

sities of a fixed creed or the presuppositions of a system of thought, are sure to be imperfect and faulty. The pure fountain from which our thought of Him must be drawn is His thought of Himself. To the question, "Who was Jesus?" Jesus alone can give answer.

Our study of the testimony of Jesus to Himself proceeds on two assumptions: the first, that the four Gospel records of His words and deeds are statements of historical fact. The reasonableness of this is to most men evident. The second assumption is that Jesus was truly a man. If His life was a real life, with a distinct significance for us and worthy of something more than our mere curious interest, it was a human life. To this wonderful man, then, as He is set forth in the Gospels, we turn and say, "Teacher, if it is Thy will that men should know Thy thoughts, we pray Thee tell us who Thou art. What sayest Thou of Thyself?"

Pontius Pilate asked Him just such a question; so did the Jews, but they received no explicit reply. No more can we. For even if He should say, "I am the Christ, the Son of God," still these words must first be translated into terms of our own thinking before they can convey a clear meaning to us. And, moreover, our knowledge of Jesus, as of any man, must be not merely intellectual but personal, not the result of analysis and definition but the outcome of a living fellowship. Of this Jesus was perfectly aware, and accordingly never attempted to demonstrate the nature of His person by a logical process; for "No man knoweth who the Son is save the Father; and who the Father is save the Son and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal Him." Such sayings as this, and there are many of them, show that to the man Jesus, as to every thoughtful man, the question had come, "Who am I, and why am I in the world?" and that He had found His answer. They show that Jesus felt it was a transcendent privilege to know Him, *because He knew Himself.*

It is evident that Jesus thought much on this matter. No subject was oftener upon His heart. He already felt its weight when a boy of only twelve years. That during those eighteen years of silence at Nazareth His thought concerning Himself was maturing in His bosom for public declaration, we may judge from the fact that in the crisis of His life when He decided to come before the people in baptism, *it* furnished the controlling motive; for the voice of the Father from the rent heavens and the voice of the Spirit in the Baptist had meaning to Him, because it was true to His own feeling, as indicated in His words to John; while it is just this self-feeling of Jesus which seemed to offer a foothold to the tempter when he said, "If Thou art the Son of God," in his wilderness attack upon the confidence of the Christ. And if the sayings and doings of Jesus are no mere artificial arrangement of words and acts suited to circumstances, but are rather the natural outflow of His own feelings, then we may gather from the growing emphasis He lays upon the knowledge of His person that His