

surely it must be ten times more so in the teaching of the living Word of God, helped by the presence of the Eternal Spirit of God.

This brings me to the first point in my paper, that the presence of the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential. Without the aid of God to explain His Word it will be the most uninteresting book to the ordinary mind that could be found. It will be positively distasteful: the carnal mind is enmity against God. The apparent exceptions to this rule will be found to be among those who have a cultivated taste for literary pursuits, carried on, on the lines of modern analytical science. But at best this method is likely to be a poor one, which ignores entirely the first principle laid down here, that the teaching of the Holy Spirit is essential to the right understanding of the Word of God. The one thing, however, which makes the Bible so continually read, in spite of the lack of the Holy Spirit among those who read, is that the Book is itself an inspired book, that there is belonging to it a quality which can be attributed to no other book in the world. Apart from the question of authorship; apart from theories of inspiration, the Bible claims for itself to be *God breathed*, that it is *itself the living word of God which abideth for ever*.

It would be out of place here to introduce the subject of inspiration, but a second essential premise must be laid down, and that is a firm belief in the authority of the book—a belief in it as the only final authority to which we can appeal; as a book which stands on a different footing to all others; in short, as the Word of God. If we do not believe that this book will teach all who read it and follow its guidance, how to live and how to die; that it will tell them and all the world things which they cannot know without it, then how can we possibly persuade others to take a sufficient interest in it to devote more attention to it than to any other in the world, to read and learn and obey it, though they read and learn and obey nothing else?

The third essential must now be dealt with, and cannot be so quickly handled. It has already been referred to. He who would interest others must be interested himself. It will not be as much off the lines of my subject as it might at first sight appear to enquire at some length how we may be interested ourselves, for by learning this we shall be better able to teach others, and an ounce of experience in this matter is worth, if I may be allowed the expression, tons of theory. An examination of the methods employed by those who may be considered masters of the art of popular Bible study (as far as anything which requires *study* can be popular) will be therefore helpful and in fact almost necessary. Though it is probable that no two minds approach a subject in exactly the same manner, yet there is so much in common that help may be gained by an examination of the way in which others look on a matter.