

4 *Christ the Personal Source of Religion and Theology.*

Scriptures, and in the history of the Church, but this he is incompetent to do, unless he is personally in sympathy with Christianity. Personal experience is necessary, in order to understand the material he is working with. To the ordinary man of the world, the christian seems to be the merest dreamer, and the former could only become a theologian out of curiosity, and would be forced to study christian theology from the outside rather as a phase of human illusion, a phantasy, than as real human experience. He could not get within his subject and acquire a sufficient understanding of what it is to give an account of it. The ultimate appeal, then, in theology must be to the christian theologian. But he too, must, in the nature of things have a standard, and the deeper his religious life, that is to say, the more truly it conforms to its exemplar, the more trustworthy will be his theology. Hence, in the interests of theological truth, we must be at the utmost pains to cultivate our religious life. This brings us to the central theme of my lecture—*Theology and religion have one ultimate source and standard.* What is this? Everything revolves round the *Person of Christ*. The christian knows that in Christ he has found the chief among ten thousand, the altogether lovely, that through Him the Father has spoken to men, and that in Him he has become reconciled to God. The theologian too is convinced that the Personality of Christ is unique; on the one hand it has brought unity into his thought in its utmost reaches, embracing the universe, man and God, while again this Christ has bestowed peace on his own soul.

I wish to direct your attention to what this *Person of Christ* implies both to the theologian and to the religious man.

1. It implies that *Christianity is a historical religion founded on facts.* It is not a philosophy. The facts cannot be removed and the essence of the religion remain, as some hold who indeed maintain that the religion is purified by the sublimation of the concrete; the finite can be only transient; when by these we have risen to the infinite we can dispense with the ladder on which we have made our ascent, and now dwell with the infinite reason which is behind the facts and is eternal. This might be true enough possibly if Christianity were a *philosophy*; but seeing that it is a *religion* by which a man links himself with a Person, this vague idealism of metaphysics must not be brought