

ARTICLE III.

STUDIES IN CHRISTOLOGY.¹

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IX.

THE BIBLICAL FACTS.

WE now approach in these studies the center of the problem. It has been remarked that "It is only when men are firmly convinced that Christ is God that the problem suggested by his human nature will press upon their minds and demand consideration." But such is the immemorial conviction of the church. And yet it is conceivable, improbable as it may be, that the church was all along mistaken in this belief, and that Christ is not really God; and, hence, that the christological problem has no real foundation in facts for which a reconciliation is required. We must revert, therefore, to the beginning of our subject ere we can enter upon the dogmatic discussion of the union of the two natures in Christ, and ask the question anew for ourselves, Whether we are to believe, in this nineteenth century, and with all the light upon the Scriptures and upon every other appropriate source of information which we possess, in the proper deity of Jesus Christ. Let us begin with the Scripture teaching.

The earliest source of biblical teaching which is afforded us in the New Testament, according to the divisions of "biblical theology" so-called, are the discourses of Jesus. Even the three synoptic Gospels furnish evidence of some reflection by their writers upon the story they have to tell, objective as

¹ Continued from July, 1895, p. 548.

they are in most of their representations. The evidences of the wonder which Jesus excited, and of the display in him of a something which was more than ordinary humanity, with the innocent art by which it is sought to produce like impressions on the reader, are examples of this element contributed by the writers of the synoptics to the simple narrative they have to give. But the discourses of Jesus are not thus modified. They are an objective report. And they are the primary, as they are the highest, source we possess. It is the merit of the recent writers in biblical theology, of Wendt and Beyschlag, as well as of the more conservative Nösgen, to have shown that in their teachings the discourses of the Fourth Gospel harmonize entirely with those of the first three. The picture of Jesus Christ given by himself according to these four witnesses is one.

Neither the designation of himself by Jesus as Son of man nor as Son of God was intended to indicate directly his deity. The former was a somewhat indirect, but an unequivocal, expression of his claim to be the Messiah of the Old Testament; the latter expressed the peculiarly intimate relation of love and communion in which he stood with the Father. The expression "Son of David" pointed still further. It implied the expectation of royal dignity; but this, when connected with his definite prophecies of a violent death (Mark viii. 31; ix. 31; x. 34) and of his resurrection from the dead, pointed forward to another realm, beyond this world, in which he was to possess the glory which truly belonged to him. More distinctly yet was this brought out when, in Mark xii. 36, he appropriated to himself Psalm cx. i.: "The Lord saith unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand till I make thine enemies thy footstool"; and thus designated himself as the one who was to share the divine throne, and so as a divine person. He was then to enter upon his true glory, and as possessing this he was God, for he who partakes in the administration of the world is no mere creature. The administration of the world

is the biblical argument for the divinity of God himself (Isa. xl. 12-26).

The result at which we thus arrive by the consideration of the group of discourses found in the synoptics is that the full dignity of Christ was only intimated in his earthly career, and that we are to judge of what he truly is, even while upon earth, by the revelation made of himself in his resurrection and exaltation to the throne of the majesty on high. With this view harmonizes entirely that given in the Fourth Gospel, though the subject is approached from a different point of departure. Jesus represents himself as having been in the most intimate relations with the Father "before the world was," as having "come forth from God," as speaking that which he "heard" and "saw" with the Father. Repeatedly is the phrase that he was "sent into the world" employed, with which another is associated, that he "came," both of these denoting his conscious and remembered preëxistence before he was in the world. Thus he is the perfect organ of revelation and the perfect representation of the Father, so that he who has seen Jesus has seen the Father (xiv. 9). Repeatedly are his expressions as to himself so bold that the Jews cry out that he is making himself equal with God; and his replies, while they blunt the point of the definite accusation made, leave its substance untouched.

The book of Acts, which begins with the account of the ascension of the Lord, views him always in the light of the fact that he occupies the mediatorial throne. It is from this that he sends forth the Spirit. Since he occupies this, it is proper that he should be designated as "Lord" (*κύριος*); and to the Lord upon the throne any Old Testament text which speaks of judgment or salvation (Acts ii. 20, 21) can be immediately applied, however explicit in its original application to Jehovah himself (comp. vii. 59, 60).

