

any inspiration and entire inerrancy is even regarded as a burden too great to bear for conservative theology, imposing a task which is neither required nor necessary for the Church to assume. The new attitude assumed toward the Scriptures by modern scholarship is that these are in themselves not the Word of God, but that they *contain* the Word of God. A sharp distinction is made between the human and the divine elements in the Scriptures, and while former generations did actually ignore the former, the present is inclined to give it extraordinary prominence.

These changed views as to the Scriptures themselves have necessitated changed views as to the relation of the Church to the Scriptures as the basis of its faith. The critical views as to the Scriptures have been transferred also from the biblical to the dogmatical field. That for the conservatives who have accepted some of the literary conclusions of modern biblical criticism, while rejecting with horror the structure of hay and stubble erected on the readjusted Bible literature by a naturalistic and naturalizing philosophy, the Bible has continued to be what it was before, the source of Christian faith and practise, is very evident from their teachings and professions. Even if they do accept a human element in Scripture and in externals admit the presence of minor discrepancies and errors, yet for theological truth it is for them just as it was before the Revelation of God to fallen mankind, containing the Gospel of peace and pardon. It may at times be a somewhat difficult psychological problem to reconcile their absolute dependence on the teachings of the Word with their own teachings concerning that Word, yet it is a fact beyond dispute that they are Bible Christians to the core, as they also claim to be. For this class of Bible critics the Scriptures have not been moved from their fundamental position.

This is more than can be said for the advanced class of thinkers, the best representatives of which are no doubt the Ritschl men in Germany and their followers, the adherents of the *theologie de la conscience*, or theology of consciousness, of French Protestantism. These aim at a reconciliation of modern theology with modern thought, and expect to do this without the sacrifice of the contents and blessings of the evangelical system of faith, by constructing their system not on the basis of the written Word, but upon a Christian consciousness and conviction inspired by the personality and work of "the historical Christ." It is the picture of the historical Christ that they conjure with, yet "the historical Christ" as understood by them is little, if anything, more than a great and model man, whose preexistence and divine Sonship is denied.

Just what is meant by "the historical Christ," which this school openly places in antithesis to the Scriptures as the basis of the faith of the Church, can be seen from an exposition of the subject recently published in its organ, the ably edited *Christliche Welt*, of Leipzig,