no continuity with his former embodiment). However, Luke’s repeated insistence on Jesus’ embodiment shows that Jesus revealed not only his spiritual, but also his embodied self. Given the parallel with John 20 – Jesus probably showed the disciples his wounds in addition to his embodiment.

*John’s* Gospel communicates the same point in a slightly different way. Instead of asserting that Jesus has appeared in a divine-like way (as Matthew does) or in a spiritually transformed way (as Luke does), he says that Jesus appears through locked doors (Jn 20:19 and 20:26) which would not be possible for a resuscitated corpse:

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!” (John 20:19)

He then shows them the wounds of the crucifixion on his hands and side (John 20:20) as if he were intentionally identifying himself. John focuses all of the “doubts” in the story on Thomas, and so the doubts of the disciples about who Jesus is in the appearance are somewhat obscured. However, in the Appendix (John 21), John makes very clear that the apostles have doubts about Jesus in the appearance when he says, “None of the disciples dared ask him, ‘Who are you?’ They knew it was the Lord” (John 21:12).

The term “the Lord” (*Ho Kurios*) is significant here, showing that the Evangelist is pointing to Jesus’ *divine* appearance (very much like Matthew’s Gospel). *Kurios* (Lord) in Greek can mean anything from “sir” to “master,” but “*Ho Kurios*” (*the* Lord with the definite article) is the Septuagint Greek translation of the Hebrew divine name (Yahweh). Prior to Jesus’ resurrection, John never uses “*Ho Kurios*” of Jesus, but after the resurrection this is the *only* term used to refer to Jesus in the minds and on the lips of the Apostles.<sup>30</sup> It seems that they saw a divinely transformed Jesus, and that Jesus makes His embodiment known to them through the wounds of his crucifixion.

Now let us return to the curious passage, “No one dared to ask him ‘Who are you?’ for they knew it was the Lord” (John 21:12). If the apostles knew that it was the Lord (the Divine One) appearing to them, then why are they having doubts (as might be suggested by the phrase, “No one dared to ask him, who are you?”). Once again we see the apostles having difficulty identifying *Jesus* amidst his transformed divine appearance. Jesus apparently makes his embodiment known to them through his communication with and missioning of them.

As can be seen, all three Gospel writers who describe Jesus’ risen appearance to the apostles (Matthew, Luke, and John) indicate that he has been divinely and spiritually transformed and that this transformation outshines his former corporeality – so much so that the apostles at first have doubts about whether Jesus is in this divine-spiritual appearance. Jesus overcomes these doubts by revealing his identity (and continuity with his former embodiment) through the marks of his crucifixion (Luke and John 20) and through his communication with and missioning of them (Matthew and John 21).

*Paul’s* account of how the dead will be raised in 1Corinthians 15 shows remarkable similarities to all three gospel accounts (Matthew, Luke, and John) with respect to Jesus’ spiritually transformed body. He asserts that we will be raised in a way similar to Jesus’

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<sup>30</sup> In the closed room, when Jesus appears, the Apostles recognize “the Lord.” When Jesus appears to Thomas a week later, he says, “My Lord and My God” (“*Ho Kurios mou, Ho Theos mou*”).

At the Sea of Tiberius, when John recognizes the appearance to be Jesus, he turns to Peter and says, “Peter, it is the Lord” (“*Ho Kurios*”). On shore, the Apostles recognize that it is “the Lord” who is appearing, but they want to ask him, “Who are you?” indicating that they are having trouble recognizing *Jesus* in the appearance. Notice that only the narrator of the story (not the apostles) refers to “Jesus” in both John 20 and 21, but the apostles only see “*the Lord*” (the divine one).

resurrection – namely, as spiritual bodies (*pneumatikon soma*). His explanation of this adds theological interpretation to the gospel accounts.

The pertinent passage from 1Corinthians 15 can be broken down into three parts:

- (1) But someone will ask, “How are the dead raised? With what kind of body will they come?” How foolish! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. *When you sow, you do not plant the body that will be, but just a seed*, perhaps of wheat or of something else.
- (2) So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised *imperishable*; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in *glory*; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in *power*; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a *spiritual body*. If there is a natural body, there is also a *spiritual body*.
- (3) The first man was of the dust of the earth; *the second man is of heaven*. As was the earthly man, so are those who are of the earth; and as is the heavenly man, so also are those who are of heaven. *And just as we have borne the image of the earthly man, so shall we bear the image of the heavenly man.*

Perhaps it is best to begin with the last line of (3) above (“And just as we have borne the image of the earthly man, so shall we bear the image of the heavenly man”). When Paul says that we are going to be in the image of the heavenly man (the risen Jesus), he is saying that all the descriptions he has given of this risen state (in 1Corinthians 15) are similar to the way that Jesus appeared to his disciples after the resurrection. Thus, if we want to know how Jesus appeared to the apostles, all we have to do is look at how Paul describes our future risen state (which will be like that of Jesus).

So, how might we infer that Jesus appeared from Paul’s description of our risen state? In (1) above, Paul says that there will only be a seed of our former natural bodies, and that the rest will be transformed. There will be continuity with our earthly bodies, but also a marked transformation of those bodies. From this we might infer that Jesus maintained continuity with his former embodiment but that it was spiritually transformed, giving rise to something new, glorious, and imperishable. This resembles the Gospel accounts of Jesus’ risen appearance to his disciples (Section II above).

How was Jesus transformed? In (2) above, Paul says that this seed was transformed with imperishability, glory, power, and spirit. What would this look like? Paul gives only one explicit description – that it will be a “spiritual body.” If we want to know how the imperishability, power, and glory of this “spiritual body” appeared, we will have to turn to the Gospel writers who describe his power and glory as divine – so much so that the apostles bow down and worship him (Matthew 28:16) and were convinced that it was God appearing (see the references to “the Lord” in John 20 and 21). Furthermore, this powerful, glorious, spiritual, divine-like appearance engenders fear and awe (“They were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a spirit. He said to them, ‘Why are you troubled...’” – Luke 24:38).

Paul summarizes this transformed corporeality by twice calling it “a spiritual body” (a “*pneumatikon soma*”) which is a completely new concept in both the Jewish and the Greco-



Then he appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time  
[most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep.]  
Then he appeared to James,  
then to all the apostles.  
[Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me.] (1Cor. 15:3-8).

Two parts of the *kerygma* are obviously Pauline additions (in square brackets). First, the passage beginning with “Last of all...he appeared also to me” is Pauline in origin, for Paul does not need to refer to a *tradition* about himself. The first passage, “most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep” is also Pauline in origin. This passage merits special attention, not only because it is a Pauline addition, but also because it has value in ascertaining the historicity of the events portrayed in the *kerygma*. By phrasing the passage in this way, Paul is virtually inviting his Corinthian audience to “check out the facts” with the living witnesses. The fact that Paul is writing within living memory of these extraordinary events, and seems to be acquainted with many of the witnesses he lists, that he is aware that these witnesses are still alive, and challenges the Corinthians to investigate them, gives evidential weight to the claims in the passage.<sup>33</sup>

There are varied interpretations of Paul’s list of witnesses. Some exegetes believe that the list could be chronological, as Paul seems to suggest with his use of “first,” “next,” and “last of all...He appeared to me.” Others have suggested that the first part of the list establishes Church governance<sup>34</sup> (and may also be chronological) while the second part of the list establishes the missionary Church.<sup>35</sup> It is not inconceivable that both interpretations could be true, such that Jesus could have established Church governance and a missionary Church through the precise chronology elucidated by the *kerygma*.

So who were these witnesses? The first appearance to Peter and to the Twelve are probably linked and occurred in Galilee. Fuller notes in this regard:

...[T]he appearances to Cephas and to the Twelve form a closely linked group. A single *ōphthē* (“he appeared”) functions for both appearances, and the particle *eita* (“then”), used in verses 5-7 to join two items within a single group, connects these two appearances. ... ¶ Even if we assume that the disciples remained hidden in Jerusalem until after the Sabbath, as Mark seems to suppose, yet according to the earliest available tradition (Mark) it was in Galilee that the first appearances took place. ... ¶ We may conjecture that upon arriving back in Galilee, Peter proceeded

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<sup>33</sup> See Jeremias 1971, pp. 307-308.

<sup>34</sup> Fuller indicates “that the appearances to Peter and to the Twelve share a common function. In these appearances the Risen One initiates the foundation of the eschatological community: they are church-founding appearances” (Fuller 1971, p. 35).

<sup>35</sup> “[The first two appearances] must be distinguished from the later appearances, whose function is the call and sending of apostles to fulfill a mission” (Fuller 1971, p. 35).

to assemble the disciples for the second appearance. Luke contains a hint that this was the procedure: “When you [singular] have turned again, strengthen your brethren” (Luke 22:32).<sup>36</sup>

The third appearance (to the 500+) probably took place after the Twelve returned to Jerusalem and gathered the community together. Fuller believes that this Jerusalem appearance may have been the point at which the risen Jesus bestowed the Holy Spirit upon the large crowd gathered there.<sup>37</sup> Jeremias adds to this contention by noting:

Paul’s remark in I Cor. 15.6 that of the five hundred “most are still alive, but some have fallen asleep,” which is meant to underline the reliability of the account, also contains an indirect reference to the place of the appearance. That it is possible to ascertain which of the eye-witnesses to this appearance are still alive a quarter of a century later makes one wonder whether at least the majority of the five hundred lived in one and the same place, and that would apply to Jerusalem. Since the days of the Tübingen school, therefore, the hypothesis that the appearance to the five hundred and Pentecost are two different traditions of one and the same event has found many supporters. A further point in favour of this combination is that in John 20.22 we find Christophany and the receiving of the spirit linked together.<sup>38</sup>

Some exegetes stress caution with this thesis, because the appearance to the 500 is clearly a Christophany, while the gift of the Holy Spirit in Acts is a charismatic activity, including speaking in tongues. But there is no evidence from Scripture to preclude both of these from being combined (i.e., the risen Christ giving the Holy Spirit to the disciples at Jerusalem). Even if one separates the gift of the Holy Spirit from the appearance to the 500+, the remainder of Fuller’s thesis could still be true, namely, that “the +500 are the first-fruits of the church-founding function of Peter and the Twelve after their return from Galilee to Jerusalem.”<sup>39</sup>

The fourth appearance to James would seem to be (like Paul’s) a post-Pentecost event. Fuller notes that this “James” would almost certainly have to be James the brother (the relative/follower)<sup>40</sup> of Jesus, for James the Less is too insignificant, and James the Greater is martyred very early on. The appearance to this James would explain why he experienced such a rapid rise in the post-Pentecost Church when he does not appear to be even a significant disciple of Jesus during the ministry. Fuller goes so far as to say:

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<sup>36</sup> Fuller 1971, pp. 34-35.

<sup>37</sup> Fuller 1971, p. 36.

<sup>38</sup> Jeremias 1971, pp. 307-308.

<sup>39</sup> Fuller 1971, p. 36.

<sup>40</sup> “In a wider use [brother] signifies a person of common ancestry and relationship; in particular, a member of the same clan or tribe (e.g., Nm 16:10). It is extended to members of the same race or nation (e.g., Dt 15:12) or of a kindred nation (e.g., Dt 23:7). In the NT Christians are called brothers about 160 times, and Jesus Himself said that one who does the will of the Father is His own brother (Mt 12:50; Mk 3:35; Lk 8:21).” (McKenzie 1965, p. 108).

It might be said that if there were no record of an appearance to James the Lord's brother in the New Testament we should have to invent one in order to account for his post-resurrection conversion and rapid advance.<sup>41</sup>

There is ample evidence in the Acts of the Apostles to show that James serves a double role – he is at once the head of the Jerusalem Church, and also appears to be head of all missionary activities stemming from Jerusalem.<sup>42</sup> If this is the case, then the post-Pentecost appearance to James both establishes Church governance and initiates the mission function of the Church.

The fifth appearance to “all the apostles” refers to “apostles” in another sense than “the Twelve.” Paul commonly uses the term *apostolos* in a way similar to its common usage (“sent forth” or “those sent forth”)<sup>43</sup> – that is, “missionaries.” This meaning would certainly correspond to the theory that the second set of appearances (James, “all the apostles,” and Paul) in the 1Corinthians 15 *kerygma* are “mission-initiating.”

If “all the apostles” is meant in this missionary sense, then it refers to all the primary missionaries mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles. This would include both Aramaic-speaking Jewish Christians and Hellenistic Jewish Christians in the early Church (i.e., prior to the conversion of Paul).<sup>44</sup> Fuller conjectures further:

Were these perhaps the missionaries referred to in Acts 11:19, who embarked upon a mission to Hellenistic Jews in Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch? Were the seven of Acts 6 originally part of the group consisting of “all the apostles?”<sup>45</sup>

Whether or not they were, “all the apostles” seems to refer to a significant group of Aramaic-speaking and Hellenistic missionaries who enjoyed prominence in the pre-Pauline Church.

It seems that these missionaries may have witnessed Jesus' appearance in several different groupings after Pentecost. Why several? Because there is no specific reference to “all at once” as is noted in the passage about the 500+. It seems that these appearances were shared by different *groups* because specific individuals are not named (as they are for Peter, James, and Paul). Furthermore, Jerusalem is a likely place for these appearances, because it follows upon the Church-founding and mission-initiating activities which had already occurred there. The final appearance to Paul will be taken up below.

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<sup>41</sup> Fuller 1971, p. 37.

<sup>42</sup> Fuller 1971, p. 38.

<sup>43</sup> McKenzie notes: “A similar use transferred to a religious sense seems to lie behind 2 Co 8:23, where the apostles mentioned are not apostles in the technical sense, but missionaries or messengers sent by particular churches” (McKenzie 1965, p. 46).

<sup>44</sup> See Fuller 1971, pp. 40-41.

<sup>45</sup> Fuller 1971, p. 40.

If the above explanation of Paul's list of witnesses is correct, then the 1Corinthians 15 *kerygma* refers to: (1) an appearance to Peter and (2) a subsequent appearance to the Twelve (both of which probably took place in Galilee and were both Church-founding and governance-establishing), (3) an appearance to 500 brethren, which may be a Christophany associated with the gift of the Holy Spirit in Jerusalem (which is both Church-founding and mission-establishing), (4) a *possible* post-Pentecost appearance to James, the "brother" of Christ, in Jerusalem (which was both governance-establishing and mission-initiating, given that James is both the head of the Jerusalem Church and the head of the mission activities originating in Jerusalem), and (5) multiple post-Pentecost appearances, probably in Jerusalem, to the primary Aramaic-speaking and Hellenistic missionaries in the early Church (prior to the conversion of Paul). Most of the witnesses (from the above five groupings) would have lived within Paul's writing of the 1Corinthians 15 *kerygma* (as Paul, himself, notes). The above list of witnesses is probably incomplete, for it does not account for the appearances to the women,<sup>46</sup> or seemingly to minor disciples (such as those on the way to Emmaus).

### **III.B. St. Paul's Witness Dilemma**

Immediately after the 1Corinthians 15 *kerygma* (with its list of witnesses), Paul presents an interesting dilemma which could apply to all the witnesses in that list:

*First side of the dilemma:* ...if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. We are also found to be false witnesses of God because we witnessed before God that He raised Christ...

*The other side of the dilemma:* If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all men most to be pitied. ...Why am I in peril every hour? ...I die every day! What do I gain if, humanly speaking, I fought with beasts at Ephesus? If the dead are not raised, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die" (1Cor 15:14-32).

If we look at this passage carefully, we can see the makings of a classical dilemma which has the objective of verifying the witness value not only of Paul, but also of the Twelve, the 500, James, and the "other apostles." From a legal perspective, the most objective way of validating a witness' testimony is to show that that witness has "everything to lose, and nothing to gain." From the opposite perspective, a witness who has everything to gain and nothing to lose may be telling the truth, but there is no extrinsic way of validating this. Indeed, there is a haunting

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<sup>46</sup> It is quite certain that the women discovered the empty tomb, but their absence from the list of witnesses in the 1Cor 15 *kerygma* is puzzling. Many exegetes believe that the women were the first to receive an appearance of the risen Christ, but that their witness value in a creedal list was less significant because of Jewish practice and law (see Brown 1973, p. 122, note 204 – "their testimony would have less public authority").







What is unique [about Jesus' claim to bring the kingdom of God] is the result. But, again, we cannot know that the result springs from the uniqueness of the historical Jesus. Without the resurrection, would his disciples have endured longer than did John the Baptist's? We can only guess, but I would guess not.<sup>48</sup>

Wright expands this insight by noting that it applies not only to the disciples of John the Baptist, but also to the followers of:

Judas the Galilean, Simon, Athronges, Eleazar ben Deinaus and Alexander, Menahem, Simon bar Giora, and bar-Kochba himself. Faced with the defeat of their leader, followers of such figures would either be rounded up as well or melt away into the undergrowth.<sup>49</sup>

This did not happen in the early Church. After the public humiliation, persecution, and execution of their messiah, the disciples maintained their identity and did not replace Jesus as the true leader of their community. Instead, the early Church acknowledged that Jesus was raised from the dead, continued to be its leader, and was the fulfillment of the prophecies of Israel. Wright points out that no other messianic movement displayed this behavior:

...In not one case do we hear of any group, after the death of its leader, claiming that he was in any sense alive again, and that therefore Israel's expectation had in some strange way actually come true.<sup>50</sup>

This early community is even stranger still. It actually begins to *worship* Jesus as Lord, associate Him with divine status, and attribute to Him co-eternity with the Father.<sup>51</sup> This is not only historically unique, but also apologetically unappealing – so much so that the early Church had to pay the ultimate price for it (including separation from the synagogue and even persecution).<sup>52</sup>

Additionally, the early Church organized itself into a missionary community that not only went beyond the boundaries of Israel but also to the very frontiers of the Roman Empire, making it one of the most pluralistic religious organizations in the history of religions. With a crucified Messiah as its head, the early Church formed one of the most dynamically expansive communities in history.

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<sup>48</sup> Sanders 1985, p. 240.

<sup>49</sup> Wright 1996, p. 110. An extensive consideration of all these figures is given in Wright 1992 (Vol. I), pp. 170-181.

<sup>50</sup> Wright 1996, p. 110.

<sup>51</sup> See the many indications of the community's worship of Jesus in Matthew's, Luke's and John's resurrection narratives (above in this Chapter).

<sup>52</sup> See Wright 1996, pp. 110-112.

We are now led to N.T. Wright's probative questions. Why didn't the Church follow the patterns of other groups whose leaders had been persecuted? Why did it (uniquely) consider Jesus as its continued leader? Why did it consider Jesus (after the crucifixion) to be the fulfillment of Israel's destiny? Why did it organize itself so uniquely? Why did it worship Jesus as the Lord and endure persecution for that worship? How did it become one of the most inspired and dynamically expansive missionary organizations in the history of religions with a publicly humiliated and executed "Messiah" as its sole leader?

