

But it is equally true and vital to thought that nature is not pantheistic. God is not a vague unconscious spirit coming to knowledge of itself only in man, whose moments of self-consciousness will be wiped out at death as you rub chalk marks off a blackboard. God is a person who has ordered His universe so beneficently that His immanent spirit causes the worlds to minister to our needs. Spiritual influences are not latent in material objects as such, stored up in greater measure wherever there are specially consecrated receptacles. Their ultimate source is a personal will. Nature it is true gives evidence of a personal God, but through Nature alone we do not come into personal contact with Him. Now

THE GREAT TRUTH OF REVELATION IS THAT GOD HATH BECOME INCARNATE IN A MAN JESUS

so that he who hath seen Him hath seen the Father, and that the Holy Spirit, which is the Spirit of His Son, the source of all good influences, dwells in the hearts of men as one person dwells in the heart of another. This which represents the whole activity of God upon our wills is entirely moral, coming to us through the medium of the historical life of Jesus in which we discern the will of the Father. The whole life of Jesus was thoroughly human. He came to perfect human character, and therefore observed the laws of human life, not violating the natural order of growth, nor the constitution of our mind or will. It is to be carefully borne in mind that the life of Jesus was miraculous, not magical. No action of His in the least degree gave reason for men to expect help from God in a preternatural way. I may explain this by the words of Jesus when the woman touched the hem of His garment. He really told her, "Woman I am no store-house of magic from which streams of divine material influence flow forth. Thy faith in me—thy belief that I Jesus have sufficient power, has saved thee." The miraculous energy of Jesus proceeded so directly from His own will that no one could expect it to be transmitted as a permanent gift to His church. Though He raised Lazarus men did not imagine that death would now cease, nor when He fed the five thousand did He promise that they should no longer need to work for their bread.

JESUS SOUGHT TO MAKE THE WILL GOOD,

and therefore never flattered even the weakest with the hope that their moral responsibility would be lessened by an endowment of magical powers through consecrated material forms. Every miracle expressed the truth that spirit has power over matter, the will over the body, but no miracle lends support to the idea that heightened natural action or material force can stimulate the will morally. Body and soul shall both be redeemed with a glory prefigured in the life of Jesus at the Transfiguration and the Resurrection. Indeed all nature is to be renewed. But the process is spiritual. Even as Christ's pure will had mastery over nature when He rose triumphant from the grave, so He returns to us in His Holy Spirit to possess our wills, wooing them from their perverseness, charming their obstinacy, purging their impurities, and flooding their darkness