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PROVE AND HOLD FAST THE TRUTH.

The inquiry—What is truth?—is all important. There are prejudices to be overcome, doubts to be solved, fears to be dispelled, errors to be exposed, and sins to be condemned. The soul of Man, tossed on the waves of uncertainty, incurs the risk of eternal loss, until the star of truth becomes a guide to the haven of peace. Man is, therefore, to search for truth. In the fields of science, the search has been long and ardent. The sanctuary of nature has been found stored with countless treasures, which have become the spoil of the discoverer. It is, however, to the higher and nobler inquiry after truth as bearing on the immortal condition of Man, that we call attention. There is an open page on which we read of Him who is the way, the *truth*, and the life. We avow our conviction, that truth for the soul, divine truth, eternal truth, is to be found in the gospel. This truth has nothing to fear from investigation, hence the calm and candid examination of its claims is courted. Religion does not require blind and unreasonable confidence. It comes forth to open day. It seeks diffusion by free inquiry. The devotee of superstition takes at second hand any story which the plans of designing men may palm on him. Hence, in the absence of scriptural knowledge, the mind is fettered and enslaved. The right of *private judgment* is, therefore, of the first consequence in maintaining a holy and active Christianity. The Word of God, having been itself tested, and ascertained to possess authority, is diligently studied. The test of religious doctrine is there. The zeal and urgency which may attend the propagation of a particular theory, are not to impose on us. Prove all things. This blessed privilege is clearly implied in many of the directions of the Scriptures; while the nature of the lessons, together with the persons to whom they were originally addressed, go to shew that the themes of the Book of books are designed to be pondered and received by diligent search. Jealously too must the decrees of ecclesiastical courts and councils be watched. No human authority has a right to bind the conscience. The servant of Christ answereth to his own Master. The terrors of an Inquisition may control outward conduct, but after all, thought is free. It is on the individual mind that the impressions produced by truth are wrought, and consequently its own conviction and consent are required to accomplish the end. We judge, therefore, that neither fraud nor force can be allowed to prevent the closest scrutiny of God's message to men. It is an individual duty. Every man to whom the light has come, is bound to look into what-