

Spiritualism

VERSUS

Christianity.



BY

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Spiritualism v. Christianity.

Christian.—I hear you are a Spiritualist now, my friend.

Spiritualist.—Yes, I believe I have got hold of the right thing at last.

Christian.—Indeed! What makes you think Spiritualism is the right thing?

Spiritualist.—Well, I've tried the old-fashioned orthodox teaching, but found it was a failure. I believe Spiritualism to be a "New Revelation," and is the last and best religion that God has been pleased to reveal to mankind.

Christian.—Ah! then I'm not so sure of you being on the right track when you call it a "New Revelation," and a "new religion"; in fact, I fear you are sadly astray in embracing as a religion such a cult as Spiritualism. The leaders in the system contradict one another in their explanations of what Spiritualism really is. One calls it a philosophy, a religion, and a science all in one. Another denies that there is any religion in it, that it is purely a science. Sir Conan Doyle says, "Spiritualism is the very breath of religion." Sir Wm. Barrett says, "It is obvious that Spiritualism is not, and cannot be a religion, for true religion rests essentially upon those higher instincts of the soul we call faith"; and another writer declares, "The essence of true religion is the personal communion of the soul with God." Spiritualism cannot satisfy. To call it a religion is an insult to the faith and name of Christ.

Spiritualist.—You surprise me. Have you never investigated it?

Christian.—Certainly I have not. It is not necessary to see a murder or a burglary committed in order to be able to warn others against the crimes of murder and theft. No more is it necessary to investigate Spiritualism in order to be justified in condemning it. I have an old-fashioned Book that tells me all about it, and it certainly denounces the system.

Spiritualist.—I really do not think you can find anything condemnatory of Spiritualism in the Bible. There are some wonderful accounts there of trances, visions, and materialisations from the spirit world. Man, as you know, is a spirit clad in clay, and while in this prison house of clay—the body—he is susceptible to spiritual impressions from the unseen world; and many of these spiritual manifestations and visions are recorded in the Bible.

Christian.—Quite true. A large part of the Bible is taken up with spirit manifestations, visions of seers, glimpses of angels, etc. All the old prophets and apostles, and even Christ Himself, were often in touch with the spirit world, and received communications, words of comfort, advice, etc.

Spiritualist.—We appear to be agreed on that point; on what grounds then do you condemn Spiritualism?

Christian.—My objections to Spiritualism are shortly these: First of all, it is condemned in the Word of God, and this fact alone is sufficient condemnation. The visions seen, and communications those prophets and apostles received were not from evil spirits, but from angelic messengers sent direct from God.

Spiritualist.—How do you know those visions were not hallucinations?

Christian.—We know they were not, for the men and women who saw them had the witness of the Spirit of God, which modern Spiritualists certainly have not. Now, if you will read carefully the early history of Israel, you must come to the conclusion that God has always set His face against this abominable thing called demonism; and so strong was His denunciation of it that He absolutely forbade His people having anything to do with it on pain of death. Now, I strenuously maintain that if this devilry

called demonism is forbidden by God, it cannot possibly be the "New Revelation" you seem so enamoured of. The cult is in fact as old as humanity, and through all the ages has been looked upon as a crime.

Spiritualist.—Your language is certainly strong; but how can you identify modern Spiritualism with what you call the demonism of bygone ages?

Christian.—That is not a difficult matter. A tree is always known by its fruit; and no one can deny the fact that what was known as necromancy, or "seeking the truth from the dead," in those far off ages is identical in spirit, aim, and practice with the cult known as modern Spiritualism.

Spiritualist.—Give proofs of that, please.

Christian.—Very well. We are warned in the Bible against certain abominations, one of which was "seeking the truth from the dead," and this is the essential feature of modern Spiritualism. It is a fact, almost universally accepted, that there are hosts of intelligent beings in the unseen world around us who are in antagonism to human beings.

Spiritualist.—I certainly believe that; they are evil spirits.

Christian.—Yes. Well, God warned His people against having communication with those evil spirits. You know, there were mediums in those past ages who were controlled by these spirits—"familiar spirits" they are called in the Bible—and thereby got into communication with them, just as the medium of to-day goes into a trance, and while in this passive state is controlled by one or more spirits. Now, this is the crux of the whole thing, because Spiritualists profess to believe that these spirits are the spirits of our departed dead; but we know from God's Word that the spirits of our dead do not communicate with us.

