

ting it in the glorious words of St. John, that God is love, we reach the highest point in religious thought. We arrive at this conclusion because to think anything else would seem to land us in an absurd position. But we must frankly own that this goodness is not revealed in the world around us. It is a deduction from the nature of the human mind and we must await with patience the next life, when faith will become sight, for the meaning and justification of pain. Faith, then, is the hope that God will turn out to be like the highest we can think of Him.

Now, this brings me to another point on which I must touch lightly, yet without which this lecture would be grievously incomplete. You may say to me, "You have given us plausible reasons for believing in a good God and in the immortality of our own souls, but these beliefs are not peculiar to Christianity. What about miracles and the higher criticism? Can we believe what is told us about the origin of Christianity? What reason is there for regarding Christianity as the only true religion?"

I was brought up to believe that Christianity is true because it is taught in the Bible; that the Bible was God's word given by men who proved that they had the right to speak in God's name by doing miracles. Now, this belief, like many other orthodox beliefs, had a curious history. One large body of Christians held that the true Christian doctrine was conserved and promulgated by the organized body of Christian officers called the Church, presided over by the Bishop of Rome. Amongst the doctrines so promulgated was the infallible character of certain Jewish and early Christian writings called the Scriptures. Luther pointed out that the doctrines contained in the aforesaid Scriptures were often in flat contradiction to the later doctrines promulgated by the Church; he, therefore, rejected the authority of the Church, preferring the Scriptures as giving a truer picture of what Christ taught, though by no means attributing infallibility to them. In particular he called the Epistle of James an epistle of straw. But the desire of the masses to have something infallible to lean on—in a word, to be supplied with ready-made convictions—led the later reformers to oppose an infallible Book to an infallible Church, and thus to place round the neck of religious belief a load from which it is only now beginning to free itself. Our God-given reason imposes on us the duty of taking nothing for granted, and