

III. THE CHRISTIAN HIMSELF IS ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN THAT THE CHANGE HAS BEEN WROUGHT BY GOD:

1. He knows that he did not of himself remove his original enmity to God. 2. He recognizes in the effects produced on his heart, intellect and conscience, the operations of the Being described in the Scriptures. 3. The increasing life within him is an irrefutable evidence of the reality and truth of the Christianity which gave rise to it. It proves that the redemption promised by the gospel is a fact. 4. He is further assured of the truth of Christianity by repeated answers to his prayers. (1) These are too manifold and various to be merely coincidences. (2) Throughout the history of the race these answers to prayer are as wide-spread and continuous as a law of nature. (3) Then there must be a sphere from which these answers come. Thus while the Christian life is an evidence of the truth which all can examine, the Christian himself has a verified knowledge of all the leading truths of Christianity.

THE EVIDENCE OF THE SOCIAL EFFECTS OF CHRISTIANITY.

The spread of Christian thought in society has produced results which bear the seal of divine truth.

I. CHRISTIANITY INTRODUCED A NEW AND HIGHER IDEA OF THE INDIVIDUAL MAN :

In heathenism the individual was nothing unless he possessed power, wealth, or learning, which distinguished him from the crowd. Christianity assumed that there is something in every man much more valuable than anything which is peculiar to a few.

1. *It recognized all men as essentially equal before God.* (1) All are guilty of sin. (2) All possess some traces of the image of God, such as conscience and the power of affection. (3) All will live hereafter. (4) Christ died for men of all classes. So it seated the slave and his master at the same communion table and refused to see any difference between them. 2. *It taught that the individual man has a place in the thought of God.* It emphasized this by showing the stupendous character of the provisions made for his redemption. (1) The eternal and unchangeable plan of redemptive love in which the individual has a place. (2) The incarnation and death of the divine Son. (3) The new revelation of God conveyed to angels and other beings by the redemption of the individual man. 3. *It appealed to the voluntary choice of every man.* It laid upon every conscience the responsibility of accepting or rejecting Christ. This way of treating humanity was radically different from driving them in herds into the religion of their rulers.

II. CHRISTIANITY ELEVATED AND PURIFIED FAMILY LIFE :

We can learn its beneficial effects here only by contrasting the present state of things among us with pre-Christian society.

1. *It forbade polygamy.* (1) Monogamy marked a distinct advance on Old Testament legislations. (2) It gave new sanction to the marriage tie and removed many discords. (3) It emphasized the necessity of personal purity. 2. *It assigned a higher place and enlarged opportunities to woman.* (1) In most heathen nations she was little more than a slave; Christianity everywhere makes her the equal of man. (2) This has added new dignity and nobility to man. (3) It has had an incalculably beneficial effect on children. 3. *It added to childhood a sacredness hitherto entirely unknown.* Any Roman father could expose or murder his child if he wished to do so. The greatest names in classic literature approved of this practice. The horror with which the worst men among us regard such a thing shews the change which Christian teaching has produced.