

less that they are ruled by fate. Most thinking minds maintain that reason, not chance or blind necessity, is at the centre of the world. In virtue of the constitution of human nature, the great majority of men are led to believe in the existence of a Power invisible and eternal to which they stand, and to which they feel that they stand, necessarily related.

Although the doctrine of Deity has been the subject of unbounded speculation and discussion for several thousand years, yet, instead of becoming more weak or more vague, the idea of God becomes more pure, more prevalent and more comprehensive as the march of intellect advances. In one form or another, belief in God prevails to-day more widely than at any previous period of history. The cold, blank atheism of fifty or a hundred years ago has well-nigh disappeared in all parts of the Christian world. The existence of an invisible Power, acting behind the visible phenomena of nature, and determining those phenomena, is now conceived by scientific thinkers of nearly every shade of thought.

Doubt and difference exist in reference to the name they call it, or the attributes they give it; but its existence is everywhere observed, and almost everywhere acknowledged, by mankind. The sceptical Herbert Spencer recognizes an infinite and eternal energy from which all things proceed; the unbelieving Huxley also recognizes an infinite and eternal force with similar capabilities; and the agnostic Matthew Arnold designates this force a something, not ourselves, that makes for righteousness. Mark the significance of these expressions. No power can be infinite but a spirit, and nothing does make for righteousness but a person.

On the admission, therefore, of each of these three representative teachers in the modern scientific school, the Gospel conception of God is essentially involved, though not actually expressed. God is a spirit, infinite and eternal, and eternal because He has infinity; God is a spirit, personal and righteous, and righteous because He possesses personality. All nature points to the existence and activity of a personal Deity who is also imminent and omnipresent.

The Gospel represents God as a Being who is spiritually