

any branch of it, at any period of history, not only based all its doctrines upon this foundation, but actually drawn all its subordinate doctrines from this one? Is "Fatherhood" the fundamental conception of God in the system of John Calvin, or of any other? Have all other Christian conceptions been interpreted in the light of and in harmony with this doctrine? Has Fatherhood always been that conception of God through which we have interpreted the Atonement.⁹ Has the governing conception of the Church been that of a family of God? To me it is perfectly clear, amazing as it seems, that Fatherhood has never yet been the *fundamental* and *controlling* conception of God in our theology.

In our Forward Movement, then, which is to influence both thought and life, I would suggest that the Doctrine of Fatherhood be that idea of God in the light of which we approach and explain all other religious teachings. Do not let us say Father and mean King. Do not let us say Father and mean Judge. It is not necessary to deny God's Kingship or Judgeship. Is not every father in a sense king and judge in his own family? But the ideas of the Kingship and Judgeship of God must be subordinate to that of His Fatherhood.

(3) How does God become known to man? Chiefly through man himself. Not indeed that each man's religious yearnings and experiences are a sufficient guide to himself, any more than his intellectual faculty is independent of external guidance, instruction, support. The rejection of Infallible Authority as the ultimate basis of faith, does not involve the rejection of all authority. The Bible is a great record of religious experiences of a people in whose life and thought religion occupied a quite unique place. It is not, I think, too much to say that the main river of revelation flows through the pages of the Bible, though we need not deny that many tributaries flow into that river from other sources. We need not, nay, we must not claim for it in-

(9) Cf. Rashdall's important work on *The Idea of Atonement in Christian Theology*, especially Chap. I.