

ordinary means, and the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. What we maintain is, that, in the use of means and by the help of the Spirit, obtained by prayer, the unlearned, as well as the learned, may understand from the Scriptures all truths necessary to salvation.

It will be perceived then that the position we maintain is, (as stated in the Westminster Confession of Faith) that although "all things in Scripture are not alike plain in themselves, nor alike clear unto all, yet those things which are necessary to be known, believed and observed for salvation are so clearly propounded and opened in some place of Scripture or other, that not only the learned but the unlearned, in a due use of the ordinary means, may attain unto a sufficient understanding of them." The arguments by which this position is established are such as the following.

1. In the first place the perspicuity (as well as the perfection) of Scripture may be inferred from the design for which they profess to have been written. We are told (Rom. xv. 4), that "whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning that we through patience and comfort of the Scripture might have hope." If written for our learning, the Scriptures are surely sufficiently clear. This argument derives peculiar force when it is remembered that the Scriptures were given by inspiration of God, who might be expected, in revealing His will, to adopt the mode best fitted for our instruction.

2. In the second place, the perspicuity of Scripture is proved by express statements. Thus we read, *Deut.* xxx. 11, "This commandment which I command thee this day is not hidden from thee." *Psaln* xix. 7-8, "The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes." *Psaln* cxix. 105 and 130, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." "The entrance of Thy word giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple." *Prov.* vi. 23, "The commandment is a lamp, and the law is a light." II. *Pet.* i. 19, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn and the day-star arise in your hearts.

3. In the third place, the perspicuity of Scripture is confirmed by the fact that it is addressed to all men generally, learned and unlearned, ministers and people alike. Christ said to the people generally, "Search the Scriptures." Paul, in writing to the Church at Rome, addresses his letter, "To all that be at Rome, beloved of God called to be saints," *Rom.* i. 7. To the Corinthians he writes, "Unto the Church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs, and ours," *2 Cor.* i. 5. To the Thessalonians he writes—"I charge you by the Lord that this Epistle be read unto all the holy brethren," *I. Thes.* v. 27. To the Philippians he writes, "To all the saints in Christ Jesus, which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons," *Phil.* i. 1. Thus the Scriptures are addressed to all classes alike. Why should they be so addressed, if their statements were so obscure as to be generally unintelligible?

4. Once more, we make a *direct appeal* in support of our position to the general style and structure of the Scriptures themselves. We find the style to be as plain as that of any other book. It affects nothing of mystery. On the contrary, the important doctrines of revelation are set before us in every variety of form, so as to be adapted to the understandings of all. They are interwoven with simple narratives. They are pictured in types and metaphors, as well as exhibited in plain didactic statements.