Spiritualist.—But those communications are a proved reality.

Christian.—Certainly; but they are impersonations. If they were only some form of telepathy, surely God

would not have pronounced such terrible judgments on those who practise it.

Spiritualist.—All Spiritualists admit that in their seances there are at times spirits who seem to delight in misleading and deceiving those with whom they communicate. But in spite of that, we have proofs that those who have passed beyond the veil have been able to communicate with those left behind. The special claim of Spiritualism is that it furnishes proof that our departed dead are still living.

Christian.—But surely we know that fact already from Scripture without the doubtful aid of Spiritualism. The so-called revelations of Spiritualism have given us absolutely nothing that the Bible has not already revealed. How then can it be called a “New Revelation”? To the believer in Christ Jesus the question of personal survival after death rests upon far surer evidence than Spiritualism can ever hope to give.

Spiritualist.—Indeed! you surprise me. What evidence is that?

Christian.—The infallible evidence of God’s Word. Conscious life after death does not require Spiritualism to prove it. The Bible is most emphatic and convincing on the subject, but the scheme of Spiritualism is to deny God’s Word, and pretend to prove it as if it were a “New Revelation.” The most powerful argument for the survival of man’s spirit after death is not to be found in spiritualistic experiments or phenomena, but in the positive and absolutely authoritative statements of Scripture. Spiritualism relies upon its phenomena as evidence of its truth; but alas! much of that phenomena has been fraudulently produced; and as for the communications, you admit that **some** spirits are guilty of wilful lying and misrepresentation; how then can you possibly know but that **all** are equally guilty?

Spiritualist.—Oh, no; very many of the spirits are too highly developed to stoop to such lying and deception.

Christian.—Oh, indeed. Now, your own champion, Sir Conan Doyle, says in this connection: “We have, unhappily, to deal with absolutely cold-blooded lying on

the part of wicked or mischievous intelligences." He freely admits it. Others have deplored the same thing. These admissions by your front rank leaders are significant, and show that there is absolutely no reliance to be placed in spiritualistic communications. And these men also deplore the fact that they have no possible hope of discovering the identity of the spirits. Why? This question of identity is admittedly the weak link in the spiritualistic chain, and is a fatal defect that condemns the whole system; for it is an axiom that a chain is no stronger than its weakest link. This weak point is fully admitted by its leaders; as is also the fact that the spirits are guilty of lying and misrepresentation. Of what value then, I ask, are your alleged proofs of communication with these spirits of our departed dead? None whatever. God has already given us His will in this respect as far as He has deemed it necessary that we should know, and if He wished to give us further light, He certainly would not use such a doubtful medium as Spiritualism.

Spiritualist.—We consider all these communications to be supplementary, and to indicate that the human spirits that have passed over have acquired a larger knowledge of the scheme of things, and increased powers of comprehension.

Christian.—They have certainly acquired a larger knowledge, but the state after death is "a bourne from which no traveller returns," either to warn or to cheer. The rich man in Hades had no power to warn his five brothers on earth as regards their peril of meeting the same fate as himself, and although he pleaded with Abraham to send Lazarus to warn them, Lazarus was not sent. Why? Abraham gave Dives such a view of Scripture reasoning on the subject, that it completely shatters the absurd claims of Spiritualism as to the dead communicating with the living.

Spiritualist.—But don't you realise that if spirits communicate with us from the unseen world, it must without doubt convince men of the reality of the life after death, and their power to communicate?

Christian.—Certainly it would not. If spirits could return to earth, surely Dives would have lost no time in coming to warn his brothers. Listen to what Abraham told him: "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." Sound reasoning, this, my friend. A writer says: "There is no case in Scripture of a human departed spirit being permitted to hold converse with living man, except that of Samuel, and he was sent in God's anger." The Bible negatives any such idea.

Spiritualist.—You refer to the case of the Witch of Endor? Ah, that was a clear proof that departed spirits can communicate with us.

