

CHAPTER I

OUR NEED OF REFORMATION

It is now admitted by New Testament scholars that those words of Jesus which appear to treat of the society he founded as partial in extent, and suggest that the kingdom of heaven would include but a few out of the many, refer only to the period of the kingdom's growth. From the general tenor of his teaching and outlook we gather that he thought, not only that he was providing a salvation for the whole world, but that his salvation must ultimately pervade the whole world; and further, that the principles of conduct he laid down, the character he exemplified, and the faith he revealed, if closely wrought into the lives of his followers would most quickly and effectually accomplish, not only their own enfranchisement, but the enfranchisement of the race.

Meantime, the reception and transmission of his message of deliverance did not depend upon its being perfectly comprehended; and the great proof we have of the truth of the earliest traditions concerning him is that his followers passed on an ideal which they only imperfectly understood. There can be