

V.—NEW VALUES AND NEW RELATIONS

It is this new evaluation of man that fixes the specific quality and direction of Christian conduct. We have indeed spoken much of the infinite value of the soul; and we have made all haste to save it from the awaiting pit. But this was not the reaction that Jesus called for. He bade us see the image and the superscription of the Son of Man upon every man and so carry ourselves. This doctrine of the absolute worth of the soul is the first assumption of Christianity. It is written broad and deep over the face of the New Testament. The whole weight of the Christian tradition rests upon the view that God thought man so much worth that He gave so that even He could not give more, in order to redeem him. "He spared not His own Son." And it belongs to this conception of human worth that it is wholly unaffected by those considerations which enter so deeply into men's judgments of one another. We are apt to cast whole classes of men into a sub-human category because they chance either in the circumstances of their birth or their social standing or their race to be in our view inferior to ourselves; and our judgments of men are profoundly affected by our view of their moral condition, so incorrigible is our Pharisaism. But the valuation of man by God takes account neither of the accidents of his condition nor of his moral state. Beneath all these the eye of God sees His own image, the essential man; and that is the first fixed point for all Christian thinking. Its primary postulate is the absolute worth of person-