Christian.—I think I can show you that it was not a proof. It is the only authentic instance where a departed spirit has been "called up" by a medium to communicate with the living. See 1 Samuel 28. But God evidently permitted the spirit of Samuel to appear for a special purpose. You will see there is an important difference between this seance and the modern ones. Instead of the spirit speaking through the medium, as is done in modern spiritualistic seances, you will notice that the words were spoken direct to Saul. The medium was entirely **ignored**. She was terror-stricken by the unusual revelation. The message was not given through her mediumship at all, but direct to Saul; and instead of being a message of advice and comfort, was one of stern denunciation. After having "called up" the spirit of Samuel, she seems to have had no further part in it. God evidently intervened, and took the business out of her hands. He then brought Samuel and Saul face to face once more. That this was so, we may judge by her terror, for she evidently did not expect to see what really happened. If, as Spiritualists assert, it is love for those left behind that makes the departed one desirous to communicate, why did Samuel reproach Saul? "Why hast thou disquieted me to bring me up?" God's judgment can be clearly seen in this remarkable incident, for it is elsewhere stated that "Saul died for enquiry of a familiar spirit." 1 Chr. 10-13.

Spiritualist.—But you agreed with me just now that there is abundance of spirit manifestation and communication with man recorded in the Bible.

Christian.—Certainly I did; and such is the fact. In past ages there have been abundant communications from God and His angel messengers. The Bible record is full of such visions and manifestations of God to His servants; but the lying communications received by mediums are from evil spirits who have the power to personate our departed dead; and this is the test Christ gave, "By their fruits ye shall know them."

Spiritualist.—But we read of David who had the prophet Gad as a seer: also Elijah and many others. These men communicated with the spirit-world, received messages, and evidently acted the part of mediums. And even Christ was visited at times with spirit messages, and with angels.

Christian.—Quite true; God did not condemn a genuine seer. In fact, He could not do so without condemning those old prophets who were seers; and in later times His Apostles who went into trances saw visions, and communicated with the spirit world. In the early Church a diversity of spiritual gifts was looked upon as a blessing from God. The spirit of knowledge, of grace, of prayer, of prophecy, which were the gifts of the Spirit of God, were sought after. Paul exhorted his hearers to "covet earnestly the best gifts." There were voices, visions, and other physical phenomena constantly taking place in the lives of the Apostles, and the members of the early Church. But that does not prove that because Spiritualists go into trances, see visions, and hear voices, that their experiences necessarily tally with that of those early Spirit-filled believers. By no means. These men were filled with the Spirit of God; they had been converted, had passed from death into life—the abundant risen life of their Saviour and Lord. They were "one in Christ." Here is the difference. Spiritualists reject Jesus Christ as their Saviour, consequently there is a world of difference between the two. Spiritualists distort the plain teachings of the Bible in this respect in order

to try and justify their position of practising communication with the unseen world. One Spiritist writer asserts that because the disciples were controlled by Spirit power on the day of Pentecost, modern Spiritualists have therefore a striking example and precedent. But, alas! for such an argument. The Spirit power on that day was the Holy Spirit of God; those who control Spiritualism are evil spirits, who have a deadly hatred to God and His great scheme of redemption. Scripture draws a sharp distinction between these men—energised and directed by the Spirit of God—and those who have “familiar spirits.” We constantly meet with their attempts to compare the mediumship of Spiritualism with the Divine inspiration and the holy spiritual agency of Old and New Testament times; and verse after verse is distorted and mutilated to suit their purpose of claiming similarity of inspiration and control.

Spiritualist.—We claim that all the old prophets and Apostles had psychic faculties—mediumistic powers similar to those our best mediums are gifted with, and that in all respects they were the forerunners of those of our own day.

Christian.—They had psychic faculties; they had also communications; but what a world of difference between the two. You must not forget that those men were selected and inspired by the Holy Spirit of God for the work they had to do. You will notice also that there was always a “Thus saith the Lord” in connection with all those communications of olden times. Take, for instance, the seer you just mentioned: Gad the prophet, who was David’s seer. You must have noticed that he acted only under God’s direction. Thus: “The word of the Lord came to the prophet Gad”; or “The angel of the Lord commanded Gad to say to David.” And this Divine spiritual guidance applied to all the prophets and apostles of the Lord; they were all inspired and guided by the Spirit of God. You will thus perceive the vast chasm that separates those men of God from the spiritualistic mediums who try to “seek the truth from the dead.”

