

and refuse to see God in His wonderful works. Now men may, when thus left to themselves, abuse the blessing conferred. Sin, self and corruption destroy the best works and defeat the best purposes. So here, the Word is plain; "it is nigh thee." It is so plain that all may know what they are asked to believe and to do. There must be limits to all religious knowledge; just as natural vision has its limits. Revelation must stop somewhere. We must reach a point where we are left to wonder and speculate as to what lies beyond: but this doubt does not rest like a cloud upon those things which the Spirit purposed to reveal for our salvation.

The first requisite then, in the use made of any divine message, is honesty of purpose. If the Word were obscure and difficult of comprehension, then the fault might be laid on the record of revelation. But when the record is plain the blame must lie with the receiver. What then is needed in his case is integrity of purpose. But no sinful man can exercise this in his use of a message which so glaringly and forcibly condemns himself. The matter is not abstract or speculative, but personal and practical, and he will pervert its plainest declarations. Behold here the principal cause of theological error. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned." Nicodemus, though a teacher, did not know a most elementary truth in religion, and Jesus said: "Ye must be born from above." So that to some extent and in some source a revelation is made to each man by the Spirit of God who does not change the message, but the man who hears the message. His eyes are opened and he obtains a vision, without which the external revelation is no revelation to him. The theological student must not be astonished that so many erroneous religious opinions abound where men have not used the Word as was intended; and he may see what he needs in order that he may really have a revelation made to himself, namely, a purified and teachable disposition imparted by the Spirit that gave revelation.

It may explain much to remember that there is a genesis of error—in other words: that one error begets another, and that men support an erroneous opinion because they see it to be necessary from its connection with some other opinion. To con-