The answers to these questions requires a cause capable of explaining why Christianity does not follow the pattern of other religions or messianic movements. Why does Christianity pick up momentum from a crucified leader when other messianic movements at the time quickly faded away? Why didn't Christianity pick out another leader in the face of its leader's crucifixion, like other messianic movements whose leaders were executed? Above all, why did it become such a powerful Messianic movement capable of threatening the Roman Empire within a few generations after that same empire executed its Messiah?

What kind of cause could explain so many unique phenomena? A powerful one – one capable of overcoming the crucifixion of the movement's leader, capable of communicating both imminent and transcendent hope (amidst the death of its presumed messiah); one capable of revealing that God's kingdom had arrived in the world, and capable of providing sufficient momentum to turn a little Jewish sub-cult into an empire-wide – indeed, worldwide religion within a few generations. This powerful cause would seem to be the post-resurrection appearances of Jesus in combination with Jesus' gift of the Holy Spirit which enabled the apostles' (along with other missionaries) to perform miracles in the *name of Jesus*. John P. Meier summarizes this unique historical phenomenon as follows:

...[T]here was a notable difference between the long-term impact of the Baptist and that of Jesus. After the Baptist's death, his followers did not continue to grow into a religious movement that in due time swept the Greco-Roman world. Followers remained, revering the Baptist's memory and practices. But by the early 2d century A.D. any cohesive group that could have claimed an organic connection with the historical Baptist seems to have passed from the scene. In contrast, the movement that had begun to sprout up around the historical Jesus continued to *grow* – amid many sea changes – throughout the 1<sup>st</sup> century and beyond. Not entirely by coincidence, the post-Easter "Jesus movement" claimed the same sort of ability to work miracles that Jesus had claimed for himself during his lifetime. This continued claim to work miracles may help to explain the continued growth, instead of a tapering off, of the group that emerged from Jesus' ministry.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Meier 1994, p. 623.



interconnecting theme among early Christian doctrines. The doctrine of the resurrection grounds Christology, particularly the doctrine of Christ's glorification and, in part, the doctrine of Christ's divinity; it grounds the Christian doctrine of soteriology – "for if the dead are not raised, neither has Christ been raised" (1Cor 15:16); it shows God's vindication of Jesus' teaching; it grounds Christian eschatology; and is, in every respect, central to all other doctrines. St. Paul thinks it is so important that he proclaims:

If Christ has not been raised, your faith is in vain [useless]; you are still in your sins. Then those who have fallen asleep have perished. If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are the most pitiable people of all (1Corinthians 15: 17-19).

Second Temple Judaism does not place the resurrection in any such central role, and does not use it as an interconnecting theme for its doctrines. It is almost secondary in importance to other doctrines concerned with the law and prayer.

Once again, Wright finds himself as an historian in the position of having to ask for a necessary and sufficient explanation of these radical mutations in Second Temple Judaism's doctrine of the resurrection. A responsible historian cannot simply say that there was no reason for this universally accepted change within early Christianity, because this position runs counter to the fact that Christianity remained faithful to Judaism except for when Jesus (or some historical event connected with Jesus) changed it.

So what could explain this radical change? The preaching of Jesus? This is not tenable because Jesus does not put the resurrection at the center of His doctrine, but rather the arrival of the kingdom. Furthermore, He does not connect the resurrection to His Messiahship, and He certainly does not talk about the resurrection being transformed embodiment (or spiritual embodiment, or glorified embodiment), which is evident in the early Christian doctrine. The obvious explanation would be that the many witnesses (e.g., Peter, the Twelve, the 500 disciples, James, the early missionaries to the Gentile Church, and Paul himself) saw the risen Jesus in a transformed embodied state (manifesting at once a spiritual transformation which had the appearance of divine glory and power, *and* some form of embodiment which was continuous with Jesus' embodiment in His ministry). This would easily explain all five of the above-mentioned mutations.<sup>60</sup>

Rigorous historical method requires more than leaping to the obvious explanation. The historian must eliminate all other plausible explanations for the same phenomena. In order to do this, Wright sets out five other possible explanations for the above-mentioned mutations: (1) paganism, (2) early Christian interior visions or experiences, (3) the empty tomb alone, (4) cognitive dissonance, and (5) Schillebeeckx's conjecture of a new experience of grace.

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<sup>60</sup> See Wright 2003, pp. 205, 272-274, and 401-584; and Spitzer 2010(a), Chapter 4, Section II.

1. *Paganism*. Paganism offers virtually no possibility of explaining the Christians' view of resurrection, let alone the mutations of Second Temple Judaism. Paganism generally held that the soul would be separated from the body, that the body would die and never be restored, and that the soul was very likely destined to be in Hades, manifest as a mere shadow of its former self.<sup>61</sup> The contrast between paganism and early Christianity is so stark that the attempt to derive the latter from the former is not coherent.
2. *Early Christian interior visions*. Given that the unique, uniform, early Christian view of resurrection did not come from either Second Temple Judaism or paganism, might it not have come from an interior vision of Jesus after His crucifixion? Wouldn't a vision be *sufficient* to produce a whole new viewpoint on resurrection which became the central integrating theme of Christian doctrine and missionary activity?

In response, Wright shows that visions of the dead in the ancient world were quite commonplace and that these visions were never interpreted to be a resurrection of the body:

The more “normal” these “visions” were, the less chance there is that anyone, no matter how cognitively dissonant they may have been feeling, would have said what nobody had ever said about such a dead person before, that they had been *raised from the dead*.<sup>62</sup>

Recall that “raised from the dead” refers to a resurrection of the body, and that this occurred with respect to Jesus, and that this grounded the early Church's belief in the initiation of the final age. There is no reason to believe that a vision of Jesus after death would have had any more effect than the frequently occurring visions of other dead people.

There is another related objection to the sufficiency of the vision hypothesis. The resurrection of Jesus had three verifiable effects: (a) it created a new, unique doctrine of the resurrection, (b) this doctrine became the central, integral theme of Christian doctrine, and (c) it provided the main force for the belief in Jesus' Messiahship and Lordship. Given that visions of the dead were quite normal in the ancient world, it is highly unlikely that a vision would produce these unprecedented effects.

3. *The empty tomb alone*. Some exegetes have contended that the empty tomb alone was sufficient to motivate early Christian belief in a bodily resurrection. They believe that the stories about Jesus' post-resurrection appearances were mere add-ons either to enhance the empty tomb story or to redress the polemic that Jesus' disciples had stolen the body. This hypothesis is also insufficient to explain the five Christian mutations for two reasons: (a) it suffers from the same problem as interior visions, namely, that empty tombs and grave robbery were quite normal in the ancient world; and (b) an

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<sup>61</sup> See Wright 2003, Chapter 2 – particularly pp. 78-82.

<sup>62</sup> Wright 2003, p. 690.

empty tomb does not explain four out of five of the above Christian mutations. Let us take each in turn.

Wright addresses the first point as follows:

An empty tomb without any meetings with Jesus would have been a distressing puzzle, but not a long-term problem. It would have proved nothing; it would have suggested nothing, except the fairly common practice of grave-robbery. It certainly would not have generated the phenomena we have studied in this book so far. Tombs were often robbed in the ancient world, adding to grief both insult and injury. Nobody in the pagan world would have interpreted an empty tomb as implying resurrection; everyone knew such a thing was out of the question. Nobody in the ancient Jewish world would have interpreted it like that either; “resurrection” was not something anyone expected to happen to a single individual while the world went on as normal.<sup>63</sup>

Wright addresses the second major problem by showing that an empty tomb alone would not be able to explain four of the Christian mutations:

Had the tomb been empty, with no other unusual occurrences, no one would have imagined that Jesus was the Messiah or the lord of the world. No one would have imagined that the kingdom had been inaugurated. No one, in particular, would have developed so quickly and consistently a radical and reshaped version of the Jewish hope for the resurrection of the body. The empty tomb is by itself insufficient to account for the subsequent evidence.<sup>64</sup>

4. *Cognitive dissonance*. The phenomenon of cognitive dissonance begins with an expectation (arising out of a deep longing or yearning) for some particular state of affairs which is followed by a disappointment of that expectation. The group cannot reconcile itself to the fact that its deepest yearning has been disappointed, and so it perpetuates a state of denial which then provokes it to reorganize its view of *reality* to conform to this denied state of affairs. The group attempts to increase its numbers in order to help justify its interpretation of the denied state of affairs.<sup>65</sup>

The application of this theory to the early Christian Church might at first glance provide an alternative explanation to that of St. Paul and the gospels. Suppose the early Christian Church

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<sup>63</sup> Wright 2003, pp. 688-689.

<sup>64</sup> Wright 2003, p. 689.

<sup>65</sup> See Wright 2003, pp. 697-698.



experienced cognitive dissonance – that is that they *really* wanted Jesus to be the Messiah, and they were *very* disappointed when Jesus was crucified. Being unable to reconcile themselves to this fact, they reorganized their reality to resolve their dissonance and disappointment by projecting His resurrection into their reality. They further reinforced their perspective by adding converts to their ranks.

There are several problems with this hypothesis. As the reader will by now surmise, this explanation does not explain four out of five of the above Christian mutations of Second Temple Judaism. Why would cognitive dissonance have caused the early Christians to believe in a completely unique notion of the resurrection (i.e., spiritual embodiment)? Why would it have led them to believe that the resurrection would begin with a single individual (and not a group)? Why would cognitive dissonance have caused the early Christians to believe in a completely unique view of the final age (while earthly life continued as quasi-normal)? Why would cognitive dissonance have caused early Christians to make their unique doctrine of the resurrection so central and integral to all other doctrines? Cognitive dissonance explains neither the need for nor the content of these mutations. Wright sums this up as follows:

The real problem is something that any first-century historian should recognize: that whatever it was that the early Christians were expecting, wanting, hoping and praying for, this was *not* what they said, after Easter, had happened.<sup>66</sup>

The early Christians did not expect anything like spiritual embodiment, the initiation of the final age, the resurrection of a single individual, or the doctrinal centrality of the resurrection, and it is difficult to see how cognitive dissonance would have enabled them to change their expectations. So it seems that cognitive dissonance is not a sufficient explanation of the highly unusual facts.

5. *Schillebeeckx's "new experience of grace."* Edward Schillebeeckx's proposal may be summarized as follows: Peter (and some other disciples, apparently through his influence) had a wonderful experience of forgiveness and conversion which led him/them to believe that Jesus was still alive. This led to cultic practice which then began to develop stories about the empty tomb (perhaps in light of veneration of the tomb), and even stories about post-resurrection narratives. Each Evangelist approaches the stories differently (from the context of the faith community in which they were writing), which not only explains the origin of the stories, but also their seeming differences.

Aside from the fact that Schillebeeckx makes no less than eight significant errors in his exegesis of the Gospel texts,<sup>67</sup> his interpretation of the resurrection fails to explain all five of the above

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<sup>66</sup> Wright 2003, p. 699.



































- 2) A passing reference to the exorcism of Mary Magdalene (Luke 8:2),
- 3) The Gerasene Demoniac (Mark 5:1-20),
- 4) The Demoniac in the Capernaum Synagogue (Mark 1:23-28),
- 5) The Mute and Blind demoniac in the Q tradition (Matt 12:24/Luke 11:14-15),
- 6) The Mute Demoniac (Matt 9:32-33), and
- 7) The Syrophenician Woman (Mark 7:24-30/Matt 15:21-28).

Meier concludes as follows about the historicity of Jesus' exorcisms:

That there should be seven individual 'specimens' of a very specific type of miracle, namely, exorcism, supports the view that exorcisms loomed large in Jesus' ministry.<sup>98</sup>

These seven distinct instances are complemented by many *sayings* (about exorcisms) as well as references to exorcisms within *summary texts*.

There is multiple attestation of sources – though Mark is responsible for most of the extended exorcism narratives (which are used by Matthew and Luke).

- L (special Luke) gives a passing reference to the exorcism of Mary Magdalene: "...some women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out..." (Lk 8:2);
- Q has one narrative (Matt 12:22-24/Luke 11:14-15) – the mute and blind demoniac;
- M (special Matthew) recounts one narrative (Matt 9:32-33 – Jesus exorcises a mute demoniac).

When we combine the Marcan narratives and the Q *sayings* with the above three other sources, we see a strong confluence of attestation which Meier summarizes as follows:

Q sayings join Marcan sayings and Marcan narratives in providing multiple attestation for the existence of exorcisms in the ministry of the historical Jesus.<sup>99</sup>

Jesus does not cast out demons by invoking the name of God or by asking God to work *through* him. Recall that Jesus distinguishes himself from other Jewish miracle workers by acting through his command and word alone. See, for example:

- "You deaf and mute spirit," he said, "I command you, come out of him and never enter him again" (Mk 9:25).
- The demons *begged Jesus*, "Send us among the pigs; allow us to go into them." *He gave* them permission (Mk 5: 12-13).

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<sup>98</sup> Meier 1994, p. 648.

<sup>99</sup> Meier 1994, p. 648.

- “Be quiet!” *said Jesus sternly*. “Come out of him!” The impure spirit shook the man violently and came out of him with a shriek (Mk 1: 25).

In conclusion, there is more than ample evidence to support a belief in the historicity of Jesus’ exorcisms. Indeed, the evidence suggests that they played a frequent and prominent role in His ministry, particularly in the region of Galilee.

## II.B Healings

The evidence for Jesus’ healing miracles is even stronger than the evidence for His exorcisms, and this is reflected in the fact that the early Church remembered Jesus more as a healer than as an exorcist.<sup>100</sup> As noted above, Jesus’ healings have a connection to his exorcisms, because they were thought to be an overcoming of evil. Recall that physical infirmity was associated with evil or sin in the Judaism of Jesus’ time. However, healings do not have an element of direct struggle with spirits or Satan. Instead, they focus on the *need* of particular persons and the *plea* of those persons or a concerned petitioner. Jesus sees faith (trust in His desire and power to heal) in these cries for help and is moved by compassion to heal the sick person.

As with exorcisms, Jesus accomplishes healings by his own authority and power (without making recourse to God or prayer), and in so doing initiates the Kingdom, and reveals His possession of divine authority and power. Inasmuch as Jesus was aware of possessing divine authority and power, and aware that *possession* of this power was categorically different from *all* the Old Testament prophets, he must have also been aware of his divine status (which he termed “Sonship”) that made his possession of divine power possible.

What can be said about the historicity of healings? First, with respect to multiple attestation, there is a large number of healing miracles in four out of five independent sources: Mark, Q, special Luke, and John. Special Matthew alone lacks an independent healing narrative. There are 15 distinct (non-overlapping) accounts of healing miracles in the Gospels, plus the general Q list in Matt 11:2-6 and Luke 7:18-23. This totals 16 non-overlapping references to healing miracles in the Gospels. The breakdown is as follows:

- Mark relates *eight* miracle accounts: two concerned with cures of paralytics (2:1-12 and 3:1-6), two concerned with cures of blindness (10:46-52 and 8:22-26), one concerned with the cure of leprosy (1:40-45), and three concerned with various diseases mentioned only once (fever of Peter’s mother-in-law in 1:29-31, the woman with a hemorrhage in 5:24-34, and the deaf-mute in 7:31-37).<sup>101</sup>
- Q relates only *one* account of a healing miracle which is the cure of a centurion’s servant (at a distance). Matthew calls this a cure of a paralytic, but Luke calls it a cure of someone with a grave illness. Curiously, John agrees with Luke instead of Matthew, meaning that Matthew has probably changed the Q source (instead of

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<sup>100</sup> See Meier 1994, p. 679.

<sup>101</sup> This reflects Meier’s list given in Meier 1994, p. 678.





















this Christian messianic movement accelerated and received such an open reception among both Jewish and Gentile communities (many of whom had not even heard about Jesus or the Jewish background from which He came). This seems to require another sufficient cause which John P. Meier identifies as the apostles' power to perform healings and miracles in a similar fashion to Jesus (with the important exception that Jesus performed miracles by His own authority while the apostles performed them in *His name*):

...[T]here was a notable difference between the long-term impact of the Baptist and that of Jesus. After the Baptist's death, his followers did not continue to grow into a religious movement that in due time swept the Greco-Roman world. Followers remained, revering the Baptist's memory and practices. But by the early 2d century A.D. any cohesive group that could have claimed an organic connection with the historical Baptist seems to have passed from the scene. In contrast, the movement that had begun to sprout up around the historical Jesus continued to grow – amid many sea changes – throughout the 1<sup>st</sup> century and beyond. Not entirely by coincidence, *the post-Easter "Jesus movement" claimed the same sort of ability to work miracles that Jesus had claimed for himself during his lifetime.* This continued claim to work miracles may help to explain the continued growth, instead of a tapering off, of the group that emerged from Jesus' ministry.<sup>116</sup>

Though these miracles are performed in the name of Jesus, the power which is used to perform them (in His name) is attributed to the Holy Spirit, who works through individuals and the Church to bring about the salvation of the world.

## **I. Jesus' Gift of the Holy Spirit**

The early Christians characterized the Holy Spirit as “the power of God” (“*dunamis tou Theou*”) which was uniquely possessed by Jesus during His ministry, and continued to flow from Him in the life of the Church. As their understanding of the Holy Spirit developed through experience, they became progressively aware of Its *personal* presence flowing through Jesus. McKenzie succinctly describes this more developed theology as follows:

The spirit is basically the divine and heavenly dynamic force; it is conceived as peculiarly existing in Jesus (and specifically in the risen Jesus), as pervading the body of Jesus which is the Church, and as apportioned to the members of the Church. Jesus is the son of David in the flesh but the son of God in power according to the spirit (Rm 1:3); the unique possession of the spirit by Jesus and the unique power which flows from this possession reveal His true reality, which is the reality of the spiritual sphere, i.e., the divine and heavenly sphere.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> Meier 1994, p. 623.

<sup>117</sup> McKenzie 1965, p. 843.

We can trace the development of the early Church's experiential understanding of the Spirit through its exposition in Luke-Acts, and later exposition in Saint Paul.<sup>118</sup> Let us begin with the earlier exposition.

## I.A

### The Visible Manifestation of the Spirit in the Acts of the Apostles

In the Acts of the Apostles, Luke recounts three kinds of powerful experiences which the early Church community attributes to God, or more specifically, to "the Spirit of God" or "the power of God": (1) healings and miracles, (2) prophesy, and (3) ecstatic experiences (such as glossolalia and visions).

Though all three of these areas merit consideration, an overview of the first will be sufficient to show (1) that the early Church saw the charisms as explicit manifestations of God's power and God's Spirit, and (2) that the risen Jesus is seen to be the source of this power/Spirit (because the Spirit works through His name).

