

carnation of our Lord Jesus Christ may be far nearer to Him than he who, knowing his Lord, does *not* do His will. The Church in many ages has rankt orthodoxy above holiness. It is a desperate and immeasurable error. The truest orthodoxy is holiness, the worst heresy is sin and hatred. Better by far the virtuous heathen than the corrupt convert, better the holy heretic than the malignant Christian. When, as the great father, St. Gregory of Nazianzen, tells us, the very bakers and bathmen of Byzantium were furiously discussing the double nature of the Lord, that city was seething with immorality and crime. Let us indeed learn what is the Catholic faith about Christ, but never let us forget that He told us how easy it was to confess Him with the *mouth*, and draw nigh unto Him with the *lips*, while all the time our heart was far from Him.

4. Then, fourthly, let not our view of Christ be merely ecclesiastical. I believe with all my heart in the Holy Catholic Church; and I do not confuse or identify it exclusively with any one branch of the Church; but it is only too possible to make the Church an *opaque barrier* between us and Christ instead of a *glorious crystal mirror* to reflect Him. It is quite possible to thrust out of all due perspective a word which, in our sense, occurs but once only on Christ's lips, and that in but one Gospel. The truth that in the Church and its ordinances we find means of grace may be distorted into very exaggerated and unscriptural forms. The word *grace* is used constantly in our days as tho it meant some specific influence, incommunicable except as conveyed by priestly agencies, through external channels, in some occult, arbitrary way. But the word *grace* means "*favor*"—God's favor or kindness—and nothing else, and I do not believe that that is confined to human instrumentalities, being, as Christ said, like the wind which bloweth where it listeth. So far is it from being *limited* to outward ordinances of any kind, that, tho mentioned more than one hundred times in the New Testament, grace is never once mentioned in connection even with the sacraments, or with anything but that love of God to man which is as universal as the world, as individual as ourselves. How partial would be the parable of the Prodigal Son, how one-sided the great mass of the recorded words of Jesus, if there were no approach to Christ save through certain forms administered only by certain men. In the Middle Ages popes insolently laid kingdoms under interdicts, and men trembled by millions as tho their salvation depended on the breath of some often intriguing and sometimes execrable Italian priest. They had no need to tremble. Popes might have tried just as reasonably to monopolize the common sunshine, or to make an enclosure in the common air. Christ is not to be parceled into fragments. He is not *my* Christ, He is not *our* Christ, save as He is the Christ of *all* who seek, of all who worship Him, whether they belong to this fold or no. He is not so poor as to have no church save one at Geneva, or one in England, or one in Rome.