There would be greater possibility of doubt as to the correctness of this last statement, did not the next group of New

Testament writings, the earlier Pauline Epistles, furnish numerous and indisputable examples of the same usage. Paul's preaching was summed up in one phrase, that Jesus is Lord. Hence he applies to him directly passages from the Old Testament employed there of Jehovah (1 Cor. ii. 16 from Isa. xl. 13; x. 22 from Deut. xxxii. 21; Rom. x. 13). In one passage (Rom. xiv. 8, 9) he applies the term "Lord" to Christ when in the immediate context it has been applied, in the same sense, to Jehovah (ver. 3 and 4). It is as "Lord" that Jesus Christ sits at the right hand of God (Rom. viii. 34) and is the Ruler of the world (x. 12). When this exalted Christ returns to judgment, it is with divine predicates, such as omniscience (1 Cor. iv. 5). He is therefore the object of divine honors (2 Cor. xii. 8, 9; Rom. x. 12, 13) and Paul also once calls him explicitly God (Rom. ix. 5). Thus again, it is the glorified state of Christ which in Paul's mind exhibits him in his true nature and reveals those attributes of his being which must be presupposed to make his Messianic work a possibility.

But Paul goes further. His thought rises in sublimity and reaches into the ages of the past eternity as well as forward into the future. In his later epistles Paul teaches that the Son of God, who was the object of peculiar love (Col. i. 13), existed before the creation, and was sent into the world. "When the fullness of time came, God sent forth his Son" (Gal. iv. 4) upon the errand of redemption. This was itself a divine work (Rom. viii. 3), but the Son had already wrought divine works, since he was the medium of creation (1 Cor. viii. 6; Col. i. 15, 16), and of the administration of grace under the ancient economy (1 Cor. x. 4). The eternal election of the individual Christian was made "in [by] him" (Eph. iii. 11; i. 3, 4). He was also the goal towards which the world in its onward sweep was moving, since all things were not only created through him, but also "unto him . . . that in all things he might have the preëminence" (Col. i. 16-18). But the goal of the world-process must be God (Rom. xi. 36).

Hence arises Paul's conception of the estate of humiliation. Though he was in the form of God, he emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, becoming obedient even unto death. For this cause God has highly exalted him and given him the name which is above every name, the name Jehovah (*κύριος*), that every knee should bow and confess him Lord (Jehovah) to the glory of God the Father (Phil. ii. 1-11). Hence, in Jesus Christ exalted to the fullness of the glory of God (Eph. i. 23; iv. 10; Col. i. 19) we have God.

The same remarkable use of the word "Lord" in reference to Jesus Christ is found in the Epistle to the Hebrews. Jesus is Lord, and hence any passage of the Old Testament speaking of Jehovah is applicable directly to him for that reason.¹ Thus only can the propriety of such passages as i. 10-12 be justified. Indeed, the first chapter of this epistle is as definite in its expressions as the first chapter of the Gospel of John. The phrase "Son of God" is used (i. 1) in a new sense, implying, as I think, the divine nature (v. 8; vii. 3), and the term God is not withheld (i. 8, 9). The Son is the express image of the Father and the brightness of his glory, the creator of the worlds, the preserver and upholder of all things. That is, he is very God.

Thus it is nothing new when, at the end of the period of New Testament revelation, the Apostle John appears with his doctrine of the Logos. This was in the beginning with God and was God (i. 1), was the medium of creation (ver. 3) and of all revelation (ver. 4, 9) and became flesh (ver. 14). The sum and substance of this teaching, as of all the course of thought in the New Testament, is that the Christ was the eternal God manifested in the flesh. The passages quoted serve rather to indicate than fully to delineate it: the doctrine is the woof of the New Testament Scriptures, as the Fatherhood of God is the warp. It is contained in innumer-

¹ No one is clearer in his statement of these facts than Beyschlag, *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, Vol. ii. p. 304.

able passages. If it be once fully accepted upon the authority of these indubitable passages, it will be found to shine forth in hints, suggestions, and implications, as under the morning sun the hidden dew is revealed amid the grass by glittering points of prismatic light. The general, the first, the unshakable, and the last, impression of the Bible is that Christ is God.

