

special grace alone, not from any thing at all foreseen in man, who is altogether passive therein, until being quickened and renewed by the Holy Spirit, he is thereby enabled to answer this call, and to embrace the grace offered and conveyed therein." And we have living writers whose works bear evidence that they have not read this part of the confession in vain. Dr. Candlish writes that, "Faith is the act of a renewed understanding, a renewed heart, and a renewed will." And the writings of all divine, of the Calvinistic School abound in such sentiments. The passage we have quoted from the confession of Faith is supported by Scripture proof; and, it may be best, just in the way of clearing the ground, to look, in the first place, at the support which the above passage obtains from Scripture. The first verse given in proof is 1 Cor. ii. 14. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, because they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned," This passage teaches that none but a spiritual man receives or discerns spiritual things. The things spoken of by the apostle are "the deep things of God." The things that make up the experience of a spiritual man, combined with those future blessings that are in store for all those that love God. But, the gospel is a simple thing. It is so plain, that he who runs may read it as he runs. The things referred to by Paul are things in advance of the simple gospel. Jesus said to his disciples on one occasion, "I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot hear them yet." The disciples were not prepared to take in the Saviour's teachings upon advanced matters. And, some of the Corinthians were in such a state, that the apostle had fed them with milk, and not with strong meat, for they were not able to bear it. "We speak wisdom among them that are perfect," says the apostle;—thus intimating that it was only those who were in an advanced spiritual condition, who could really discern and appreciate the deep things of God's Spirit. But, it is through faith that any man can become a spiritual man. For, Paul to the Galatians writes, "That the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit, (i. e. the Spirit promised), through faith." And, again, "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." The necessity for regeneration does not lie in any supposed inability to believe the gospel when presented to the mind, but in the fact, that man is altogether depraved as to his character.