

2. We must confine ourselves to the rock once found—build there, and there only—since rock foundations only will stand.

Forgetting this, some of our wisest builders have tried to buttress the rock—strengthen Christ by human masonry. Thus have grown up projecting wings of doctrine—certitudes, as many believe them, of like importance and stability with the work itself. Of latter days, there has been a great shaking among these theological foundations—these offshoots from the living rock—these would be additions and improvements on God's foundation. The inspired writer to the Hebrews tells us that to shake these is the purpose of God, since the various systems man has elaborated, useful as they are in their place and time, indispensable as they were often to those who made them, must pass away that the things that cannot be shaken may remain. The time has come when we must be careful to distinguish between these doctrinal systems, the outcome of changing times—humanly constructed foundations—and the rock itself. These are falling, as God ordains they should fall, and amid the crashing of wreckage and cries of fearing men, small wonder if some fancy the rock is giving way. Be it ours to remember that "he that believeth shall not make haste." Our God abides the same, a faithful Creator, who is still

"Whispering to the worlds of space  
In the deep night, that all is well."

Perhaps the greatest poet that ever existed, our own William Shakespeare, spoke of the influence of a pure life removed, on those she leaves behind, in words as beautiful as they are true.

"The idea of her life shall sweetly creep  
Into his study of imagination,  
And every lovely organ of her life  
Shall come apparelled in more precious habit,  
More moving delicate and full of life,  
Into the eye and prospect of his soul,  
Than when she lived indeed."

The idea of her life, all he remembered and felt of her, her sweet aims, her gentle influences, creep, before he is aware of it, sweetly, softly, gently, lovingly, into the real presence chamber of his soul, till, though not present, her life is more powerful to him—her influence at hand to hold him back or beckon him on. So God makes himself first visible to us in His Son. In Him we see the mind of God, the idea of God, and this wonderful idea does creep into the soul—no mere fancy, a most proveable fact, and has withheld millions from sin, has stimulated millions to virtue, holiness, self-sacrifice—as *when He lived indeed*. Let Christ become enshrined in the study of our imagination, the mind of Christ, the example of Christ, the purposes of Christ; and he does become what He was on earth—the First, the Chief among ten thousand.

At the fountain of that life man tastes the old wine, and so, having tasted, all else seems harsh and new. He must be before party; put Him there and party strife loses its acrimony; before Church, put Him there and ecclesiastical distinctions are seen to be trivial; before wishes, and we can forego the most cherished; before fancies, and though we retain we are not dominated by them; before self, and He does increase and self decrease.

How can Christ be brought into the study of the imagination of a distinctly pleasure-loving and intensely active age? This is the question the Church of Christ must boldly face to-day. The answer cannot, I think, for a moment be doubtful. By uniting all true Christians—that is, all in the study of whose heart Christ Jesus dwells and reigns. To declare that nothing but Christ can permanently, worthily, fill the heart of the man He has made. This is the aim of the Bible Society. Any Society having such an aim deserves our support. It would unite all Christians in an effort to distribute that wonderful, that blessed book, in which the living Christ stands before men.

This is not the time, nor this the place, to speak hardly of others; but