But Christ was also truly man. It is at this day unnecessary to argue with any that he had a real *body*, that he was born as other men are, grew as they do, appeared like a man, depended as men do upon the material world for sustenance, was restricted by space as men are, so that he traveled patiently from place to place, slept as men do, suffered pain like men, and truly died—a fact unconsciously indicated with perfect clearness by the simple accuracy of the evangelical description (John xix. 34). It may be more necessary to note and to substantiate the fact that he possessed a *human soul*. A brief consideration of the plainest facts of his life will bring out the truth that he displays, on some occasion or other, proofs of the existence of every leading characteristic of the human soul, and more prolonged study would only develop the proof with more overwhelming fullness. Thus we find him possessed of an *intellect* which moved by the same processes as ours, as, for example, the syllogism which he employed in John viii. 47. His *moral intuitions* and ultimate ethical principle were the same as ours; as, see Matt. xxii. 37–40, in which he sets forth the universal law of human duty, and Matt. iv. 3–10, in which he obeys duty as men do. We even have trace of almost every distinctive human *feeling*; as, for example, desire of knowledge (Luke ii. 46) and of esteem (Luke vii. 45); natural affection, such as for friends (John xv. 15), for family (John xix. 26), for country (Matt. xxiii. 37–39); complacent love (Mark xiv. 8); moral indignation (Luke xi. 46; John viii. 44); joy and peace (John xiv. 27). His *will* was moved by like considerations as ours.

And finally, it is his entire likeness to us in every essential point which is made the ground for the perfection of our salvation, to which this likeness was necessary, in Heb. ii. 10-18: iv. 15; v. 7-10.

Christ was, therefore, by nature God, and he was by nature man. There are two natures in Christ, divine and human. This is the first great result of biblical study, as it is the universal conviction of the Christian church from the beginning.

X.

THE MODERN ATTACK UPON THE DOCTRINE OF THE TWO NATURES.—RITSCHL.

It is at precisely this point, at the doctrine of the two natures in Christ, that the most vigorous attacks upon biblical doctrine have always been made. The early Unitarians in the United States rejected this doctrine because, as Channing said, it destroyed the unity of God and the unity of Christ. That movement, with its attempt to construct the personality of God upon the model of human personality, and with its easy refutation of a form of orthodoxy which was substantially Nestorianism, has long since ceased to receive further attention. In our own day the attack is made in a different way. The theological school of Ritschl, now the most influential aggressive school of thought in Germany, denies the two natures, while maintaining most vigorously, after its own fashion, the "deity" (*Gottheit*)¹ of Christ. The historical

¹ Since this article was sent to the printers, the second volume of Ritschl's Life has appeared. In this is a review of Ritschl's whole system by his son, in which it is said that one "can as well affirm that Ritschl denies the existence of God, and hence teaches atheism, as that he does not intend the deity of Christ to be understood as reality in the full sense" (p. 212). Again, the "identification of God and man in the one person is to the reason a *paradox*." The church has not succeeded in bringing the two natures into one person, "any more than in uniting human freedom and divine grace. For this problem is also for the reason a *simple paradox*" (p. 216). I do not see, however, that the following criticism is invalidated by this affirmation as to Ritschl's personal conviction.

development of his system in the mind of Albrecht Ritschl, as portrayed in his "Life" by his son, Professor Otto Ritschl, exhibits it as, in fact, what it is in its logical relations,—an arrested stage of return from the Hegelian rationalism of the school of Baur. We may, therefore, deem ourselves historically justified in preserving the traditional air of reserve which belongs to the Anglo-Saxon mind, and confessing that we regard Ritschl's characteristic christological positions far from the truth, in spite of their great popularity in Germany. But we deem them, for other reasons than apologetic ones, worthy of a careful attention.

Ritschl's own presentation of his view is found in the third volume of his principal work, the "Rechtfertigung und Ver-söhnung."¹ He begins his remarks upon the person and work of Christ by observing that Christianity gives to Christ a place quite peculiar among the founders of religions by making his *person* an element in its general philosophy of the universe (*Weltanschauung*). This is because (1) he performed a unique work when he founded the kingdom of God upon earth. The origin and continued existence of this kingdom, as a society of those who govern themselves in their conduct by the law of love, is to be ascribed to the force which went forth from Christ. He not only had views of vital importance upon religious truth which he presented, but his whole life was a practical illustration of man's true relations with God, an identification of himself with the purposes of God in the world, the assumption, as his specific calling, and as his individual purpose, of the great purpose of God for the

