

the subject, He usually goes amongst the people as a sympathizing friend, as one who is earnest to know and see the woes that afflict His suffering brethren. And when "they brought unto Him all that were diseased," from many a mile of surrounding country, "He healed them all." The supreme deity of the Hindoo is represented as reposing in self-sufficient but inactive dignity, independent of, and indifferent to, the weal or woe of man; but our incarnate God "has compassion"—weeps over Jerusalem, hastes with eager feet to assuage the grief of the sisters of Lazarus, walks until weary to enlighten a Samaritan woman, bears the privations of a pilgrim life, teaches laboriously the thronging crowds who follow His footsteps. Surely, if we ask an example of *earnestness*, we have it in Him who "went about doing good." And if His life in work and word illustrates the quality of earnestness, how much more gloriously does it shine from the cross and the sepulchre. The death of Christ, with its attendant facts—the resurrection and ascension—unlocks many mysteries, subserves many great purposes of God, teaches many grand lessons to our race,—lessons which, though all-important to man, are not in the line of this essay; but it certainly carries on its front the greatest exhibition of *earnestness* the world has ever seen. The amount of sacrifice that men make to accomplish their ends is taken as a gauge of their earnestness. Who will gauge for us the earnestness of Him "who His own self bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we being dead to sins should live unto righteousness, by whose stripes we are healed?"

Earnest Christianity is *normal* Christianity, for it is Christianity consistent with its own essential elements. What are its essential elements? Besides the character of its author, is there not the salvation or damnation of man,—the tremendous importance of death as a crisis in human history,—the revealed existence and character of the devil and his angels,—the possibility of man being instrumentally the Saviour of his fellow,—the character of the Christian's reward paling all the glories of earth by its magnificence,—the character of retribution, making the deepest sorrows and horrors of the present life seem like blessings and beauties by comparison,—the ETERNITY which, with its dread over-mastering mystery, seems to make all sublunary importance "less than nothing and vanity,"—eternity attaching unmeasured value to every moral effort, unmeasured vengeance to every unrepented sin, the eye of a never-sleeping God, the heart of an ever sympathetic Saviour. O, what things are these! Who can appreciate these things and be indifferent? Who can live by faith in view of these realities without *earnestness*? without an intense enthusiasm,—an earnestness that

"Would the precious time redeem,
To spend and to be spent for them
Who have not yet my Saviour known,—
To point them to the Lamb of God,
And quench the brands in Jesus' blood."

Earnest Christianity is *normal* Christianity, for that is the character of those who first professed Christianity in its completeness. The first Christian Church was the Church at Jerusalem, created by the effusion of the Holy