

can tell by his long dress and an indescribable something about him, that he is a scholar; and you might say to him, "Now, why don't you be a good man, and give up your opium? Your wife is starving; your land is gone; your house is in ruins. Why not be a good man?" "I dare not," he replies; "I am afraid if I attempt to give up my opium I shall die. I cannot." "But you are a Chinese scholar. You have read the books of Confucius." "Yes; I know them from one end to the other. I can repeat them." "Do you never, when you read these Confucian books, find some inspiration coming to you and saying, 'I must be a better man, and live a good life?'" "No, never," he says; "I dare not give up my opium. I am afraid I should die." This is the impression, unfortunately, of every opium-smoker in China—that in the course of giving up the opium he will die, and he says, "I dare not." But after the service a conversation was begun, and the scholar was told of the worship of the God that Confucius mentions—the God of China before Confucius lived. "Perhaps you would like to look at one of our books." The Old Testament was put into his hand, and he was told to read the first chapter of Genesis. And he read it. He said, "I am amazed at the beauty of that first chapter—at the majesty, at the wonderful power of that chapter." When he had read that first chapter, unconsciously to himself, he had taken the first step to God. He came again and again, and heard the gospel and read the Bible, and the result was that one Sunday he said, "I am going to be a Christian. I am going to give up all my Confucianism; but the first thing I am going to do is to give up my opium." The preacher said to him: "Well, we are very glad of that, but you will have to be very careful. Do it gradually. It is a very serious business." He said: "I know it is, but I am not going to do it gradually. It is wrong, and from this moment I will never touch opium as long as I live!" He was employed as a tutor by a rich merchant who was a great opium-smoker himself. By-and-by his employer said to him: "Come away to your opium." "No," he replied, "I am never going to smoke it again." The rich merchant smiled sarcastically, and said: "Before midnight comes you will want it. When you do, here it is on the tray. Here is the opium, and here are the lights." Midnight came and found this man in intense agony. Every bone in his body ached, and forced an indescribable wail from him. Sleep fled from his eyes as though they were never intended to sleep. As night went on the pain increased, and he felt as though the outside world were in terrible conflict with the influences that made up his own individuality. In the next room was the opium all ready; but he never took a step towards it. He and the opium were separated for ever. There was a new force in his life. No; he would not move, although it seemed that the night would never end, and that the Chinese sun was shining in his eyes all through. No; he would suffer, but he would not take the opium as long as he lived. That was the same power that evoked the martyr's spirit. This Chinese scholar was being brought among those whose names have stamped themselves upon history. For years this man has been one of our chief workers and best pastors in the church—a man whom the Chinese can look up to. I often hear him pray. His prayers are mainly, "Christ and Him crucified. Christ my Saviour." And as I listen I am not listening to any theological statement, for I know that the man is going back upon his old life of sin and to his opium, and that it is passing vividly before his mind as he says, "Christ has saved me."

You ask that man if the Bible is inspired. Ask him! He will look with pity on you. You say: "But what evidence have you?" He says: "My life. Everything is changed!" Dear friends, hold on to the Bible—don't give 't up for all the noise and din of criticism. I have gone to places where there was only heathenism—dark, intensely dark—and to-day there is light there; I have baptized hundreds of converts, and it is all by the power of the gospel.