

that which is real, or that which is original, the architypal, the uncreated. The light of my lamp, for instance, is a real light, but it is a light which is derived; the true, original, and archetypal light is in the sun, from whose inexhaustible resources light has been drawn for thousands of generations. There are three qualities by which the light of my lamp is distinguished from the light of the sun; first, it is derived; second, it is circumscribed; and third, it is transient. Such illuminating power as my lamp has is not original, but derived. The light of my lamp is circumscribed; it is enough for me, but it would not be enough to light this city, nor even this church; but the true light, the sun, fills all space with its glory. Again, my lamp needs replenishing; it may fail me at any moment; a sudden gust of wind, or a movement of my hand, would extinguish it. But the true light needs no care of mortal man; its radiance is undiminished, inexhaustible, administered with unceasing vigilance, and abiding in its power and influence. Now, when the Holy Scripture speaks of our Lord as the Light of men, we understand it to refer to His vocation as a Teacher. Darkness is always a type of ignorance in Holy Scriptures, and light represents knowledge. But our Lord is not come to teach men all that they are capable of learning; in many spheres of knowledge the Bible is not needed, and is not offered to us as a guide; there are other spheres where man's reason guides him but little way—spheres which are full of darkness and mist to him, which can be dispersed and dissipated only by a power so deep and intense that it may be appropriately called "the Sun of Righteousness." Of those things, are all those which pertain to the moral and spiritual and eternal relations that the life of man sustains to the Living God; and in the consideration of these themes of supreme moment, our Lord is not only the Light, but the true Light; not one of many lamps, shedding a flickering radiance, not even an electric lamp, before whose splendour all other lights that we possess grow dim; but the one true, original, and uncreated light, the original, infallible, and permanently authorized teacher of man as pertaining to the things of God. The teachings of other men are fragmentary and hypothetical, and are wanting in solidity and permanency; but our Lord Jesus Christ comprehended and taught the truth, and taught it not as if it were a thing far above Him, or a thing outside Himself, but as if it were His own personal inheritance, and had always been and would always remain so; as if it were His own original, undervived, and eternal treasure; as if it were, so to speak, consubstantial with His being. He was the Way, the Truth; He was God embodied walking among men, and speaking to them those things that they should know; and that truth of God which was in unison with the very being of our God, He comprehended and taught so clearly and completely that His utterances leave light behind them and give God's word a peculiar and unmistakable worth. This gives us, it seems to me, a clue to the place that belongs to our Lord among the ranks of the world's religious teachers, and provides us also with the place that must be assigned to Christianity in comparison with other religions of the world. Our Lord is the only true Teacher; all others are but fragmentary and tentative. His authority is not to be set over against that of other teachers of the world, as if they were false and impostors. We may liken His teaching to the spring from which a great river rises, and to the ocean into which it empties its mighty volume; and so Moses, and David, and Paul, and Isaiah, and Confucius, and Socrates, and Luther, and others, were all great and wise and earnest teachers of men, but not one of them was the true Light. It is impossible to point to a single philosopher or theologian who is thoroughly consistent with himself in all his utterances. For the wisest of all teachers other than Christ can give us only their personal convictions, and these are very largely speculations, though resting perhaps on very good grounds. Jesus Christ is the Word become flesh; as the Godman He is the eternal Reason, the true Light, and all other teachers are only lamps. But lamps they are; very fragmentary and unsatisfactory their radiance may be; but, still, they