Spiritualist.—But the Mosaic law these prophets lived under has passed away, and with it the condemnation of necromancy.

Christian.—By no means. The ceremonial law of Moses has indeed passed away—being fulfilled in Christ—but the moral law, “Thou shalt not”—will never pass away. That prohibition reaches back as far as revelation itself, and will stand while the Word of God stands.

Spiritualist.—Yes, but in spite of that alleged prohibition it is our special claim that the spirits of our departed loved ones do return and manifest their presence at our seances.

Christian.—Now, although these intelligences who thus manifest themselves always **claim** to be the spirits of our dear departed dead, it is admitted that claim has always broken down in the presence of a real test. Those whose names were best known in spiritualistic circles, and who have spent most of their lives in the search for sure evidence on this vital point, have, after death, been unable to furnish that evidence themselves. They have not found it possible to supply what I may call the “missing link” of spiritistic hypothesis. It is a well-known fact that the late F. W. Myers left a message in a sealed envelope, and which he undertook to send through some medium from the other side of death. But that message has never come through! Never yet has any medium succeeded with this test of the sealed message, though many have tried it. Why has the message never come? Because the separating gulf of death is impassable. It is a “great gulf fixed.” In all the literature of Spiritualism, made up of communications from the supposed spirits of the dead—and some of them have been men of high attainments in literature and science—there has never yet been given a single truth that has increased human knowledge. It is a significant fact, that of all the millions of learned men—men skilled in the highest arts and sciences—who have passed over into the unseen world, not one sentence of information of the slightest value to science or medical research has ever been obtained from them. All the communications have been either blasphemous, vulgar, or

trashy; all utterly useless. Why is this? Have those great minds degenerated? Certainly not; but the received communications have been impersonations; and all are due either to "lying spirits," or lying mediums. It is a well-known and admitted fact among leading Spiritualists that these evil spirits do personate our dead; but the investigator has no possible means whatever of testing the truth of their utterances. We know absolutely nothing about those spirits: their nature, their origin, or their capabilities, save the revelation in God's Word that they surround our earth, are evil, and antagonistic to God and to humanity. We also know that witchcraft, necromancy, or divination, is always connected in the Bible as originating with evil spirits. Hence the warnings. We are therefore justified in condemning the invoking of spirits as is practised in spiritualistic seances as contrary to the express teaching of the Bible. There is only one Spirit we may invoke--the Omnipotent Holy Spirit of God.

Spiritualist.—If, as you allege, it was so largely practised in bygone ages, and its ranks at the present time number millions of adherents, which include men of the highest intelligence and education, why do you so strongly condemn the system, seeing its wonderful advance?

Christian.—Because it is a direct attempt to pry into things which are forbidden, and which are purposely hidden from man by an All-Wise God. It is an attempt to force open a door that God has locked.

Spiritualist.—But the Christ could and did invoke spirits when on earth.

Christian.—No. He rebuked evil spirits that had taken possession of unfortunate men and women. He rebuked those demons, and commanded them to depart out of the men. They knew Jesus Christ, and acknowledged Him to be the Son of God; they quickly obeyed His commands, and cowered in His Holy presence.

Spiritualist.—That demon possession you refer to was peculiar to that age. I do not think men and women

are as actually obsessed by demons in our day. I have never known any.

Christian.—Well, my observation of events around us to-day plainly indicate that men and women are as really possessed by demons now as in the days of Christ; and the "Occult Review," a spiritualistic paper, recently said: "Spiritists are well aware of the awful peril of obsession by evil spirits; man has some very dangerous and powerful enemies behind the veil." These are a Spiritualist's words, not mine, but they prove up to the hilt what I have been telling you, viz., that Spiritualism is of the devil. If it was of God, as they wish us to believe, it would not be antagonistic to Christ. Why, the very fact that the character of the devil is unchanged; that it is still his fixed determination to seduce and estrange mankind from God, this fixity of purpose being just as intense as it was in the Garden of Eden—probably more so, as he knows that his time to work mischief and ruin is drawing to a close—is, I think, evidence enough. Instances could be given of men being possessed and absolutely controlled by demons in our day, and consequently ruined morally and physically, and sad to say, much of it is brought about by the evil teachings of Spiritualism. The late W. T. Stead, the well-known journalist and Spiritualist, said of Spiritualism: "A system cannot be defended which wrecks the moral and physical health of its devotees."

