

heaven. If the decision is in the affirmative, then he must forthwith enter upon a crusade against modern usages concerning this matter, or acknowledge himself an open despiser of God's revealed will. If the answer is in the negative, then he must certainly give ample reasons for accepting one set of Paul's deliverances and rejecting another. But that reason must be traced back to Christ before it can be authoritative. For failing such authority, he certainly opens to every reader of Paul's writings the same privilege of deciding for or against any one of his commands or recommendations according to his (the reader's) own sweet will. This at once strips Paul of the last vestige of personal authority as a teacher of God's revelations to man, which is the same thing as divesting his writings of every trace of oracular inspiration, and lands him where, indeed, Christ's teachings place him, viz., as a simple illustrator of the walk in the Spirit, as possible to all men.

The same result is reached where the attempt is simply to confine this or any other of the deliverances of the great apostle to his own times, or put upon them any limitations whatever, as any one will realize when the subject is looked into with sufficient care. Any effort to clothe Paul with a personal authority different from that possessed by Luther or Wesley, inevitably leads to the same absurd, illogical results. Even an argument founded on Paul's *ipse dixit*, if it were forthcoming, would lead to confusion, and could not eventually prevail. Did Paul rise from the dead and ascend to heaven to establish his ability to teach ultimate truth?

But, it may be added, did not Paul authoritatively repeat the teachings of Christ? What sources of knowledge, we ask, did he have which we have not access to? It is true that he had personal friendship with those who heard the sermon on the mount. But even then his statements must be received as second-handed, and, although reliable as histories, where will the dogma of inspiration come in?

Thus, every way considered, this deliverance is an indefensible one with

this presumed meaning read into the word *practice*, and unless surrendered will finally make this or any other writer or teacher who persistently stands by it, a narrow sectie, whose tendency will be to deny the privilege of liberal, independent thought to his brother man.

From this article we obtain some glimpses as to the absence of precise thought connected with this subject, even in the minds of accurate thinkers. He, himself, declines to give forth any definition as to what inspiration really means. His words are:

"You do not expect me to lay down any dogma or formulary on this subject. There is none such. In the undivided Church of the early centuries, the Anglican Church, and the Wesleyan Methodist Church, there is a notable absence of definition as to the exact doctrine of inspiration, as if the Church had been guided by the Spirit of God to abstain from formulating theories which might prove to be untenable."

He also quotes from Dr. Pope on this subject, as follows:

"The Bible is a divine-human collection of books, the precise relation of human and divine, in which is a problem which has engaged much attention, and has not yet been, though it may be, adequately evolved. The Holy Ghost never defines inspiration as applied to the whole body of Scripture; we have to construct our theory from the facts, and our theory must take those indisputable facts as it finds them." ("Comp. Theol." Vol. I., pp. 175, 191.)

And thus we have tried to arrest the reader's attention for a little to the further consideration of this burning question, using this magazine article as an object-lesson for this purpose. Those of us who have obtained the secure anchorage of the Spirit's teaching and guidance may well compare our tranquil state with the tempest-tossed condition of the legalistic defenders of inspiration creeds, with supreme satisfaction as to our own safety and comfort, whilst ready to extend the helping hand to all who are made ready to be taught of the Spirit.

Familiarity with the subject, both in its general aspects and minute details,