

with him. It was a matter of conjecture with him as to what the Apostle Paul thought: for Paul was a man of letters, a man of a very extended range of experience and observation; so much so that one of the learned rabbis of his time told him that much learning had made him mad. But he was inquiring respecting his (Paul's) information concerning the Church of Christ, a body of religious worshipers with whom he was identified, and in the midst of whom he was an authorized Apostle.

"We desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest; for as concerning this sect, we know that everywhere it is spoken against."

"We know!" "What do you know, sir?" "We know that it is spoken against." "Where is it spoken against, sir?" "It is everywhere spoken against." Hence we see the universality, the general character of the opposition that was raised against the doctrines of the humble and despised Nazarene. Why was it, my friends, that they were opposed to Him? Why was it that His cause was so much misrepresented; that he was charged with keeping company with publicans and sinners, and considered worthy of death? Simply because he introduced an organized system of principles, of ordinances and divine institutions that were antagonistic, not in their essential nature to the welfare of mankind, but antagonistic to the existing dogmas, theologies and schools of philosophy that were then in existence. They were, moreover, systems of theology, and schools of philosophy and organized methods of procedure—in matters theological as well as matters doctrinal and political—that were becoming exhausted. They had reached the period of their decrepitude. They

had attained unto the period of old age. They had manifested within them the elements of social, moral and organic decay. Their deteriorating effects were becoming painfully apparent. They were becoming ill-adapted to the newly developing condition of things; inapplicable to the unfolding environments of those times; and God, who sits enthroned in the realms of purity and of truth, had given these systems for the sake of His people. Whatever there was of a regenerating progressive nature in these systems, God sustained. He sustained them until the day star had dawned for a brighter and more glorious epoch in the world's history, when the shepherds were visited by messengers of light from the realms of the Eternal Gods, crying, "Peace, peace on earth and good will toward all men."

But my brother who preceded me spoke of selfishness. He touched a chord that seems to me to be unbroken and of a very extended length. I think it reaches over all the ages. I think it has come down from the border times of prehistoric history. I think it is found right through human nature, crude and cultivated, civilized and uncivilized.

The doctrine which the Savior taught touched this feeling of selfishness. It touched the personal vanity of many. The supporters of the systems that I have alluded to—I have no time to name them; there may be many of you who are historically well informed and know all about them; you know there were a number of philosophical schools in existence in Athens and elsewhere at that time; you are acquainted, no doubt, with the dogmas of the period. Suffice it to say that the most violent and determined opposi-