

and defective sense. Thus used, it embraces both the correct application of false canons and the false application of correct canons, in testing the sacred Scriptures and their doctrines. Nor does it seem proper to confine the view to that erroneous form of the so-called Higher Criticism, now so prominently before the public, since to do so would be to leave out of sight other forms vastly more insidious and quite as destructive. Modern Criticism will therefore be considered as including the critical views based upon agnosticism, transcendental rationalism, mysticism, literary criticism, and naturalism—the first drawing its canons from agnostic science, the second from the human understanding, the third from the religious feeling, the fourth from literary and historical intuition, the fifth from the naturalistic view of the universe.

II. WHAT ARE THE ESSENTIAL DOCTRINES OF CHRISTIANITY?

In attempting to answer this question, there are four great doctrines that naturally present themselves to the mind of the writer as the germinal truths at the very foundation of the Christian religion: (1) The doctrine of Trinitarian Theism; (2) The doctrine of the Atonement provided by the vicarious sacrifice of our blessed Lord; (3) The supernatural and miraculous character of the Revelation of Redemption in the Book of God; (4) The direct operation of the Holy Ghost in the Regeneration and Sanctification of the human soul. Trinitarian Theism, Vicarious Atonement, Inspired Revelation, Supernatural Regeneration and Edification. These, with their related truths, are the Essentials of Christianity.

Stripped of the first of these—the doctrine of Trinitarian Theism—Christianity is left without any rational foundation at all. Without a personal God religion, at its best, cannot rise scientifically above “cosmic emotion.” Nor is bare Theism a sufficient basis for the Christian religion, since that religion is essentially a manifestation of God’s love as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. And so Theism and the doctrine of the Trinity have always been bound up in the faith of the Church.

Stripped of the second—the doctrine of Christ’s Atonement by vicarious sacrifice—Christianity appears to be a religion without a system of redemption. If it be not true that Christ died for the sinner, “the just for the unjust,” then there is no salvation provided for sinners. Such, as we take it, is the view that the Bible has impressed upon the Christian and the Christian ages.

Stripped of the third—the doctrine of the supernatural and miraculous character of the Revelation of the Bible—Christianity appears to be a doctrine without authority. A lost soul cannot rest for salvation upon an uncertainty. If the Bible, professing to reveal to the sinner a way of salvation, does not come to him as a sure and infallible utterance of the voice of God himself, then it cannot demand of