

lehem, Fear not, for behold I bring you glad tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people, for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. While the multitude of the heavenly host made night glorious with melody and the sad heart of the world glad as they sang, "Glory be to God in the highest, on earth peace and good will toward men."

JESUS NOT A MERE PURIST.

And then these words tell us yet again that Christ was not a mere Purist—not a mere teacher and enforcer of human duty. He was indeed a moralist of the highest order. But had He been this and no more; had He been this and naught else, his name Jesus Christ would have been inept, and perhaps deceptive; and then there is no reason to think had He been only a moralist in the ordinary sense of the word, that He would have so spoken of himself as the sent of God, or affirmed that the knowing of Him would have been life eternal.—These names of Christ are explained elsewhere. His name shall be called Jesus because he saves His people from their sins. His name shall be called Christ because God, even his own God, anointed him with the oil of gladness above his fellows, and His Father sent Him into the world as the Lord Jesus Christ—as the Divine and Anointed Saviour to finish transgression and make an end of sin, and bring an everlasting righteousness.

It is not the design in this part of the discourse to expatiate on the object which Jesus contemplated in the execution of His mission. But at this time of day, and with all possible means and appliances for a thorough understanding of this object, it is pitiable to be obliged to confess that on the part of so many there is the effort to ignore it, or mystify it, or neutralize it and so to subvert the Gospel of Christ. Why will men misunderstand these so plain words: "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give his life a ransom for many!" Why will men labour to explain away the historical bearing as well as the doctrinal teaching of these words: "When the fulness of the

times had come God sent forth His son made of a woman; made under the law to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons!" Is it not curious as well as miserable that so simple statements of matters of fact as these should be doubted and denied, or at all events interpreted in a way that would make Paul blush for the perversity of man: "For I delivered unto you, first of all, that which also I received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he rose again third day according to the scriptures." Yet so it is, and somehow it is coming to pass that the simplicity that is in Christ, and in the object of His mission, is blurred and dimmed, and in some sense destroyed by the tendencies of theological thought, and of theological teachings in these days of ours. The laws and rules of grammar are tortured, and trampled in order to make out a case against the design of the sending of Christ. The inherent and cognate meaning of words is wrested from them to compass the same end. As applied to the mission and work of Christ it will not do now to speak of substitution, for he stood in the room of nobody. Nor of ransom, for he paid nothing. Nor of atonement, for he appeased nobody. Nor of reconciliation, for nobody—no parties were at variance and needed to be reconciled; and then as to such blessings as pardon and acceptance, and adoption and the new birth, and the new heart and the in-dwelling of the spirit, why they are fancies rather than facts, and as to their being procured at the cost of the blood of Christ, who says so or thinks so, or would wish to do so now a-days, save those whose intellects are in bondage to irrational beliefs, received by tradition from the Fathers, and who refuse the liberty of enquiry and of proving all things, and of holding fast that which is true!

Still under the level of all this sapping and mining the foundation of God's standeth sure. The efforts of criticism are as blank shot against the citadel. The principles of interpretation which refuse their just meaning to the terminology of the scriptures in