

nish mighty agencies. (4) The facilities of circulation are increased an hundredfold. (5) The printing press and steam and electricity have changed the face of the earth; scholarship finds its highest satisfaction and richest triumphs in translations of the Book of books. (6) The intelligent devotion and evangelistic activity of the Church far surpasses its attainments and efforts in former times. (7) Liberty of conscience is generally secured; the Bible-burning age is pretty well over, and the Bible Society, itself a mighty Christian and philanthropic organization, is fully committed to the spread of the Inspired Word and the Scriptural enlightenment of the nations to the ends of the earth.

*Second.* The scene, the field over which we look, presents discouragements as well as encouragements. It is true darkness hath covered the earth, and gross darkness the people. We may penetrate this darkness far enough to study it, especially as conducted by Isaiah and Paul. (1) The Gentiles walk in the vanity of their mind, (2) having the understanding darkened, (3) being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them because of the blindness of their heart; having lost out of their thinking and study all ideas of God and true manhood, real life, immortality, heaven, righteousness, justice, holiness, right and wrong, regeneration, resurrection of the dead. Oh, what a darkness! (4) No wonder they are past feeling, without moral sense, compunction of conscience, restraint from vice, impulse to virtue and goodness, and (5) give themselves over to lasciviousness (looseness) to work all uncleanness with greediness. What a picture is here of the condition of the heathen in his blindness! How plain the relation of the intellectual, moral, spiritual, physical in man, and how sin works the ruin of all! What remedy is there but the Word of God by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven?

*Third.* We may well learn the power of vision, on which by nature we depend, from the urgent plea of Isaiah against the idolator in his utter abandonment of even the common sense of mankind. The smith gets hungry and thirsty when he is making a god to abide for ever in the house. The worshipper plants the ash, nourishes the sapling, cuts down the tree, burns part in the fire to warm himself, part to roast a roast, and the residue he makes a god to fall down and worship it, and cry, Deliver me, for thou art my god! Neither is there spirit nor understanding to discern the folly of all this, nor to say, Is there not a lie in my right hand? How could there be grosser darkness? Where is there remedy but in the light of life, the Word of God?