

They who would argue that the way of salvation lies only through their small systems, should remember how Esaias waxeth bold and saith: "I was found, says the Lord, of them *that sought me not*; I became manifest unto *them that askt not of me*."

5. But lastly, it is yet more important that our Christ should not be a *distant* Christ,—a Christ who lived and died, and rose again, and then left all His work to a vicegerent in Italy, or a patriarch in Russia, or an army of ministers to whom as a class neither He nor His disciples ever gave the name of priests. "Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above) or Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead). But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart." And what said the Lord Himself? "The kingdom of God is *within* you." "It is not *hidden* from thee, neither is it *far* off. It is not in *heaven*, neither is it beyond the sea." Christ did not say: I am going into heaven, to delegate all My authority to the Virgin, or to arch-angels, or to nine orders of a celestial hierarchy, or to saints, martyrs, virgins, confessors, priests (who may be very far from being either saints or angels), and *these* must protect you, and *these* must intercede for you, and *these* must absolve your sins. No! but He said, "Lo! I am with you *always*, even to the end of the world"; and, "If a man love me he will keep my commandments; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."

If, then, to conclude, we would understand our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ as He is set forth in His own gospels, and in the teaching of His Apostles, let us realize Him, not as a *dead* Christ, but as a Christ who is now *risen, ascended, glorified*, at the right hand of the Father, ever interceding for us; not as a Christ *after the flesh*, but as Christ after the Spirit, to be spiritually discerned; not as a Christ who is anxious to visit condemnation on those who have failed to understand His nature, but as the Christ *in* whom, and *through* whom, and *to* whom we must live, and with whom no dogma or formula or shibboleth is for one moment accepted in lieu of the heart's obedience; not as a Christ who can be apprehended only through ecclesiastical ordinances, but as a Christ who must be *known* in the inmost heart, and approach, neither in Gerizim nor in Jerusalem, but in love and obedience by all who worship Him in spirit and in truth. Let us *thus* think of Christ, and we shall not suffer our *freedom* to be hampered by the bondage of beggarly elements; nor our *religious life* to be dwarfed and dwindled into the commandments of men; nor our *spiritual communion* to be contaminated by a gross and superstitious materialism; nor our knowledge of God to be identified with what this or that man has scholastically written of Him; nor our charity to be rent in pieces with party antagonisms; nor the inner mysteries of the spiritual life to be profanely pawed and meddled with by any man, or by any caste of men whatever. What we should desire above all things is that our