Luke recounts a large range of healings and miracles performed by Peter, Paul, and others in the Acts of the Apostles:<sup>119</sup>

- the healing of the lame man at the temple (Acts 3:1-10)
- healings and exorcisms performed by Philip in Samaria (Acts 8:4-8)
- Paul's healing from blindness (Acts 9:18)
- the healing of Aeneas' paralysis (Acts 9:33f)
- the raising of Tabitha from the dead by Peter (Acts 9:36-41)
- the healing of a cripple in Lystra (Acts 14:8-10)
- Paul's restoration of Eutychus (Acts 20:9-12)
- the healings performed by Paul in Malta (Acts 28:8f)

There are some unconventional healings and miracles also recounted in Acts, for example:

- healings through Peter's shadow (Acts 5:15)
- healings through cloths touched by Paul (Acts 19:11)
- Peter's liberation from prison (Acts 5:19-24, 12:6-11)
- Paul's liberation from prison (Acts 16:26)

There can be little doubt that such healings and miracles occurred in the earliest Church communities, as they are recounted not only by Luke, but also by Paul<sup>120</sup> (who is writing to the actual witnesses of the events) and the author of the Letter to the Hebrews. With respect to the first category of healings (those worked through the personal intercession of the apostles), few

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<sup>118</sup> I am indebted to the work of James Dunn (*Jesus and the Spirit: A Study of the Religious and Charismatic Experience of Jesus and the First Christians as Reflected in the New Testament*) from which I have derived the majority of the following materials on early apostolic miracles and charisms (See Dunn 1975).

<sup>119</sup> See the more complete list in Dunn 1975, pp. 163ff.

<sup>120</sup> See Rom. 15:19; 1Cor. 12:10, 28; 2Cor. 12:12; Gal. 3:5; Heb. 2:4. See also Dunn 1975, p. 163.

scholars doubt that Luke either had firsthand experience of these miracles (the “we” passages) or reliable firsthand sources. Dunn notes even with respect to the raising of Tabitha by Peter:

“It is quite likely that the tradition goes back to a genuine episode in the ministry of Peter.”<sup>121</sup>

If one accepts that such healings and miracles were quite frequent within the early Church community, and that the members of that community viewed them as extraordinary and powerful (in contemporary terminology, falling outside normal boundaries of natural causation), then it will not be difficult to understand why they thought that the “power of God” / the “Spirit of God” was in their midst. When this is combined with Luke’s contention that the Spirit’s power arises out of the name of *Jesus* (or the disciples’ ministry on behalf of Jesus), it seems reasonable to conclude that the primitive Church experienced the *risen Jesus* as the ongoing source of the Holy Spirit (the power of God) in the world.<sup>122</sup> Dunn notes in this regard:

Where Jesus healed in his own right, by the immediate power and authority of God (cf. Acts 2:22; 10:38), his disciples healed in the name of Jesus. It would appear that from the first they recognized that their power to heal was somehow dependent on Jesus and derivative from him (cf. Luke 10:17). Whereas he had been the direct representative of God in his healing ministry, they saw themselves primarily as representatives of Jesus. They healed by the same power, but that power was now linked with the name of Jesus.<sup>123</sup>

The frequent occurrence of the charismatic manifestation of the Spirit arising out of the name of Jesus provides an *experiential* ground (within the early Church) for the association of Jesus with the source of divine power.

## **I.B Visible and Interior Manifestations of the Spirit in Paul**

Though St. Paul’s letters were written before the Acts of the Apostles, Luke saves and recounts traditions about “the power of the Spirit and the name of Jesus” which *predate* Paul’s theology of the Spirit. An exploration of Paul’s theology of the Spirit reveals his awareness of these earlier traditions and his *personal experience* of the visible and tangible manifestations of the Spirit emphasized by Luke.

Paul’s experience of the Spirit, as Fitzmyer notes, is “God’s gift of his creative, prophetic, or renovative *presence* to human beings or the world...[italics mine].”<sup>124</sup> This “presence of God” is more than merely “the power of God” viewed as a blind supernatural force; it has a subjective (indeed, intersubjective) quality. The Spirit not only searches the hearts of human beings, but also searches the depths of God the Father, having a comprehensive knowledge of Him: “For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God” (1Cor 2:10b).

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<sup>121</sup> Dunn 1975, p. 165.

<sup>122</sup> This key insight is justified in a detailed way in Dunn 1975, pp. 163-165.

<sup>123</sup> Dunn 1975, p. 164.

<sup>124</sup> Fitzmyer 1990, p. 1396 (82:65).

When Paul refers to either the visible gifts of the Spirit, he generally uses the term “*charismata*” (a specific instance of “*charis*” – a gratuitous gift for the wellbeing of another – which, in this case, is God’s gratuitous gift of salvation). When Paul looks at the *charismata* from the vantage point of agency, he refers to them either as “*phanerōsis tou pneumatos*” (manifestation of the Spirit – e.g., 1 Cor 12:7), or as “*dunamis tou Theou*” (the power of God – e.g., 1 Cor 1:24), or as “*onomati tou kuriou*” (what is given in the name of the Lord/Christ – e.g., 1 Cor 6:11). As Dunn, referring to Gunkel’s longstanding work, notes:

...[S]o far as Paul was concerned *charismata* are the manifestation of supernatural power. Charisma is *always* God acting, *always* the Spirit manifesting himself. ...[F]or Paul, *every* charisma was supernatural. *The character of transcendent otherness lies at the heart of the Pauline concept of charisma.* ... The “infinite qualitative distinction” (Kierkegaard) between divine and human means that every expression of grace is always something *more* than human.<sup>125</sup>

We may now explore the vast array of Paul’s and others’ experience of the supernatural power of the Spirit, beginning with the public charismatic gifts and concluding with the interior gifts.

It is noteworthy that Paul is writing to communities and individuals who have witnessed the powerful visible manifestations of the Spirit multiple times. It is therefore reasonable to assume that these gifts were virtually commonplace in the early community as Luke indicates in the Acts of the Apostles. Dunn mentions further:

...[I]t is worth pointing out that in 1 Cor. 12.9, 28, 30 we have firsthand testimony to the fact that there were cures and healings experienced in the Pauline communities for which no natural or rational explanation would suffice – they could only be put down to the action of God.<sup>126</sup>

So what do the visible gifts consist in? From the list given in 1 Cor 12:8f, three may be easily identified:

- 1) Healings (*charismata iamatōn* – gifts of cures),
- 2) Miracles (*energēmata dunameōn* – workings of power), and
- 3) The gift of tongues (*genē glōssōn* – kinds of tongues).

There are two other gifts which the community thought to be supernatural and public (as distinct from interior), namely, prophesy and revelation. As Paul recognizes, there are false prophets who can lead the Church astray, and so there is need to discern the quality of prophesy within the early community. I will give a brief description of the first three gifts as an illustration of why the community believed that the Holy Spirit was the power of God, that Jesus was the ongoing source of that Spirit, and therefore, that “Jesus is Lord.”

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<sup>125</sup> Dunn 1975, p. 255. See also Gunkel 1888, pp. 82f.

<sup>126</sup> Dunn 1975, p. 210.

**Healing.** Paul uses the plural “*charismata*” (in contrast to using the singular in referring to the other gifts) because he probably believed that there was a special charisma for every kind of illness.<sup>127</sup> From this, we may infer that Paul witnessed different kinds of healings, and that those healings probably resembled those recounted by Luke in Acts, and in the Gospels with respect to Jesus’ ministry. There can be little doubt that Paul views these as arising solely out of the power of God (that is, not occurring in nature, but only through supernatural power).

**Miracles.** Paul’s distinct listing of miracles next to healings would seem to indicate that they included supernatural acts other than cures. Exegetes suspect that these would be of two sorts: exorcisms<sup>128</sup> and nature miracles.<sup>129</sup> Clearly, Paul was familiar with Jesus’ exorcisms, and even though they do not figure as prominently in Paul’s ministry as in Jesus’, Paul certainly was involved in exorcisms.<sup>130</sup> Paul may also have in mind nature miracles, such as cures taking place through his handkerchief (Acts 19:18) or other “signs and wonders” (*en dunamei sēmeiōn kai teratōn* – by power of signs and wonders – Rom 18:19) which he evidently worked from Jerusalem to Illyricum.

The working of miracles (*energōn dunameis*) factored prominently into Paul’s ministry in new communities, and in encouraging converts among people who had not yet heard the Word. In Galatians 3:4ff, Paul uses the history of miracles worked in the community through the Holy Spirit as a proof of why the Galatians should remain faithful to him:

Did you experience so many things in vain? If it really is in vain. Does he who supplies the Spirit to you and *works miracles* among you, do so by works of the law, or by hearing with faith?<sup>131</sup>

Given that Paul is writing to those who have directly experienced “*dunameis*,” it can hardly be doubted that the experience of these persuasive outward signs is not only common to Paul’s ministry, but continues after Paul has left (presumably through people with that charism), and is sufficiently powerful within the community to persuade it of the veracity of Paul’s words years after his departure.

The power to heal and to work miracles does not belong to the human agent working them. The power is distinctly that of God (the Spirit of God) done through the name of “the Lord Jesus Christ” (e.g., 1Cor 6:11). That power is meant not for the benefit of the healer or miracle-worker, but for the benefit of one *in need*, or for the good of the *community*. The healer/miracle-worker is purely the instrument of God.

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<sup>127</sup> Dunn 1975, pp. 210-211.

<sup>128</sup> See Dunn 1975, p. 210.

<sup>129</sup> See Dunn 1975, p. 210.

<sup>130</sup> See Acts 16:18 – “Turning to the Spirit, Paul said, ‘I charge thee, in the name of Jesus Christ, to come out from her;’ and it came out in the same hour.” See also, Acts 19:17 “And diseases left them, and the evil spirits came out of them.”

<sup>131</sup> Though *dunameis* here may include healings, it certainly should not be restricted to them, for Paul would have used the more appropriate term “*charismata iamatōn*” if he meant it in the restricted sense. Therefore, he probably meant it to include exorcisms and possibly even nature miracles.



Despite the incredible persuasiveness of healing and miracles in the early community, Paul believes that they must be put in perspective to allow for the prominence of gifts which produce deep conversion of the heart. In this respect, Paul is distinct from Luke, who gives clear prominence to powerful visible gifts of the Spirit.

**Speaking in Tongues.** Paul views this ecstatic charism as a proof of the Spirit, an aspect of his ministry of initial conversion, a spiritual benefit to individual believers,<sup>132</sup> and an occasional benefit to the community (when there is an authentic interpreter of the tongues).<sup>133</sup> However, Paul views speaking in tongues as the lowest of the “deeds of power,” because it does not directly serve either to deepen conversion, or to build up the community’s understanding of God, Jesus, or even itself. Hence, in 1Cor 14:6, Paul warns the community not to seek speaking in tongues as an end in itself, and to prefer prophesy (which builds up the community and leads to its deeper conversion) over glossolalia:

Now brethren, if I come to you speaking in tongues, how shall I benefit you unless I bring you some revelation or knowledge or prophecy or teaching? If even lifeless instruments, such as the flute or the harp, do not give distinct notes, how will anyone know what is played? ... So with yourselves; since you are eager for manifestations of the Spirit, strive to excel in building up the Church. ... I thank God that I speak in tongues more than you all; nevertheless, in church, I would rather speak five words with my mind in order to instruct others [prophesy or revelation] than ten thousand words in a tongue [1Cor 14:6-7, 12, 18-19].

I will not discuss prophecy and revelation here because the above points on healing, miracles, and speaking in tongues are sufficient to establish my central conclusion which is explained below.

## **I.C Conclusion**

The conclusion may be set out in three parts:

1. There were frequent “deeds of healing and power” in the early Church (as there are today) which are difficult, if not impossible, to explain by natural causation.
2. These extraordinary occurrences were reasonably interpreted by the early Church to be the power (Spirit) of God, and
3. The ongoing source of this spiritual power was attributed to Jesus, for it came through the use of His name.

The frequent occurrence of these healings and miracles through the power of the Holy Spirit and the name of Jesus, allowed the Church to engage in a remarkably expansive missionary effort, because it substantiated the apostles’ claim that Jesus was raised in glory and is the exclusive beloved Son of the Father. This gave rise to the post-Easter churches’ titles for Him – “the Lord” and “the Son of God.”

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<sup>132</sup> See Dunn 1975, pp. 230-231.

<sup>133</sup> As Paul notes in 1Cor 14:18: “I thank God that I speak in tongues more than you all...”











Since the laboratories involved in the 1988 Carbon 14 test were beyond reproach and the fibers taken for the test *seemed to be* from the Shroud itself (and not from thread or cloth used to mend the Shroud or provide a backing for it), the result appeared unquestionable – which cast doubt on all the evidence mentioned above. Though Carbon 14 testing is by no means incontrovertible<sup>145</sup> and there were significant problems following the protocols for the 1988 test, the result shocked most of the 1978 STURP committee of scientists as well as the religious community.

The negative result of the 1988 Carbon 14 test did not discourage researchers who felt that the evidence for the Shroud's authenticity was too great to simply be abandoned in the face of one negative test that could be fallible for many reasons. Ironically, this led to a resurgence of new creative Shroud research which gave rise to four new testing methods (see below Section III), comparisons with the Sudarium of Oviedo – the facecloth of Jesus (see below Section IV.C), and new studies of the image formation on the Shroud (see below Section V). This new research seriously calls into question the result obtained from the 1988 Carbon 14 test because it overwhelmingly shows that the Shroud not only dates back to the time of Jesus, but also could not have been a forgery, and possibly shows a “relic” of his resurrection. At the very least, this calls for a new Carbon 14 dating test to be performed with all of the standards recommended by the scientists who found flaws in the 1988 procedure -- Raymond Rogers, Giulio Fanti, and John Jackson (see below Section II).

At present the preponderance of scientific and historical evidence favors the authenticity of the Shroud. In fact, the preponderance is so great that a change in Carbon 14 dating should be expected from new tests – with the swing back in time of approximately 1,000 to 1,600 years from the date given by the 1988 carbon testing (1260-1390). This would put the date of the cloth between 250 BC and 350 AD (see below Section III). Thus, the mean predictable date of the Shroud's origin would be approximately 50 AD – quite near the time of Jesus' crucifixion.

As noted above, the 1988 Carbon 14 testing showed that *the fibers removed from the Shroud* were 638 years old (with a probable origin at around 1350). Note that this test did not show that the *Shroud* originated in 1350 A.D., but only that the fibers extracted from the Shroud (which could have come from threads or cloth used to mend it after the fire of Chambery in 1532). As we shall see, the fibers removed from the Shroud were probably not from the original Shroud, but from dyed cloth added to the Shroud at that time. Furthermore, the testing did not account for microbiological contaminants or the additional carbon that would have been added by the fire. These problems indicate that the 1988 Carbon 14 testing was very likely invalid and skewed toward a much later date.

At the very outset, there were problems associated with the sampling of fibers used for the 1988 Carbon 14 test. The STURP team recommended that seven different samples from different parts of the Shroud be sent to seven labs across Europe and the United States. This was inexplicably changed. Instead of taking fibers from many parts of the Shroud, the samples were taken from a single strip from a questionable part of it. This one sample was divided into three parts and sent to only three labs. To make matters worse, chemical and microscopic testing on

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<sup>145</sup> See William Meacham “Carbon14 Debate from the Shroud Newsgroup: alt.turin-shroud” (<http://www.shroud.com/c14debat.htm>) 1998.

the single strip was not performed (even though there were experts present who could have done so). Though arguments broke out about these problems, the samples were sent to the three labs which no doubt performed the tests professionally. The problem was not with the Carbon 14 testing, but rather with the gathering of the samples.

We now turn to the three discoveries that challenge the validity of the 1988 Carbon dating:

1. Problems with the samples used to make the tests (discovered by Dr. Raymond Rogers) – Section II.A.
2. Microbiological contaminants producing additional carbon content that were not removed prior to the 1988 testing (discovered by Drs. Garza-Valdes and Mattingly) – Section II.B.
3. Additional carbon content embedded in the Shroud from the fire of Chambery and other carbon contaminants (discovered by Kouznetsov and Jackson—and modified by Moroni and associates) – Section II.C.

## II.A

### Raymond Rogers on Aberrant Samples used in the 1988 Carbon 14 Testing

Though the Carbon 14 testing at the three laboratories at the University of Arizona, University of Oxford, and University of Zurich were done very professionally, the collection of the sample to be tested was seriously flawed in two respects. First, the sample came from a *single* strip from a *single* site on the Shroud. According to Rogers:

The use of a single sample, assuming it was representative of the whole cloth, defied normal procedures and protocols established before the radiocarbon study. It was a serious mistake.<sup>146</sup>

Though this single sample seemed to avoid the many patches and charred areas (from the fire of Chambery), there was no guarantee that it represented the *original* part of the cloth. Such a guarantee could have only come from following ordinary protocols – namely, obtaining fibers from *multiple* sites of the cloth.

Secondly, the two scientists charged with certifying the originality of the single strip (Franco Testore, professor of textile technology at the Turin Polytechnic, and Gabriel Vial, curator of the Ancient Textile Museum, Lyon, France) approved the single sample for Carbon 14 testing without making any serious chemical or microscopic characterization of it.<sup>147</sup>

These two flaws in the collection procedure made it impossible to guarantee the validity of the sample by normal Carbon 14 sampling protocol. Indeed, the procedure was wide open to an invalid sample which Rogers later discovered to be the case:

The area where the radiocarbon sample was obtained had been photographed in 1978 with an ultraviolet source... While making the UV photographs, the

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<sup>146</sup> Raymond Rogers *Shroud of Turin Guide to the Facts*, Question #5.

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid* Question #5.















As far as establishing the Shroud's provenance, *Zygophyllum dumosum* is the most significant plant on the list. Max Frei identified pollen grains of this species on the adhesive tapes he examined. The northernmost extent of the distribution of this plant in the world coincides with the line between Jericho and the sea level marker on the road leading from Jerusalem to Jericho. As *Zygophyllum dumosum* grows only in Israel, Jordan and Sinai, its appearance helps to definitively limit the Shroud's place of origin.<sup>161</sup>

The three major regional similarities of pollen grain groupings indicate a high probability of the Shroud's origin and travels. The abundance of grains -- and unique grains -- indigenous to Palestine indicate a high probability that the Shroud originated there. It was probably manufactured there and exposed to the open air for a considerable period of time. Frei also believed that some of the grains came from the aloes used to anoint the body and from grains that adhered to the wetness of the body after the crucifixion.

Since we know where the Shroud surfaced in Europe (Lirey, France -- in the hands of Geoffrey de Charny in 1349), we can deduce from the pollen grains that the Shroud must have traveled to Turkey (Edessa and Constantinople) before its arrival in France. The fact that Geoffrey de Charny was married to Jeanne de Vergy -- a fifth generation descendant of Othon de la Roche (a leader of the Fourth Crusade who occupied the area of Constantinople in which the Shroud was kept) corroborates this.<sup>162</sup> Frei also helped to make a connection between the Shroud of Turin and the Sudarium (facecloth) of Oviedo by showing a similar origin in Palestine from the presence of indigenous pollen grains from that region on the Sudarium.