Spiritualist.—We Spiritualists certainly do not see those things in the same light as those who adhere to the old orthodox teaching. Our teachings are certainly at variance with many of the doctrines and dogmas of Christianity, as we consider them to be obsolete. We do not believe, for instance, that Jesus Christ was really God, nor that He died to save man from sin. We hold and teach that He was merely a Spirit of an exalted order; that He was an inspired medium, and that He closed His life as a martyr. We have had many martyrs since. We reverence Him as being the highest Spirit who has been incarnate upon earth, but we do not believe that He was God.

Christian.—Well, I have read, “the devils believe and tremble,” and even the demons in Christ’s day acknowledged Him to be the Son of God; but Spiritualists do neither. Now, you have given me another proof of the demoniacal origin of Spiritualism. You assert that Spiritualism entirely rejects the doctrine of the divinity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ?

Spiritualist.—Yes, that is correct; we consider that Jesus Christ was a perfect man, a man of the highest ideals, but only a man. He was a wonderful seer, and died a martyr, but we absolutely reject the teaching that He was God incarnate.

Christian.—Well, the object of Spiritualism certainly seems to be the destruction of man’s belief in Christ as the anointed Son of God. They exalt Him as “a wonderful medium,” but totally reject Him as the world’s Saviour. And to deny that Jesus Christ came in the flesh, is certainly of the Devil, for the Apostle John says: “Believe not every spirit . . . you can know the Spirit of God by this: every spirit that confesses that Jesus is the Christ incarnate comes from God, and every spirit that does not confess Jesus incarnate does **not** come from God, but is that spirit of Antichrist.” (Moffat’s translation) 1 John 4, 2. Now, God never contradicts Himself. If Spiritualism, as you allege, is a “New Revelation” from God, and destined to eventually supplant and overthrow the Christian religion, then we have the anomaly of God denouncing and forbidding communication with demons in the necromancy of olden times, but in these latter days allegedly revealing the same thing in the modern system of Spiritualism as a “New Revelation,” and which is destined to nullify His Son’s life and work on this earth, and bring to nought the whole mighty scheme of man’s redemption. No; God does not change, nor does He contradict Himself. He does not bless now what He cursed in those bygone ages. The rejection of Christ as the Son of God, and His work in the atonement for man’s sin, condemns the system of modern Spiritualism as anti-christian.

Spiritualist.—You are confusing the names of two distinct systems, viz., Spiritualism and Spiritism. We claim there is a great difference between them. We hold that Spiritism is really necromancy; that it belongs to the realm of fortune-telling, black magic, etc., and is certainly identical with the witchcraft and necromancy so strongly forbidden in the Old Testament. But Spiritualism, on the contrary, we claim to be a science, a philosophy, and a religion all in one. This is the teaching of the leaders in the system.

Christian.—That is essentially hair-splitting. Spiritualism has been defined by its leaders as “the demonstration of a future life by means of communication between the living and the spirits of the dead”; and our dictionaries define it as “the doctrine of the existence of spirits as distinct from matter, and **is synonymous with Spiritism.**” That is, both have the same meaning. The terms are synonymous, and you must have noticed that most of the leading Spiritualists use both terms interchangeably. The futile attempt to prove they are different systems is a trick to deceive the unwary and the simple, and has evidently been adopted as a ruse to escape the discredit which attaches to certain fraudulent mediums and seances, and this is best effected by styling them “Spiritists.” But the infallible Word of God makes no such distinction. They have the same identical aim and purpose, that is, of “seeking after familiar spirits,” as did the ancient sorcerers and necromancers. A writer says: “‘Spiritism’ is the correct name for what is usually called Spiritualism. True Christians—believers in the Lord Jesus Christ—alone are really ‘spiritual.’ ‘Spiritualism’ so called is a dealing with spirits in a way that quenches real spirituality; it is ‘psychic’ and fleshly.” What a contrast between the experiences of mediums and those of the true believer, who is governed and guided by the Holy Spirit of God. He alone is really spiritual.