¹I employ here the first and third editions in conjunction with each other (first edition, pp. 340-421; third edition, pp. 364-455). The differences between the two are not of essential importance, and the language of the first edition is often to be preferred for its directness and raciness. The attempts to avoid misunderstanding which were painfully made in the third edition, often excluded valuable matter, and laid a restraint upon the author which resulted in the impoverishment of the style—the loss of the Ritschlian "*Geist*."

world, which is the establishment of the kingdom of God. Thus he is the source of power which brings men into relation with God, and guides them in their religious life. This is the one reason of Christ's peculiar position; and the second is (2) that he perfectly reveals God to man. These two elements are comprised in the single predicate of the deity of Christ, which expresses the peculiar honor which Christianity ascribes to its founder.

Some little reflection may be necessary to enter in fully to Ritschl's thought. He is engaged, as in his whole theology, in giving an account of what he styles *religious* truths, which he always distinguishes from merely *intellectual* truths. He lays the greatest emphasis upon the importance of thoroughly comprehending this distinction. Illustrating it from Luther's definition of faith, which is no mere intellectual reception of revealed propositions as true, but a trust in God, he introduces his most distinctive and important term, the celebrated word *Werthurtheil*. He says: "Faith or trust *in* Jesus Christ, or *in* the Holy Ghost, is the recognition of the deity of Jesus Christ and of the Holy Ghost, because such a trust can be directed to no other being than God. The deity of Christ is thus presented by this explanation as a *Werthurtheil*." This peculiar term has been much misunderstood, and has very often failed to convey any meaning whatever to the Anglo-Saxon mind. But it is not difficult to arrive at an understanding of it. There are, as already said, two kinds of knowledge, according to Ritschl's view, the intellectual and the practical, the uninterested and that which is accompanied by feelings of pleasure or pain, the scientific and the religious. These pairs of expressions mean, for our present purpose, the same thing. When I view God as my God, when I feel pleasure in my view of him, when I give myself to him, and when I express these things in a proposition, that proposition is a *Werthurtheil*, or a proposition involving an expression of worth. An illustration of a theoretical, intellectual judgment might be:

"God is a Spirit," a scientific statement as to his nature. A corresponding illustration of a *Werthurtheil* would be: "God is my Father," a judgment which expresses a religious relation, which cannot be uttered without involving the feeling of pleasure, and which is uttered as designating God's character, not abstractly as he is in himself, but in reference to me. Thus Ritschl says: "The knowledge of God can be presented as religious knowledge only when he is conceived in such a relation that he secures to the believer a position in the world enabling him to overcome the restrictions he suffers from the same. Outside of this *Werthurtheil* through faith, there is no knowledge of God which is worthy of this contents." That is to say, If I cannot know God as having a relation to me, I can have no interest in him; and no knowledge which abstracts human relations, and thus destroys human interest in God, is religious knowledge at all.

Kaftan, who is the greatest living dogmatician of the Ritschlian school, defines the two classes of propositions which Ritschl has thus distinguished from each other as follows: "Theoretical propositions express a matter of fact, *Werthurtheile* give expression to our position towards the same."¹ With a more careful definition of the subject than I have anywhere found in Ritschl himself, but, I think, with no real departure from Ritschl's thought, Kaftan goes on to say that there are theoretical propositions in the Christian system of faith, and that these are distinguished from other theoretical propositions not by the fact that the latter are theoretical and the former not, but because they involve *Werthurtheile*. He says: "I have nowhere maintained that the religious propositions *are Werthurtheile*, but regard this expression as, at least, liable to misunderstanding. No! *Werthurtheile* are *involved* in them, but they themselves *are* theoretical propositions, and are such so essentially that the estimate of the world in respect to its worth in connection with religious

¹ *Wesen der christlichen Religion*, second edition, p. 45.

faith is, inasmuch as it is connected with the idea of God, expressed in theoretical propositions of objective significance which are derived from, or grounded in, the knowledge of God." Ritschl employs the looser expression, but with the same meaning. Even when he speaks of "*selbständige Werthurtheile*," he means, not propositions which express worth and nothing but worth, but propositions which require for their full understanding the propositions expressing value which are implied in them. Thus, God is love, is a *Werthurtheil*, though it does not immediately express worth for us. That is, it is a religious truth only as it involves a personal relation to this God and calls up the pleasure that is excited in the mind when we think that he loves us.