As we shall see, the Sudarium also bears the same blood and aloe stains as the Shroud (see below Section IV.C). Frei first used dust samples not taken by him from an investigation of the facecloth in 1978 and then used his own samples obtained in 1979. According to Emanuela Marinelli:

As on the Shroud, also on the Sudarium he found cells of the epidermis of *Aloe socotrina*. He also identified the pollen of 13 plants, four of which do not grow in Europe but are frequently encountered in Palestine, in the deserts, in salt places or on rocks, and five others are Mediterranean plants that grow also in Palestine. Frei stressed: 'The *Acacia albida* is typical for the Dead Sea area and the *Hyoscyamus aureus* still grows on the walls of the Old Citadel of Jerusalem. These two plants are represented also on the Shroud'.<sup>163</sup>

Frei's studies were complemented and completed by the studies of the biologist Carmen Gómez Ferreras, of the *Universidad Complutense* of Madrid.

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<sup>161</sup> Avinoam Danin, "Pressed Flowers" in *Eretz Magazine* 55 (1997), pp. 35-37 and 69.

<sup>162</sup> See John Long 2013 (B) "The Shroud of Turin's Earlier History: Part 4: To Little Lirey" (<http://www.biblearchaeology.org/post/2013/09/05/The-Shroud-of-Turins-Earlier-History-Part-4-To-Little-Lirey.aspx>)

<sup>163</sup> Emanuela Marinelli "The Question of Pollen Grains on the Shroud of Turin and the Sudarium of Oviedo" Geological and Natural CC by the University of Rome *La Sapienza* (<https://www.shroud.com/pdfs/marinelli2veng.pdf>).

The work of Frei and Gómez Ferreras is important for showing that the two cloths had a similar geographical origin—namely, Palestine. The blood and aloe evidence is even more important because it reveals that both cloths touched the same face (see below Section IV.C). Since the Sudarium can be dated to 616 A. D., we must assume that both the Shroud and the Sudarium originated prior to that time. Thus, when we combine the pollen, blood and aloe evidence on both the Shroud and the Sudarium, we may conclude that both cloths originated in Palestine before 616 A. D., which casts doubt on the 1988 Carbon 14 test and the medieval forgery hypothesis.

#### **IV.B Roman Coins on the Eyes of the Man in the Image**

The presence of coins on the eyelids of the man on the Shroud was first identified by the Greek classical numismatist Michael Marx who saw their images in the photographs of Enrie (1931) and Secundo Pia (1898). Marx identified four raised letters – UCAI -- on coins that looked like Jewish lepta (“widow’s mite” coins – copper coins minted by Pontius Pilate in 29 AD in Judea). This discovery was initially challenged by some numismatists who claimed that such a coin would not have had a Roman “C” but rather a Greek “K” – because this was the way Tiberius’ coins were typically minted. However, Fr. Francis Filas (Professor at Loyola University Chicago) responded when he was given a lepton with the “C” inscription on it. Later, Filas and Duke University Professor Alan Whanger discovered five additional leptons with the same inscription – indicating that it was unusual, but by no means, rare.

These coins enabled Whanger (and others) to use a polarized overlay photographic analysis to show that the images of the coins (on the eyes of the man of the Shroud) corresponded almost perfectly to the actual coins with the unusual “C” mint. Whanger described the discovery as follows:

We have done this by means of the polarized image overlay technique that we developed which enables the highly accurate comparison of two different images and the documentation of the various points of congruence...Using the forensic criteria for matching finger prints, we feel that there is *overwhelming evidence* for the identification of the images and the matches with the coins.<sup>164</sup>

Whanger has made these results well-known internationally through a variety of media:

We have published these findings in the referenced professional literature and in many lay publications, have issued an international press and video release in 1982, have shown the findings personally to many thousands of people, and have produced detailed documentary videotapes showing the identification of these images and their congruence to two Pontius Pilate lepta.<sup>165</sup>

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<sup>164</sup> Alan D. Whanger 1997 “A Reply to Doubts Concerning The Coins Over the Eyes” in *The Shroud of Turin Website* (<https://www.shroud.com/lombatti.htm>).

See also Alan D. and Mary Whanger, "Polarized Image Overlay Technique: A New Image Comparison Method and its Applications", *APPLIED OPTICS*, Vol. 24, No. 6, 15 March 1985, pp. 766-772.

<sup>165</sup> Whanger 1997.



Whanger's polarized imaging overlay analysis is complemented and corroborated by the *digital* imaging analysis of Professor Robert Haralick (an internationally known computer imaging expert). Haralick's results show evidence of "OUCAIC" on the coins on the eyelids of the man in the Shroud. This is a more extensive result than the previous one (UCAI) by Marx, Filas, and Whanger. He notes in this regard:

The evidence is definitely supporting evidence because there is some degree of match between what one would expect to find if the Shroud did indeed contain a faint image of the Pilate coin and what we can in fact observe in the original and in the digitally processed images.<sup>166</sup>

If Whanger is correct in assessing the evidence as "overwhelming" and Haralick is correct in assessing it as "definitive," then it is highly probable that the image of the man on the Shroud of Turin has two Jewish lepta, minted in 29 AD by Pontius Pilate in Judea at the time of Jesus, on his eyelids. If this is the case, then it agrees strongly with the pollen grain evidence of Frei and Danin – which further challenges the medieval forger hypothesis and the 1988 Carbon dating test.

#### IV.C The Sudarium of Oviedo

The Sudarium Christi (the facecloth of Christ) is kept in the Cathedral of Oviedo (in northern Spain). It is a poor quality linen cloth measuring 84 x 53 centimeters. Though it does not have an image of a face (as does the Shroud of Turin), it has features indicating that it was applied to the face of a man who was newly deceased. It has bloodstains and serum stains from pulmonary edema fluid which match the blood and serum patterns and blood type AB of the Shroud of Turin. The length of the nose on both cloths is 8 centimeters (3 inches). The similarities between the two cloths indicate the high probability that they touched the face of the same crucified man who was crowned with thorns. The evidence of pollen grains on both cloths (see above IV.A) corroborates their origin in Judea.

Why is this cloth significant for dating the Shroud of Turin? Its history – which is traceable to 616 AD -- can be better documented than the Shroud of Turin.<sup>167</sup> If both cloths touched the same face, then the Shroud of Turin must also go back to 616 AD – approximately 800 years earlier than the age determined by the 1988 Carbon 14 tests. In order to establish this, we will examine the blood, pulmonary fluid, and other stains on both cloths.

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<sup>166</sup> Robert M. Haralick 1983 *Analysis of Digital Images of the Shroud of Turin* (Blacksburg, VA: Publication of Spatial Data Analysis Laboratory, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University).

<sup>167</sup> The Sudarium has been in Oviedo since 718 where it remains to this day. However, its history prior to that time was traced by Bishop Pelagius in his *Book of the Testaments of Oviedo* and the *Chronicon Regum Legionensium* -- 1121). Pelagius discovered the line of bishops who received the Sudarium when it arrived in Cartagena (from Palestine) in 616 to its arrival in Oviedo in 718.

See Mark Guscini 1997 "The Sudarium of Oviedo: Its History and Relationship to the Shroud of Turin" in *Proceedings of the Nice Symposium on the Shroud of Turin* – May 1997

(<https://www.shroud.com/guscini.htm#top> ).

The Sudarium was applied to the face of a crucified man at a time proximate to his death in an upright position (if we suppose the face is that of Jesus, it would have been applied to his face while he was still upright on the cross). This was a typical part of Jewish burial custom (out of respect for the deceased) – and frequently done for people whose faces had been disfigured (out of respect for the deceased and the mourners).<sup>168</sup> According to the Investigation Team of the Spanish Centre for Sindonology (who performed the analysis on the stains) and Dr. José Villalaín (who performed the medical examination),<sup>169</sup> the main stains are composed of one part blood and six parts fluid from the pleural oedema. According to Guscini:

This liquid collects in the lungs when a crucified person dies of asphyxiation, and if the body subsequently suffers jolting movements, can come out through the nostrils. These are in fact the main stains visible on the Sudarium.<sup>170</sup>

The Investigation Team determined that the cloth was folded over which left four stains for every imprint of fluid on the face of the crucified man – the front and back surfaces of the part touching the face as well as the back and front surfaces furthest from the face (the folded over part). This fold enabled the Investigation Team to create a timeline for the events that occurred immediately after the cloth had been applied to the dead man:

[The first stain was made while the body was still on the cross.] The second stain [on the back side of the part touching the face] was made about an hour later, when the body was taken down. The third stain [the back side of the part folded over] was made when the body was lifted from the ground about forty-five minutes later. The body was lying at the foot of the cross for about forty-five minutes before being buried. The marks (not fingerprints) of the fingers that held the cloth to the nose are also visible.<sup>171</sup>

The presence of a fluid that would have formed in the lungs during asphyxiation and the drying patterns of the blood and fluids on all four sides of the cloth indicate a series of events strikingly similar to those recounted about the burial of Jesus in the four Gospels. Furthermore, it is evident that the facecloth was taken off the dead man's face before the main Shroud was applied (prior to the burial). This corresponds to the account of the empty tomb in the Gospel of John:

Simon Peter, following him, also came up, went into the tomb, saw the linen cloth lying on the ground, and also the cloth that had been over his head; this was not with the linen cloth but rolled up in a place by itself (Jn 20:6-7).

How can the investigators be so certain that the Sudarium touched the same face as the Shroud of Turin? There are six major kinds of coincidences between the two cloths:

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<sup>168</sup> See Mark Guscini 1997 "The Sudarium of Oviedo: Its History and Relationship to the Shroud of Turin" in *Proceedings of the Nice Symposium on the Shroud of Turin* -- May 1997 (<https://www.shroud.com/guscini.htm#top>).

<sup>169</sup> Guillermo Heras, J.D. Villalain, J.M. Rodriguez. 1998, *Comparative Studies of the Sudarium of Oviedo and the Shroud of Turin*. III Congreso Internazionale de Studi sulla Sindone Turin. (<http://www.teachingfaith.com/files/books/Sudarium.PDF>) pp. 1-17.

<sup>170</sup> Guscini 1997.

<sup>171</sup> Guscini 1997.

1. The blood stains contain human male DNA and are the rare type AB.<sup>172</sup>
2. The length of the nose through which the pleural oedema fluid was discharged was just over 3 inches (eight centimeters) – the same size as the man on the Shroud of Turin.<sup>173</sup>
3. Since the Sudarium was not used to wipe the face, but only placed on the face in a stable position, the stains on the Sudarium can be laid over the image of the face on the Shroud of Turin. The positioning of the wounds relative to the beard is an exact fit. This would be extremely difficult to duplicate unless the face that touched the Sudarium and the Shroud were very similar.<sup>174</sup>
4. The stain on the side of the mouth (visible on the Sudarium) was confirmed to be present on the Shroud through the VP-8 photo enhancements of Dr. John Jackson (of the STURP Investigation team).<sup>175</sup>
5. The blood stains resulting from the thorns on the nape of the neck on the Sudarium correspond perfectly to the blood stains on the Shroud of Turin.<sup>176</sup>
6. Dr. Alan Whanger used Polarized Image Overlay Technique on photographs of both cloths and discovered 70 coincidences on the frontal stains of the Sudarium and the Shroud, and 50 points of coincidence on the rear side of the Sudarium and Shroud. There are so many coincidences between the wounds and fluid markings of both cloths that Guscini notes, “The only possible conclusion is that the Oviedo Sudarium covered the same face as the Turin Shroud.”<sup>177</sup>

In view of the similarities in blood type and facial features, as well as the 120 points of coincidence in the positioning of blood and fluids on the two cloths, it is difficult to avoid Guscini’s conclusion – that the two cloths touched the same face of a man crowned with thorns and severely beaten.

So why is this coincidence so important for purposes of dating the Shroud of Turin? As noted above, the documented history of the Shroud of Turin begins in 1349 in the hands of Geoffrey de Charny which is compatible with the 1988 Carbon dating of the Shroud. However, the documented history of the Sudarium of Oviedo goes back much earlier -- to 616 in the Middle East. If the two cloths originated at the same time by touching the same face, and the Sudarium can be documented to 616 in Cartagena, Spain, then we must conclude that the Shroud also goes back to 616 as well. We may also infer that both the Shroud and Sudarium were in Palestine prior to 616. Why? The pollen evidence on both cloths is telling. Like the Shroud, the pollen evidence on the Sudarium shows its probable origin in Palestine. Thirteen pollens are from Israel, and four of them are unique to that region.<sup>178</sup> When we compare the pollen evidence on the Sudarium and the Shroud, it shows that both cloths originated in Palestine, and since they touched the same face, we can conclude that they were in Palestine before 616. The combined

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<sup>172</sup> See Guillermo Heras, J.D. Villalain, J.M. Rodriguez. 1998, p. 15, and Guscini 1997, p.12.

<sup>173</sup> See Guillermo Heras, J.D. Villalain, J.M. Rodriguez. 1998, p. 15, and Guscini 1997, p.11.

<sup>174</sup> See Guillermo Heras, J.D. Villalain, J.M. Rodriguez. 1998, p. 15, and Guscini 1997, p.11.

<sup>175</sup> See Guillermo Heras, J.D. Villalain, J.M. Rodriguez. 1998, p. 15, and Guscini 1997, p.11.

<sup>176</sup> See Guillermo Heras, J.D. Villalain, J.M. Rodriguez. 1998, p. 15, and Guscini 1997, p.3.

<sup>177</sup> Guscini 1997, p.4.

<sup>178</sup> Emanuela Marinelli “The Question of Pollen Grains on the Shroud of Turin and the Sudarium of Oviedo” Geological and Natural CC by the University of Rome *La Sapienza*.

(<https://www.shroud.com/pdfs/marinelli2veng.pdf>)

evidence of the Shroud and the Sudarium once again throws the 1988 Carbon testing into question (which dates the Shroud to 1350). If the Shroud was in Palestine before 616, then the 1988 Carbon dating would be in error by at least 734 years.

#### **IV.D Summary of the Dating Evidence**

The 1988 carbon dating cast doubts on the Shroud's origin in the First Century – and therefore on its authenticity as the burial cloth of Jesus. As we have said, Carbon 14 dating is by no means infallible. William Meacham, an archaeologist and carbon dating expert, has noted in this regard:

Over the years a whole host of difficulties have come to light with C14, e.g. modern living samples which give ages of hundreds or thousands of years, or centuries-old samples which give dates in the future. The causes of these phenomena are known, but in many other cases anomalous dates have not been satisfactorily explained.<sup>179</sup>

As we have seen above, the carbon 14 dating of the Shroud conflicts with four other dating methods (Roger's Vanillin test, Fanti's infrared spectroscopy, Fanti's Raman laser spectroscopy, and Fanti's mechanical compressibility and breaking strength test) and three other reliable circumstantial methods of dating the Shroud (Frei's pollen evidence, Whanger's polarized photographic overlay analysis of the coins, and the evidence for the Sudarium having touched the same face as the Shroud from the analysis of Heras, Villalain, and Rodriguez). Each of these seven kinds of evidence can stand on its own, but in combination they corroborate one another in pointing to a First Century origin of the Shroud. It is truly difficult to imagine that all four of the above tests and the three circumstantial methods of dating the Shroud are fallacious – and it is even more difficult to imagine that they are off by a factor of 1,350 years! When a single carbon 14 test departs so radically from so many other kinds of equally substantial evidence, Meacham recommends:

As an archaeologist with 25 years of experience using C14 for the dating of excavated samples, I know what most archaeologists do when C14 produces a date which conflicts strongly with other evidence from a site: 1) run more dates on different samples from the same context, and then 2) put the aberrant dates down to some unidentified problem (usually in a footnote to the site report if mentioned at all)...This happens often in archaeology, even on sites and samples which were thought to be ideal for C14 dating. Very rarely is the problem of these individual aberrant dates ever resolved or even addressed.<sup>180</sup>

In the case of the Shroud of Turin, considerable work has been done to explain the aberrant finding of the 1988 carbon 14 test:

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<sup>179</sup> William Meacham, "C-14 Debate from the Shroud Newsgroup: alt.turin-shroud" in *The Shroud of Turin Website* ([www.shroud.com](http://www.shroud.com)).

<sup>180</sup> Ibid.



*supernatural* origin of the radiation – perhaps as a part of Jesus’ resurrection – we cannot prove this scientifically, because we cannot construct a scientific test for a supernatural cause – all we can do is eliminate every *known* natural cause of this seemingly unique radiation. The uniqueness and current inexplicability of this phenomenon gives us reason to *believe* that God has given us evidence of Jesus’ resurrection. This belief can be strengthened by further understanding of the light phenomenon that seems to be the source of the image as well as the continued elimination of natural causes for it. We will explain this conclusion in three steps:

1. The 1978 STURP investigation of the image.
2. The hypothesis of John Jackson, and
3. The experimental substantiation by Paolo Di Lazzaro.

## V.A

### The 1978 STURP Investigation of the Shroud’s Image

Prior to the STURP investigation, Secundo Pia and subsequent photographers discovered that the Shroud image was a perfect photographic negative (as distinct from the blood which is a positive image). Furthermore, the work of Dr. Pierre Barbet (and others) showed that the image of the Shroud – relative to the blood stains – was anatomically perfect. These two early findings suggested that medieval forgery was unlikely. The results of the STURP investigation in 1978 and the 3-D imaging of the Shroud by Jackson, Jumper, and Ercoline in 1982<sup>182</sup> showed how exceedingly unlikely a medieval forgery would be.

So what did the STURP investigation find in 1978? The image was caused by rapid dehydration, oxidation and degradation of the linen by an unidentified process, coloring it a sepia or straw yellow. The range of possible causes is restricted by the unusual characteristics of the image – namely, its *superficial* character limited to the uppermost surface of the cloth and the fact that the image does not fluoresce. This meant that the surface was likely produced by light radiation, *but not by heat radiation*.<sup>183</sup> Dr. John Jackson (and other physicists) theorized that a plausible cause of such “light radiation” might be a short intense burst of vacuum ultraviolet radiation.

## V.B

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<sup>182</sup> See Jackson, J.P., E.J. Jumper and W.R. Ercoline, "Three Dimensional Characteristic of the Shroud Image," *IEEE 1982 Proceedings of the International Conference on Cybernetics and Society*, October 1982, pp. 559-575. Jackson, J.P., E.J. Jumper, and W.R. Ercoline, "Correlation of Image Intensity on the Turin Shroud with the 3-D Structure of a Human Body Shape," *Applied Optics*, Vol. 23, No. 14, 1984, pp. 2244-2270.

<sup>183</sup> See Jumper, E.J. and R.W. Mottern, "Scientific Investigation of the Shroud of Turin," *Applied Optics*, Vol. 19, No. 12, 1980, pp. 1909-1912.

Jumper, E.J., "An Overview of the Testing Performed by the Shroud of Turin Research Project with a Summary of Results," *IEEE 1982 Proceedings of the International Conference on Cybernetics and Society*, October 1982, pp. 535-537.

