

And that under these circumstances, he would take a chance on leaving his baptism until he knew he was going to die the next day. It seems to be inconsistent with the character of a careful ruler as he was. He could not tell when he would be killed, in battle or assassination, and the fact that he prolonged it to the end of his life does not seem to me to fit with the theory that he believed it would wipe out all his sins before. It seems to me much better to take the idea that he had taken the Lord as his Saviour and that he was saved and that if he was killed in battle, he would go to be with the Lord, and that the matter of the external witnessing to the world of his associations with the Christian church was something which he felt could be safely postponed until a later time. Now that is only conjecture but the idea that he had a magical idea that ~~the~~ baptism wiped away sin and that it is all gone so you can start over again, that is an idea which some attribute but it seems to me the ~~the~~ evidence for this is pretty slight, and it doesn't seem to me that if he really believed that - in his position with the danger of - with the fact that at least 50 Roman emperors had been assassinated before him, that he would take the chance. It seems very unlikely.

Now the second question is a different one from the first. (a) was Constantine's character (b) is Constantine's effect on Christianity. Now there are those who think that Constantine's effect on Christianity was entirely harmful. If only there had been a man like ~~8~~----- who had taken the power instead of Constantine, who would have kept up the persecution steadily, how the Christian church would have been purged and how much more sure we would be that those who were Christians were sincere, earnest Christians - well, that is true. On the other hand, how many would there have been a century later? God, I think, during the first three centuries, arranged that the persecutions would come frequently enough to frequently purge the church, to cleanse them, to clear out of it those who were not earnest and loyal and thus to maintain its spiritual character - until this little group went ahead and grew bigger and bigger until it was spread through the empire. I think he did that  $8\frac{1}{2}$  ----- ----- so that the persecution of Diocletian