

rule of the law of the Spirit. The rod of iron rule is good, is beneficent when compared with the lawlessness which obtains in its absence, but becomes an iron law when compared with the Spirit rule as made possible in this His dispensation.

THE "UNCTION."

1 JOHN ii 20-27.

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What about this "unction" or anointing (R. V.) of which John speaks? Everybody believes that Peter, Paul and John were abundantly "anointed," so that they needed no man to teach them; but how about the common people, the rank and file of the first Christians? John seems to be writing to these, and he declares they have the "unction from the Holy One." It seems to have been a pretty powerful unction, too, for he declares that it taught them all things. Perhaps some one will be kind enough to arise and explain the difference between this anointing and that which John himself possessed. If it taught them all things, "how much more could it teach the apostles?" Meanwhile, let us notice some of the practical advantages of having this unction:

1. It makes men teachable. Even in worldly wisdom the most learned are the most teachable. The man who knows nothing can learn nothing. The highest wisdom is to know how to learn. Hence there are none so teachable as those who walk in the Spirit, popular opinion to the contrary, notwithstanding. John intimated that he took the greater pleasure in writing to these people, not because they were ignorant but because they knew, *i.e.*, they had the unction—Spirit of Truth—who would teach them all the truth contained in his letter. Those who have the "unction" are open to conviction. They have only one question to ask concerning any man's teaching, and that is, is it true? If it is true, they are ready to accept it, whether the world or even the Church calls it orthodox or heterodox, biblical or unbiblical; whether it be popular or unpopular.

2. Those who have the "unction" and "know all things" learn most rapidly. Those who "have no need that any man should teach them," learn most from or rather *through* men. Fine paradoxes, certainly, but none the less true. We can learn little from a man whom we accept as an authority, as our master—for in the very act of accepting any man as an authority or absolute teacher of truth we accept a falsehood. How dare we call any man master? How can we accept any man's book as an authority? How can God teach us while we are heaping to ourselves human teachers? How can we hear God's still all voice while so many human voices are bawling in our ears? The fact that these human teachers are holy men makes but little difference. Whilst I am depending upon them I can learn little from them, and even that little I shall not feel quite sure of; but the moment I cease depending upon them and look straight to God the Spirit, refusing to accept anything as truth until He places His seal of approval upon it, then God can teach me "all things" *through* these same men, through their writing, experience and preaching.

Thus whilst walking in the Spirit every step will be a sure step in advance. I will not heap together a mass of theological rubbish, which will be a positive burden to carry around, and which I shall have one day to lay aside, and find to my astonishment, too, that it is more difficult to get rid of old error than it is to acquire new truth.

3. The "unction" saves us from impostors of all kinds.

No antichrist could deceive those to whom John wrote. No false prophet could impose upon them. They would know how to "try the spirits (teachers) whether they were of God." Indeed, John knew they would try him, whether he was of God. How could they try him? How could they know he wrote or spoke the truth? The "unction" taught them certainly. How else could they learn? They had no Bible. They could not compare his teaching with Christ's, seeing it is not at all likely they had heard the Saviour. And just how delightful it is to speak or write to those