

faith. He that hath the Son hath life—that is the subject of the Fourth Gospel.

Jesus himself sets forth his mission in like manner. In the Gospel of Mark, which many critics love to call the original gospel, Christ claims to be Lord, sitting from before the ages at the right hand of God (Mark xii. 35). He admits that he is "Christ the Son of the Blessed," who, sitting on the right hand of power, "will come in the clouds of heaven" (xiv. 61). And most solemnly does he lead Peter (viii. 27 f.) to confess him to be "the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt. xvi. 16), and tell him that such a confession came from the Father in Heaven. Neither does it seem accidental, as early Christian teachers observed, that upon that confession of the Messiah as the God-Man followed the foundation of the Church, against which the gates of hell should not prevail.

When we go a step further and come to the study of theology, whether biblical or systematic, we find in like manner that the Divine Christ appears as the fundamental doctrine. For what is Christian theology? Paul's theology, Augustine's theology, for that matter all evangelical theology can be summed up in Rom. i. 16; the Gospel is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." It is a gospel of sin in man and grace in God; and that grace which forgives sin came by Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son. Is our theology a scheme of salvation, of redemption, of deliverance, then the Saviour, the Redeemer, can be none else than the Lord mighty to save. Is it a plan involving forgiveness, then the forgiver must be divine, for "who can forgive sins but God only?"

The pagan theology, the wisdom of the Greeks, that filled the Roman empire when Christianity appeared, regarded religious founders and leaders as teachers. They showed men what was in harmony with reason and virtue, and urged them to shape their lives accordingly. This Greek theology had about three articles:—(1) There is a God, true, beautiful, good,—the mind of the Universe, the Unknowable; (2) Man should live according to right reason—he can do it; (3) Those who so live will enjoy whatever immortality or happiness may possibly be found beyond this life. That is Natural Theology, the theology still preached by a great many men, in the name of the Gospel of