

timidly, unwilling to be known, in any sense, as a disciple of the Nazarene. But, whatever his motives, it was well that he came. It is well for every man, whatever his present religious condition, to read and hear God's word, to come within the range and reach of the truth, to afford the teachers of truth an opportunity of communication.

These two interlocutors are met at the world's centre. The affairs of mankind do not gravitate to Athens or to Rome, but to Jerusalem; for the temple of God is there, the oracles of God are there, and there, too, the only true Priest is about to offer the true and only sacrifice for the sins of all mankind. "Salvation is of the Jews."

They are met to converse on the theme of themes—religion, the relationship between God and man, the kingdom that is over all forever. Men's ordinary topics find no place here. The weather, the crops and the war, party politics, the literature of time, human science, civilization, fleeting philosophy, are not now stirring the heart of Nicodemus, or seeking to elicit the Master's weighty words. These two talk of God's kingdom and the men that shall enter it. They talk of escape from perdition, of God's love and its gifts, of the faith that saves and the unbelief that destroys. What can match such themes as these? They belong to us all; they are above all estimation and beyond all comparison, and they should be our great study and topic. A little longer and we shall have nothing else to think of; a little longer and we shall have nothing else to care for.

Very admirable and valuable is the conversation itself. The more we attempt to fathom it the deeper we find it; the more we seek in it the more it yields us; it is an unfailing spring of spiritual influence, an inexhaustible mine of heavenly wealth. Its theme, from beginning to end, is one, true religion; and the wisdom of God presents this theme in its noblest and most appropriate aspect—the aspect of LIFE.

The conversation, as our Lord conducts and moulds it, contains four parts or portions. The first may be taken to include the first thirteen verses of the third chapter of the Gospel according to John; the second consists of the fourteenth and fifteenth verses; the third of the sixteenth and seventeenth, and the fourth