

where the trend is away from the Scriptural basis and foundation. Modern critical theology, also constantly dealing with the Scriptures, is in reality in its trend and tendency thoroughly unscriptural and anti-scriptural. Its canons, tenets, and teachings, as developed by its most advanced representatives, undermine the Scriptural basis of the Church's faith. At heart it is a radical and fundamental departure from the formal principle of the Reformation.

### III.—CHRIST AS A DIVINE TEACHER.

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WHEN Nicodemus said, "Rabbi, we know that Thou art a Teacher come from God," he expressed what, after eighteen centuries, is the ripest result and verdict of the ages. "Rabbi" was the comparative of which "Rab" was the positive and "Rabboni" the superlative—master, my master, my great master—the last and most honorable title being given to but seven persons, all Hillelites and men of great mark. It may not be amiss, after eighteen hundred years of history, to look back, as in review, and express, like another Nicodemus, the calm judgment of candid minds concerning this greatest of teachers.

1. *Authority*, which was the earliest, is also the latest, impression of His teaching. Matthew especially notes this, that the people were astonished at the authoritative tone of His instructions. The scribes, who wrote out the law, were naturally supposed to be familiar with it, and so were appealed to in controversy. But the most they did was themselves to appeal to the Scriptures. Christ taught as Himself being the ultimate court of appeal, as one who knew the law—not as a transcriber or expounder, but as author and originator. Mark the boldness, the audacity, as Mirabeau would call it, with which He overturns common interpretations and affirms the true meaning. Lord Northwick, who brought from Italy, in troublous times, one of Carracci's pictures, a portrait of St. Gregory, had to get some inferior artist to paint over it, in body color, a worthless daub; and when the case was opened, he simply washed the canvas and revealed the masterpiece. Carnalism and literalism had long glossed over the true Scripture by false traditions, and the Saviour with bold touch swept away the doctrines and commandments of men and once more brought to light the divine original.

He not only taught as one who alone had authority, but He dealt with majestic intrepidity with those who had falsely usurped authority. While he glorified and magnified the law, so as to make it seem like a new revelation, how he belittled the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, startling the multitude by telling them that except theirs exceeded that, they should in no case even *enter* the kingdom!