

Roman jurisprudence, and a permanent heritage to the world, yet no example of this ideal virtue anywhere appeared; and the immense contrasts of social life, and the insufficiency of philosophy created a religious urgency which was without an equal.

It is in the existence of such facts as these that we observe the preparation for the coming of Jesus Christ into the world. Not only was the classic tongue of Greece fitted to express His doctrine, and the empire of Imperial Rome fitted to transmit His gospel, but the philosophical thought of the patrician and the religious faith of the plebeian had created the necessity for His appearance, and in the fulness of time God sent forth His Son.

But the Son of God was too transcendent a being to be comprehended by the wisdom of the world, and He was too obscure in His birth and His associations to obtain its attention. Though we can see in looking back over the years what an awakening He became to the minds of men, yet that awakening was not immediate. "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not." But we have only to compare His knowledge of God with the knowledge of His contemporaries to behold His immeasurable superiority over them.

I have proceeded all along upon the assumption that Jesus Christ was the fulness of that knowledge of which the ancient world had discovered a little, but only a little; and since He was wisdom and truth, nothing was more natural than that He should become an object of study to the wise men. If His advance to the foremost place in the problems of thought was not immediate, it was nevertheless most certain and rapid. It was inevitable that He should enter the schools and sit among the sophists in Athens, and in Alexandria, as He once sat among the doctors in the Temple, hearing them and asking them questions. A great teacher had come into the world; it did not matter where, He was a city set upon a hill and could not be hid. The leaven had been put into the measure of meal—it did not matter how large the measure, all it contained should feel the working of the vital germ.