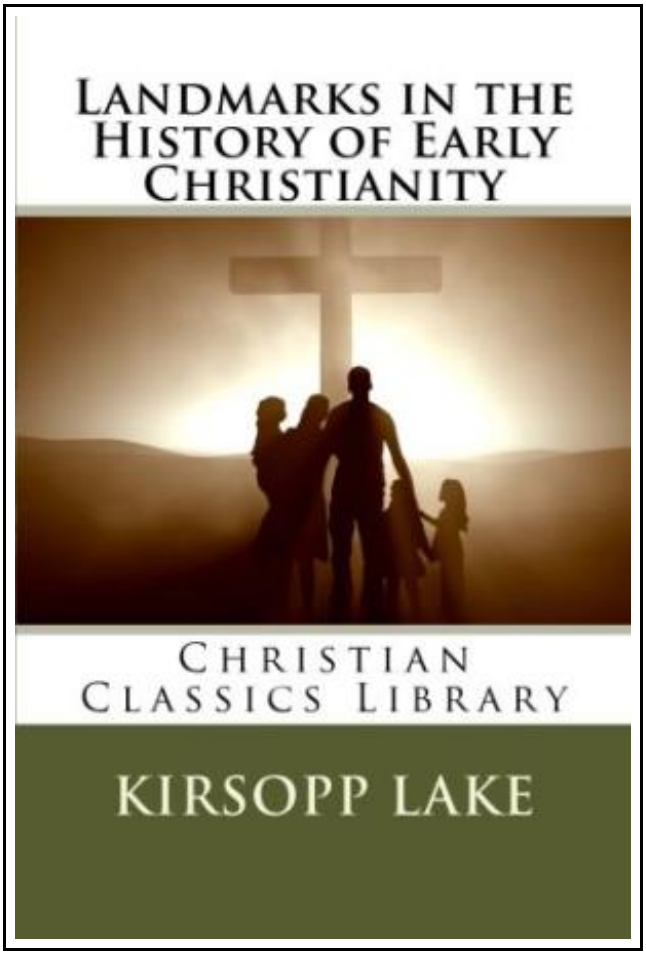
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CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform. Paperback. Book Condition: New. This item is printed on demand. Paperback. 78 pages. Dimensions: 9.0in. x 6.0in. x 0.2in.Nothing illustrates this so well as the history of Christianity, for no religion is so well-known. The facts are plainly visible, and would be plainly seen by all, were it not for the general tendency of ecclesiastical scholarship to consult the records of the past only to find the reflection of its own features. The general condition of religion in the Roman Empire at the beginning of the Christian era was one of far advanced disintegration and rapid synthesis. In every district there could be found the remains of old local religions, which retained the loyalty of the conservative, but no longer aroused any vital response in the emotions of the multitudes or in the interest of the educated. At that time, and for many generations afterward, the Roman landowners, to take one example, maintained the ceremonies and customs of an agricultural animism which for their ancestors had been a living religion, but for them had become aesthetic, conventional, and superstitious, an appendage to life, not its driving force. Those who wish can read a description of it, written with a sympathy possible only for one who felt the analogy of his own experience, in the pages of Marius the Epicurean, in which Walter Pater, by a wonderful tour de force, wove an exact and scholarly knowledge of the original documents into such a web of artistic English that the deep learning of the book cannot be appreciated except by those who have some small share in it themselves. Over these local religions had been thrown throughout the Empire the covering fabric of Greek mythology. It had lost much of its power; it was no longer sincerely believed;...

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