

## FRIENDSHIP THE CORE OF RELIGION

people err to-day. How often do we in calling our friends to a friendly meal think more of the elaborate preparations than of sweetness of spirit and reality of friendship, which alone make such a gathering worth while. So with the children of Israel, they came to look on sacrifice as something demanded by God and having a value in itself. Instead of looking to their hearts and making sure of their fitness for meeting face to face with God in that best nursery of friendship, a common meal, they looked to the value and amount of the sacrifice. They considered religion as a kind of bargain, demanding offerings from them, and compelling gifts from God. How much they missed of sweet fellowship and of living friendship with their God by this misapprehension of His mind and will.

And we who interpret the death of Christ in terms of the old Jewish sacrifices miss just as much. We think too often of sin as a debt owing to God, and of Christ paying that debt in His death, or we think of God as being angry with us and Christ making a sacrifice on Calvary which appeased that anger. These conceptions have in them a great truth, though when