Jumper, E.J., A.D. Adler, J.P. Jackson, S.F. Pellicori, J.H. Heller and J.R. Drusik. "A Comprehensive Examination of the Various Stains and Images on the Shroud of Turin," *Archaeological Chemistry III, ACS Advances in Chemistry* No. 205, J.B. Lambert, Editor, Chapter 22, *American Chemical Society*, Washington D.C., 1984, pp. 447-476.

## The Hypothesis of John Jackson

Why did Jackson select a radiation hypothesis instead of a chemical one? Because a dye, powder, ointment, or other chemical source of the image could not explain three enigmatic dimensions of the image adequately:

1. Chemicals cannot explain the superficiality of the Shroud image (limited to the uppermost surface of the fibrils without penetration to the medulla of the fiber). Chemicals that touched the Shroud would have in many places penetrated beyond that surface.
2. Chemicals do not explain how the image is evenly present on the many areas of the cloth which did *not* touch the body.
3. Vapors from chemicals on the body (or from the body itself) could not have produced a perfect photographic image on the areas of the cloth which did not touch the body.

In view of this, Jackson moved into the realm of radiation—which held out the potential of resolving all three of these enigmatic features.<sup>184</sup>

There is only one problem with a radiation hypothesis—radiation not only gives off light (which could produce discoloration of the fabric), but also heat which could scorch or burn the cloth. The STURP investigation showed that the image on the cloth was not the result of a scorch, because it did not fluoresce.<sup>185</sup> So Jackson needed to find a kind of radiation that would not produce an accompanying heat radiation sufficient to scorch the cloth.

Vacuum ultraviolet radiation is an excellent candidate for explaining the Shroud image because VUV radiation would not have scorched the cloth. It dissipates so quickly that its initial energy could discolor the cloth in a brief burst without scorching or destroying it in the process.<sup>186</sup> Furthermore, vacuum ultraviolet radiation could be limited to the surface of the fibrils without penetrating to the medulla of the fibers. Jackson and Propp note in this regard:

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<sup>184</sup> Jackson's supposition was later confirmed when it was found that the cloth has a *double* image—one on the front surface of the cloth and a fainter, but nonetheless distinct image on the back surface of the cloth—however there is *nothing* in between the front and back surface images! Chemicals and vapors could not have done this, and it requires that the body in the Shroud be mechanically transparent. See below Section III.B.

<sup>185</sup> According to Barry Schwartz, a well-known Shroud expert, "Since the color of the image is very similar to the color of the scorches, STURP understood the need to test this theory and performed specific experiments for that purpose. A primary test was to photograph the Shroud using ultraviolet fluorescence photography, since true scorches on linen will always fluoresce in the red. As there are many documented scorches on the Shroud from the 1532 fire, testing this was not difficult and the results of the tests were published in this peer reviewed reference: Miller, V.D. and S.F. Pellicori, "Ultraviolet Fluorescence Photography of the Shroud of Turin," *Journal of Biological Photography*, Vol. 49, No. 3, 1981, pp. 71-85. Every documented scorch on the Shroud fluoresced in the red, as expected. However, the *image* did NOT fluoresce and in fact, even quenched the background fluorescence in the image areas. The only conclusion possible from these observations is that the Shroud image is NOT the product of scorched or heated linen." Barry Schwartz, comment in "The Image on the Shroud of Turin is Not a Scorch" in *The Shroud of Turin Blog*—shroudstory.com, 2012. (URL: <http://shroudstory.com/2012/02/10/the-image-on-the-shroud-of-turin-is-not-a-scorch/>).

<sup>186</sup> See Jackson, John P., "Is the Image on the Shroud Due to a Process Heretofore Unknown to Modern Science?" *Shroud Spectrum International*, No. 34 March, 1990, pgs. 3-29.

Of particular note, are the observations that the image discolorations reside on the surfaces of the image fibrils and that the inside medullas are not colored. We point out, again, that vacuum ultraviolet radiation would be absorbed at the surface of the fibrils, which would leave the medullas unaffected, thereby satisfying those requirements.<sup>187</sup>

Finally, a short burst of ultraviolet radiation would also explain how the image was perfectly present (sufficient to produce a perfect photographic negative) on the many parts of the cloth that did *not* touch the body. Thus the Jackson hypothesis is able to explain three enigmas of the image on the cloth.

Yet there is another enigma. A cursory glance at the image reveals the bones of the hand encased within flesh – as if the image recorded both the inside of the hand (the skeleton) and the outside of the hand (the flesh surrounding the skeleton) at the same time. As Jackson notes:

There is, however, one particular observation that definitively places the Shroud image in a unique category... If we examine this image region carefully, we can see... that the finger bones are visible well into the palm of the hands, extending right up to the base of the wrist. These cannot be interpreted as tendons, because tendons and ligaments are much too narrow. Rather, we see that the thickness of the fingers are individually preserved well into the palm of the hand. It thus seems as though we are looking at the internal skeletal structure of the hand imaged through the intervening flesh tissues onto the Shroud cloth.<sup>188</sup>

How could this unique image forming process occur? It would require that the frontal part of the cloth *collapse* into the dorsal part of the cloth during the process of image formation – as if the body were completely transparent – not impeding the collapse of the cloth. If the cloth had not collapsed, only the outside of the body would have been in the image – which is clearly not the case (because the skeleton of the hand is visible along with the flesh surrounding it). Thus it seems that the vacuum ultraviolet radiation is emanating evenly throughout the body, and that the body presents no obstacle to the collapse of the cloth. In Jackson's words:

I propose that, as the Shroud collapsed through the underlying body, radiation emitted from all points within that body and discolored the cloth so as to produce the observed image. As will be seen below, this assumption [also] explains the superficiality of the Shroud image and, perhaps, the differentiation in fibril coloring.<sup>189</sup>

If Jackson is correct, then when the blood attached to the Shroud, the body impeded the collapse of the cloth; however, during the time of image formation, the body became mechanically

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<sup>187</sup> Jackson and Propp. "Comments on Rogers' 'Testing the Jackson Theory' of Image Formation." (<http://www.shroud.com/pdfs/jacksonpropp.pdf>).

<sup>188</sup> John P. Jackson, "An Unconventional Hypothesis to Explain all Image Characteristics Found on the Shroud Image" in *History, Science, Theology and the Shroud* ed. by A. Berard (St. Louis: Symposium Proceedings) 1991 (<http://theshroudofturin.blogspot.com/2012/01/john-p-jackson-unconventional.html>).

<sup>189</sup> Ibid.



transparent – it still remained a 3-dimensional source of light, but lost the mechanical quality of solidity which would have impeded a collapse of the cloth. The loss of “mechanical solidity” enabled the newly configured body to emit a burst of evenly distributed intense radiation while the cloth collapsed through it -- giving rise to the flattened 3-D image. Jackson explains:

We must assume that the Shroud initially covered a body shape [at the time that blood was being transferred to the cloth], but, for some reason, that body did not impede the collapse of the Shroud during the time of image formation.<sup>190</sup>

Despite the unconventional nature of this hypothesis, Jackson believes that it is warranted, because it is currently the only explanation for all of the observed data on the cloth:

...in the case of the Shroud image, the cloth did collapse *into* and *through* the underlying body structure. As a physicist, I admit to having my own difficulties with this concept, but I also know that scientists must be ready to overturn even their most hallowed principles if observation warrants.

Jackson’s hypothesis seems to break completely with everything we know about bodily decomposition – and verges on the miraculous. How could a decomposing body give rise to such an intense burst of radiation? How could it become mechanically transparent so that this ultraviolet radiation could emanate evenly through it during the process of image formation?

We may here be on the verge of having to use a *transphysical* explanation to explain the observational data. Nevertheless, Jackson and others persist in this line of thinking, because no other *natural* explanation seems to meet the requirements of the enigmatic image on the shroud. If Jackson’s hypothesis could be experimentally confirmed in the laboratory—with short bursts of vacuum ultraviolet radiation producing an image similar to that on the Shroud, it would confirm his hypothesis as realistic and tenable. It would not answer the question of how a decomposing body could produce this very special kind of radiation – or how the cloth could collapse through the body while vacuum ultraviolet radiation emanated evenly from every point within it – but it would show that the Jackson hypothesis could explain at least three enigmas on the Shroud – the restriction of the discoloration to the uppermost surface of the fibrils, the absence of scorching in the image areas, and the perfect 3-dimensional negative image in places where the body did not touch the cloth.

The first step in this experimental verification occurred in 2010 (see below V.C), but before discussing it, we will want to examine yet another enigma of the Shroud image that can also be answered by Jackson’s hypothesis—the *double* image on the frontal part of the Shroud discovered by Fanti and Maggiolo in 2004.<sup>191</sup>

The Shroud of Turin has a *double* image—that is, a superficial discoloration on the front surface of the cloth—closest to the body—and a fainter image on the back surface of the cloth—

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<sup>190</sup> Ibid. See also John Jackson: “Is the image on the Shroud due to a process heretofore unknown to modern science?” *Shroud Spectrum International* No. 34, March 1990, pp. 3-29.

<sup>191</sup> Giulio Fanti and Roberto Maggiolo, “The Double Superficiality of the Frontal Image of the Turin Shroud” in *Journal of Optics A: Pure and Applied Optics*, Vol. 6, No. 6, 2004, p 491.

furthest from the body. However, there is no discoloration on the fibers *between* the front surface and back surface of the cloth. Both images correspond to each other anatomically—though the one on the back surface of the cloth is fainter than the one on the front surface. The double image is evident only on the frontal part of the Shroud (but not on the dorsal part) — particularly in the area of the face and hands.<sup>192</sup>

Chemical and vapor explanations of this double image are inadequate, because none of them can explain an image occurring on the front surface and the back surface of a cloth without leaving any residue in-between. In order for chemicals or vapors to reach the back surface of the cloth, they would have to go *through* the cloth leaving an obvious residue in the process. Given that the image could not have been produced by *slowly* dissipating radiation (which would leave a scorch), we are left with Jackson's explanation of a short intense burst of vacuum ultraviolet radiation (which dissipates before scorching the cloth) emitted evenly throughout a mechanically transparent body.

Could this kind of radiation produce the *double* image on the frontal part of the Shroud? It would if we accept the validity of Jackson's mechanically transparent man (collapsing cloth) hypothesis. If the cloth collapsed into the body, the light energy would have made superficial images on both the front surface and the back surface of the cloth without penetrating more deeply. Think of it this way – the vacuum ultraviolet radiation is completely *surrounding* the cloth collapsing through the body. Thus, it is making contact with both the front surface and the back surface of the frontal part of the collapsing cloth. However, it does not penetrate either surface of the cloth deeply, because the vacuum ultraviolet energy dissipates so quickly. Thus, the radiation hits both the front and back surface of the collapsing cloth simultaneously, but dissipates so quickly that it does not penetrate into the center of the cloth from either side.

Jackson predicted that such a double image would be the consequence of his hypothesis before its discovery by Fanti and Maggiolo. Jackson and Propp reasserted this prediction in 2004:

In 1990, one of us (Jackson) offered a [mechanically transparent man] hypothesis as an attempt to explain simultaneously all observations regarding the Shroud image. This hypothesis was ventured only after a systematic study of alternatives had failed to account for various image characteristics and, though unconventional, this hypothesis makes a variety of testable predictions that are a-priori falsifiable by means of the Scientific Method. Recently, one important prediction of the hypothesis, that a double superficial frontal image without an associated dorsal image should exist on the Shroud, was reported by Fanti and Maggiolo.<sup>193</sup>

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<sup>192</sup> See Ibid. No researcher has yet been able to make a digital scan of the back surface of the frontal part of the cloth, because there is a backing which was made to protect it, and the custodians of the Shroud are reluctant to have it removed. However, Fanti and Maggiolo enhanced photographs of the back surface of the cloth by a special method – “This was based on convolution with Gaussian filters, summation of images, and filtering in spatial frequency by direct and inverse bidimensional Fourier transformations.” This brings the image of the face into perspective sufficiently for matching with the front surface of the cloth.

<sup>193</sup> John P. Jackson, Keith E. Propp. 2004. “Comments on Rogers’ ‘Testing the Jackson Theory’ of Image Formation.” The Shroud of Turin website 2004 (<http://www.shroud.com/pdfs/jacksonpropp.pdf>).

In sum, there are five major enigmas of the Shroud image:

1. The fact that the image is limited to the uppermost surface of the fibrils and does not penetrate to the medulla of the fibers. This implies that the image was not produced by chemicals or vapors of any kind.
2. The fact that the image is not a scorch (but rather discoloration coming from dehydration). This implies that the image could not have been produced by *slowly* dissipating radiation (which would have scorched it).
3. The image is a perfect photographic negative in which the image intensity is related to the distance of the cloth from the body. Thus, the image was present regardless of whether the cloth touched the body. This implies that radiation – and not chemicals or vapors– was the source of image formation.
4. There is a double image on the frontal part of the cloth (a more intense image on the front surface – nearest the body – and a less intense image on the back surface – furthest from the body – without any effects between the two surfaces). This implies that the radiation was surrounding both surfaces of the cloth – further implying that the cloth collapsed into a mechanically transparent body.
5. Parts of the frontal image – particularly the hands – show an image which is resolvable into three dimensions, in which the inside skeletal parts of the hand are proportionately related to the surrounding exterior flesh on the hand. This implies that the cloth collapsed into *and through* a mechanically transparent body.

The more conventional part of Jackson’s hypothesis – that a short intense burst of vacuum ultraviolet radiation emitted from the decomposing body – can explain the first three enigmas. However, the fourth and fifth enigmas – the double image on the frontal part of the Shroud as well as the inside (skeletal)-outside (flesh) characteristic -- require the unconventional part of Jackson’s hypothesis – in which the body became mechanically transparent, allowing the cloth to collapse into and through it while light emanated evenly from every three-dimensional part of the transparent body.

## V.C

### **Partial Confirmation of the Jackson Hypothesis in 2010**

In 2010, six physicists from three research centers (Frascati Research Center, The University of Padua, and Casaccia Research Center) were able to confirm the Jackson hypothesis under experimental conditions by creating a burst of ultraviolet radiation through an excimer laser. According to Paolo DiLazzaro, director of the six-member team:

We have irradiated a linen fabric having the same absolute spectral reflectance of the Turin Shroud...with pulsed deep-UV radiation emitted by an ArF excimer laser. We have shown that 12 ns, 193 nm laser pulses are able to color a very thin layer on the

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Jackson and Propp refer to three previous investigations for this conclusion. See Jackson, John P., “Is the Image on the Shroud Due to a Process Heretofore Unknown to Modern Science?” *Shroud Spectrum International*, No. 34 March, 1990, pgs. 3-29. See also Jackson, John P., et al., “Correlation of image intensity on the Turin Shroud with the 3-D structure of a human body shape” *Applied Optics*, Vol. 23, No. 14, 15 July 1984, pgs. 2244 – 2270.

linen yarn... The colorless inner part of a few fibers... suggests that we have locally achieved a coloration of the outermost part of the fibers. To the best of our knowledge, this is the first coloration of a linen material resembling the very shallow depth of coloration... observed in the Turin Shroud fibers.<sup>194</sup>

The team specified that three of the above five enigmas were explained and experimentally confirmed by this method precisely as Jackson predicted. In an interview with Sci-News, Di Lazzaro said:

In particular, vacuum ultraviolet photons account for [1] the very thin coloration depth, [2] the hue of color and [3] the presence of image in linen parts not in contact with the body. Obviously, it does not mean the image was produced by a laser. Rather, the laser is a powerful tool to test and obtain the light parameters suitable for a shroud-like coloration.<sup>195</sup>

He adds that a single laser alone could not explain the image over the full length of the body. In fact, it would have taken *14,000* lasers like the one used by Di Lazzaro et al. to produce a full body image like the one on the Shroud. The characteristics of the kind of light impulse that would be needed to produce an image like that on the Shroud are quite remarkable. According to Di Lazzaro:

[The ultraviolet light necessary to form the image] exceeds the maximum power released by all ultraviolet light sources available today says Di Lazzaro. It would require “pulses having durations shorter than one forty-billionth of a second, and intensities on the order of several billion watts.”<sup>196</sup>

How exactly could a normal decomposing body do something like this?

In sum, Di Lazzaro’s research confirms Jackson’s theory that a short intense burst of vacuum ultraviolet radiation can produce an image on the uppermost surface of the fibrils which is discolored through dehydration (rather than a scorch) yielding a perfect photographic negative image – on parts of the cloth not in contact with the body. However, his experiment did not confirm how the other two enigmas of the image originated – the double image as well as the image of the inside and outside of the hands.

Recall that Jackson had to supplement his vacuum ultraviolet radiation hypothesis with the more unconventional hypothesis of a mechanically transparent man to account for these other two enigmas. We should not be surprised that DiLazzaro and his team were not able to confirm the fourth and fifth enigmas of the image because they were not able to reproduce a mechanically transparent body in which light emanated evenly from every part. These two enigmas may never

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<sup>194</sup> Paolo Di Lazzaro, D. Murra, A. Santoni, G. Fanti, E. Nichelatti, and G. Baldacchini. “Deep Ultraviolet Radiation Simulates the Turin Shroud Image,” *Journal of Imaging Science and Technology*, July-August 2010, p 6.

<sup>195</sup> Sergio Prostack 2011 “Scientists Suggest Turin Shroud Authentic,” December 21, 2011 in *Sci-News.com* (<http://www.sci-news.com/physics/scientists-suggest-turin-shroud-authentic.html>).

<sup>196</sup> Frank Viviano 2015 “Why Shroud of Turin’s Secrets Continue to Elude Science” *National Geographic* April 17, 2015 (<http://news.nationalgeographic.com/2015/04/150417-shroud-turin-relics-jesus-catholic-church-religion-science/>)

be reproducible under experimental conditions, because the only known explanation of them (from Jackson) supersedes the known laws of physics. Thus, we may be left with a plausible explanation for the image that cannot be, strictly speaking, physically reproducible, and experimentally verifiable.

## V.D

### Does the Shroud Give Evidence of Jesus' Resurrection?

The research of the 1978 STURP Investigation, as well as subsequent research of John Jackson, Giulio Fanti, Paolo Di Lazzaro and their teams, shows the likelihood that sometime after the blood deposits had dried on the Shroud, the decomposing body in the Shroud emitted a short intense burst of vacuum ultraviolet radiation that led to a dehydration and discoloration of the frontal and dorsal parts of the Shroud, giving rise to a perfect photographic negative image. Jackson's research also suggests that the body inside the Shroud became mechanically transparent and emitted light evenly from every 3-dimensional point within it. This allowed the frontal part of the Shroud to collapse – creating an image (of both the inside and outside of the hands) as well as a double image on the frontal part of the Shroud.

So where do we stand? The first three of the above five enigmas (see above V.B) of image formation can be explained by a short intense burst of vacuum ultraviolet radiation emitted from the body. This explanation has been shown to be realistic through experimental replication (by Paolo Di Lazzaro et al.). The fourth and fifth enigmas imply that the body in the Shroud became mechanically transparent and emitted light evenly from every three dimensional point within it.

