

the kingdom of God founded by Christ. Whoever is willing to accept this kingdom, recognizes in it the absolute purpose of God respecting this world. This kingdom consists of the communion of those whose conduct is inspired by the pure motive of Christian love. Ritschl pronounces this love supernatural, being so different from all that is earthly. The purpose of God, as embodied in His kingdom, could be revealed to man only by a human being who became absorbed by this purpose, realized in himself the absolute, universal love for mankind, and recognized the establishment of this kingdom as his mission and actually established the same. The believer attains perfection by giving himself to this kingdom and thus becoming harmonized with the purpose of God. To an individual embodying in himself the love prevailing in this kingdom all short-comings will seem as nothing. In the perfection attained in this kingdom, in that love which is the characteristic mark of the kingdom, we find the basis for the certainty of salvation. The life of the believer must of course be such as becomes a Christian, and he must recognize the relation he sustains to God. God himself is absolute love; and it is the nature of divine love to regard the members of the kingdom, in spite of their sinfulness, as just, and to grant them free access to Himself. The privilege which God gives them is to them the assurance that they are of supreme worth in the world, and that all things shall work together for their good. Nothing, not even death, can rob them of assurance of the divine goodness. Their experience as God's children contains the evidence that God accepts them; it is thus the proof of their redemption. God's love is the ground of justification. "The mediation of Christ is necessary only to deprive the sinner of his mistrust of God." Christ's life and death are evidences to us that for God's children the wages of sin is no longer death. God need not be reconciled to man; but man must learn what God is and how He regards the members of His kingdom.

Prof. Schmidt regards these and other views of Ritschl as far from being satisfactory. If metaphysics is to be wholly rejected, so that we must refrain from all questions pertaining to being, what shall we say respecting the existence of God? Is it enough to affirm that God must exist because man finds his existence so valuable? This theology declares that Christ is God to the Church; but if this means that in Himself, in His person, He is God, the judgment is metaphysical, and this Ritschl pronounces beyond the province of theology. Thus he denies the possibility of determining anything respecting the essence or nature of God and Christ. The most essential problems are therefore left in the dark. A follower of Ritschl, Gottschick, in Giessen, has affirmed that even the appearance of Jesus after His death, permits no inference respecting the historic fact of His resurrection. It is evident

that Christian faith cannot dispense with metaphysics; problems of worth or value must be supplemented by those of existence. The believer wants, first of all, to know of a God with whom he can commune and whom he can address as dear children their dear Father. "He cannot live without certainty respecting this God and without an insight into his relation to this world." Nor can he be satisfied with Ritschl's sharp separation of the kingdom of God from this world. Faith can only overcome the contradictions between the natural and the ethical if it can be assured that in some points they come in contact with each other. That the conflict of religion with science and philosophy cannot be settled by ignoring the latter is self-evident.

With all avowed respect for Scripture, Ritschl has introduced interpretations which have a strong rationalistic flavor. In his school not only the resurrection of Christ has been questioned, but God has been so far removed from individual wants and considerations that He seems to be the God of deism. Ritschl's view, that divine blessings came to the believer through the Church, not to him directly from God, cannot satisfy the heart. Divisions have already begun in the school; and there is no doubt that, just as in Schleiermacher's school, there were tendencies toward orthodoxy and toward rationalism, so it will be in that of Ritschl. Bender, of Bonn, has gone to the extreme left and has landed in agnosticism. Other members of the school have become more positive. This is true of Kaftan, Dörner's successor in Berlin. He lays an emphasis on Christ's resurrection which implies that it was a historic fact. Still more emphatic is the declaration of Haering, of Zurich, respecting that resurrection.

The author of the article thinks that the merit of Ritschl consists in the fact that he has given the impulse to separate from theology all that has no significance for faith and to avoid all useless controversy with other departments of thought. Even among orthodox theologians there is now a tendency to be more guarded on points which cannot be determined without aids foreign to theology. But an absolute separation between theology and worldly learning is not possible. Whoever thinks wants to harmonize his faith with his whole stock of knowledge, without regarding that faith as dependent on philosophy or historiography.

So far our author. I regard his criticism just. The fact that this theology has spread so rapidly is no evidence that its principles will bear the test of ages and will prove enduring. Theology should be freed from the undue influence of other subjects; but that does not imply a complete separation. There is much in Ritschl which reminds one of Kant's distrust of metaphysics, and also of his efforts to reduce religion to morality. Like Herbart and Lotze, Ritschl emphasizes values as ruling in ethics, and he also makes them the ruling factors in theology. Instead of the deep Scriptural view of sin, he rather regards it as a falling behind the divine purpose, mere shortcoming. The anguish caused by sin in the cases of Paul and Luther are viewed as individual instances, not as norms of general experience. That Christ's death thus loses the significance attached to it by the orthodox is evident. But this theology must be viewed as still in a state of fermentation; not as fixed, but as in a process of becoming. Much will, no doubt, be changed in the development of its principles and through the attacks of opponents; what the outcome of the whole will be it is impossible to determine at present. Its rapid spread is perhaps as significant of the unsettled state of theological thought in Germany as of the merits of the principles of the school.