

THE RELIGION OF JESUS, NO. I.

FIRST PRINCIPLES, NO. I.

No one knows the Lord Jesus but as he learns him. No one loves Jesus, but as he knows him. No one obeys Jesus, but as he loves him. We first learn—then we love—then we obey. This is heaven's order. Jesus is taught and we learn him; we thereby see his love, and hence love him; and we discover his authority in his love and therefore obey him. Unsaved friend! allow your understanding, your heart, yourself in full, to be addressed on the subject of Jesus' Religion in its first or elementary principles.

The religion of the Lord being more human, it needs more than a human teacher to teach it. The lessons of heaven must be taught from heaven and with the authority of heaven. An English teacher can teach the English language; a Frenchman acquainted with his own national tongue is capable of teaching French; a common science can be taught by any one who studies and understands it; and indeed every subject, object, science, art, or system properly belonging to the present world, can be taught by men who are of the world.—But to learn Divine lessons we need a Divine teacher. A human teacher for earthly things—a Divine teacher for heavenly things.

Jesus therefore teaches his own religion. "He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God." So the great reformer, John the Baptist, tells us, as reported by John the apostle, chap. iii. A master in Israel might therefore with great propriety call the Lord Jesus "a teacher sent from God." Even his rankest opposers were constrained to testify, "Never did man speak like him." The "words of God" are the words he speaks. "He that hears me," says the Messiah, "hears him that sent me." The religion of Jesus therefore is to be learned from himself; and since no other teacher is competent, he kindly condescends to become the Great Teacher of the sons of Adam. What a thought!—Jesus a Teacher, and men his pupils!

But who is Jesus? "Who do men say that I, the son of man, am?" is a query full of divine pathos which originated with the Lord himself. Yes, the question urges itself in the weight of its mightiness upon us, Who and what is Jesus? True, indeed, he is the Teacher sent from God, speaking the words of God, and declaring God; but he is more. He is the Father's Apostle to the world; but he is more. He is the Christ of God; but he is more. He is the Sacrifice for sin, the Ransom for all; but he is more. He is the Mediator between God and man, the High Priest who has passed into the heavens, the true Holy Place, but he is more, much more. He is the Word who was made flesh, Emmanuel, God with us; but he is more. He is the Conqueror of