

Before the days of the Bethlehem birth God spoke to us in the human word, but in Christ God is manifest in human nature. He reveals himself to us as the son of Man. A human heart speaks here in human language and in human ways. As the Apostle John asserts: In Jesus they have not only seen and heard what is God's, but have touched, that is they have handled with their hands, and have actually seen before their eyes the eternal—Godlike in human manifestation and in human form. Hence the whole Christian faith and Christian confession rests upon the clear and firm conviction that God has not willed himself to be lost to us in endless abstractions, but that in our human nature, in human form and in human language he comes to us ever more closely, in order through the medium of our human heart to establish affectionate and full fellowship with us.

Our Lord Jesus makes no high-sounding, abstract statements of the infinite in the Eternal, but shows us God as our Father, and calls us to be his children, and with childlike confidence, in a childlike way, and with childlike intimacy to have fellowship with him. Let it be distinctly understood that this rests on sober reality. That this is not mere semblance but actual fact, since God created us after his image. That thus, in the face of a broad difference, Divine reality is expressed in the human. And that, when the Word became flesh, the fact that the Son of God became Man, is directly connected with our creation after God's image.

Would we undo all this, and create a distance between us and God which would exclude all personal fellowship, by putting a whole system of