

Greeks came into Palestine, sought the disciples of the Nazarene, and, said "Sirs, we would see Jesus." They were still looking, inquiring, longing, still dying in uncertainty and going into the doom of hopelessness. Another empire succeeded—the great Roman Empire—whose conquests spread its domain from Parthia to Britain, and from the German forests to the cataracts of the Nile, gathering in its sweep not only the material wealth of the nations, but their intellectual resources and riches. The Roman conquered the Greek, the Greek conquered the Roman. In mental matters the Romans were the mere pupils of the Greeks, imitating the Greek religion, philosophy and literature. Virgil sang what Horace had sung, and Roman philosophers imitated Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. After all that the Roman mind had gathered from the races as the result of the thinking of all past ages, Pilate, in the presence of the same Nazarene, spoke not for himself but for his age and nation, saying, "What is truth?" and this not with a sneer or with scepticism. There, then, is the last result of human thinking concerning things divine. Shall we go back again and travel all the dreary waste? We say, No. Shall we leave the nations around us to work on and on through their historical ages, to come in later generations to our children or our children's children, saying, "Sirs, we would see Jesus," or looking up from the bleak world to heaven, calling in broken-hearted despair, "What is truth?" To any rationalist he had two things to say. First, what is human reason? What are its powers? On what ground do you affirm the authenticity of what it defines? There was not one rationalist out of ten thousand who could answer the question to his own satisfaction, much less ours. The second point is, Have you read history? If you have, profit by it. Standing on our own ground, and believing we have a revelation from God, which must be made powerful in our hearts and minds, by the Holy Spirit, for our salvation and eternal life, what is the present place for the Scriptures in the scheme of evangelistic work by which we can bring the Gospel to bear on the heart, mind, character, and everlasting destiny of the race? God has always respected the human mind according to its constitution, and has always dealt with it after a rational fashion. He has never required faith from man without giving ample grounds for it. So from the beginning, when God knew, as He always must have known, that the time had come to speak to man lest man should go to destruction, He has always authenticated the message. First, He has given to some of His servants a message to men, and then He has given something to authenticate the message, so that no man need receive it until he could justify the reception of it as wholly rational. When God spoke to any of the patriarchs, He manifested Himself so that the patriarch should see Him. He then gave His message. The patriarch was to speak to others and repeat the message, and he had some sign, some token from God that he had received it from God, and was authorized to declare it to men. The same obtained in regard to the prophets. Moreover, God is truth, and He will not co-operate with any man who is not true, and will not endorse a message which is not true. Christ uttereth the truth. Nicodemus stood up to explain the philosophy of his teaching as related to his miracles—"We know that thou art a teacher come from God, because no man can do these miracles unless God be with him." God does not send His mighty power in connection with a message that is untrue. Christ said, "Believe my words if you are spiritual, but if you are not spiritual, believe me for the work's sake." When Christ gave the commission to His Apostles, He told them first of all that the Gospel would be completed by the Holy Spirit. "He shall take of mine and show it unto you. He shall bring to your remembrance whatever I have said unto you, and you shall have power to work miracles." They went forth with the power of Christ, and the power authenticated the Word, and men were ra-