To put Ritschl's thought into plain language, therefore, with this understanding of his peculiar word *Werthurtheil*, it may be stated thus:—

When the Christian finds himself delivered from the power of this world and made citizen of another, even of the kingdom of God, he recognizes the power which produces this change as a divine power. It proceeds from Jesus Christ, who is also so perfect a revelation of God to him that, as he looks upon Christ, it is the same, so far as the impressions of the divine upon his soul are concerned, as if he looked directly upon God. That is, Christ calls up the same feelings of pleasure in the Christian and establishes the same relations with him as God would himself. He takes the place of God to the Christian. He does for the Christian just what God does, that is, he has the *worth* of God, that is, he is, for the Christian, God. This is the Christian's *Werthurtheil*, a proposition, that is, which is of a theoretical nature (Christ is God), but founded upon a *proposition expressing worth*, viz., upon the proposition that we experience the same feelings in reference to him as in reference to God himself.

So much for the meaning and the application of the idea of the *Werthurtheil* to our subject. The remaining portion of

Ritschl's chapter upon the person and work of Christ is occupied with expressing in various forms this idea and its consequences, and with defending it against various other views. The principal point made in all these discussions is that the deity of Christ and all the proofs of it are of no value when they are taken in abstraction from us and our relations to him. Christ's present dominion over the world upon the throne of his glory is no proof of his deity, if it cannot be shown that he possessed the same supremacy to the world even when upon earth. It is strange that Ritschl should have maintained this position, since, as the present and living source of divine gifts to his people (Acts ii. 33), Christ is of the greatest "interest" and "worth" to them. But, as is well known, Ritschl denies all communion with Christ, and hence all such blessings from him, except through the medium of the "church" (*Gemeinde*), that is, except from the historical influence which filters down through the ages from the person of Jesus Christ. So again, the argument for Christ's divinity from his preëxistence is of no importance, inasmuch as Christ's preëxistence has no worth for us, excites no feelings of pleasure, since it does not open a way for our imitating him, but rather exhibits him at infinite distance from us. Hence the idea of his preëxistence is "not a religious idea; nor is it a complete expression of Christ's deity, but only a *Hilfslinie* (which I shall translate by the awkward expression: *suggestion contributing to an explanation*) for the traditional theological concept of the same": "it is no exhaustive expression for the religious worth which is expressed in the deity of Christ." Of course, it is not a "complete" nor an "exhaustive" expression—who ever said it was?—but does it follow that it has nothing to do with the matter?

Into these discussions we need not go further, nor into the somewhat scanty exegetical discussion of the subject in this treatise. A few expressions remain to be considered which will throw light upon Ritschl's exact meaning as to the deity

of Christ. Referring to the forms of expression found in the Gospel of John, Ritschl says that the Johannine position that "in Christ the divine revelation is person" has the meaning "that the divine revelation is the form, the human individuality, the material of the person of Christ." He puts it again thus: "The human individual exists only in such a way that the divine Logos is the motive power of all his phenomenal operations." That is to say, Christ was a human personality governed by the motives which rule God, that is, substantially, governed by the motive of love. Ritschl takes particular pains to argue that God's attributes of omnipotence, omniscience, etc., could not find expression in a human life, and hence *we do not view the deity of Christ as involving these*. It is only as the Christian experiences a certain [spiritual] superiority to the world in his Christian life that he ascribes to Christ the same [and hence only spiritual] superiority to the world.

The evident tendency of this line of argument to issue in the complete rejection of the doctrine of two natures in Christ is made perfectly clear by Ritschl's more special treatment of that topic. He expresses himself with reserve, saying in one place: "The formula of the union of two natures in Christ can be regarded neither as a *sufficient* expression of the contents and worth of his known historical activity, nor as the *exhaustive* ground of the explanation of the same." That is perfectly true; but Ritschl doubtless meant more. He intends to substitute the "human individuality" in which the "motive power" is the Logos, for the doctrine of the two natures. His great objection to the doctrine is indicated in the quoted sentence. Statements as to the divine and human natures, each perfect and entire, which are to be found in Christ, are statements as to facts about him which excite no interest in us, that is, lead to no feelings of pleasure, stir no personal element, and lead to no assumption on our part of any personal relation to him, and hence have no *worth* for

us. They are statements of a perfectly theoretical nature, have to do with the "furnishing" with which this person Jesus Christ, "appeared upon the threshold of the world." Thus such statements have no religious character whatever, since all religious statements are *Werthurtheile*. They belong in the region of the scientific. As such, Ritschl carefully avoids saying anything about them, since he has nothing, as a theologian, to do with them. But it is evident, from the substitution which he makes for them, that he thought that, *if he should enter* upon the consideration of them, he should find them false.

