

to be recognized, that every individual can apply some one of those three tests to the gospel. It is not true, as is often alleged, that some persons have no means of assuring themselves by actual trial and inquiry of the gospel evidence. For, if history and philosophy bar out any persons from investigating by their methods, the method of experiment is left free to all. They can ask themselves what the gospel says to them concerning their own nature, condition, and wants, and what its work is upon heart and life; and this method of examination, as it is free to all, is the best and the most conclusive to all.

The gospel satisfies every inquiry which it prompts, except those inquiries which it gives us reasons of its own for not satisfying. It entitles itself a message of love from God, announcing good news to men. It affirms that the original dispensation of it was planned in purpose before even this earth was arranged as a scene of human life. It was not designed to meet an emergency in the divine government, but to be the fulfilment of a divine method. The gospel dates its first spoken word of promise on the earth to the evening of the day on which the first remorse and blight of sin were settling upon two human beings, as they hid themselves in the thickets of Eden. A succession of inspired prophets, the training of a burdensome law, and the preparatory experience of long and dreary ages, were made the means of exciting the hopes and of fitting the hearts of men to receive it. The gospel defines its own purpose under the large words, Redemption and Salvation, — redemption, say some, from "the wrath of God;" redemption, say others, from the "curse of sin;" and only those dispute *angrily* which of these two sentences best expresses the truth, who do not