Jackson, Fanti, and DiLazzaro show that alternative *physical* explanations either contradict the above enigmas or fail to explain them:

- **Chemical and vapor explanations** fail to explain four of the above five enigmas (1, 3, 4, and 5). With respect to the first enigma, chemicals and vapors would not be limited only to the uppermost surface of the fibrils, but would have penetrated to the medulla of the fibers on many parts of the cloth. Furthermore, with respect to the third enigma, chemicals and vapors would not give rise to a perfect photographic image – even the most recent ingenious attempts to do this have resulted in multiple imperfections and “clumping.”<sup>197</sup> With respect to the fourth and fifth enigmas, chemicals and vapors cannot

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<sup>197</sup> An organic chemistry professor at the University of Pavia, Luigi Garlaschelli and his team, who were funded by an Italian association of atheists and agnostics, tried to reproduce the Shroud image by using ochre, acid, and a special heating technique. According to the Catholic News Agency, “they created their image by placing the linen over a volunteer before rubbing it with a pigment called ochre with traces of acid. The linen was then ‘aged’ by heating it in an oven and washing it with water.” They then added blood stains. Though the image bore some resemblance to that on the Shroud superficially, it was by no means a replica of it. First, adding the blood stains afterwards is not consistent with what happened on the Shroud, but if the attempted forgers had placed the blood stains on the cloth first, they would have ruined them when adding the ochre and acid to produce the image. Furthermore, the image they produced was quite distorted. As Jackson noted, “...while the images of Garlaschelli’s shroud on the internet look authentic, when taken from a 3-D perspective, “it’s really rather grotesque. The hands are embedded into the body and the legs have unnatural looking lumps and bumps...” Catholic News Agency,

reproduce the double image (with nothing in between) and the interior image of the skeleton of the hand.

- **Heating or scorching explanations** violate the second enigma because the image is not a scorch as shown by its failure to fluoresce.
- **Other radiation hypotheses** besides vacuum ultraviolet radiation will likely violate the second enigma because they would not dissipate quickly enough to prevent scorching on the cloth. Furthermore, heat radiation of this kind would penetrate to the medulla of the fiber violating the first enigma.

At present, there is no alternative physical explanation for all five enigmas on the Shroud besides the 2-part explanation of John Jackson:

1. A short intense burst of vacuum ultraviolet radiation which was...
2. Emitted evenly by a mechanically transparent body from every three-dimensional point within it.

Currently, the known laws of physics cannot explain how a decomposing body can emit an intense burst of vacuum ultraviolet radiation. Furthermore, they cannot explain how such a body could become mechanically transparent and emit light from every three dimensional point within it.

So, where does that leave us? If Jackson's explanation continues to be the only one that explains all five enigmas, and if future articulations of the laws of physics cannot explain how a decomposing body could become mechanically transparent and evenly emit vacuum ultraviolet radiation from every three dimensional point within it, then we are left at the brink of a *transphysical* or *metaphysical* explanation. Under these conditions, it would be both reasonable and responsible to *believe* that a *transphysical cause* interacted with the decomposing body to transform it into an intense burst of light.

Evidently, we cannot *scientifically prove* a transphysical cause, because science is restricted to the domain of physical causation. However, if the above conditions hold, we can reasonably *infer* the possibility and perhaps the likelihood of such a transphysical cause. This is sufficient for reasonable and responsible belief.

Does this transphysical explanation of the Shroud's image point to the resurrection of Jesus? Jesus' resurrection was not a resuscitation of a material corpse but rather, a transforming event which gave rise to what St. Paul called a "spiritual body"—a body transformed in glory, spirit and power.<sup>198</sup> Could this transformation of a material body into a burst of intense light signify a beginning point of the transformation of Jesus' body from a physical one to a spiritual-glorified one? Though there can be no scientific proof of this, it is a reasonable inference from the parallels between the explanation of the Shroud's enigmatic image and the testimony of St.

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"Experts question scientist's claim of reproducing Shroud of Turin" October 6, 2009, ([http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/experts\\_question\\_scientists\\_claim\\_of\\_reproducing\\_shroud\\_of\\_turin/](http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/experts_question_scientists_claim_of_reproducing_shroud_of_turin/))

<sup>198</sup> This is explained in detail in Chapter 4 of a forthcoming book—*God So Loved the World: Clues to Our Transcendent Destiny from the Revelation of Jesus* (Ignatius Press—Coming in 2016)

Paul and the Gospel writers. In this sense, we might say that the image on the Shroud presents a clue – even a relic – of Jesus’ resurrection.

## VI. Conclusion

Why would we think the body in the Shroud was that of *Jesus*? As explained above, it is exceedingly improbable that the Shroud is a medieval forgery. First, there are no paints, dyes or other pigments on the Shroud (except for the small flecks coming from the sanctification of icons and paintings which touched it). Secondly, the anatomical precision of the blood stains—which are real human blood that congealed on the Shroud *before* the formation of the image—are in precise anatomical correlation to the image itself. How could a medieval forger have accomplished this? Thirdly, it is exceedingly difficult to explain how pollen grains indigenous to Palestine appeared in abundance on a shroud of probable Semitic origin (if it originated in medieval Europe) and how coins minted in 29 A.D. in Palestine appeared on the eyes of the man on the Shroud. How could a medieval forger have duplicated these first century Palestinian characteristics of the Shroud? Fourthly, the five enigmas of the image on the Shroud almost certainly preclude a forgery. How could a medieval forger have used vacuum ultraviolet radiation to discolor the cloth on the uppermost surface of the fibrils? How could he have created a perfect photographic negative image? How could he have created a double image on the frontal part of the Shroud? And how could he have known how to duplicate the interior and exterior of the hands in perfect proportion to each other? Thus, it does not seem reasonable or responsible to believe that the Shroud is a medieval forgery.

Beyond this, there are three probative kinds of evidence pointing specifically to *Jesus*’ place and time of origin and to his *unique* crucifixion and resurrection:

1. The material of the Shroud, the pollen grains on it, and the coins on the man’s eyes, all have their origin in First Century Palestine – the place where Jesus was purported to have died.
2. The blood stains come from a crucifixion event identical to the one described in the four Gospels – which was very unusual, if not unique, in many respects – such as being crowned with thorns, being flogged, and being pierced with a Roman pilium (see above – the Introduction to this article).
3. The five enigmas of the Shroud’s image point to a *transphysically* caused burst of vacuum ultraviolet radiation from a mechanically transparent body. This is suggestive of the transformation of Jesus’ body from a physical one to a spiritual-glorified one (as reported by St. Paul and the four Gospels). The spiritual-glorified transformation of Jesus’ body was *unique* to the Christian view of resurrection.<sup>199</sup> It was not known in

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<sup>199</sup> N.T. Wright elucidates several Christian mutations of Second Temple Judaism’s doctrine of resurrection. One of these mutations is the change from a merely corporeal resurrection (like a resuscitated corpse) in Jewish doctrine to a spiritual-corporeal resurrection (“spiritual body”-- “pneumatikon soma”—1Cor.15:44) in the Christian view. This is remarkable in view of the fact that early Christians did *not* want to separate themselves from the doctrine of Second Temple Judaism. Why then, did the early Christians do this? After an exhaustive analysis, Wright concludes there is only one explanation—they saw the risen Jesus in a spiritual-glorified-powerful form—which evidenced both his former corporeality as well as his spiritual transformation. See N.T. Wright 2003 *The Resurrection of the Son of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press) pp 200-274. I have outlined the steps and substance of Wright’s argument





mathematician, Eugene Wigner, recognized this remarkable coincidence of natural laws and mathematics, referring to it as a “miracle” or “the scientist’s article of faith.” “It is, as Schrödinger has remarked, a miracle that in spite of the baffling complexity of the world, certain regularities in the events could be discovered.”<sup>201</sup> Wigner later goes on to describe a four-fold miracle in the connection between classical physics, quantum physics, higher level mathematics, and the human mind’s ability to recognize it:

Finally, it now begins to appear that not only complex numbers but so-called analytic functions are destined to play a decisive role in the formulation of quantum theory. I am referring to the rapidly developing theory of dispersion relations. ¶ It is difficult to avoid the impression that a miracle confronts us here, quite comparable in its striking nature to the miracle that the human mind can string a thousand arguments together without getting itself into contradictions, or to the two miracles of the existence of laws of nature and of the human mind's capacity to divine them.<sup>202</sup>

Though Wigner was using the term “miracle” loosely here, this four-fold non-necessary coincidence of physics, mathematics, aesthetics, and the human mind is completely inexplicable in terms of logic, mathematics and physics themselves. Wigner and Schrödinger leave us to draw our own conclusions, but people of faith will see rigorous rationality and creative serendipity in this four-fold coincidence which has all the earmarks of creative intellection coursing through nature—and intellection pointing toward a supernatural mind.

More recently, Michio Kaku (one of the founders of String Theory) has articulated a new approach to the same “miracle” within the natural universe manifesting supernatural intellection. He assumes that the pre-big-bang universe is in the hyper-dimensionality of M-theory (11-dimensional string theory), and further postulates the need for primitive semi-radius tachyons to create free spaces for interaction within the universe. If his view of the pre-big-bang universe is correct (and we do not have confirmation of this), then this universe with its primitive semi-radius tachyons would be such an elegant manifestation of extreme complexity (like a matrix) that Kaku can see only one ultimate solution-resolution – a divine mind capable of mathematical super-intellection.<sup>203</sup>

Impressive as the miracle of mathematical-physical laws may be, the divine intellect has also seen fit to manifest his supernatural intellect and power in the world by, as Lewis notes, “feeding new events into the patterns of nature.” The Lord does this to manifest His presence in

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<sup>201</sup> Eugene Wigner 1960 *The Unreasonable Effectiveness of Mathematics in the Natural Sciences* in *Communications in Pure and Applied Mathematics, vol.13, No.1* (New York: John Wiles & Sons, Inc.)

<http://www.dartmouth.edu/~matc/MathDrama/reading/Wigner.html>

<sup>202</sup> *ibid*

<sup>203</sup> Michio Kaku 2016 in *Geophilosophical Association of Anthropological and Cultural Studies* (June 13, 2016).

<http://www.express.co.uk/news/science/742567/PROOF-of-God-real-Michio-Kaku>.

<http://www.cnsnews.com/news/article/barbara-hollingsworth/string-theory-co-founder-sub-atomic-particles-are-evidence-0>



Over the last five centuries, there have been nine Marian Apparitions approved by the Church. We will discuss three of them that have undergone particular historical and scientific scrutiny:

- A. The Apparition of Our Lady of Guadalupe;
- B. The Apparition of Our Lady of Lourdes;
- C. The Apparition of Our Lady of Fatima.

### I.A

#### The Apparition of Our Lady of Guadalupe

According to several well-attested accounts (see below) the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to a native Aztec, Juan Diego, on December 9, 1531. She identified herself as the [Virgin Mary](#), "mother of the very true deity." She asked him to ask his Bishop -- Juan de Zumarraga -- to build a church atop Tepeyac Hill (now within the confines of Mexico City). Juan Diego did as he was instructed, but after relating his story to Zumarraga, he did not believe him. The Blessed Virgin appeared again to Juan Diego that same day (December 9<sup>th</sup>) and asked him to return to the Bishop. On December 10<sup>th</sup>, Juan Diego returned to Zumarraga, but he still had doubts, and asked Juan Diego to return to the Hill and ask the Virgin for a miraculous sign. He did as he was instructed and the Lady promised a sign the next day (December 11). However, before Juan Diego could return to the Hill on December 11 his uncle Juan Bernardino became quite ill and Juan Diego stayed with him to find medical assistance and a priest. On December 12<sup>th</sup> when Juan Diego left his uncle to find a priest, the Virgin met him on the road and assured him that his uncle would be cured and told him to proceed to the Hill where he would find the sign required by Bishop Zumarraga. He went to Tepeyac Hill and found Castilian roses growing there (not native to Mexico), gathered them and put them in his tilma. When he returned with the roses to Bishop Zumarraga and opened his cloak to allow the roses to fall, the picture of the Lady of Guadalupe appeared on the tilma. Apparently the roses and the image were sufficient to convince Bishop Zumarraga to build the first Church (and sanctuary for the image) atop of Tepeyac Hill in 1531.

Some scholars have challenged the veracity of this story because it was not found either in the writings of Bishop Zumarraga or in an ecclesiastical report about the image. However, in 1995, Jesuit historian Xavier Escalada published a four-volume encyclopedia on the image and history of Our Lady of Guadalupe in which he reports and analyses a hitherto unknown sheet of parchment dated 1548 called "*Codex Escalada*."<sup>205</sup> The parchment contains an illustrated story of the vision of Juan Diego and is signed by Antonio Valeriano and Bernardino de Sahagun. These signatures were authenticated by Banco de Mexico and Charles E. Dibble. The authentication of the signatures -- along with the parchment, illustrations, language, and style -- validate both the parchment and the existence and vision of Juan Diego.<sup>206</sup>

The image itself has many extraordinary attributes that border on the miraculous, and probably indicate it. Five attributes have been scientifically tested in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries:

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<sup>205</sup> See the *Codex Escalada* 1548 in [http://basilica.mxv.mx/web1/-apariciones/Documentos\\_Historicos/Mestizos/Codice\\_1548.html](http://basilica.mxv.mx/web1/-apariciones/Documentos_Historicos/Mestizos/Codice_1548.html)

<sup>206</sup> See Alberto Peralta (2003). "El Codice 1548: Critica a una supesta Fuente Guadalupana del Siglo SVI." *Articulos* (in Spanish). Proyecto Guadalupe. See Stafford Poole (July 2005). "History vs. Juan Diego". *The Americas*. **62**: 1–16. doi:10.1353/tam.2005.0133. Stafford Poole (2006). *The Guadalupan Controversies in Mexico*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press..

1. The material of the tilma has maintained its chemical and structural integrity for almost 500 years. This is quite remarkable considering that most replicas of tilmas with the same chemical and structural composition last only *15 years* before analyzable decomposition. Furthermore, the tilma was displayed without protective glass for its first 115 years, and was subjected to soot, candlewax, incense, and touching throughout its history. There is currently no scientific explanation for its physical and chemical longevity.<sup>207</sup>
2. Though there are several parts of the cloth which have been painted subsequent to the original image (e.g. the moon underneath the Virgin's feet, the angel holding the cloth, and the rays coming from the image), the original image of the Virgin herself does not appear to have been painted by an artist at the time. There is no sketch underneath it, no brush strokes, no corrections, and it appears to have been produced in a single step. These features were identified by Dr. Philip Serna Callahan (biophysicist and NASA consultant) who photographed the image under infrared light.<sup>208</sup>
3. According to Nobel Prize winning biochemist, Richard Kuhn, who analyzed a sample of the fabric, the pigments used were from no known natural source, whether animal, mineral, or vegetable. Given that there were no synthetic pigments in 1531, this enigma remains inexplicable.<sup>209</sup>
4. Dr. Callahan also noted that the original image on the tilma had not cracked, flaked, or decayed over 500 years while the paint and gold leaf had flaked or deteriorated considerably. This phenomenon has not yet been scientifically explained – and may not be able to be so explained.
5. The eyes of the Virgin have three remarkable qualities that cannot be explained through known technology in 1531 – and would be difficult to replicate with today's technology enhanced by computers, ophthalmologic knowledge, and digital photography:
  - a. Engineer, Jose' Aste Tonsmann, has amplified an image of the pupils of the Blessed Virgin by 2500 times, and can identify not only what appears to be the image of Bishop Zumarraga, but also several other witnesses of the miracle reflected there.
  - b. The images in the pupils also manifest the triple reflection called the Samson-Purkinje effect – which was completely unknown at the time of the image's formation.
  - c. The image in the eyes of the Virgin follow the curvature of the cornea precisely in the way it occurs in a normal human eye.

The first ophthalmologist to identify both the Samson-Purkinje effect and the precise corneal curvature in the images in both of the Virgin's eyes was Dr. Javier Torroella Bueno, MDS in 1956. Dr. Rafael Torrija Lavoignet made a detailed examination of the Virgin's eyes with an ophthalmoscope, and confirmed Dr. Bueno's findings, noting other remarkable similarities to human eyes. Since that time, the eyes have been examined by more than 20 ophthalmologists confirming the conclusions of the original examination. As noted above, Dr. Jose Aste

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<sup>207</sup> See Giulio Dante Guerra, AlleanzaCattolica.org, "La Madonna di Guadalupe". 'Inculturazione' Miracolosa. Christianita. n. 205–206, 1992. , accessed December 1, 2006.

<sup>208</sup> See P. Callahan (1981). *The Tilma under Infrared Radiation: CARA Studies in Popular Devotion, vol. II, Guadalupe Studies, n° 3*. Washington D.C.: Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate, pp. 6–13. See also Thomas Sennott. 2011 "The Tilma of Guadalupe: A Scientific Analysis" in <http://www.motherofallpeoples.com/2011/12/the-tilma-of-guadalupe-a-scientific-analysis/>.

<sup>209</sup> See the comments of engineer Dr. Jose' Aste Tonsmann of the Mexican Center of Guadalupan Studies during a conference at Pontifical Regina Apostolorum Athenaeum in 2001. Reported in *Zenit* 2001. <https://web.archive.org/web/20100620110845/http://www.catholiceducation.org/articles/religion/re0447.html>

Tonsmann (formerly of Cornell University working at IBM) amplified the Virgin's eyes by a factor of 2,500 times, and used a series of filters to eliminate "noise" in the amplified images. He not only confirmed the precise corneal curvature and the Samson-Purkinje effect, but also several other figures behind Bishop Zumarraga (the front figure pictured with a beard) all of whom were looking at the tilma in amazement.<sup>210</sup> Readers interested in some of Dr. Tonsmann's photographs will want to consult the following URL: <http://www.sancta.org/eyes.html>.

The above five enigmas in the tilma of Juan Diego are scientifically inexplicable today – and certainly cannot be explained by the artistic and preservation capabilities between 1531 to 1900. In view of this, it is reasonable and responsible to believe that this tilma had more than an extraordinary origin – indeed, a supernatural one.

In addition to the seemingly miraculous origin of the image, there have been many miracles associated with the tilma over the last several centuries – some concerned with healing, and one concerned with the tilma's remarkable survival when a bomb was placed underneath it by a Mexican secularist in 1921. Despite the fact that a brass crucifix was completely bent over, and the altar was damaged, the tilma was left unharmed.<sup>211</sup> Among the many healings that have taken place over the centuries through the tilma – or replicas that have touched the original – this author is personally acquainted with one man who has publically testified to being cured of fourth stage cancer in a remarkably short time after being prayed over under a replica of the tilma.<sup>212</sup>

In conclusion, devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe portrayed on the remarkable tilma in the Cathedral atop Tepeyac Hill, has been a most remarkable source of conversion to Catholicism throughout Mexico. It has also been a source of strength and grace for the Catholic religion, particularly in times of persecution and secularism. The message of Our Lady to Juan Diego – filled with love and affection for the native people of the western hemisphere has inspired tens of thousands of people beyond the boundaries of Mexico, and she is now considered to be the patroness of all the Americas.<sup>213</sup> Her image can be found all over the United States as well as other non-Mexican countries in Latin America. The influence of this single devotion has been so great that Pope Benedict XIV in 1754 wept and uttered the words of Psalm 147 when he looked upon it for the first time -- "God has not dealt in like manner with any other nation."