Spiritualist.—Oh, that is the old theological orthodoxy, and do you know that all those obsolete dogmas

and theological platitudes that orthodox Christianity teaches are a failure, and Spiritualism will most certainly supplant them.

Christian.--Never. I know there have been failures amongst many who hold to the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ; but the failure is not in His teachings, but in those who do not and will not live up to them. Those who wilfully shut their eyes to the teaching of Christ's Gospel will always be ready to declare that Christianity is a failure. But Jesus Christ cannot fail; and those who believe and trust in Him will never fail; they are founded on the Rock, and that Rock is Christ. He is the only hope for fallen man.

Spiritualist.--We do not hold with you in that belief. We claim that man did not fall in the sense the Bible teaches, consequently man can be his own Saviour, and by his own unaided efforts work out his own salvation.

Christian.--Then Spiritualists do not believe in Christ's atonement?

Spiritualist.--No; we do not believe such atonement was necessary; we do not recognise any need of propitiation towards God. We deny Jesus Christ as the Saviour of mankind; we teach universally that man is his own saviour, and can obtain happiness or suffer misery only through his own acts in this life; for as he sows here, so will he reap there.

Christian.--Truly the doctrines of demons. The Spirit of God says, "In the latter days some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons." In all these false "isms," viz., Eddyism, Russellism, Mormonism, Spiritualism, etc., much is said about Jesus Christ being "a higher Spirit," "Master," "Teacher," "Mystic," "Medium," "Seer," etc., but by every one of them He is robbed of His true place and position. His holy Name—the Name above all—is blasphemed and traduced by them while idly professing to "reverence" Him. They deny His divinity, and in this are certainly worse than the demons, for in the days of His flesh they acknowledged to Christ, "We

know Thee who Thou art, the Holy One of God." Spiritualism thus stands condemned as an anti-christian and illogical system; a blasphemous, self-contradictory cult. As a pretended religion, it is an unholy, unreal, unhealthy thing, and the poor dupes who follow it up run grave risks of mental derangement and moral decadence. Our Lord, whom they blasphemously describe as "a wonderful medium," never had recourse to a dark seance, though He raised the dead to life, and cast out evil spirits. He never went into a convulsive trance, or waited for the inspiration of His "control." He never played tricks on anyone, nor did He cause tables to dance about to amuse His disciples. How blasphemous then is the charge that He was a "clever medium." It is not possible to be a true Christian and a true Spiritualist at the same time, because Christianity is against Spiritualism, and Spiritualism is against true Christianity for the reason it is antagonistic to Christ. The teachings of Spiritualism are subversive of all the fundamental doctrines of the religion of Jesus Christ, and are therefore false; and all who are believers in Christ as their Saviour must surely experience a feeling of horror and disgust at the unashamed blasphemy that thus degrades the divinity of the only begotten Son of God down to the level of a spiritualistic medium, and repudiates the sacrifice of the Sinless Being who endured the death of the Cross as absolutely unnecessary and useless.

Spiritualist.—Now, Sir Conan Doyle says "There is no redemption from sin, because there is no such thing as original sin, no fall of man, because man never fell; so there is no atonement necessary and no cleansing by the blood of the Lamb." We spiritualists believe all this, and also believe that orthodox Christianity is a failure, and will eventually become obsolete, as it must do. The grand religion of Spiritualism will then entirely supplant it.

Christian.—Never, because the invariable tendency of Spiritualism is away from Christ, and this demon-inspired hostility to Jesus Christ and His mighty work of



atonement very clearly indicates its origin. Dr. Schofield observes: "Paul mentions a trinity of evils, viz., 'Another Jesus whom we did not preach,' 'Another gospel which ye did not accept,' 'Another spirit which ye did not receive,' and these three evils are with us to-day, and are very fairly represented in the three most popular pretended religions, viz., Eddyism—mis-called Christian Science—Theosophy, and Spiritualism." No man can honestly believe God's Word and accept the blasphemous teachings of Spiritualism at the same time. They are opposed to each other, as light is to darkness, as death is to life, as Satan is to God.

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