

that permanent rest and happiness they ardently desired and sought. It has, indeed, with infinite wisdom and mercy, been ordained that the satisfying and eternal enjoyment of the spirit of man cannot be secured but by an adequate knowledge of the great and benevolent God of the Universe; and especially, under his Scriptural revelation, by the additional or combined knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, His Son, as His gift of mercy, according to the words of the text.

But, now, properly arises the enquiry, what are we truly and savingly to understand by the knowledge of God and of His Son whom He sent, as expressed in the text, and as to the purposes for which He was sent? And first, as to the knowledge of this "only true God." It implies, of course, as its primary element—as far as human intellect and intelligence can reach it—the correct knowledge of the attributes and perfections which form His divine nature and character. These have never been truly discovered by a Plato, or an Aristotle, a Seneca, a Cato, or a Cicero, or through any merely human investigation or system framed by the seeming wisdom of man;—so true are the words of the Patriarch: "Who can by searching find out God, or find out the Almighty unto perfection;" and also those of the Apostle: "The world by wisdom knew not God." The highest human wisdom could only reach the idea, or conclusion, that there was some great Being of a Spiritual nature, who originated all living creatures and inanimate objects and things; but when they sought to find out his true character, they were confounded and their investigations came to an end, or became perplexed and contradictory—chiefly through their inability to reconcile the seeming inconsistencies of His supposed government of His rational creatures and visible works, and His varied providential dispensations. But blessed be this true God that, in due time, He gave—and through more than fifteen hundred years progressively enlarged and has constantly preserved, and will, as promised, preserve to the end of time—a revelation of His own sacred attributes and character, and of His gracious will and designs regarding the whole human race. And this revelation is as full and perfect as the capacities, wants, and duties of man require for his welfare and happiness while here, and his eternal enjoyment hereafter. In this inspired revelation we are plainly informed of