

affirms, in like manner, a simple matter of fact, involving the same elementary truth, which requires no new proof, and can justly give rise to no controversy. It is either the fact that Jesus is the Son of God, or it is not. Upon this question rests the whole Christian fabric, and it is one which is not to be proved by reasoning from abstract principles, but by the testimony of God himself and the evidence of such other facts as are pertinent to the case. Such, accordingly, are the very proofs which are supplied in regard to this great basis of Christianity, which, like the sun in the heavens, is placed far above all those controversies which have so beclouded the religious parties as almost wholly to conceal its splendor and intercept its life-giving beams. It is in this great fact that the Lord Jesus Christ himself is presented to us in his true and proper character, that we may so receive him and trust him. He is, indeed, the Sun of Righteousness, the radiating and attracting centre of the spiritual system, shedding light on the heavens and on the earth—upon the things of God, and the nature, duty, and destiny of man. In accepting the above proposition, then, we take Christ himself as the basis of Christian union, as he is also the chief corner stone and only foundation of the church. To demand, instead of this, as a profession of faith and basis of union, an exact knowledge of remote points of Christian doctrine, as unscriptural as it would be irrational to prohibit men from enjoying the light and warmth of the natural sun until they had first attained a high proficiency in astronomy, and were able to determine the movements and magnitudes of the remote planets and inferior satellites of the solar system.

Neither do we, on the other hand, at all concede that this great fact may be confounded with any thing else in the Divine testimony, or that its splendor may be at all diminished by comparison with any one or all other facts presented to the mind. It stands alone in all its sublime grandeur, amidst the revelations of God. There is nothing, indeed, which may be justly compared with it. All other propositions in religion are subordinate to this, and can be rendered visible only by the light which it sheds upon them. Allow us here to offer a few additional considerations from the Scriptures, which will serve to give a just view of the position which this fact occupies in the Christian institution.

1. The proposition which asserts it is a Divine Oracle, in a specific and peculiar sense. For it was *announced by the Father himself from heaven*. It is seldom indeed, that God has directly addressed himself to men, and when He does, ordinary methods of communication and presents himself, as it were, in person, to speak to mortals, we may be sure the communication is one of the most transcendent importance. Such was the case when, at the baptism of Jesus, in presence of the assembled multitude upon the banks of the Jordan, there came a voice from heaven saying, "THIS IS MY BELOVED SON." Such was also the case at the transfiguration, when the same declaration was repeated to the chosen disciples in presence of Moses the giver, and Elijah the restorer of the law, with the significant addition, "HEAR YE HIM."

2. This proposition is the rock upon which Christ himself declared