

*I. Knowledge of Divine Truth comes by Revelation.*—Comparative Theology has shown that all nations refer the origin of Religion to a divine source. None claim it as the invention or discovery of man. Plato affirms that even the names of God were not of human origin, but given by divine revelation. The universal tradition of certain central truths of Religion, harmonizing with the Scriptures, and in possession of peoples long excluded from communication with one another, argues a common source whence those traditions must have sprung; and the nearer we approach the cradle of the race, the purer do we find the traditions of the people. We have the testimony of the best scholars that the early Egyptians and Hindoos were Monotheists. It was only as the original traditions grew dim and were corrupted, because there was no written word, that in the lapse of time these nations glided into polytheism and idolatry. All nations turn toward the cradle lands as they trace the current of their traditions to the original source. Greece looked toward the East. China looked toward the West. The power of the human soul to find out the truth about God, duty, salvation, destiny— independently, has not been made manifest, and never can be proved. Man has always and everywhere been surrounded by religious influences of some kind; some seeds of religious truth have always been in his mind. If you throw into a human mind a truth, or the germ of a truth, by instruction from without, you alter the condition of that mind forever. Those who live within the environment of the Holy Scriptures are influenced thereby, whether consciously or otherwise, toward their best and truest attainments in the knowledge of God and of divine things. Even those to whose ears nothing better than the faint and tremulous voice of tradition has been wafted, can never be looked upon as instances of natural reason attaining to the knowledge, or even the conception of God and religious truth. "Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God."

*II. God's Word written has conserved the purity and progress of Revelation.*—The tendency of mankind toward polytheism and idolatry, renders it essential that God's Word should be written in a book and committed to the care of special custodians for the benefit of mankind. The Jews were selected for this purpose, and in their hands the Book grew with an "increasing purpose," through a period of fifteen hundred years, into the marvellous literature comprised in the Hebrew Scriptures of the Old Testament. It then passed into the hands of the Christian Church, and the Sacred Canon was brought to a fitting close by the addition of the New Testament. These two portions comprise the one volume of the Book—the one Revelation of God to man, a Revelation luminous with the features of a structural unity which shows it to be an organic whole, vital throughout with the same elements of doctrinal and ethical truth, the work of one mind. "Given by inspiration of God," it is "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." It is a fact, easily verified by the reader of history, that wherever this Book has not been known, or has been withheld from the people, there Religion has become corrupt and has tended ever toward worse and worse degeneracy.

*III. The Word of God has always been both light and power in the moral progress of the World.*—The Bible is a perfect standard of truth and duty, always in advance of man's actual condition. Its shout is *eccelsior*—nor will it cease to guide the purest and the wisest until they have entered the gates of light and dwell in the presence of the glory of God. Human nature is always below Revelation, and no culture of the intellect, no practice of virtue can ever become so perfect as to have outgrown this guide. The source of Revelation is in heaven, and as the stream can never rise above its fountain, the Bible will always be equal to the highest elevation of the human mind.

The Bible is not only light, it is also power; it comes with authority because it is the Word of God. The revival of a pure religious faith, and the practice of a better life, amongst any people who are fallen and corrupt, is