

ness" to the Gentile. To proclaim Christianity, they gave themselves up to poverty, persecution, hardship, and some of them to martyrdom. On the hypothesis that Christianity is a false system, which they cunningly contrived, they submitted to all this to advocate what they knew to be false. Those who believe this should be silent as to the credulousness of believers in the holy religion of Jesus.

The crucifixion of Christ is a most important fact. Just as no fact is better attested, no fact is more important. The sacrifices of the old economy, which prefigured it, and which led the men of that dispensation, to look forward to it, and the observance of the Lord's Supper, which Jesus himself before he died, instituted in commemoration of his death on the Cross, that his followers might look back to it, show its vast importance.

It is also a wondrous fact. The elemental war, which was synchronous with it, testifies to its marvellousness. The natural sun could not witness the agonies of the Son of God as he hung on the Cross, and shrouded himself in darkness. The earth was ill at ease on being made the theatre on which a scene so strange was enacted. The rocks, less hard than the obdurate hearts of men, were riven, as if in expression of sorrow at the sight.

But we see still more the importance and wondrousness of the crucifixion of Christ, if we look at its significance. It should be viewed as the exhibition of the love of God to men. The Divine Father gave up his Son to endure the agonies of crucifixion for men's salvation. Jesus condescended to endure the woes and shame of crucifixion that he might bring men to God. Thus the Cross of Christ is a complete refutation of the lie of the devil. The evil one led our first parents to believe that God had withheld from them that which was necessary to make them truly happy—the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. By means of that falsehood, in one form or another, he maintains his sway over the minds of men. Now the Cross exhibits the truth respecting his character—that he is love—that he loves the sinner, fallen and