

## ON PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY.

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To realize that fellowship, (of the Spirit) in any of those intellectual exercises to which the truth may invite us, is to feel that moral influence which God exerts—that wisdom and power of God which, through the preaching of a crucified Christ, converts the soul

Such an intellectual operation you distinctly perceive is implied in the moral influence, which is exerted by the Spirit of man; and man is like God—and like him in this very connexion. “For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.” The similitude thus traced out offers no violence to true philosophy. It is merely the human mind rising from fellowship with an intellectual creature to fellowship with the intellectual Creator, and that by a direct process—communion with a brother—a father—a minister—a prophet—an Apostle—Jehovah himself. All the way it is communion of SPIRIT with SPIRIT. Physical power belongs no more to one part of the process than another. \* \* It is the communion of mind with mind, and must be explained on the LAWS OF MIND. \* \* \*

Let us exemplify.—Some stranger undertakes to counsel a wayward youth. The advice offered is just such as ought to be given. Its TRUTH is unquestionable and easily perceived. Perhaps the youth may bow submissively; for there is nothing unnatural or improbable in the idea that mind may yield to the influence of *truth*, or that the SPIRIT of one human being may strongly affect the SPIRIT of another human being. But the stranger may possibly be considered to be officious and impertinent, and may be treated accordingly. Yet he uttered TRUTH, and in all probability the truth he uttered was distinctly understood. Why then has his advice been rejected, and himself disdained? The objection supposed, you perceive, is personal. Though the stranger has uttered truth, yet he is considered impertinent or officious—the errant boy declines all fellowship with the stranger’s spirit. The father then appears, offers the same advice, and urges the same truth; or it is made evident that the stranger interfered, not on his own account, but as the father’s agent, and the desired impression is produced. What is the difference? TRUTH is declared in both cases. No arbitrary power, no physical compulsion has been employed. Had such power been called in, the impression desired might not have been made. The only difference which can be perceived is, that the *personal* objection supposed has been removed, and that FELLOWSHIP OF SPIRIT has sustained the appeals of truth.

The gospel is preached by a fellow-man, and no good effect follows—the sinner remains unmoved, unconverted. On some