## I.B

### The Apparition of Our Lady of Lourdes

The appearance of the Blessed Virgin Mary to Bernadette Soubirous at the Grotto of Lourdes in 1858 is probably the most well-known Marian apparition in history—not so much

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<sup>210</sup> Joe Aste Tonsmann 1981 *El Secreto de sus Ojos*. (Mexico City: Editorial Diana).

<sup>211</sup> See D.A. Brading, *Mexican Phoenix. Our Lady of Guadalupe: Image and Tradition Across Five Centuries*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, (2001), p. 314; Stafford Poole, *The Guadalupe Controversies in Mexico*, Stanford, California: Stanford University Press (2006), p. 110.

<sup>212</sup> Michael Patterson, Seattle, Washington, was prayed over while being covered by a replica of it at the Napa Institute 2015. He testified to this at the same institute in 2016.

<sup>213</sup> See Carl Anderson 2009 *Our Lady of Guadalupe: Mother of the Civilization of Love* (NY: Doubleday Religion).

because of the apparition itself as the thousands of miraculous cures that have taken place through the water of the Grotto.

On February 11, 1858, just outside of Lourdes, France, Bernadette Soubirous (a 14-year old girl without much formal education), her sister Toinette, and a friend Jeanne Abadie were searching for kindling and bones in a cave. Just as she had taken off her shoes and stockings, a lady, small in stature, dressed in white with a blue sash around her waist, and holding a gold rosary appeared to her. Bernadette tried to make the sign of the cross but was so scared she could not, at which point the Lady asked her to pray the rosary with her, restoring her calm. Bernadette was the only one to see and hear the apparition.

When Toinette returned home, she told their mother and both parents punished them for telling such a “story.” Nevertheless, Bernadette was drawn back to the cave, and the lady appeared to her again. Bernadette brought holy water with her, and sprinkled it on the apparition to see if she would shrink from it, but the Lady only smiled, at which point Bernadette told her that if she was not of God she would have to go away.<sup>214</sup> The lady smiled and bowed and Bernadette went into a kind of ecstasy—sensing her holiness and love. Her companions witnessed this ecstasy which seemed to last long after the apparition.

Bernadette returned a third time to the Grotto, and the lady gave her instructions to return several times throughout the upcoming two weeks. On February 20th, the lady taught her a prayer and asked for penance for the conversion of sinners.

Bernadette returned to the Grotto on several other occasions accompanied by hundreds of people. The official Lourdes website lists the major points of the apparitions as follows:<sup>215</sup>  
*Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> February.* Early in the morning, Bernadette was accompanied by about 100 people, after the apparition she was questioned by the Police Commissioner, Jacomet.

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*Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> February.* Surrounded by 150 persons, Bernadette arrived at the Grotto. The Apparition reveals to her a secret "only for her alone".

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*Wednesday 24th February.* The message of the Lady: "Penance! Penance! Penance! Pray to God for sinners. Kiss the ground as an act of penance for sinners!"

*Thursday 25th February.* Three hundred people were present. Bernadette relates; "She told me to go, drink of the spring (...) I only found a little muddy water. At the fourth attempt I was able to drink. She also made me eat the bitter herbs that were found near the spring, and then the vision left and went away."

*Saturday 27th February.* Eight hundred people were present. The Apparition was silent. Bernadette drank the water from the spring and carried out her usual acts of penance.

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<sup>214</sup> Anonymous, “The Apparitions in 1858” on the official Lourdes website. <https://en.lourdes-france.org/deepen/bernadette-soubirous/the-apparitions>.

<sup>215</sup> Ibid.

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*Sunday 28th. February.* Over one thousand people were present at the ecstasy. Bernadette prayed, kissed the ground and moved on her knees as a sign of penance. She was then taken to the house of Judge Ribes who threatened to put her in prison.

*Monday 1st. March.* Over one thousand five hundred people assembled and among them, for the first time, a priest. In the night, Catherine Latapie, a friend from Lourdes, went to the Grotto, she plunged her dislocated arm into the water of the Spring: her arm and her hand regained their movement.

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Several additional cures occurred at the Grotto (seven of which were considered medically inexplicable--and therefore miraculous) which drew even more people to the cave. This caused a great deal of controversy both within the Church and the town. A decision was made in March to barricade the Grotto which had the effect of bringing it to the attention of the national press and national government. Bernadette was not to be deterred, and so visited the barricaded Grotto at night on several other occasions. On one such occasion (March 25, 1858) the lady declared that she was "the Immaculate Conception." Her last apparition occurred on July 16, 1858.

The controversy concerning the closure of the Grotto became a national issue, compelling Emperor Napoleon III to formally reopen the Grotto on October 4, 1858. The Catholic Church was concerned about the immense popularity of the Grotto and the potential for people to be misled, and so the Bishop assembled an ecclesiastical committee in November 1858 to assess the veracity of Bernadette's apparitions.<sup>216</sup> On January 18, 1860 the Bishop, following the advice of the committee, declared the apparition to be authentic. Bernadette was canonized as a saint in 1933. Today, almost 4 million pilgrims per year visit the shrine, and hundreds receive extraordinary and miraculous cures.

### **I.B.1 The Miraculous Cures**

From the time of Blessed Mary's first apparition to Bernadette Soubirous, the water from the Lourdes Grotto has been a source of miraculous healings both for those who have visited the Grotto and even for those who used the water in remote places. Since the time of Bernadette, over 7,000 miraculous cures have been reported to the Lourdes Medical Bureau by pilgrims who have visited Lourdes (which does not include miracles that have taken place outside of Lourdes). There were so many purported cures associated with the water and Grotto of Lourdes that the

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<sup>216</sup> The Church has definite criteria for judging the authenticity of an apparition. APPROVAL FOR MARIAN APPARITIONS (from the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Doctrine of the Faith): 1. "There must be moral certainty, or at least great probability, that something miraculous has occurred, something that cannot be explained by natural causes, or by deliberate fakery. 2. The person or persons who claim to have had the private revelation must be mentally sound, honest, sincere, of upright conduct, and obedient to ecclesiastical authority. 3. The content of the revelation or message must be theologically acceptable, morally sound and free of error. 4. The apparition must yield positive and continuing spiritual assets: for example, prayer, conversion, increase of charity."

Catholic Church decided to set up the Lourdes Medical Bureau to be constituted by and under the leadership of physicians and scientists alone. The forerunner of the Bureau was started by doctors affiliated with the Grotto in 1883. Pope Pius X formally constituted the Medical Bureau we know today in 1905. The objective of the Bureau is to render a judgment that a particular cure was near instantaneous, efficacious throughout the remainder of life, and in all other ways, scientifically inexplicable. The Bureau is constituted by 20 physicians and scientists. Its records are open to any physician or scientist who wants to make their own investigation or challenge to any particular case recognized by the above criteria as “miraculous.”

Since 1883, only 69 cases have been recognized as “miraculous” according to the strict standards of the Bureau. But this does not mean that the 7,000 other cures were not miraculous by other standards. These cases simply cannot be shown to be *completely* scientifically inexplicable – though their occurrence could be truly extraordinary and possibly – or even probably – miraculous. Recall the definition of “miracle” mentioned above – that the Lord is introducing transphysical (supernatural) causes and events into the natural patterns of physical nature.

The 69 cases approved by the Lourdes Medical Bureau have been inspected by large numbers of physicians and scientists, and the vast majority of them have been shown to be permanent and inexplicable cures. A list of cures is available at the following website -- [http://www.miraclehunter.com/marian\\_apparitions/approved\\_apparitions/lourdes/downloads/lourdes\\_cures.pdf](http://www.miraclehunter.com/marian_apparitions/approved_apparitions/lourdes/downloads/lourdes_cures.pdf). Books and websites have been written about particular cases, but readers desiring more information on the above 69 cases will have to visit the Lourdes Medical Bureau. Arrangements can be made through the following website: <http://en.lourdes-france.org/deepen/cures-and-miracles/miraculous-cures-in-lourdes>.

Though many of these cases were truly remarkable, we will only examine three of them which had an impact far beyond the individual’s receiving a miraculous cure:

1. The case of Marie Bailly – attested to by the Nobel Prize winning physician Alexis Carrel – 1902.
2. The case of Gabriel Gargam – 1901.
3. The case of John Traynor – 1923.

### **I.B.2**

#### **Marie Bailly and Alexis Carrel – 1902**

The first case concerns Marie Bailly, attested to by the Nobel Prize winning physician – Dr. Alexis Carrel. This case was examined by Fr. Stanley Jaki, Ph.D., who received two doctorates in physics and theology, was a notable contributor to the history and philosophy of science, and a Templeton Prize winner.<sup>217</sup> This case is as much about Dr. Carrel as the recipient

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<sup>217</sup> Stanley Jaki made a thorough examination of Dossier 54 on this case at the Lourdes Medical Bureau. He gives the physician depositions (from Carrel and two other physicians) in the Dossier, as well as an analysis of it, in his introduction to a new edition of Alexis Carrel’s *The Voyage to Lourdes*. This was published by his own publishing company, Real View Books, and is available for purchase online at <http://www.realviewbooks.com/>. Fr. Jaki summarized the main parts of this case in a lecture given for the Catholic Medical Association. See Stanley Jaki 1999 “Two Lourdes Miracles and a Nobel Laureate: What Really Happened?” *Catholic Medical Association*. <https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=2866>.



of the miraculous healing – Marie Bailly. Dr. Carrell won the Nobel Prize for techniques he perfected in vascular surgery and *Scientific American* credited him with “having initiated all major advances in modern surgery, including organ transplants.”<sup>218</sup>

In 1902 a physician friend of Dr. Carrell invited him to help take care of sick patients being transported on a train from Lyons to Lourdes. Carrell, at that time, was an agnostic who did not believe in miracles, but consented to help out, not only because of friendship, but also an interest in what natural causes might be allowing such fast healings as those taking place at Lourdes. On the train, he encountered Marie Bailly who was suffering from acute tuberculous peritonitis with considerable abdominal distension with large hard masses.<sup>219</sup> Though Marie Bailly was half-conscious, Carrell believed that she would pass away quite quickly after arriving at Lourdes – if not before. Other physicians on the train agreed with this diagnosis.

When the train arrived at Lourdes, Marie was taken to the Grotto where three pitchers of water were poured over her distended abdomen. After the first pour, she felt a searing pain, but after the second pour, it was lessened, and after the third pour, she experienced a pleasant sensation. Her stomach began to flatten and her pulse returned to normal.<sup>220</sup> Carrel was standing behind Marie (along with other physicians) taking notes as the water was poured over her abdomen, and wrote: “The enormously distended and very hard abdomen began to flatten and within 30 minutes it had completely disappeared. No discharge whatsoever was observed from the body.”<sup>221</sup> Marie then sat up in bed, had dinner (without vomiting), and got out of bed on her own and dressed herself the next day.<sup>222</sup> She then boarded the train, riding on the hard benches, and arrived in Lyons refreshed. Carrel was still interested in her psychological and physical condition, and so asked that she be monitored by a psychiatrist and a physician for four months.<sup>223</sup> After that, Marie joined the Sisters of Charity – to work with the sick and the poor in a very strenuous life – and died in 1937 at the age of 58.<sup>224</sup>

When Carrel witnessed this exceedingly rapid and medically inexplicable event, he believed he had seen something like a miracle, but it was difficult for him to part with his former skeptical agnosticism – so he did not yet return to the Catholic faith of his childhood. Furthermore, he wanted to avoid being a medical witness to a miraculous event because he knew that if it became public it would ruin his career at the medical faculty at Lyons.

Nevertheless, Marie Bailly’s cure seemed so evidently miraculous (being so rapid, complete, and inexplicable) that it became public in the news media in France and throughout the world. Reporters indicated that Carrel did not think the cure was a miracle which forced Carrel to

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<sup>218</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>219</sup> Dr. Carrell wrote about this cure himself in a book entitled *The Voyage to Lourdes* using as the main protagonist Dr. Lerrac (“Carrel spelled backwards”) and changed the name “Marie Bailly” to “Marie Ferrand” in the story. It is a complete description of what Dr. Carrel saw on his train ride to Lourdes. See Dr. Alexis Carrel 1950 *The Voyage to Lourdes*, trans. by Virgilia Peterson (NY: Harper Brothers). An online is available free of charge at [http://www.basicincome.com/bp/files/The\\_Voyage\\_to\\_Lourdes.pdf](http://www.basicincome.com/bp/files/The_Voyage_to_Lourdes.pdf).

<sup>220</sup> See Jaki “Two Lourdes Miracles...”

<sup>221</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>222</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>223</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>224</sup> *Ibid.*

write a public reply stating that one side (some believers) was jumping to a miraculous conclusion too rapidly and the other side (the medical community) had unjustifiably refused to look at facts that appeared to be miraculous.<sup>225</sup> Indeed, Carrel implied that Bailly's cure may have been miraculous.

As Carrel feared, his advocacy of the possibility of Bailly's miraculous cure led to an end of his career at the medical faculty of Lyons which ironically had a very good effect on his future – because it led him to the University of Chicago and then to the Rockefeller University. In 1912, he received the Nobel Prize for his work in vascular anastomosis. Carrel returned to Lourdes many times, and on one occasion, witnessed a second miracle – the instantaneous cure of an 18-month old blind boy. Despite these two miracles, Carrel could not bring himself to conclusively affirm the reality of miracles – real divine supernatural intervention manifest in the world. In 1938, one year after the death of Sr. Marie Bailly, Carrel became friends with the Rector of the Major Seminary in Rennes, who told him to consult with a Trappist monk -- who was a well-known spiritual director and friend of Charles de Gaulle – Fr. Alexis Presse, with whom he began a dialogue. In 1942, Carrel announced that he believed in God, the immortality of the soul, and the teachings of the Catholic Church. Two years later, in 1944, as Carrel was dying in Paris, he sent for Fr. Presse, who administered the Last Rites of the Church to him. He had not been able to let go of the miracles of Lourdes, and they had led him to continue his inquiry into his spiritual nature and Christian revelation. Ultimately he would find himself joined to the Lord through the Church of his childhood.

### **I.B.3 Gabriel Gargam -- 1901**

The second case, that of Gabriel Gargam, occurred in 1901. He was born to practicing Catholic parents, but lost his faith at the age of 15, and no longer practiced it. Later in life he became a postal sorter, and during the course of his work in 1899, the train on which he had been sorting collided head on with another train travelling at 50 mph. He was thrown 52 feet from the train and was badly injured. After eight months, he was at the point of death -- a mere 78 pounds with gangrenous feet, unable to take solid food. He could only be fed once every 24 hours by a tube and required two nurses to take care of him. His condition was well-attested not only by his physicians, but by those involved in the lawsuit he filed against the railroad – the court records and physicians' testimonies still exist today.<sup>226</sup>

Gargam spent two years in bed – unable to be moved from his room. Though his aunt (a religious sister) and his mother begged him to go to Lourdes, he refused to do so preferring to suffer his fate in his room. Finally he relented and consented to the trip, but being moved on a stretcher and riding on the train almost killed him. When he arrived at Lourdes he was in dire condition, and he went to confession and received a piece of Holy Communion, and then he was brought to the waters in the Grotto. The strain was so great, that he fell into a swoon and his attendants believed him to be dead, so they put him on a carriage, put a cloth on his face, and began to wheel him back to the hotel. On the way there, a Eucharistic procession was passing by.

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<sup>225</sup> Jaki. "Two Lourdes Miracles..."

<sup>226</sup> Elaine Jordan "The Lourdes' Miracle of Gabriel Gargam" in *Tradition in Action*, [http://www.traditioninaction.org/religious/h106\\_Lourdes.htm](http://www.traditioninaction.org/religious/h106_Lourdes.htm).

The priest leading the procession saw the sorrowful crowd around Gargam, and he blessed them with the Holy Eucharist, at which point Gargam's legs began to move under the sheets. He then sat upright by his own power (which he had not been able to do for two years), and then proceeded to get off the carriage and walk around by his own power. The astonished crowd accompanied him back to his hotel where he sat down to eat a hearty meal (though he had not taken solid food for two years).<sup>227</sup>

On August 20<sup>th</sup>, 1901, Gargam was examined by 60 physicians, all of whom pronounced him completely cured. They could not explain his cure through any known form of physical causation – a judgment which still holds true today. Gargam also underwent a spiritual metamorphosis, consecrating himself to the Blessed Virgin Mary and the service of the sick at Lourdes. He lived a normal healthy life until his death at 83 years of age.<sup>228</sup>

#### **I.B.4 John Traynor – 1923**

The third case, John Traynor, occurred in 1923. Traynor was raised a Catholic and was a bonafide WWI hero who was severely injured during the war. In 1915, in a third battle where he received severe wounds, he was sprayed with machine gun fire. A bullet lodged under his collarbone, he was wounded in the chest, and another bullet hit his head (which caused a permanent hole revealing his pulsating brain that was later blocked by a silver plate). As result of these injuries, Traynor's right arm was paralyzed (and his muscles atrophied), his legs were partially paralyzed, and he was epileptic (from the wound in his head). He was not able to do anything, and had to be moved from his bed to his wheelchair, sometime suffering four epileptic fits per day.<sup>229</sup>

In 1923, Traynor's diocese of Liverpool organized a pilgrimage to Lourdes. Traynor who had a sincere devotion to the Blessed Virgin, wanted to go, though his physicians, wife, the government ministry of pensions, and even the priest organizing the pilgrimage begged him to stay home. They thought the trip would be suicide, and they were almost correct. Traynor was wheeled to the train in Liverpool, and suffered tremendously on the trip to Lourdes. When he arrived he was almost dead, and one woman wrote to his wife indicating that he would be buried at Lourdes. During his stay, he was taken to the baths nine times, and on the occasion of his tenth time (July 25, 1923), his legs felt agitated in the bath. After the bath, he was placed in the wheelchair to receive a Eucharistic blessing from the Bishop of Rheims who was passing by in a Eucharistic procession. After being blessed by the host, his arm (which had been paralyzed for 8 years) grew so strong that he was able to burst through his bandages. He then regained the use of his legs (which had been partially paralyzed for 8 years preventing him from standing and walking). He got out of his chair and walked several steps, but his attendants put him to bed for the evening because they were afraid he might hurt himself. During the night, he leapt out of his bed, knelt down to finish a rosary, and ran out his door to go to the Grotto – to the utter amazement of everyone watching. He knelt down in the Grotto to finish his prayers, but seemed

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<sup>227</sup> Ibid.

<sup>228</sup> Ibid.

