

word *communication*? In the connexion in which it stands in the sentence, and in general use, does it not mean something to instruct or teach? And will any one who is not a prophet nor a prophet's son affirm that he is instructed or taught without language or something revealed? And is not the gospel—which regenerates or converts—a message or scheme of salvation which requires to be learned? *and has "a Disciple" discovered a mode of learning without instruction or teaching, or is there anything of this nature expressed or intimated in reference to receiving the gospel in the sacred Book?*

I may be in company with a beloved friend who strengthens, consoles, and delights me by his looks, amiability of manner, and the fact of his presence; but if this friend teaches me anything, he must express himself—he must utter words—or communicate his thoughts by signs which I understand. God, also, in tens of thousands of ways, incomprehensible to the human family, may comfort and assist his people by his presence and by the agency of angels and ministering spirits; but that he converts a sinner without the gospel, or by anything super-added to the gospel, I am not prepared to admit.

Nor is this human philosophy: for the idea of God not converting men without the instrumentality of the gospel is not rejected because inconsistent with my understanding, but because it is contrary to the express declaration of God's own word.

Upon this subject I am exceedingly jealous. I am a firm believer in the existence, gracious presence, and sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit, which gives to the christian an assurance of heaven and a foretaste of the pleasures of the divine inheritance. Without the presence and power of the spirit of God, and without a disposition to enjoy this presence and power, I have no faith in any man's pretensions to salvation. Plato's philosophy, or Combe's phrenology, or Sir Walter Scott's novels, are as useful to instruct, prepare, or qualify for eternal life, as any scheme or theory which has not within it the spirit of the living God. If men had confined themselves within the common bounds of extravagance in commenting upon the holy spirit, and not have given themselves wholly up to the delusions of theories intended to explain the nature and operation of this spirit, I for one would never use my tongue or lift my pen in controversy upon the subject; but when we have fresh evidences every day that certain views are made the centre of a popular Divinity which saves and sanctifies sinners independently of the word of life or the gospel of God, I feel myself justifiable in unsheathing my sword, and putting on breast-plate, helmet, and shield. I have already intimated a crusade against the 'Doctors of the law' who have read their bibles with green spectacles turned