

for the father of lies is ever working, and he has many children ; the best of men are liable to error, and even truth itself, like the orb'd moon, is to the human beholder but onesided. Still we must utter and heed the warning of the beloved disciple. "Brethren believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God, because many false prophets are gone out into the world." So in literature Wolff tries the Homeric poems and calls in question their authenticity, Niebuhr denies the credibility of early Roman history, and Sayce characterizes Herodotus as the father of romancing, while a host of writers within and without the Christian pale rend the Bible to tatters among them. How do we know which of these critics is right and which wrong? What is the canon according to which the spirits shall be tried? Is it our standard of morality, the coincidence of their statements with what our judgment or imagination would assign to the persons, times and places of which they treat, the discovery of inconsistencies and apparent contradictions which we cannot reconcile? Not so John. Here is the test: "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God." Do you call this a begging of the question? It is nothing of the kind. It is the test of fact, or rather of faith in the greatest fact the world has known, the theophany of all the theophanies, the greatest cycle of phenomena in which God has been revealed. It is the testimony with which John begins the epistle in which these words stand: "That which we have seen, heard, handled, declare we unto you that ye may have fellowship with us." Faith in the phenomenal God is the test by which the spirits are to be tried.

Thus we are thrown back upon faith. I am bound to believe what God says you say, but not to believe man who is as often a deceiver as not. But if God is not pleased to give you a phenomenal revelation how are you to gain this belief in Him? There is a passage which says: "He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" This passage is of wide application. "He that believeth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he believe God whom he hath not seen?" In order to believe in God you must believe in man. Oh, preacher of the gospel, remember this: in the measure in which men believe in you will they believe in the God whom you declare. I do not say in order to believe in a God, in divinity, you must believe in man. This belief is valueless. The devils who have no faith at all believe and tremble. We frequently speak of faith in the evidence of testimony, and I have erred in this respect. The author of the epistle to the Hebrews says more truly: "Faith is the evidence of things not seen," and, therefore, of things testified to us by those who have seen them. When the truth of my brother's statement is evident to my mind, so far as that statement goes I have faith. Many are the testimonies that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh. Fact truthfully attested is the test of the truthfulness of other statements. Eight eye witnesses, the four evangelists with Paul, Peter,