<sup>229</sup> See anonymous "Miracles of Lourdes" in Our Lady of the Rosary Library. <https://olrl.org/stories/lourdes.shtml>.

to suffer a temporary lapse of memory about his condition prior to going into the bath for the tenth time. The healing not only cured his paralysis and epilepsy, it seemed to mask the memory of his former misery. Two days later, while riding on the train back to Liverpool, Archbishop Keating of Liverpool came into his compartment, and reminded him of his former condition – only then was his memory revived, and both he and the Archbishop broke down in tears.<sup>230</sup>

His cure was so complete that he went into the coal and hauling business (lifting 200-pound sacks of coal), pledged himself to service at the Grotto of Lourdes every summer, and died on the Eve of the Feast of the Immaculate Conception in 1943 (20 years after his cure). A large number of conversions occurred in Liverpool as a result of the obvious miracle.<sup>231</sup>

In 1926, the Lourdes Medical Bureau certified that Traynor was instantly and permanently cured in a completely scientifically inexplicable way. Not only was the paralysis in his arm and legs completely cured, but he regained the muscle and tendons in his skeletal arm. Moreover, the permanent hole in his temple healed completely, leaving no mark but a slight indentation. He received a certificate from Dr. McConnell of Liverpool attesting that he had not had an epileptic fit since 1923. All these cures occurred simultaneously and instantly.<sup>232</sup> A movie is currently being made by his great great grandson about the miracle, and will be available sometime in 2017.<sup>233</sup>

### **I.B.5 Conclusion**

As previously noted, there are many other miraculous cases of healings associated with Lourdes beyond the above three – 69 of them officially judged a miracle by the Lourdes Medical Bureau, and literally thousands of others that are truly extraordinary, but not susceptible of being judged *completely* scientifically inexplicable. In view of this, it is highly likely that an extraordinary power – indeed, a supernatural power – appears to be continuously present and operative at the Grotto of Lourdes. The evidence is so extensive that even slight openness to the existence of God and God’s action in the world, would lead one to draw this conclusion – at least prospectively.

If one concludes to the presence of divine power and healing at Lourdes, what would this mean beyond the obvious conclusion of God’s existence and action in the world? One conclusion might be that God is love, for this is not only evident in the actual cures that take place multiple times every year at the Grotto, but also in the loving service of so many people who have dedicated their time, and even their lives, to helping sick pilgrims to bathe in these waters of hope. But what about those who do not receive a cure? What happens to them? The vast majority – though perhaps initially disappointed – find themselves spiritually renewed by the prayer, spiritual witness, and loving service at the Grotto. The experience causes them to refocus – not

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<sup>230</sup> Ibid.

<sup>231</sup> Ibid.

<sup>232</sup> Ibid.

<sup>233</sup> See also Eleanor Barlow 2016 “Liverpool ‘miracle’ soldier’s story to be told in documentary directed by great-great-grandson” in *Echo News* (Liverpool), June 2016. <http://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/news/liverpool-news/liverpool-miracle-soldiers-story-told-11455815>.

on receiving a cure in this world, but on their eternal salvation with the loving God who is so extraordinarily present at the sanctuary and the Grotto. Very few pilgrims leave the Grotto embittered. Quite the opposite – they are edified, spiritually rejuvenated, and focused on life with God which they now know includes an element of the cross to help them along the way. Acceptance of the cross as an integral means to the purification of love, and its ultimate purification in heaven, is perhaps the hardest dimension of human existence. Yet Lourdes, even when cures do not occur, has the remarkable effect of inciting us quite rapidly toward this acceptance. Lourdes is clearly about the love of God manifest in healing, service, and most blessedly in the acceptance of the cross of Jesus Christ.

How else does this remarkable story and Grotto affect us? There is the most obvious point of all – not only is God the Father and the risen Jesus present, but also the Blessed Virgin Mary. The modern age seems to have so much difficulty accepting the involvement of the Blessed Virgin in the work of divine providence and salvation. Yet as we have seen at Guadalupe and now at Lourdes, Blessed Mary has a way of appearing to people much like herself when she was a young woman in Nazareth. As noted earlier, the persons of the Blessed Trinity are not interested in monopolizing the providential stage – they desire to share it first with the Blessed Mother, then with saints such as Bernadette Soubirous, and even men of medicine like Alexis Carrel.

The Blessed Virgin's vital presence at Lourdes shows her centrality in the order of salvation by God's will. We might ask why He would want her to have such an important role in providence and salvation. One answer might be, as illustrated by Guadalupe and Lourdes, that He seeks a feminine and motherly voice in the manifestation of His care and salvific intention. Mary's motherly affection toward Juan Diego and Bernadette shows this essential dimension – as well as the dimension of family – in God's providential plan and love. This motherly dimension is truly important for those who are suffering and need the kind of encouragement and solace that only a mother can give. This motherly care and solace richly complements the unconditional love of the Prodigal Son's father (Abba) and the unconditional brotherly love of Jesus Himself.

Some people might object that this constitutes "Mariolatry" – a divinization and worship of Mary. Far from it! Catholics are not interested in divinizing or worshiping Mary, but only acknowledging her vital role in the order of salvation – not only in first century Nazareth, but throughout history. When the Father made all of us adopted children through His Son Jesus, He also made us adopted children of Jesus' Mother Mary. She accepts us within the divine-human family she initiated through her consent to be the Mother of His Son. We are her children – not just in the first century – but for all time – and the miracles of Guadalupe and Lourdes confirm this logic of familial love.

One last observation—when the Blessed Virgin appeared to Bernadette Soubirous, she announced herself as "the Immaculate Conception." This is another doctrine that non-Catholics believe to be extra-Biblical and somewhat difficult to believe. Though the Bible does not explicitly mention Mary being free of original sin at the time of her conception, the Church believed that this followed from her sinlessness-- almost universally attested by the Church Fathers. On this basis, the doctrine was declared by Pope Pius IX in 1854 in the papal bull

*Ineffabilis Deus.* Given the veracity of the many miracles that have occurred at Lourdes, it is reasonable to assign the same veracity to Bernadette's account of the apparitions which apparently confirms the veracity of the Immaculate Conception by Mary's own words. This doctrine confirms God's long-standing providential plan to choose Mary as the mother of His son, and to keep her from being affected by concupiscence—one of the effects of the fall. This would protect Mary's capacity to raise Jesus with a perfected love. This doctrine makes complete sense. If the Son of God is to become incarnate as a baby (because He is fully human), then it seems fitting that His mother be able to raise Him in accordance with the fullest potential for human love. Though Bernadette may not have recognized the significance of Mary's announcement (at the age of 14 without formal education), she became a conduit to confirm an important doctrine about God's foreknowledge, unconditional love, providence, and intention to save.

### **I.C The Apparition of Our Lady of Fatima**

In the spring of 1916 three Portuguese shepherd children – Lucia Santos and her cousins Jacinta and Francisco Marto were visited three times by an apparition of an angel who identified himself as “The Angel of Peace.” They said that the angel taught them prayers and encouraged them to spend time in adoration. On May 13, 1917, the children were visited for the first time by the Blessed Virgin Mary at the Cova da Iria in Fatima, who appeared to them as exceedingly radiant. She wore a white mantle edged with gold, and carried a rosary, telling the children to devote themselves to the Holy Trinity and to daily recitation of the rosary for an end to the First World War.

Though Lucia had asked her two cousins to keep the apparition secret, Jacinta told her mother, who in turn told it to several neighbors which made the children's apparition quite public. On June 13, 1917, the children experienced the second apparition, at which time the Blessed Virgin revealed that Jacinta and Francisco would die soon, but that Lucia would live longer to spread the message of peace from Fatima. This prediction proved to be true. Jacinta died in 1918 and Francisco died in 1919 during the world flu pandemic, but Lucia lived to be 97, dying on February 13, 2005 after spending most of her life in a discalced Carmelite Monastery.

On October 13, officials of the Portuguese government intercepted the children who were returning to the Cova da Iria, and interrogated them because hundreds of people were flocking to the Cova, and officials considered the three secrets that the Blessed Virgin had revealed to the children to be politically disruptive. The children returned to the Grotto on August 19 where the Blessed Virgin promised an extraordinary miracle on October 13. The Virgin visited the children three more times prior to October 13 with a similar message about praying the rosary for world peace.

On October 13, 1917, a huge crowd of around 50,000 people gathered at the Cova da Iria to witness the great miracle that Lucia had predicted would occur on that date. It had been raining and then it began to clear. Lucia shouted, “Look at the sun.” The sun appeared to be rotating on its own axis, throwing out a variety of colors, and then it appeared to approach the earth causing many to believe that the world was ending. It then returned to its normal state. Though the ground had been quite wet from the rain prior to the miracle, the sun's activity

during the miracle dried the ground significantly, baffling many of the engineers and scientists present. The miracle was variously described by reporters, doctors, and scientists. Dr. Domingos Pinto Coelho, reporting for the Catholic newspaper, described the event as follows:

The sun, at one moment surrounded with scarlet flame, at another aureoled in yellow and deep purple, seemed to be in an exceedingly swift and whirling movement, at times appearing to be loosened from the sky and to be approaching the earth, strongly radiating heat.<sup>234</sup>

A reporter from the Lisbon paper, *O Dia* saw it this way:

The silver sun, enveloped in the same gauzy grey light, was seen to whirl and turn in the circle of broken clouds ... The light turned a beautiful blue, as if it had come through the stained-glass windows of a cathedral, and spread itself over the people who knelt with outstretched hands ... people wept and prayed with uncovered heads, in the presence of a miracle they had awaited. The seconds seemed like hours, so vivid were they.<sup>235</sup>

Dr. Almeida Garrett, Professor of Natural Sciences at Coimbra University described it as follows:

The sun's disc did not remain immobile. This was not the sparkling of a heavenly body, for it spun round on itself in a mad whirl, when suddenly a clamor was heard from all the people. The sun, whirling, seemed to loosen itself from the firmament and advance threateningly upon the earth as if to crush us with its huge fiery weight. The sensation during those moments was terrible.<sup>236</sup>

Fr. John DeMarchi spent seven years researching the Fatima accounts of both the apparitions and the miracle of the sun, obtaining hundreds of testimonies to the phenomenon and presents them in three important works:

1. *The Immaculate Heart, The True Story of Our Lady of Fatima*,<sup>237</sup>
2. *The True Story of Fatima*,<sup>238</sup> and
3. *Fatima: From the Beginning*.<sup>239</sup>

In addition to the large group of witnesses at the Cova de Iria, several witnesses reported seeing the solar phenomenon in the surrounding area – some as far as 18 to 40 kilometers from the Cova. DeMarchi found no witnesses outside the 40 kilometer perimeter of the Cova. The vast

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<sup>234</sup> Cited in John DeMarchi 1952 *The Immaculate Heart: The True Story of Our Lady of Fatima* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Young) p. 147.

<sup>235</sup> Ibid. p. 143.

<sup>236</sup> Ibid. p. 146.

<sup>237</sup> Ibid.

<sup>238</sup> John DeMarchi 1956, *The True Story of Fatima* (St. Paul Minnesota: Catechetical Guild).

<sup>239</sup> John De Marchi 1981 *Fatima: From the Beginning* (Fatima, Portugal: Missoes Consolata).

majority of those present attested to the sun's highly unusual and beautiful activity, giving various reports of how it seemed to look. DeMarchi found no one present who denied it.<sup>240</sup>

How can this event be explained? It could not have been an astronomical phenomenon because it was not witnessed by anyone beyond 40 kilometers from the Cova da Iria. Therefore it had to be either a highly unusual local *atmospheric* phenomenon or a supernatural phenomenon acting like a gigantic spinning lens or prism suspended in the atmosphere. If it was caused by atmospheric conditions, such conditions would be exceedingly unusual in human recorded history. Though some scientists, such as Stuart Campbell, have suggested that the phenomenon might be explained by a large cloud of stratospheric dust (similar to one that created a reddening effect on the sun in China in 1983), this explanation does not explain how the phenomenon made the sun spin on its own axis, approach the earth, and then recede to its original position. Even if it could, the fact that the children predicted the precise time and place for such a highly unusual atmospheric event goes beyond natural explanation.<sup>241</sup>

The atmospheric explanation requires a convergence of a large number of highly unusual factors whose spontaneous occurrence would be very difficult to explain by natural causation. Even if one attributes the phenomenon to purely natural causes, the convergence of so many highly unusual atmospheric conditions, to produce a rotating disc approaching and then receding from the earth on the precise day predicted by the children strongly suggests that the phenomenon had a supernatural dimension. Recall C.S. Lewis' definition of a miracle: "The divine art of miracle is not an art of suspending the pattern into which events conform but of feeding new events into that pattern."<sup>242</sup>

Alternatively, the phenomenon could be explained on a purely supernatural basis – as a sort of transphysical round lens or prism suspended in the atmosphere spinning on its own axis, approaching the earth and then receding back to its original position. In either case, if the 50,000 witnesses were not deluded by mass hallucination, it seems that something supernatural took place at the Cova da Iria on October 13, 1917.

The explanation of mass hallucination has been proffered by some critics especially because the event was religious, and the witnesses were expecting a miracle to occur. Yet such an explanation is highly dubious because of the large number of witnesses (50,000) who ranged from believers to skeptical non-believers and included physicians, scientists, reporters, churchmen, attorneys, and other people of high education and repute. Furthermore, those who witnessed the event 18 to 40 kilometers away could not have been under the same "spell" as those in the Cova da Iria. Finally, the fact that the phenomenon dried wet ground (from a lengthy preceding rain) in a very short time shows that the event was not only in the minds of the participants. According to De Marchi, "Engineers that have studied the case indicated that an incredible amount of energy would have been necessary to dry up in a few minutes, the pools of

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<sup>240</sup> John DeMarchi 1952 *The Immaculate Heart, The True Story of Our Lady of Fatima*, p. 143.

<sup>241</sup> Stanley Jaki, the well-known Benedictine professor of physics and philosopher of science notes that the children's prediction alone shows the supernatural origin of the phenomenon. See Stanley Jaki, *God and the Sun at Fatima* (South Orange, NJ: Real View Books).

<sup>242</sup> C.S. Lewis 1947 *Miracles: A Preliminary Study* (New York: Harper One) p.95















The above miracles not only help to give credence to Christian faith, the risen Jesus, and His real presence in the Eucharist, but also ground the rich theology of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the saints that constitute the mystical body and the living tradition of the Catholic Church. It seems strange to me that some Christian denominations think that God would not want to share His glory and His Son's glorification with all of us – and allow our little unique sparks of glorified goodness and love to constitute His Son's mystical body. After all, all Christians acknowledge that God is unconditional love, and as such, He cannot possibly want to hoard His glory for Himself. His nature is to give it away, to share it, to create community, and to allow His infinite richness to be expressed like countless little finite expressions that come together in His providential weave like a gigantic tapestry.

The Christian view of God shouts out that He would not only share His glory, but delight in its being freely appropriated and magnified again with everyone in the mystical body. Hence, devotion and prayers to the Blessed Virgin Mary and the saints is perfectly consistent with His infinitely good and loving nature – and it enriches our experience of His goodness, glory, and love. Since we are finite in intellection and intuition, we cannot appropriate God's infinite glory, goodness, and love in a single intuitive moment. All we can do is appreciate finite manifestations of that glory in His Incarnate Son, in the goodness and wisdom of scripture, in the manifestations of the Blessed Virgin Mary who has become our Mother, and in the lives of the saints, who though imperfect reflect in so many extraordinary ways, God's glory, love, and goodness in their lives.

This fills our contemplative experience with great richness, for it breaks the Divine Light into a multifaceted spectrum, enabling us to appreciate evermore deeply not only the infinite goodness and love of God, but also His glory and beauty. Gerard Manley Hopkins saw His glory and beauty in nature in his poems "God's Grandeur" and "The Wind Hover," but he also saw God's beauty manifest in the goodness and love of the saints in his poem "Kingfishers." Beginning with God's glory, beauty, and richness manifest in nature, he concludes with his recognition of a higher beauty manifest in justice and love:

As kingfishers catch fire, dragonflies draw flame;  
As tumbled over rim in roundy wells  
Stones ring; like each tucked string tells, each hung bell's  
Bow swung finds tongue to fling out broad its name;  
Each mortal thing does one thing and the same:  
deals out that being indoors each one dwells;  
Selves — goes itself; *myself* it speaks and spells,  
Crying *What I dó is me: for that I came.*  
I say móre: the just man justices;  
Keeps grace: that keeps all his goings graces;  
Acts in God's eye what in God's eye he is —  
Christ — for Christ plays in ten thousand places,  
Lovely in limbs, and lovely in eyes not his  
To the Father through the features of men's faces.

What Hopkins understood is that Christ's glory is expressed not only in His goodness, love, and truth, but also in the beauty of His person. Beauty awakens us, takes hold of us, and moves us deeply within our being filling us with a sense of appreciation, awe, resonance, harmony, and fulfillment. It moves us at once to great excitement and great calm as if it is filling our deepest interior needs with a completion or fulfillment beyond our capacity to produce. Beauty takes hold of us – we do not take hold of it, and when the highest beauties of the divine person, love, goodness, and truth take hold of us, they can move us not only to feelings of ecstasy over joy, but also to an awareness of holiness, mystery, and communion with God. In the first volume of his trilogy *Glory*, Hans Urs von Balthasar expresses it this way:

Before the beautiful—no, not really *before* but *within* the beautiful—the whole person quivers. He not only 'finds' the beautiful moving; rather, he experiences himself as being moved and possessed by it.<sup>254</sup>

Von Balthasar's observation pertains to all beauty – from natural beauty to divine beauty – but when it applies to divine beauty, the feelings and consciousness awakened by it reaches a supernatural height. This insight helps to reveal why God would share His glory with the Blessed Virgin Mary and the saints. It is not only because such sharing is consistent with His unrestricted goodness and love, but because it is part of His plan to awaken our sense of appreciation, awe, wonder, sacredness, and joy revealed in the beauty of the goodness and love of His Son's Mother and the saints. As we contemplate the life of the Virgin Mary and include her in our prayers – and further contemplate the lives of the saints, in their goodness, holiness and love, we put a prism in front of the light of God's unrestricted glory making it a myriad of interwoven colors and shapes – a veritable symphony of holiness and love. The above miracles not only serve to validate this view of the God of Jesus Christ, but also reveal the same beauty of goodness and love that they validate. Miracles – scientifically and naturally inexplicable events occurring through apparitions and prayer -- are not only real, they validate the truth of God's presence, goodness, and love – and above all, they reveal His beauty, glory, mystery, holiness, and majesty – they fill us with wonder, awe, fascination, and delight – the very thing lacking in a purely mundane materialistic view of reality. If we are to enjoy their richness to the full, we will also want to practice devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary (through the rosary) and allow ourselves to be moved by lives of the saints who reflect the glory and grandeur of God. We will discuss these devotions to the Blessed Virgin Mary, the saints, and the Eucharist in Chapter 12.

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<sup>254</sup> Edward T. Oakes and David Moss, eds. 2004, *The Cambridge Companion to Hans Urs von Balthasar* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) p 270.