

## Napoleon's Proof for the Divinity of Jesus<sup>1</sup>



"Napoleon regarded this as precisely the most striking proof of the divinity of Jesus--namely, his power over men's hearts. The once well nigh all-powerful Corsican, in the solitude of his last days, called up before his imagination all the heroic figures and master minds of the world, and measured them by his own gigantic greatness. But all of them combined, and he himself as well, vanished like empty shadows before the person of Jesus Christ:

Napoleon: "What a conqueror! --a conqueror who controls humanity at will, and wins to himself not only one nation, but the whole human race. What a marvel! He attaches to himself the human soul with all its energies. And how? By a miracle which surpasses all others. He claims the love of men--that is to say, the most difficult thing in the world to obtain; that which the wisest of men cannot force from his truest friend, that which no father can compel from his children, no wife from her husband, no brother from his brother--the heart. He claims it; he requires it absolutely and undividedly, and he obtains it instantly.

Alexander, Caesar, Hannibal, Louis XIV strove in vain to secure this. They conquered the world, yet they had not a single friend, or at all events, they have none any more. Christ speaks, however, and from that moment all generations belong to him; and they are joined to him much more closely than by any ties of blood and by a much more intimate, sacred and powerful communion. He kindles the flame of love which causes one's self-love to die, and triumphs over every other love. Why should we not recognize in this miracle of love the eternal Word which created the world? The other founders of religions had not the least conception of this mystic love which forms the essence of Christianity.

I have filled multitudes with such passionate devotion that they went to death for me. But God forbid that I should compare the enthusiasm of my soldiers with Christian love. They are as unlike as their causes. In my case, my presence was always necessary, the electric effect of my glance, my voice, my words, to kindle fire in their hearts. And I certainly possess personally the secret of that magic power of taking by storm the

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<sup>1</sup>To me, there is no great proof than that his disciples followed His Way after His death knowing they would die painful death with no possible promise of earthly riches or importance. They clearly had certain knowledge of His divinity, His resurrection.

sentiments of men; but I was not able to communicate that power to anyone. None of my generals ever learned it from me or found it out. Moreover, I myself do not possess the secret of perpetuating my name and a love for me in their hearts forever, and to work miracles in them without material means.

Now that I languish here at St Helena, chained upon this rock, who fights, who conquers empires for me? Who still even thinks of me? Who interests himself for me in Europe? Who has remained true to me? That is the fate of all great men. It was the fate of Alexander and Caesar, as it is my own. We are forgotten, and the names of the mightiest conquerors and most illustrious emperors are soon only the subject of a schoolboy's tasks. Our exploits come under the rod of a pedantic schoolmaster, who praises or condemns us as he likes.

What an abyss exists between my profound misery and the eternal reign of Christ, who is preached, loved, and worshipped, and live on throughout the entire world. Is this to die? Is it not rather to live eternally? The death of Christ! It is the death of a God."

(Quoted in Hilarin Felder, Christ and the Critics, vol. 2, pp. 216-17)