

It shows him no instrumentality adapted to accomplish that indispensably necessary end. It therefore cannot satisfy him. To preach such theology to him amidst his spiritual anxieties, is as though he asked for bread and you gave him a stone. On the contrary, when the Gospel brings its message to his ears; when it places Christ, in the glory of his person and the boundless merit of his atoning work, before his view; when it shows him not merely the remission of sins, but also the sanctifying grace of the Holy Spirit, secured by the death of Christ; when, in a word, he perceives in the doctrine of the cross a combination of all the possible motives which instrumentally are fitted to turn men away from their iniquities, he feels that he has here a scheme which answers the wants of which he is conscious; a scheme wisely, with divine wisdom, suited to the circumstances of his fallen condition.

III. But, in the third and last place, I observed that the Gospel commends itself as wisdom to them that are perfect *by its experimental effects*; by its being actually found, in the experience of individual believers, to produce the results which it professes to accomplish. Under the last particular I spoke of the Gospel as announcing pardon to sinners, and as furnishing a provision for turning them from sin to God. I made some observations also, by way of showing that, theoretically, the Gospel is adapted to accomplish the ends it contemplates, in a manner consistent with the principles of the human mind. But the question remains, Does it in fact do this? Does experience bear out its important and high pretensions? We mean, of course, the experience, not of those who reject the Gospel, or profess a mere nominal attachment to it, but of such as have received the love of the truth.

Now, with regard to pardon, experience does not directly tell us that we have obtained this blessing. We have no