

man. That God is one—that Jesus is his messenger, come to teach men virtue, and to set them a good example—that there is something so attractive in virtue and winning in all that is good and praiseworthy, that men disposed to receive this theory will most certainly become pure and godlike here, and shine among the stars hereafter. This, I repeat, is very plausible in theory; but facts, stubborn facts, prove that these theories are the most meagre skeletons of religion—destitute of soul and spirit. The fine theory, my brother, with which you have favored us, without the great facts of the Gospel, never awakened a sinner to a sense of his sins—never penetrated a soul with a conviction of its utter ruin, and God's unbounded love to man. Neither Paul, nor Peter, nor John, ever theorized after your manner, when they called the attention of sinners to what God was, what they were, and what God had done for them. All those fine-spun-philosophic systems are as cold as moonshine: they have light reflected and mild: by them you see things dimly; but they have no genial warmth. The sun of righteousness is not there: without him every thing must droop, and wither, and die.

In your fine theory, my brother, you have found no place for the facts *first* announced, and always kept most prominently before men by the Apostolic Heralds of Salvation. "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we can be saved," said the Apostle Peter; and Paul was "determined to know nothing among men but Jesus Christ and him crucified;" and hence he "proclaimed first of all that Christ died for our sins:" "Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is that Jesus is the Christ." Only by his death and resurrection could this glorious fact be demonstrated. The Messiah, predicted by the Ancient Prophets, was to be to the people a "root out of dry ground;" "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;" "on him the chastisement of our peace was laid," and only "by his stripes were we to be healed." "He was to be led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb so he was not to open his mouth." Thus the sacrificial death and triumphant resurrection of our Lord Messiah, are the great facts of the Gospel. Over the systems that give them not a prominent place, we weep with Mary and exclaim "they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him!" You may reply, that many who hold and propagate something like your theory are among the excellent of the earth. Granted; but they were not made so by such theories. Some Atheists and Deists have been men of most amiable tempers—in all their intercourse with men just and upright; but it was not their unbelief that promoted their virtues.

Of late years we have heard, and in fact known some societies of Unitarians and Universalists, whose preachers have tried to imitate other religious Societies by holding other meetings than those on the Lord's day—called prayer, social, or conference meetings; but who beside the clergyman ever prayed or spoke? Seldom, if ever, any but those who had become religious in other societies. Systems and forms that lose sight of Jesus as the "Lamb of God bearing away the sin of the world" can never infuse life, energy, or power into any soul to make it either alive to God, or ardently devoted to the cause of human redemption.