

went speedily and wholly into Christ's worship, as an easy and pleasing substitute for the difficult and painful performance of Christian duty. That nothing of this kind took place in the early Church, or continues in it to the present day, we will not affirm, for we remember the words of the Great Teacher, "Why call ye Me Lord, Lord, and do not what I say?" But neither is it a new thing that we should be unacquainted with it, and so deceived by it, or an old thing which has passed away, and from which we are in no danger of being deceived, to seek to conceal and justify one error by pointing out and condemning another error, which seems to be opposed to it, while both spring from the same root of bitterness, the evil heart of unbelief in departing from the Living God.

Christ will not accept a feigned reverence for His person, when His commands are neglected or despised. But will He therefore accept of a feigned admiration of His precepts, when the honour and worship He claims for His person are withheld, or denied to be due? If we cannot truly call Him Lord, Lord, while we do not keep His sayings, can we render to Him true and unfeigned obedience, while we refuse to call Him our Lord and our God, if He require this at our hand, either by His own mouth or by the mouth of servants duly accredited to make the demand in His name?

But we do, not now propose to enter into the question concerning Christ's person, but to consider this, Whether He did or did not make Himself and His work the principal theme of His teaching while on Earth? When we say His *work*, we of course mean some other work than the work of teaching, for, if He represented His teaching as the one great thing which He came into the World to do, this question may be considered as settled. When we say, "Did He make Himself and His work the principal theme of His teaching?" we do not propose to enquire whether He spoke of these more frequently in His discourses than of other things, though of this we think there can be no doubt; but whether it was, as some say, the great aim of His teaching to expound the Law as the way of life, or to draw attention to Himself as one who had come into the World, not merely to teach, but to deliver men from all their miseries, and restore them to the lost favour of God, not to be recovered otherwise than by His aid. This was certainly the great theme of the teaching of the apostles He commissioned to preach in His name after He was taken up into Heaven. Was it or was it not also His own while He went about teaching and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom of God upon Earth?

If it had not been so, whatever reasons some might have seen for receiving Him as the Great Teacher of the World, there would have been a serious drawback from

His claim to be received as the Great Teacher of the Bible. But a very slight inspection of the records left us of His personal ministry will show that He took care to place this claim far above the suspicion of any such doubt. Those who would represent His mission upon Earth to have been chiefly that of a correct expounder of the Law, an assertor of its spiritual nature, and a vindicator of its high and holy requirements from the impure and groveling glosses of its corrupt and carnal-minded interpreters, must overlook nearly all on which He Himself laid the greatest stress in His teaching, whether in public or in private.

When Nicodemus came to Him, saying, "Rabbi, we know that Thou art a Teacher come from God, for no man can do these miracles which Thou doest, except God be with him." According to the notions of some there was no need that Jesus should have pressed His personal claims upon the attention of such an enquirer, for he admitted all the authority that a mere teacher of the Law could be required to possess. Does Jesus then proceed to expound to Him the Law? No, but to tell him of the necessity of regeneration by the Spirit, which is certainly no unfolding of the duties inculcated by the Law. But this regeneration by the Spirit might be a necessary preparation for performing the duties and so for receiving the precepts of the Law in their proper and spiritual sense. No doubt such a preparation was necessary for such a purpose. What then does Jesus proceed to do next? To propound the requirements of the Law? No, but to set forth His own personal claims to be received in the World. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee. We speak that We do know, and testify that We have seen. And no man hath ascended up into Heaven, but He that came down from Heaven, even the Son of Man which is in Heaven. And, as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that He gave His Only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. He that believeth on Him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the Only-begotten Son of God." Does this read like an exposition of the Law, and not rather a setting-forth of His own claim to be received as the Saviour of the World? Or, if any one explain the Law, and insist upon its being obeyed in all the strictness with which God has a right to demand that it should, and do not preach the Gospel of salvation by Christ, will He seem to have been sent to condemn the world or to save it? "But God sent not His Son to con-

demn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved."

Thus Jesus taught Nicodemus what He required His disciples to believe. What then was the nature of His instruction to these disciples themselves, when apart from the rest of the world He taught them the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God? Is the Law His principal text, and its nature and requirements the main substance of His discourse? Let us hear what they have recorded as what formed the most interesting and important theme during these private conferences.

"Let not your hearts be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in Me. My peace I leave with you; My peace I give unto you. Not as the world giveth, give I unto you. In the world ye shall have tribulation; but in Me ye shall have peace. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." Are these and such assurances of comfort, support and deliverance to be esteemed of little account in the doctrine of Christ? But, when Jesus taught such things as these, was He preaching the Law, or preaching Himself? Or, when He said to Philip, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip. He, that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father. How then sayest thou, Show us the Father?" Did He then proclaim Himself as no more, or as little more than a Teacher of the Law? As a Teacher of the Law, do we say? Did He not, both in His discourse with Nicodemus and in His many discourses with His disciples, proclaim Himself not only as something more than but as something quite different from a Teacher in any sense. But He did take upon Him to discharge the office of a Teacher in the Church, and we are now considering in what manner He fulfilled the part. As a Teacher come from God, He must needs expound the Law of God, and He did so as never any other man did. But He came also to make God manifest in a world that by wisdom knew Him not. He revealed therefore the Father, whom no man hath seen or can see, who dwelleth in light which is unapproachable, in so far as He can be made manifest to human capacity. This few, who hold Christ in any honour as a Teacher at all, will dispute, or indeed do dispute. But He came to reveal the Son as well as the Father; and, as He claimed to be received as the Son of God, and one with the Father, His teaching of necessity had respect to Himself as well as to the Father when He taught us the things pertaining to God. He taught us also concerning the Holy Spirit, who knoweth all things; yea, the deep things of God, even as the Spirit which is in Man, knoweth the things of a man. When Jesus said, I go into the Father and will send you the Spirit of Truth which proceedeth from the Father, and He shall testify of Me: surely His doctrine was not only concerning Himself,