

Now it is quite possible to pass examinations in Church history and yet fail to recognise the presence of the living Lord in these Christian centuries, possible to know minute details of that history without any more reference to Christ Himself than if He still lay in the grave where loving hands laid him beneath the Syrian stars. But that were to miss the meaning alike of the Gospel and of the Acts, and to ignore the presence of Him who created His Church and who has shaped her history and who still appears to such as can see Him in the midst of the seven candlesticks.

It is the part, then, of the true teacher of Church history to do more than merely convey information about the recorded incidents or the outstanding leaders of the Church, or about the creeds that have been in different times and sections the confessions of her faith. It may be given him to lead his students to recognise the Christ in history, to see where wisdom and strength were His gift while He was guiding the conflict to no uncertain issue, and that the past, in proclaiming how the Galilean has conquered, gives the strongest pledge of His full and final triumph in the future.

The Church further requires that, her College students shall be instructed in Systematic Theology. The revelation that is recorded in Scripture was given "by divers portions and in divers manners." God revealed Himself to the patriarchs and they were enabled to recognise Him as the Living One with whom they had to do. He revealed Himself as the God and King of Israel, leading them forth from bondage, giving them laws disclosing to them His character in connection with their history, and sending them prophets to interpret that history to them. He revealed Himself to individuals who were perplexed by the problems that press on human souls in every land and age, and for the solution of those problems He was found to be an all-sufficient guide. Still more completely He revealed Himself in the Eternal Word, Who became flesh and dwelt among us, and Whose life and teaching are narrated for us by men divinely quickened to detect their meaning.

But, as we read the record of this varied revelation, we find it presented, not in the abstract form of creed and statement, but as a picture of active, working life. Yet, as in other fields of study so in this, we try to cast our knowledge into some connected, systematic form. Searching the Scriptures, which, coming from the one Divine source, must be self-consistent, we draw from them the materials for our teaching about the nature of God and of man, about the Person and Work of other subjects commonly included under Dogmatic Theology. We thus draw out our creed, confession, system, fitting part to part with as great logical exactness and accuracy as we can. The danger in this process is that we bind and restrict the teaching of Scripture, the revelation there given us, as if it were possible to fit and include it all within the limits of our logical system. We look at the truths with which we are dealing as if they must admit of being closely jointed like the mortised and dove-tailed parts of a well-made cabinet. But the very exactness and the seeming completeness of our system, in such a case,