

Christians Do You Believe These Dogmas?

1. The dogma that the world was created in six days, and in the germ of humanity the Creator failed and was disappointed in his work. Gen. vi. 6.

2. The dogma that God is angry with humanity, jealous, and vindictive, visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon their children, from the first man Adam down to the last human being that hereafter may be born!

3. The dogma that God caused Jesus to be born of a woman without a human father, and caused him to suffer an infamous death on a cross, in order thus to counteract the dire consequences of his own failure in man's "creation."

4. The dogma that Jesus, thus born, is a medium between God, who has been offended by his own work, and the human race lost eternally by this failure.

5. The dogma that Jesus, by his death upon the cross, made himself an atonement, a full and perfect satisfaction to the demands of Infinite Justice for the sins of the whole world of mankind.

6. The dogma that only those of the human race who exercise "saving faith" in this atonement at the moment when they die are benefited by it. All others, when they die, "go away into everlasting punishment."

7. The dogma that Moses, the prophets, and the apostles were divinely "inspired" mediums between God and "the rest of mankind," appointed by God to make known his will; so that what purports to be their writings or utterances is truly "the word of God."

8. The dogma that the successors of apostles whether popes, bishops, priests, elders, preachers, or ministers of the gospel, when truly so called, are divinely appointed mediums between God and the "rest of mankind," and their function is to declare the will of God, and to threaten all who will not exercise faith in their declarations with God's wrath in hell forever.

9. The dogma that there is an invisible, malignant, lying Devil, with an innumerable host of evil angels, prowling about near to every living soul, seeking whom they can entice into sin and everlasting torments in hell; moreover, that, in this infernal work, these devils have been woefully successful, as they will be to the end of time, and thus by far the biggest proportion of the human race enter the "broad way" to eternal death.

10. The dogma as to the absolute authority of the mediumistic writings in the Bible. Those refusing to yield to that authority are forever damned, "cast out into utter darkness, where there is weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth."

11. The dogma in respect to sin,

that it is an infinite evil committed by a finite being.

12. The dogma respecting the government of God, that he punishes sinners in an eternal hell, not for their good, but to gratify his own love of praise and glory.

13. The dogma respecting a new birth and "change of heart." The views which a sinner has been induced to entertain of himself is a "change of heart," and he is thus "born again." Such a "conversion" instantly renders a liar truthful, a dishonest man honest, and a bad man as good as the best.

14. The dogma in respect to faith, "saving faith," that faith that creates "the evidence of things unseen." This dogma forbids faith in humanity, faith in the unvarying laws of matter and of mind.

15. The dogma respecting prayer, based upon the false idea that aspiration is not a spontaneity in the human mind, as really filial love is; and by praying in faith Infinite Wisdom will remove a mountain into the sea.

16. That dogma that drilling the minds of people with these dogmas will change the elements of human character for the better, and without a persistent trust in their truthfulness, the race is accursed of God, and doomed to an unending hell! —[Sunderland.

The Revival of Superstition.

Does any one believe that popular superstitions have passed out of existence, and have become questions for the antiquary only? Never was there a greater error. Time was when the astrologer, the diviner, the sorcerer, had to practice his mysterious arts in secret. The law of the State menaced him with its severest punishments. The church fulminated against him and his clients its direst anathemas. He could show himself only at country fairs, among ignorant bores, himself broken by the rack and the strappado, lugging on his back the machinery of his harmless but suspicious deceptions. Were he consulted by the wise and rich, as he frequently was, it must be with closed doors and under studied secrecy.

How different it is now! From some strange reason there has been a wonderful revival within the last decade of nearly every medieval superstition, under various guises, in the most enlightened centres of the world. The practitioners of this modern socery, instead of concealing, advertise their claims, and urge them on the community under pseudo-scientific names and jargons. Palmistry, astrology, sympathetic magic, the doctrine of signatures, merotherapeutics, and all the farrago of fifteenth-century thaumaturgy flourish to-day in Boston and New York, in Paris and Chicago, to a degree surpass-

ing anything known three centuries ago.

