

seen, in object form, what confusion of thought necessarily results, and untenable positions have to be assumed when the Holy Spirit is denied His true position with the Christian as guide supreme into all truth.

The difficulties connected with the subject are fairly well stated in the first paragraph, with this exception that the work of the Holy Spirit and that of the devil are put on an equality as far as making impressions is concerned.

But in giving rules for the management of the troublesome matter is where difficulties chiefly abound.

The first rule would certainly destroy Abraham as a pattern of obedience when attempting to sacrifice his son, and, moreover, it plays into the hands of all those who think that the Bible does sanction some things which possibly the writer condemns. For instance, by this rule a Presbyterian lady would be forever prevented from breaking her silence in the churches. By this rule, also, an apostle of the dress question, or of extreme views concerning faith cure, or for that matter, concerning purity and maturity, yes, even of Zinzendorfism would be ruled out of the benefits of divine guidance concerning these things, for most of them honestly think they are scriptural in their beliefs.

As to the second rule, we remark that it certainly is in harmony with good common sense to obey God, even as Abraham did, when that obedience seemed to set at naught what generally passes for common sense. But manifestly this deliverance rules out all such extraordinary actions as those connected with the prophets and apostles. According to it common sense ceases to be common sense when it fails to harmonize with the voice of the multitude. When Dr. Coke insisted on going to Ceylon in the face of the common sense of the whole Conference, according to this rule, he was sadly astray.

The third rule is a wholesome one when there is no need for any rule. But what about its application when not to follow the impression is to act promptly against it? For example, an impression comes to a preacher to change his text when in the act of rising to

announce it to the congregation. How would the rule work at such a time? Would not a rule like the following be exactly similar yet simpler:

3. Act on no impression whether from your own mind, the devil, or the Holy Ghost, which requires promptness or hurry in carrying it out?

But behold how the fourth rule makes needless all the others! If you belong wholly to the Lord He will see to it that you will not be the prey of false impressions. Now this is comforting, and implies that the one and chief business of the Christian is to remain wholly the Lord's, then he will need none of these rules, nay, he may throw them into his waste basket with supreme indifference as to any evil consequences arising from his failure to either master their intricacies or retain them in his memory. The limiting clause is so very mild and inconsequential that it might be left out and scarcely be missed, for the very lowest form of Christian life is founded on candor and the intention to be in harmony with the Bible. After this assuring statement, does not the multiplication of rules tend to flood the mind with doubts concerning their value; and even awaken the suspicion that the writer of them is not very certain of their soundness?

But the climax is reached in the fifth and last rule, when it is admitted that, after all, infallible guidance cannot be secured from ourselves, the Bible, or the Holy Spirit, but rests in the bosoms of *godly men of long experience in the things of God*.

We suggest, however, that another rule is needed to define the number to be consulted, and the length of time necessary to constitute them an authority in these matters. For without such a statement the result of consultation with others will be meagre, as we have often proved. Again, what provision is to be made for differing judgments between these men of experience. Suppose a perplexed one should consult them concerning the subject of purity and maturity, would they be certain to get a unanimous verdict from godly men of long experience in the things of God?

Examine this rule long enough, and