

Already, then, the comparative unimportance of absolute inerrancy appears, but let a few more guiding-posts be driven in along the line of discussion.

The question that is of crucial importance is, Does the Bible contain truth, *infallible* truth, we may say, though with some redundancy, seeing that all truth is infallible? Has the Bible a message for man as man to be found nowhere else? Let so infinitely important a question be answered in the affirmative, and the question as to the absolute inerrancy of the Bible passes from a practical and momentous question to one that is theoretical and esoteric. Absolute inerrancy may be indispensable, it is true, to some theories of inspiration, but the Bible once shown to contain a series of unique revelations from God to man, and absolute inerrancy ceases to be of serious import in the practical search after religious truth. *By absolute inerrancy*, a phrase which I have found it necessary to repeat again and again, *I mean entire absence from the Bible of inconsistency, whether of any one passage with any other passage within the book, or whether of any statement within the book with any demonstrably true statement without the book.*

Now, whether absolutely inerrant or not, how infinitely important the Bible is to man, let a few facts, which may be considered quite apart from absolute inerrancy, suggest.

One series of facts, which any man who will may verify, is to be found in what the Bible has to say about human nature, and about Jesus Christ, and about redemption, and about the method of a holy life. That here the Bible presents truth, infallible truth, any one who chooses may prove by experiment. *The truest Anthropology and the truest Soteriology* is the biblical; but if this be so, can the absolute inerrancy of Scripture be necessary truth? I rather suggest the points that occur to me than illustrate them in any adequate manner.

And here is another fact which places the Bible on a pinnacle all its own, a fact again which anybody who desires may verify. *The spiritual message of the Bible cannot be understood without Divine aid.* This truth indubitably has all too frequently been presented in somewhat harsh dogmatic form, and consequently has all too frequently been held in a formal intellectual way; still, *abusus non tollit usum.* The truth is as verifiable as important. Unaided by the Spirit of God, he who reads understands not. Spiritual things are spiritually discerned. We see what we have eyes to see. View is conditioned by vision. There can be no knowledge of an objective world without a subjective knowing faculty. Percepts, spiritual as well as sensuous, imply a percipient mind as well as a thing to be perceived. Objects beyond the range of ordinary sight may become visible as the optic lenses are cleansed or improved. All these are statements of a great spiritual fact, as well as commonplaces concerning ordinary cognition. The real message of Scripture is only delivered to man when inspired from above. It is when the Spirit of God quickens,