There is a reason for this. Socery is science seen upside down. There is a confused groundwork of truth, a fallacious method of viewing facts, at the basis of these pseudo-sciences. Yet the truth and the success of the deceptions. They dazzle and daze minds not trained in sound reasoning; and how few they are! The societies for "psychical research" and theosophic speculation begin with an acknowledgement of the possible truth of ghost-seeing and of communion with the divine. This possible ground is seized by the charlatan as proved basis for his illusory edifice.

Superstitions are at core the same everywhere and at all times, because they are based on those desires and that ignorance which are and ever will be a part of man's nature. He is dimly aware of mighty unmeasured forces in ceaseless activity around him, controlling his own destiny. The ominous and omnipresent portent of death meets him at every turn. Dissatisfaction with his present condition, intense longing for a life and joy which it can never offer, goad him to seek a knowledge which weights and measures are impotent to accord him. Yet such restricted knowledge is all that science can supply. Therefore he turns, in despair, to the mystics and the adepts, the Cagliostros and the Humes, who stand ready to beckon him into their illusory temples of folly.—[Dr. BRINTON, in the Century Magazine.

Was Jesus Christ Divine?

The New Testament asserts that Jesus Christ was born of a virgin, Mary, by name, the niece of Joseph. Let us ponder on this point, never forgetting to let "the flame of reason burn". An immaculate conception is against all laws of nature, and God is nature (Christians admit this), therefore, Jesus Christ was manufactured precisely as are all human beings. Mary, finding she was to become a mother—and according to the law of Moses she had violated the seventh command and must be stoned to death—seeks the aid of her Uncle Joe. He, a widower, and of course having some affection for the niece, makes her his wife—the son of God is born. What there transpired made the writer first an Infidel, and later a materialist.

Joseph, his wife Mamie, with her child (an illegitimate one), were obliged to evacuate Bethlehem and go into the land of Judea—because God said so.

Then followed the useless slaughter of infants; poor, innocent babes were torn from the breast and slaughtered to appease a just and

loving(?) God. I say the thing was damnable if there was a God; he knew his (?) Son was safe away and why, when ruler of everything, did he permit murder to enter the mind of Herod? The slaughter of infants amounted to nothing except the damnable and useless slaughter.

Jesus Christ is then heard from at Jerusalem questioning the scribes and doctors. Eighteen years then elapse, when he appears at the river Jordan and is baptized by a crack-brained old fool—John the Baptist. One writer—Mark—states he "went into the wilderness fasting forty days and nights", and in the same verse (Mark iv. 14) "the angels ministered unto him."

What ministrations did God require, for Christ was God? Probably the writer of those words forgot himself.

Proceeding to Christ's baptism, eighteen years had elapsed since we have any record of this immaculate conception (?). What had he been doing? Nothing that we know of. I believe had he been the Son of God he would have been attending to the saving of souls; still it is possible he was "counting hairs," but according to God's rapidity in this business, Jesus could have cleaned up the job in less than eighteen years.

After his swim in the Jordan, he went about preaching in parables, knowing that the multitudes (?) (perhaps forty or fifty persons) were present. This is allowing more, by a large majority, than follow in the wake of vagrants) were at loss to interpret the meaning. Still, he claims he is the mouth-piece of God. Were he here today I should at once deny his claim.

After waltzing about for three years, he went to the "feast of the passover" and, later, to be crucified. It was not necessary for him to die at that time. He was in the prime of life—could have visited Rome, Athens, Alexandria, and other cities, where the Son of God's words would have fallen on productive soil; but Jesus wanted to become a martyr, and thought the proper place was Jerusalem.

The last night he passed on earth he was cowardly, and did exactly what Christians say an agnostic will do—he "weakened." His own words leave no doubt of the fact: "My God, My God! Why hast thou forsaken me?"

After reading, thinking and asking if Jesus was divine, the answer must be an emphatic negative.—[W. R. SNOW, in Freethought Magazine.

Remember, if you send us the names and addresses of 25 of your Liberal friends and acquaintances, we will make you a present of a copy of the Torch of Reason Song Book No. 1. This will only cost you a few minutes' work and a 2 cent stamp.