

berless individuals, and to the human race collectively, to believe that ideal truth, through faith.... That is, to believe it through confidence and trustfulness in the primary source of the doctrine. It has been of great advantage thus to believe without understanding it; and to believe, even, although in a wrong or incorrect sense. But, surely: if education has now so far advanced as to enable us to do so, it must be better to directly believe the truth itself in the right sense, with understanding.

Let us here endeavour to briefly indicate the reasoning—that is, the mode of considering and arranging the facts—by which an understanding of the actual meaning of the great fundamental truth of Christianity may be arrived at. ‘The birth of Christ.’ ‘The incarnation of the Son of God.’ ‘The Son of Man.’ ‘The Word of God in the world.’ Each of the principal words in each of these sentences has its ideal sense and significance which must be, at least in some degree, apprehended before the general ideal truth can be understood. Let us, first of all, realize as distinctly as we can that we are spiritual beings. *That* is our relation to the ideal world.\* In our animal nature, as merely animals, our relation would be that of creeping things, and, as such we can scarcely be said to have any place in the ideal world, other than that of a vitalized form of matter. A *man* may therefore be *ideally* defined as the spiritual or intellectual organization

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\* It should be particularly observed, however, that we have, each of us, to make good our claim to such relationship.