was ready to accept any faith which did not require a direct denial of reason, and for this purpose studied Buddhism, Mahommedanism and Christianity. The only persons he felt who were happy and found a meaning in life were the poor, and the only life that could be lived in accordance with reason was life under simple conditions such as animals lived. Only man must labour, not as the animals, each for itself, but for all. The search after God was not an act of reason but of feeling. To live after God’s word we must renounce all the material pleasures of life and be humble and charitable to all men. This belief he found in the churches, but mixed up with other things which he could not understand and which repelled him, viz. sacraments, fasts, bowing before relics and images. The church festivals, as commemorating miracles or alleged facts of Christ’s life, were repugnant to him. Com­munion he explained to himself as an action done in remembrance of Christ and as signifying a cleansing from sin and an accep­tance of Christ’s teaching. When asked by the priest to repeat before receiving the elements that he believed that what he was about to receive were the real Body and Blood, he repeated the formula but found that no wish to believe could make him believe it. The attitude of the various Christian churches towards one another also alienated his sympathy; it had no resemblance to a union of love. He thought that there should be mutual concessions where beliefs had so much in common, but was told that any compromise involved an admission that the clergy had altered the primitive faith and that it was their duty to hand on the faith inviolate. He was also very much repelled by the attitude of the Church towards war and capital punishment. Tracing the happiness of the peasantry to their faith, he became convinced that there were certain elements of truth in Christianity. The Christian churches and the Greek Orthodox Church in particular had in his view combined to obscure the basis of truth in Christ’s teaching.

Tolstoy therefore set himself to endeavour to. eliminate what he thought the false doctrines, and superstitious elements which had grown up round Christianity, and to discover the verities contained in it. Tolstoy, started with the premise that Christ’s teaching was communicated to unlettered persons and only put down in writing long after his death. "It may be assumed,” he says, “ that the Church in accepting the three synoptic gospels had accepted much that was inaccu­rate.” Tolstoy argues that it should be remembered that the gospels must nave gone through many changes and that he is therefore at liberty to deal with them critically. He sees in Chris­tianity not an exclusively divine revelation, nor a mere historical phenomenon, but a teaching which gives meaning to. life. The churches, he considered, were substituting a teaching which was not Christ’s, but was a strained and contorted version of what Jesus taught. The sectarianism of Christianity had its root in the idea that the gospels are to be understood not by taking them by them­selves, but by interpreting them in such a manner as to make them agree not only with the other sacred writings but with the traditions of the Church, which were themselves obscure. Tolstoy maintained that it was the foreign elements foisted upon Christ's teaching which have alienated the best minds from Christianity. Anyone taking Christ’s teaching alone will see that it has no admixture of elements that contradict common sense. It has no sympathy with supersti­tions, contains no "dregs,” has no "darknesses,” but is the strictest and fullest system of ethics.

The substance of Christianity seems to Tolstoy the inculcation of love, humility, self-denial and the duty of returning good for evil, and these essential principles attracted him throughout his life, even when he was a sceptic. The Greek Orthodox Church treated these principles rather as accessory to the teaching of Jesus than of its essence, and the Church considered dogma of more importance. The rule of the Orthodox Church concerning dogmas, sacraments, fasts, prayers, seemed not only unnecessary but were not based on anything in Christ’s teaching. The Sermon on the Mount as reported in Saint Matthew contains, according to Tolstoy, the essence of Christ’s teaching which Christians should carry out entirely. The key to the sermon is contained in the words “ Resist not evil,” this injunction meaning that not only should Christians never repay evil with evil but also that they should not oppose it with physical force. Any physical resistance of evil is contrary to the law of love. This command he regards as the central point of the doctrine of Jesus and as really easy to obey, for which view he quotes Christ’s statement, "My yoke is easy.” The whole teach­ing of the churches was contrary to Christ’s teaching when they gave their sanction and approval to armies and the enforcement of the criminal law by the executive powers of a government. Christian society not only ignored Christ’s injunction not to resist evil but was actually based on a denial of its truth. The words “Judge not that ye be not judged ” Tolstoy treats as an expansion or rather as a logical result of the command "Resist not evil.” Jesus denied the possibility of human justice, demonstrating in the case of the woman taken in adultery that man could not judge his fellow man, since he himself was also guilty. Jesus’ declaration amounted to saying, "You believe that your laws reform criminals; as a matter of fact they only make more criminals. There is only one way to suppress evil, that is to return good for evil without respect of persons.” The whole social fabric of modern so-called "Christian ” society was founded upon principles disapproved of by Christ. Its prison cells, factories and houses of infamy, its state church, its culture, science, art and civilization were all based on coercion and violence. People pretended that Christ did not abolish the Mosaic law, but that the law of Christ and the law of Moses harmon­ized. But Christians acted on the principle of "an eye for an eye,” discarding the law of Christ and following that of Moses.

