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Orthodoxy

...the real case for orthodox theology, under this, chapter 1, what we mean by orthodox theology.

The term orthodox theology may be used in various ways. Any small sect may use the term for the particular beliefs of that sect in contradistinction to those of other groups. Thus in many groups, the word orthodox seems to attach itself particularly to the more distinctive views of the particular group rather than to those that are shared in common with other Christian groups. That is not this meaning that we are going to attach to the term here. When we speak of orthodox theology we are going to mean that which has been considered as orthodox and central in the teachings of most of Christian groups through the ages. We are speaking--when we speak of orthodox theology we refer to those groups of Christian which have been considered historically as orthodox Christian groups through the long course of Christian history. We find that views of the Christian church have varied at different periods. At times great numbers have seemed to depart from the views that were considered central and primary at an earlier time. Yet we find certain matters which have been distinctive of Christianity in most of its history and which are found in most of the various denominations or groups that are considered, have been considered as Christian groups in the main line of Christianity. For our present purpose, these beliefs that have been held in common by such groups are what we are going to speak of as orthodox theology.

In other words, the present purpose is not to discuss the relation of the views which are orthodox in one denomination or one branch of Christianity to those which are held so in another group. There is a real purpose in that type of writing and of study. I personally am a Presbyterian and believe that the great doctrines that have been stressed by the Presbyterian church, the doctrines which are often summarized under the name of Calvinism, with the emphasis on the sovereignty of God, are vital doctrine, and that much value can be found in a book defending them. But that is not my present purpose. I believe