

**OUR KNOWLEDGE OF
CHRIST; AN
HISTORICAL APPROACH**

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Our knowledge of Christ; an historical approach by Lucius Hopkins Miller

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TO MY WIFE

My dear wife,
I have written this
to you in the
hope that you will
find it of some
use.

ANDY VAN
CLINTON
VANDELL

PREFACE

WE hear it often said that these are days of change. Indeed they are. Perhaps there is more of the spirit of change in this generation than in many that have gone before. But we must not forget that change has been a continual element in human affairs. We all accept this in general whether we believe, or do not believe, that change means progress.

But many who recognize this factor in human life at the same time maintain that it does not hold in the realm of religion and religious thought. In their minds, any change of view regarding the inspiration of the Bible destroys reverence for the Bible as the Word of God; any change of view regarding Jesus Christ dethrones him from his

eternal place as the **Lord and Master** of our lives.

I have too much respect and admiration for the spiritual power and intellectual honesty of thousands of men and women who think in this way to appear for a moment as in any sense their antagonist. I was born and brought up in an atmosphere permeated by such ideas and I owe too much to my upbringing to be able, even if I wished, to deny the spiritual value of that heritage.

But there are many, brought up as I was brought up, and many others not so reared for whom the old has become increasingly unsatisfying. I do not mean those who have failed to keep their religious life warm and tender; for this, unfortunately, may and does happen to men of all shades of thought. I mean men who are sincerely trying to know and to live the truth.

There are several legitimate reasons why such men often feel that the old statements

are unsatisfactory. One is that historical investigation has altered their view of the past. I admit that much which has been put forth under the guise of historical criticism has been insecurely grounded. Still, such a phenomenon is inevitable if the benefits of complete freedom of investigation are to be secured. Conclusions which distort or run beyond the facts destroy themselves, sooner or later; further, the scientific law of "trial and error" is too important to be overlooked. But the admission just made does not alter the plain fact that historical study has forced many good and sincere Christians to alter greatly their views regarding the Bible, including the Gospels and the life of Christ. This readjustment is for many a hard trial and beset with religious danger. Those who are going through it should guard their religious life by every possible means.

I wish to emphasize that I am not particularly interested in pressing a new point of