Tolstoy goes through the gospel for the purpose of finding out what Christ’s teaching really is. In doing so, he puts aside the miraculous events of Christ’s birth and all other miracles as irrelevant to his inquiry, and also impossible of belief. The result is that he finds that Christ laid down five "entirely new ” commandments, the first commandment being "Live in peace with all men,” which was the interpretation put upon the words "Ye have heard it ever said by the men of old time that thou shalt not kill and that who­soever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment., but I say unto you whosoever is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the judgment.” The words “ without cause,” Tolstoy rejects, as does also the Revised Version. He considers these words open the door to the evasion of the commandment.. Tolstoy interprets the next words, "and whoever shall say to his brother 'raca ’ shall be in danger of the council, but whosoever shall say 'thou fool' shall be in danger of hell fire ” to mean that one must never look upon a human being as worthless and as a fool. Not only must Christians refrain from anger, but it is the duty of a follower of Jesus to live in peace with all men. They should not regard anger as justifiable in any circumstances. The second commandment of Jesus Tolstoy declares to be, "Thou shalt not be united physically to any woman except the one whom thou hast originally known sexually. You commit a sin if you ever abandon that woman. Marriage is marriage, whether there have or have not been any legal or ecclesiastical formalities, once there has been physical union.” The third com­mandment as Tolstoy understands it is "Swear not at all.” This commandment applies not merely to profane swearing but to all kinds of oaths, whether taken by witnesses in courts of law, by soldiers when being sworn in, by magistrates in pursuance of their office, oaths of fidelity and the. like. All the oaths are imposed for an evil purpose and. are entirely wrong. The fourth commandment is "Resist not evil.” Christ’s followers were never meant to act as judges, citizens, policemen or in any other capacity in which it would be their duty to resist evil. Christians should do good in the sense of living virtuously. To abolish evil they should avoid the commission of evil, and never under any circumstances resist wrongs by force. They should never return violence by violence. Christ taught "If any one strike you, suffer it; if any one would deprive you of anything, yield it up to him ; if any one would force you to work for him, go and work for him ; if any one would take away your property, abandon it to him.” The fifth commandment is laid down in Matt. v. 43-48. After calling the attention of his readers to the fact that the words which introduce the injunction to "Love your enemies,” &c., read, "Ye have heard it said of old that thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy,” Tolstoy points out that these words must be understood as meaning "Thou shalt love thy fellow countryman and hate the foreigner.” But when Christ taught in opposition to this maxim "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you,” He meant "You have heard it laid down of old that you must love those of your own race and hate foreigners, but I say to you, love every one without distinction of nationality.” It is difficult to. love your personal enemy, but it is perfectly possible to love citizens of a foreign nation equally with your own.

Tolstoy admits that it is difficult to conceive that everything that is considered essential and natural—what is thought noble and grand—love, of country, defence of one’s own country, its glory, fighting against one’s country’s enemies—is not only an infraction of the law of Christ but directly denounced by Him. People might here retort “ If it is true that Jesus really meant this He would have said so plainly.” To this objection he replies “ We must not forget that Jesus did not foresee that men having faith in His doctrine of humility, love and fraternity could ever with calmness and premeditation organize themselves for the murder of their brethren. Christ not foreseeing this did not in so many words forbid Christians to participate in war.” To make good this point Tolstoy shows by quotations from the Fathers that none of the early Christians ever contemplated fighting with any thing but spiritual weapons.

The doctrines of original sin, of the Atonement, of the Trinity, of the Resurrection, are, according to Tolstoy, all without founda­tion and contrary to Christ’s teaching. Man is conscious, he writes, of a spiritual essence which exists in an imperfect form not only within himself but also in all other living creatures. The perfect spiritual essence is what we call God. It is the indwelling of this spiritual essence in man which creates the desire for communion with God and with those who possess the spirit imperfectly. The true life of man consists in fulfilling the needs of the spirit; and everything that helps to free it from the influence of the body which is antagonistic, tends to encourage the growth of that immortal part. When death comes the spirit is emancipated from the body and returns to God, where possibly, says Tolstoy, it ceases to have an individual existence. The spirit in man is not subject to the limitations of time and space. The life of the individual, however, is essentially bounded by time and space. With the destruction