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It would be perhaps unfair to charge those writers with using the 'cant' of the day, that they may appear to be abreast of the so-called advanced thought. We may therefore regard them as honestly attempting to fashion Christianity into conformity with the notions and tastes which distinguish this modern thought, but this cannot be done by depreciating the truth which endureth from generation to generation. Such a course is like that of a man who destroys the steps of the ladder by which he proposes to climb. They may say that it is to the formulas of theology, to the dogmatic expression of truth, or to technical theological terms, they object, not to the truth itself. To this we say, if the word of God does mean something, it is surely right to say what it means, so to express it that it may reach the understanding and the heart. Doctrines to be authoritative must rest on the direct and positive assertions of God's word, or they must be clear and unmistakable deductions from such direct assertions. This alone renders doctrine binding on the conscience. Theology originates no doctrines, it is not a speculative science. We receive the divine declarations as the ultimate facts of theology, in the same way in which the ultimate facts of nature become the basis of natural philosophy. In theology the recorded facts are contained in the Bible, the data rest on the authority of inspiration. A statement may be questioned as to whether it is scriptural or not, but if scriptural it acquires the force of certain and demonstrated truth. The man who denies the authority of the Bible may indeed raise a thousand other questions, but the doctrines, so far as they represent the truths of the Scriptures, stand or fall with the Scriptures themselves. The difficulties of sincere doubters can thus be met only by bringing them back to the divine authority of the word of God—set that aside and faith is impossible, doubt is inevitable.

Here the objector may ask, Why generalise and systematise these divine truths at all, why not rest content with the Scriptures as you find them? To this we answer that, as in nature so in revelation, God has given us the data and left it to us to formulate and methodise them. We do not object to Geology because the facts relative to the strata must be gathered by