

we are seeking day by day to live in the faith that made these men what they are. It is as of old, *pectus facit theologum*. Now, it is true that men may persuade themselves that they thoroughly believe what it is their interest to uphold, the so-called belief being induced by training and continual iteration. But it has no more strength than it gets from the buttress of habit and a certain logic with which the argument has been enforced. It is bound to give way to superior dialectic skill, each case of this proving once more the instability of belief based on authority.

It stands very differently when belief springs from the heart and when a system is the outcome of moral conviction strengthened by and in turn strengthening everyday conduct. The constant danger to the theologian is to degenerate into a mere professional, giving assent to certain traditional beliefs, and as arguments of which he feels the strength are brought to bear on his positions to blind himself and others to their validity lest his fabric should totter.

Intellectual certainty in theology must, if it is not to be a changing philosophy, be based on spiritual conviction. By supplying his religious needs each day, by seeking to follow his Master and to live in the presence of his Lord, the realities of Christianity will so enter into the fibre and tissue of a man's life that they become the truest things of existence and the most irreversible. His theology is an attempt to reach out day by day to a more adequate expression of his conviction, and he is not concerned whether his system become antiquated or not, provided only it serves him to set forth his unchanging heart-inbred conviction.

2. If the prime factor for a theologian is the possession of a spiritual character, this will also have influence on his method of Biblical interpretation.

The revelation of God has been from the very beginning an opening up to men of His nature. Tell me what is Thy Name. We read the Bible in order to discover the character of God and so to gain life eternal, for discovery of character can only be made by the heart. The Bible must therefore not be treated as a compendium of *loci classici* for systematic theology. It is not given to us primarily as a mine from which systems are to be dug. This idea seems to prevail still in some quarters, for in many commentaries exegesis is made subservient to dogmatics. A most unnatural meaning isolated from the evident textual setting is forced into a verse in order to bring it into line with some outpost of the theological system.

If Revelation is the unfolding of the character of God in the person of Christ, the main task of exegesis must be to make the terms of it intelligible to the heart. Revelation is not to be regarded as a series of propositions so concatenated and logically compacted that no word in one writer