We meet here, then, the first shock of the modern attack upon the simple result of exegetical study as already stated, that Christ was by nature man and by nature God. It is declared that the whole discussion is, to say the least, irrelevant; that the church does not arrive at the deity of Christ in this way; and that, if she did, it would be a deity with which we have no concern. It is an exceedingly ingenious attack. It meets all the laborious argumentation of the church by informing her that she has been engaged upon a futile and useless effort. She has not known whither her efforts should be directed. She has utterly missed attaining the result because from the beginning she has missed the way. This attack has thrown many into confusion by its very novelty. It has seemed to many completely successful. But is it in fact too powerful to be repelled?

It is important, at the outset of our reply, to note that there is common ground between Ritschl and the church theology to a certain point. He acknowledges the deity of Christ. The faith of the church, the impression made upon her by the person of Jesus Christ, is too mighty a fact to be ignored, and Ritschl does not intend to ignore it. He purposes simply to explain it better than it has been explained heretofore. The question at issue with him may be, therefore, simply resolved into this: Has he succeeded in explain-

ing satisfactorily the fact which he acknowledges must be explained, the deity of Christ? The question thus stated, the reply is easy. He has not satisfactorily explained the deity of Christ because he has furnished no bridge upon which the mind can pass from the facts about Christ which he acknowledges to the affirmation of Christ's deity; and he has himself, accordingly, really denied that deity, since he has substituted for it something which is not deity. He did this by the necessities of logical consistency. He has thus ended by denying that which he began by acknowledging and which he was attempting to explain. The result is a virtual confession that, upon the course which his method marks out, the acknowledged fact of Christ's deity cannot be explained.

When the Christian looks upon Christ and sees in him perfect superiority to the world and the perfect revelation of God by means of a character which is perfectly governed by love, does he behold in that vision God, or a godlike man? If his only way of knowing God is through the revelation thus made of him, does the fact that Christ makes that revelation convert him into God? If feelings of pleasure are excited in view of him (*Werthurtheile*), and he assumes a *worth* in our eyes, is that worth the worth of God? To ask these questions simply and without sophistication, is to answer them. No! The only thing which can give to Christ the worth of God, and convert the agent of revelation into the source as well as the agent, or show that this being is superior to the world because he is God, is the information from some other quarter, or the well-grounded conclusion from the degree as well as the character of the tokens exhibited in his historic person, that he is God. Whence is that further information? Ritschl denies that there can be any. What is the process of that conclusion, and what the premises upon which it is based? Ritschl fails to give us any. Now, in our view of Christ as God, everything depends upon the fact whether he is God or not. No one could state this point more forcibly than Kaftan

does. Speaking of religious knowledge in general, he says: "It is such that it involves the most powerful interest in its objective truth. I say with deliberation: the most powerful conceivable interest of man. For the question whether it is true or not involves life and salvation. And there is no more powerful interest among men than this." In another connection he says of propositions in respect to God that they "declare that his essence and will are thus and so and not otherwise in their relation to the world. If this belief ceases, then our inward participation in religion comes to an end. . . . Who will seek his highest good, his true life, in God, with the surrender of every earthly good, if he is not animated by a firm confidence in his life and his love?" But when the question is put to Ritschl: Is Christ, whom we regard as God, truly God? he replies, No! He is a man. And thus he not only fails to build the bridge upon which the Christian's mind can pass to the affirmation of Christ's deity, but after he has himself affirmed it without the bridge, he proceeds to deny it! If the doctrine of the two natures is, as he declares, totally irrelevant to the subject, his own doctrine is altogether insufficient and without value. But the doctrine of the two natures is not irrelevant. It may be false, but it has the merit of giving a square answer to the inevitable question, Is Christ God? It gives an answer and a reason. It says, He is God, and God by nature. Despised as it is by the Ritschlian school, it may be that the doctrine has more force, and can do more to establish the deity of Christ than Ritschl thought.