

revelations? Of course it does, and especially the Methodist church. Do not all ministers receive a personal revelation to enter the ministry? Do not *some* get revelations to "give up a good appointment for a poorer one, and have not there been cases even where a poor church has been exchanged for a rich one at the urgent call of God? It is claimed also that many men have received personal revelations to give large sums of money to the church, and *some* men claim for themselves that they have received instructions to give *less* than was their custom, but the authorities doubt this. Besides, what is the well-nigh universal doctrine of the "witness of the Spirit" but a personal revelation of the fatherhood of God and our filial relation to him? Men in the churches have come to believe in the necessity of a personal revelation in this important matter; hence many, acting out their faith, do receive such witness or revelation. To those who do not believe such witness possible it is of course impossible.

Those who believe in the necessity and possibility of getting revelations in other matters get them. Many Christians can tell with confidence and certainty of personal revelations received at different epochs in their lives. Nor is this privilege and experience confined to those inside the churches—that is, to professed Christians. God meets all who look to him in confidence, whether Christian or Pagan. I have been impressed with this truth lately in reading "Froude's Life of Carlyle." I believe Carlyle's tremendous strength and force of character, as well as his world-wide influence, have their origin largely in a personal revelation received by him at the beginning of his wondrous career.

He was intended for the church, but soon found that he could not honestly accept her doctrines. Giving up the Bible as historical and authoritative how could he

know anything about God and his relation to him? Was there a God at all, and if there was, was he a *personal* being, taking an active interest in each of his creatures?

Doubts on these great questions afflicted Carlyle for years. He called them his "spiritual dragons." He describes the workings of his mind in "Sartor," in the chapters on "The everlasting no," and "The everlasting yes." These doubts were dispelled quite suddenly and even unexpectedly, without his following any line of reasoning or looking to any authority whatever.

His reference to this spiritual experience in Sartor is the only part of that work which *literally* relates his own experience. An extract or two will reveal his spiritual struggles. "Doubt," he makes the Professor say, "had darkened into unbelief; shade after shade goes grimly over your soul, till you have the fixed, starless, Tartarean black. To such readers as have reflected (what can be called reflecting) on man's life and happily discovered, in contradiction to much profit and less philosophy, that soul is not synonymous with stomach, who understand, therefore, in our friend's words, that for man's well-being faith is properly the one thing needful, how with it martyrs otherwise weak, can cheerfully endure the shame and the cross, and without it worldlings puke up their sick existence by suicide in the midst of luxury; to such it will be clear that the loss of his religious belief was the loss of everything. Unhappy young man! . . .

. . . Is there no God then? but at best an absentee God, sitting idle ever since the first Sabbath at the outside of his universe and seeing it go? Has the word 'duty' no meaning? is what we call duty no divine messenger and guide, but a false, earthly fanaticism, made up of desire and fear? . . . Thus has the bewildered wanderer to stand, as so many have done, shouting question after question